

SPOTLIGHT ON THE INDIANS:
WHAT YSAVEL AGAD MIGHT HAVE TOLD CAPTAIN OSPINA
OR THE FIRST ONE-HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE SPANISH CONQUEST OF THE
ALTO MAGDALENA REGION (1535-1629)

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
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This study traces the first one-hundred years after the Spanish conquest of the Alto Magdalena Region (1535-1629) in present-day Colombia. In doing so, it focuses primarily on the indigenous actors – male and female, local and non-local – who took part in one way or another in this enterprise. As such it is based on the analysis of twenty-two unpublished archival documents dating from 1540 through 1669. This study argues that Belalcázar's Yanacona (Inca) allies played a major role in the conquest and colonization of the Alto Magdalena region, and that Yanacona women were an important part of this expedition. It also argues that Belalcázar and his troops encountered local matrilineal societies (Yalcones, Panches, Coyaimas, Natagaimas, Pixaos) in which women held significant political power, and that a local female (Yalcón) leader by the name of Guatepán may have given rise to the legend of La Gaitana. With regards to the wars of resistance that took place between the second half of the sixteenth century through the beginning of the seventeenth century, it claims that local indigenous groups such as the

Coyaimas and Natagaimas who sided with the Spanish were instrumental in defeating the Pixao Indians who were the principal leaders of the revolts. Along this line, it contends that the vicious and “fratricidal” wars between the Indians who sided with the Spanish and those who sided against them were a decisive factor for Spanish victory. In addition it purports to show that local indigenous shamans known as *mohanes* were in fact politico-religious leaders who were persecuted by Spanish authorities not for religious but for political reasons, and more specifically for their role as leaders of the resistance. Finally, it argues that the wars that ensued after the Spanish incursion destroyed the social networks on which so much of local women’s power was based, and that as a result, local indigenous women lost much of their traditional power and status.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
I. Yndios Conquistadores: Yanacona Servants, Lovers, and Allies	15
II. Behetrías Tejidas por Guarichas: Unruly Land, Unruly Women	46
III. Ni Chinas ni Guarichas: Women Gone Missing	98
IV. Yndios contra yndios: Indians Against Indians	132
V. Cantares de Moaneras: Subversive Shamans	165
VI. “Como árboles en el aire:” Indians without Land	197
Conclusion	239
Appendix	244
Notes	250
Glossary	292
Bibliography	297

Table of Maps and Illustrations

Maps

Figure 1. Map 1. Indigenous settlements in Colombia at the beginning of the 16 th century	12
Figure 2. Map 2. Alto Magdalena Region	13
Figure 3. Map 3. “Terra Firma et Novum Regnum Granatenense et Popayan”	14

Illustrations

Figure 4. La Gaitana. Héctor Osvaldo Pérez. 2008	86
Figure 5. Mural in honor of La Gaitana. San José de Isnos, Huila.	97
Figure 6. Sales receipt of Pixao slaves from the fort of San Joan del Chaparral.	164
Figure 7. Carguero. Edouard Riou	238

Tables

Table 1. Population in Juan López's encomienda	120
Table 2. Population in Melchor de Sotomayor's encomienda	121
Table 3. Population in Bachiller Venero's encomienda	121
Table 4. Population in Alonso Vera's encomienda	122
Table 5. Population in Antonio de Toledo's encomienda	122
Table 6. Population in Blas Martínez's encomienda	123
Table 7. Comparative table for all six encomiendas	123
Table 8. El Calamo's local population	203
Table 9. El Cálamo's marriages	203
Table 10. La Matanca's (local) population	205
Table 11. La Matanca's marriages	205
Table 12. Marriages in Diego del Campo's encomienda	206
Table 13. Population in Diego del Campo's encomienda	207
Table 14. La Cozanza marriages	211
Table 15. Population in La Cozanza's encomienda	211
Table 16. La Culata marriages	213
Table 17. Population in La Culata	213
Table 18. Population in Diego de Ibarramenez's encomienda	214
Table 19. Marriages in Diego de Ibarramenez's encomienda	215
Table 20. Population in Isabel Calderón's encomienda	217

Table 21. Marriages in Alonso de Herrera's encomienda	218
Table 22. Population in Alonso de Herrera's encomienda	219
Table 23. Cambi Indians in Andrés de Sopena's encomienda	220
Table 24. Population in Andrés de Sopena's encomienda	220
Table 25. Marriages in Miguel de Losada's encomienda	221
Table 26. Population in Miguel de Losada's encomienda	222
Table 27. Marriages in Bernardo de Villareal's encomienda	225
Table 28. Population in Bernardo de Villareal's encomienda	226
Table 29. Forasteros in Bernardo de Villareal's encomienda	226
Table 30. Marriages in Francisco Calderón's encomienda	228
Table 31. Population in Francisco Calderón's encomienda	228
Table 32. Population in Nicolás Calderón's encomienda	229
Table 33. Marriages in Nicolás Calderón's encomienda	230
Table 34. Comparative table for marriages	231
Table 35. Comparative table for local/forastero/runaway population	232
Table 36. Comparative table for adult/children population	232
Table 37. Gender distribution	233
Table 38. Approximate values for marital status	233

DEDICATION

A mi gente

Al páramo

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Introduction

On Friday, December 22, 1628, Captain Diego de Ospina went to visit the Coniabongo Indians in the village of La Matanca.¹ There was one person it was a pity he never bothered to interview: her name was Ysavel Agad and she was — according to Alonso de Torralva, the notary public who accompanied Ospina on his tour of the encomiendas in the Timaná area² — one-hundred years old.³ If true, Ysavel was probably only seven years old when the Spaniards first entered the Alto Magdalena region in present-day Colombia.⁴ She was most likely a member of the Yalcón people, which at the time inhabited that part of the country. At a hundred years old in 1628, Ysavel was certainly a remarkable woman: she had survived the Spanish conquest, the onset of Spanish diseases, the war of resistance, and the imposition of the encomienda system. In her lifetime she had witnessed not only tremendous changes, but a complete reversal of social order. Women like her, who had been raised to take active parts in the life of their communities, suddenly found themselves relegated to the very last rung of the social order. Indeed, as an elder in her community, Ysavel would have been consulted by her people on all important issues. But Spanish visitadores like Captain Diego de Ospina were not in the habit of interviewing old Indian women. They did not regard them as valid interlocutors. So Captain Ospina, whose mission it was to find out how well the few Yalcones who remained in the Timaná area were doing, never got to hear from the one person who could truly have told him how much things had really changed for the Indians since the Spaniards had first entered the area.

This work endeavors to tell that story. It does not pretend to be speaking for Ysavel Agad, but it does seek to dwell on some of the stories or events that she might have insisted on. It

is an attempt to recount the first one hundred years after Spanish conquistador Sebastián de Belalcázar penetrated the Alto Magdalena region of what is today Colombia, but an attempt that privileges the rare indigenous voices and appearances — in particular the even rarer female indigenous voices and appearances — in the documents on which it is based. Because the sources available to us are so few and elusive,⁵ I do not purport to provide readers with an account that privileges hardcore historical facts, events or developments. Instead, I wish to cast some light (as well as an ear) on some of the actors (and their voices) in this story who until now have been largely silenced and ignored. Using my training in Literature and Women's and Gender Studies, I have endeavored to probe historical sources, looking for what I like to call “muted” or “marginal evidence,” that is, clues pointing to alternative — non-dominant — historical narratives.

The story of Colombia's conquest from the south has been told many times.⁶ For the most part, however, those versions have tended to focus primarily on Spanish male actors. This work endeavors to cast the spotlight on the indigenous actors — specifically indigenous women — in this saga. Because they are few and far between, this is a fragmented story told mostly in snapshots; snapshots which nonetheless provide us with a window into a saga that would otherwise remain forever muffled. The voices and appearances of the Indian men and women that can be perceived in these snapshots have of course been mediated and filtered by several textual lenses. Some have been negotiated or screened by Spanish cronistas writing official histories intended to sing the praises of the Spanish empire; others have been handpicked by Spanish officials drafting bureaucratic reports, almost always with some kind of political agenda in mind; still others have been relayed by Spanish notaries public with little or no interest in the indigenous witnesses who were testifying before them.

In the latter case, these officials were usually writing down the answers given by the Indians to questions asked by another Spanish bureaucrat known as a *visitador*⁷ who was required to proceed according to an institutionalized and carefully preestablished questionnaire. To make matters worse, these clerks were also almost always the fourth and last instance in an intricate process of translation which usually involved two interpreters aside from the original speaker or witness. These interpreters, who were most often but not always Indians, were commonly known as a *lengua* or *sobrelengua*, and as we shall see, they were translating most of the time from one of the many languages spoken in the land⁸ to either Quechua⁹ or Chibcha,¹⁰ and from these languages into Spanish. This is why I have resisted translating the Spanish renditions into English: I do not wish to add yet another level of transliteration that would further distance us from the original speakers' intended statements. But perhaps nowhere is the difficulty that we encounter in accessing sixteenth-century indigenous voices in the region better expressed than in Colombian historian Hermes Tovar Pinzón's introduction to his book *Relaciones y Visitas a los Andes* when he writes "*Las lenguas hablaron y dijeron que decían...*"¹¹ This statement encapsulates pretty much what it is that we can hope to find in many of the fragments examined here: an approximation of an approximation of a carefully monitored answer. Yet, it is all that we have.

Often, as in Chapter III, where both the Indians and the *visitador* Francisco Hernández ignore the fear exhibited by a group of Indian women, it is the silences and what is left unsaid or unreported that is most eloquent. In these cases, I have probed this silence by playing it against the trove of historical and scholarly information available to me. Sometimes this information has echoed back a resounding lead; other times, as in Chapter VI, where the documents examined indicate that more than a third of all married women in the Timaná area were on average fifteen

years older than their husbands, I have found no such echo or clue — only a loud question mark. In all other cases, I have played the different fragments against each other and against the research at my disposal, looking for overlaps, synchronicities, conjunctions, or contradictions, discrepancies, and inconsistencies. At times, I have felt like a detective cross-examining, contrasting, and superimposing evidence, trying to piece together, as in Chapter V, the seemingly incoherent cacophony of spiteful and terror-stricken depositions made by the twenty-four witnesses summoned in a witchcraft trial. Other times, as in Chapter II, I have had no other recourse but to appeal to the anachronisms of ethnological analogy, but of this I shall speak more below.

The majority of fragments and snapshots analyzed in this work have been retrieved from a group of twenty-two unpublished archival documents. Except for one, “Carta de Pascual de Andagoya a su Majestad donde menciona los señores de Perama y Yalcón [1540]”, which belongs to the Archivo General de Indias (AGI) in Seville, all the others can be found in the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) in Bogotá. Of these, three documents, “Autos y probe: Yndios de Tunja, por el señor licenciado Cepeda, en raçon de los santuarios [1569];” “Elena India residente en Esta Ibague El Amparo de su libertad [1590-1612];” and “Indios Anaconas de la Jurisdicción de Neiva: Su Solicitud de Cambio de Residencia [1696]” deal with the role of Belalcázar’s *yanacona* allies in the conquest and colonization of the Alto Magdalena region — a role rarely acknowledged. I have relied on the civil dispute contained in “Encomendero Pedro de Molina, vecino de Timaná, en pleito con Alvaro Botello por la encomienda de los indios de Caluana [1550-1564]” in dealing with the legendary cacica La Gaitana as the case contains significant references to a *principal* or indigenous dignitary believed to be the same woman. “La Plata: Pago de Jornales a Indios [1601]” allows me to examine some of the effects on the

indigenous population of the war of resistance that was raging at the time throughout much of the Alto Magdalena region. “De officis de la Real Justicia contra Don Martín Indio del pueblo de Cayma y otros Indios E indias por herbolarios [1601]” covers the Spanish persecution of *mohanes* (shamans) in the northern Alto Magdalena region. “Carta del fuerte de San Joan del Chaparral [1608]” and “Venta de piezas [1610]” deal with the sale of Pixao slaves in the extermination campaign that the Spaniards launched against the Pixaos in 1605.¹² Finally, the group of thirteen visitas that Captain Diego de Ospina carried out between the last days of 1628 and the first two weeks of 1629 cover the last span of time examined in this work (1612-1629) when things began to take a decidedly different turn from the previous seventy years.

I have also relied heavily on Hermes Tovar’s transcription of the 1559 “Visita a la Provincia de Mariquita”¹³ in dealing with the transformations the Panche Indians were experiencing by this time in the northern part of the Alto Magdalena region. As for the wars of the Pixaos, I have used a set of wonderful field reports recovered by historian Enrique Ortega Ricaurte.¹⁴ In addition, I have relied on several other Spanish official documents published in different sources as well as on excerpts from diverse cronistas, in particular, Juan de Castellanos¹⁵ and fray Pedro Simón.¹⁶ Regarding the legend of La Gaitana, I have been fortunate to have access to Victor Bonilla’s 1972 taped interview with Nasa¹⁷ oral historian don Julio Niquinás.

I have chosen to concentrate on the Alto Magdalena region in Colombia for three reasons. The first is that this region is the birthplace of the legend of La Gaitana — a story I heard and later read about many times growing up. This story inflamed not only my imagination as a child, but that of countless generations of Colombians. It continues to do so today. The Alto Magdalena is also a territory where historians Ramón Gómez Cubides¹⁸ and Bernardo Tovar

Zambrano¹⁹ have suggested there were female chieftainships at the time of the arrival of the Spanish. In addition, this was a region where the Spanish met at the hands of the Pixao Indians some of the toughest indigenous resistance they would encounter in New Granada. The feats of the brave and fierce Pixao warriors have also been sung for generations in Colombia.

In exploring the sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region, I focus on four indigenous ethnic groups: the yanacunas of the Inca empire who helped to conquer and colonize large parts of this area; the Yalcón Indians, also known as Timanaes or Otongos, who inhabited the southern part of the Alto Magdalena region; the Pixaos who inhabited the central part of this territory; and the Panche Indians who lived in the north.

But this story does not begin in the Alto Magdalena region. It starts in Quito, the town from where Sebastián de Belalcázar launched his expedition into present-day Colombia in 1535. Belalcázar set out from Quito with an army of six-thousand yanacuna Indians, approximately one third of whom were women. Their journey and role in the conquest and colonization of what is today the Alto Magdalena region in Colombia is the subject of chapter one.

In chapter two, I have endeavored to reconstruct a vision of the pre-Hispanic Alto Magdalena indigenous world. I have done so in an attempt to better understand what really happened between Spaniards, their yanacuna allies, and the local populations they encountered. Such an understanding, however, cannot be attained unless we resort — for lack of better evidence — to ethnographic analogy as an aid in the interpretation of the rare historical and archeological sources available to us. Although ethnographic analogy has its own set of problems and assumptions — not the least of which are compressing time, denying change and potentially conflating cultures — it is the only method that can bring us remotely close to the social and cultural landscape of pre-conquest south-central Colombia. Only ethnographic analogy can help

turn the otherwise meaningless, trite, and Eurocentric remarks that abound in chronicles and Spanish colonial official documents into a vision of culturally meaningful behavior.

In an effort to achieve this, I have chosen to use a widely diverse set of five ethnographic studies: the anonymous seventeenth-century ethnography of the Iroquois edited by Jose Antonio Brandao, *Nation Iroquoise: A Seventeenth-Century Ethnography of the Iroquois*;²⁰ anthropologist Michael Harner's 1972 ethnography of the Shuar of Ecuador, *The Jívaro: People of the Sacred Waterfall*;²¹ cultural anthropologist Anna Meigs' 1984 study of cannibalism in New Guinea, *Food, Sex, and Pollution: A New Guinea Religion*;²² and anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday's 1986 studies of cannibalism among the Hua and Gimi of New Guinea — "The Mysteries of the Body: Hua and Gimi Mortuary Cannibalism" — and the Bimin-Kuskusmin of Papua New Guinea — "The Androgynous First Being: Bimin-Kuskusmin Cannibalism."²³ While referring to ethnographies of the Iroquois of North America, the Shuar of Ecuador, and the Hua, Gimi, and Bimin-Kuskusmin of Papua New Guinea may seem to entail an analogic framework far removed from the subject of this study, they all provide relevant food for thought, and only in the case of the Shuar of Ecuador are close parallels drawn between their culture and the indigenous cultures of the pre-Hispanic Alto Magdalena region. There are several reasons for this.

First of all, the ethnographic material presented in Harner's 1972 book refers to the culture of those Shuar who between 1956 and 1957 were not yet in regular first-hand contact with Ecuadorians or other whites.²⁴ The Shuar, as the Jívaro call themselves, also inhabit a region — eastern Ecuador — relatively close to the geographical area which is the focus of this study: the sixteenth-century province of Popayán and, more specifically, the Alto Magdalena region.²⁵ In addition, they also put up a tremendous and prolonged fight against the Spaniards, much like the people who inhabited the Alto Magdalena region in the sixteenth century. In fact,

the Shuar are among the few groups of American Indians to ever have successfully revolted against Spain and to have thwarted subsequent attempts by the Spaniards to reconquer them.²⁶ Michael Harner also describes the Shuar as “an individualistic people intensely jealous of their freedom and unwilling to be subservient to authority, even among themselves”²⁷ — a characterization that matches sixteenth-century descriptions of Paeces, Yalcones, Guanacas, and Pixaos.²⁸ Furthermore, inter and intra-tribal feuding is listed by Harner as one of the outstanding traits of the Shuar. Sixteenth-century accounts of the Indians in the Alto Magdalena region depict cultures with a dominant warring ethos, in which feud-triggering elements, such as a warrior’s obligation to seek individual renown and honor, were at the very core of social dynamics. The Shuar also exhibit settlement patterns akin to those attributed to the sixteenth-century inhabitants of the Alto Magdalena region. This is a crucial element since, as we shall see, settlement patterns provide key clues to the social architecture of many of the cultures living in the sixteenth-century southern Magdalena River basin. Finally, the indigenous inhabitants of the sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region very likely shared a common Amazonian origin with the Shuar. Anthropologists Reichel-Dolmatoff and Armand J. Labbé have both traced the cultures living in the sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region to Amazonian forest cultures.²⁹ They base their assertions on the fact that the shamanic iconography and statuary of the San Agustín region³⁰ along with the mythology of the surviving Pixao point to the tropical forest cultures of the Amazon as their source of inspiration. For these reasons, the Shuar provide an ideal comparative reference point from which to try to access the indigenous universe of Colombia’s sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region.

In all other cases, however, analogies when drawn are only intended to be approximations to a world that would otherwise remain forever closed to us. Specifically, I rely

on anthropologists Anna Meigs' and Peggy Reeves Sanday's ethnographies to shed light on sixteenth-century cannibalism in the Kingdom of New Granada. After reading extensively on the subject of cannibalism,³¹ I have chosen these two works because on the one hand they provide, in my opinion, the most intelligible explanations for the social and cultural rationales underlying the practice of cannibalism; and because on the other hand the cannibalistic practices they report bear the closest resemblance to the cases reported by sixteenth-century Spanish sources. Finally, I use Brandao's edition of *Nation Iroquoise* to point to theoretically possible political and religious roles for women in the pre-Hispanic Alto Magdalena region.

In chapter three, we move north into the northern part of the Alto Magdalena region of what was called by 1559 the Province of Mariquitá. Through one of the first-ever *visitas* to be carried out in New Granada, I examine how the life of the Panche Indians — in particular the life of Panche women — who inhabited this area was transformed by Spanish occupation. If anything, this early *visita* suggests that at a time when Panche resistance was organizing itself, it was, surprisingly enough, Panche women — not Panche men — who went missing from Spanish *encomiendas*.

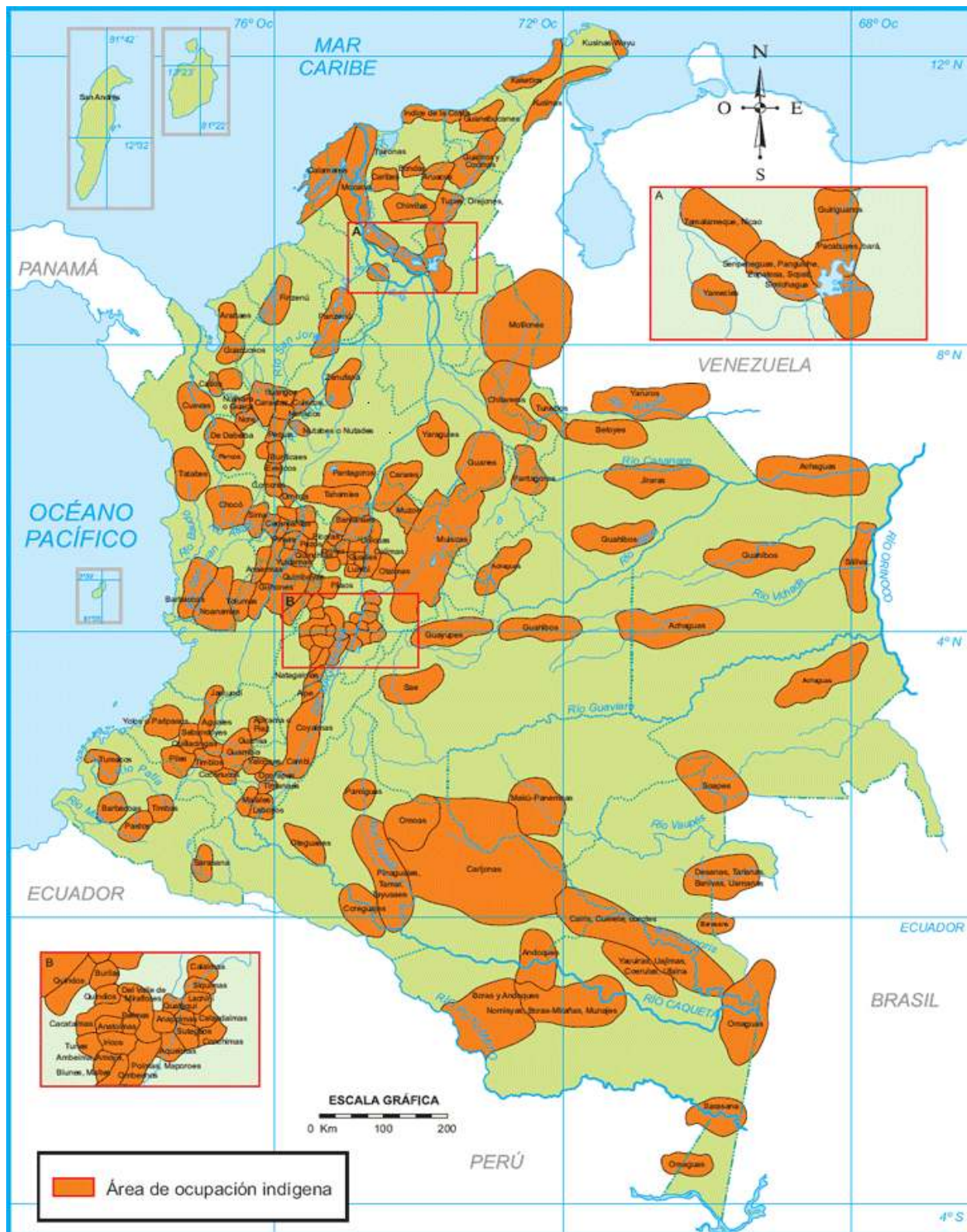
Chapter four looks at the indigenous resistance which began to take shape shortly after the Spanish incursion. This resistance first took root among the Yalcones in the south, then spread north to the Pixaos, and from there to the Panches in the northernmost part of the region. At the same time, this chapter also examines the role played in this war by the Spaniards' indigenous allies or "*yndios amigos*" — the *yanaconas*, as well as a subgroup of the Pixaos, known as the Coyaimas and Natagaimas. These groups sided with the Spaniards against indigenous rebel groups in what appears to have been an extremely brutal, and in the end, deleterious war for Indians on both sides of the conflict. This is also the chapter in which African

slaves make their first appearance in the region enlisted as they were in the Spanish militias fighting the indigenous rebels. As we shall see, from this point on, their appearances become more frequent, as they emerge in the next two chapters, either working side by side with the Indians, or as rival curanderos vying for power and prestige with indigenous moanes, or even as marauders preying on the Indians' plots of land or *chagras*.

In chapter five, I explore the Spaniards' persecution of Panche mohanes or shamans, and more specifically, that of *moaneras* or women shamans. The document which provides the source material for much of this chapter — the “Officis de la Real Justicia contra Don Martín Indio del pueblo de Cayma y otros Indios E indias por herbolarios [1601]” — presents the persecution of mohanes and moaneras as a case of Spanish religious prosecution of indigenous idolatry. However, my research into the social and political role of mohanes and moaneras, and more specifically, their role in the resistance movements that sprung up throughout the region in the sixteenth century, suggests that indigenous shamans were persecuted by Spanish authorities first and foremost because of their political role within indigenous communities.

Finally, in chapter six, we return to the southern part of the Alto Magdalena region. It is there that we find one-hundred-year-old Ysavel Agad. Through Captain Diego de Ospina's 1629 visita I examine how much life had changed for the region's original inhabitants since the arrival of the Spaniards, and how things were beginning to take a very different turn, one that foretold many of the changes that indigenous people would experience in this part of the Andes during the rest of the seventeenth century. Although we will never know what Ysavel Agad might have told Captain Ospina had he cared to ask her, we can surmise that she would have almost certainly provided him (and us) with a different narrative: one in which Belalcázar and his three-hundred Spanish men might have been just that — a puny group of Spanish soldiers surrounded by a sea

of foreign allied yanacona invaders. As an elderly woman (and to be sure, one of the last, if not the last, of her generation) looking back, it is quite possible that she might have felt inclined to dwell on how her own life (and by extension the lives of local women) had been altered by the invaders. To this end, she would have almost certainly recounted what life for women was like before the Spanish-yanacona invasion. Likewise, she might have lingered over what she perceived to be the key elements behind the changes women like her had experienced in her lifetime. To be sure she would have mentioned the Spanish and their yanacona allies as a crucial factor; but she might have been equally keen to acknowledge how later on in the struggle between invaders and locals, the kidnappings of young Indian women by Indian resistance fighters, for example, or the war of attrition that ensued between those Indians who sided with the Spanish and those who were against them, had altered the lives of women forever. In this sense, she would have almost certainly touched upon the role women played in the fight against the invaders, in which case she would have almost certainly referred to the role of moaneras and how the Spaniards had persecuted them. Perhaps she might have even volunteered the names and stories of a few famous ones. In short, it is not unthinkable to speculate that had she been asked to tell the story of how much life had changed for her and her people since the Spanish-yanacona invasion, Ysavel Agad would have chosen to concentrate on those episodes and actors that were closest and most familiar to her — mainly Indian men and women as they responded to the challenges posed by this new wave of invaders. These are the stories I propose to tell here.



Indigenous settlements in Colombia at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi.



The two provinces of Huila and Tolima (once known as the Gran Tolima) make up the Alto Magdalena region.



This map belongs to the collection of maps entitled “Terra Firma et Novum Regnum Granatense et Popayan” (Dutch school of cartographers, Mercator/Hondius/Janssonius, Amsterdam) — an extensive collection of maps drafted between the 16th and 17th centuries. AGN (Bogotá), Sección: Mapas y Planos, mapoteca 4, Rel. X – 27 (1630).

Chapter 1

Yndios conquistadores: Yanacona servants, lovers, and allies

“[...] Juan de Ampudia, Teniente General de Belalcázar, fue destinado como precursor suyo para explorar esta conquista [la de la provincia de Popayán]. Llevó órdenes de no apartarse del callejón de las cordilleras, y de no empeñarse en acción peligrosa. Su comisión fue solo para reconocer los países y las naciones, hasta dar en la parte más proporcionada para fundar una colonia, y detenerse allí hasta que llegase Belalcázar a efectuarla. Él salió de Quito por enero de 1535, con 60 hombres, 30 caballos y 2000 indianos. Los mil de estos eran siempre destinados para ir siempre por delante, descubriendo caminos y buscando vituallas, con orden de parar donde hubiese dificultad y peligro. Los otros mil iban en servicio y compañía de los españoles con sus cargas [...] Con paso muy lento le siguió Belalcázar por septiembre del mismo año, llevando el respetable cuerpo de doscientos hombres, ochenta caballos y cuatro mil indianos escogidos. Dividió este cuerpo en cuatro partes: uno de sólo mil indianos que adelantaban como batidores, recogiendo vituallas, y siguiendo siempre el rastro de Ampudia, que era inerrable por las cenizas, otra de la ala izquierda por el poniente de cincuenta hombres, con mil indianos, bajo el mando del capitán Pedro de Puelles; otra de la derecha al oriente, con otros cincuenta hombres y mil indianos, bajo el mando del capitán Alonso Sánchez; y la última del centro de cien hombres y mil indianos, en que iba el mismo Belalcázar para acudir a la diestra o a la siniestra según la necesidad lo requiriese [...]” Juan de Velasco, *Historia del Reino de Quito en la América Meridional*, 1789.³²

“[...] porque para ir a nuevo descubrimiento o poblazón no hay soldado, por sencillo que sea, que no lleve tres o cuatro indios e indias que le sirvan [...]” *Particularides del Nuevo Reino por los Oficiales Reales de Santafé de Bogotá*, 1572.³³

Writing in the eighteenth century — two-hundred years after the facts — the Jesuit priest, Juan de Velasco described the Spanish conquest of present-day southern Colombia as an enterprise in which Indians outnumbered Spaniards in a ratio of 20 to 1. Readers may of course take issue with this type of “evidence,” especially since a substantial part of this chapter is based on Velasco’s two-hundred-years-after-the-facts description. In truth, after reading all of Belalcázar’s correspondence³⁴ and the *probanzas de méritos*³⁵ and *juicios de residencia*³⁶ of several of his men, I must confess that I have not found anything that comes anywhere near to his version of events. On the contrary, there is hardly any reference to the yanaconas. Yet, an obscure official letter written on August 30, 1538, by the then Governor of Quito, Lieutenant Governor Gonzalo Díaz de Pineda, in which he complained before the city council that

Belalcázar had practically emptied the city of all its inhabitants — “[...] *porque el Capitán Benalcázar se averigua y prueba haber sacado más de cinco mil ánimas e acopio de vecinos, sin dejar en esta villa caballos ni recaudo necesario*”³⁷ — seems to support Velasco’s account. Unlike Belalcázar and his Spanish soldiers, Velasco was not looking to obtain encomiendas or royal titles from the Spanish Crown. Therefore he did not need to claim all the credits of this conquest for the Spanish troops alone. Although, I am inclined to believe that writing two-hundred years after the facts made a significant difference in the kind of information that Velasco allowed himself to include in his account. Perhaps he felt that giving some credit in 1789 to the yanacunas that had joined Belalcázar in his conquest of the territories north of Quito was no longer as threatening to Spanish interests as it might have been at an earlier point in history...

Velasco therefore described the Spanish conquest of present-day southern Colombia as an enterprise in which Indians outnumbered Spaniards in a ratio of 20 to 1. However, he went on to say that most of the Indians had perished in the sweltering heat of the Patía Valley³⁸ as they made their way down the Ecuadorian Andes and into the sultry lowlands that awaited them at the foot of the cordillera.

Nevertheless, the ubiquitous presence of yanacuna Indians in sixteenth-century colonial documents concerning the province of Popayán and the importance of the Yanacuna³⁹ community in modern-day indigenous Colombia, suggests that either a sufficient number of Indians from this expedition survived or that this group was part of a larger pattern of migrations of Quechua-speaking peoples into the territories north of Quito that would repeat itself again and again over the course of the sixteenth century. Evidence suggests that yanacunas played a major

role in the conquest and colonization of large parts of the southern and central regions of what was to become Colombia.

Although in this passage he does not use the word, the Indians Velasco was describing have been labeled as *yanaconas* since the sixteenth century. Within the Inca Empire, *yanaconas* constituted a hereditary caste of landless men and women whose chief role was to serve the Inca nobility. After the Spanish conquest of Peru, Spaniards extended the name to any Quechua-speaking Indian in their service. Thus the word quickly began to signify any and every Indian who belonged to the former Inca empire and who assisted them in one way or another, regardless of the capacity in which he or she did so. As we shall see, under Spanish rule, the roles so-called *yanaconas* took on varied greatly: from allied soldiers to lovers, translators, cooks, informants and personal attendants.

In his description, Velasco also forgot to make light of another not-so-trivial detail: the fact that out of the six thousand *indianos* who accompanied Belalcázar and his men in their first expedition into present-day Colombian territory, between fifteen hundred and two thousand of them were most likely women — a formidable number of women for any expedition, but even more so for a military campaign. Striking as it may seem, the presence of such a large number of women is supported by several sixteenth-century accounts that, like the above 1572 official report, describe how even the lowliest of Spanish soldiers always had with him anywhere from three to four Indian attendants, of which one or two were almost always women.⁴⁰ If each and every one of Belalcázar's Spanish soldiers had at least one Indian woman with him, this would put the number of women for starters at three hundred. But in addition, we have other evidence. American archeologist Terence D'Altroy claims that the presence of large contingents of women was a common enough phenomenon in Inca armies: "[...] army units would march in the

company of an important number of women, mostly relatives of the soldiers. Women would take care of cooking, and after battles would attend the wounded and help bury the dead.”⁴¹ Ann Wightman, in her study of sixteenth-century migration in the Andes, contends that the Spaniards were adept at adopting “those features of Inca society which they could adopt to their own purposes.”⁴² It thus follows that among the six-thousand *indianos* that Belalcázar had incorporated into his ranks, some fifteen hundred or two thousand women (between a quarter and a third of all the Indians) were most likely the female relatives of his Indian troops. Although we may find this number of women surprising, especially for this type of military expedition, it makes perfect sense when we consider the amount of work that feeding and caring for such a large number of men required.

Advancing almost in a cross-like formation, Belalcázar’s expedition must have been quite an impressive sight for any of the local Indian scouts who were posted along the way, keeping a close and nervous eye on the Spaniards as they made their way through the land. The scouts would first have spotted the one-thousand strong column of *indianos* that spear-headed the expedition — an unfamiliar sight for some perhaps, but not completely unheard of. Two likely scenarios come to mind. In the first one, the column is heavily made up of former enemies of the Incas, now allied to the Spaniards. In the second one, the column is mainly made up of former soldiers of the Inca army, now turned mercenaries in this new European campaign. Either way, the column would most likely have marched in much the same order it would have observed under Inca rule: a hundred *Chunka-Kamayuks*, each in charge of a squad of ten men, twenty *Piccka Chunka Kamayuks* at the head of five squads each, and ten *Pachac Kamayuks*, each in command of a company made up of one-hundred men. The entire battalion might even have been under the command of a *Huaranka Kamayuk*.⁴³

Velasco only mentions the names of the Spanish commanders who headed the left and right wings, where there were fifty Spanish soldiers in each wing. He tells us that Belalcázar himself commanded the center section where the rest of the one hundred or so Spanish soldiers were. But he mysteriously forgets to mention the name of the officer who headed the frontal phalanx. Perhaps because it was an all-indigenous force, perhaps because the name of the Huaranka Kamayuk — who in all likelihood commanded it — slipped his mind or did not seem important enough to go down into the annals of Spanish history. In any case, true to Inca military strategy, the Huaranka Kamayuk leading this all-indigenous vanguard would have posted his slingers, *boleadores*⁴⁴ and archers at the forefront, followed by men bearing *macanas*, *chambis*, and *cunka chukunas*⁴⁵ for hand-to-hand combat. Lancers would have marched last in the rear end. The hired *aucarunas* (soldiers in the former Inca army) followed in the wake of the trail of smoke and death that Juan de Ampudia — “el Atila del Cauca”⁴⁶ — and his men had left behind. They were meant to fend off any remaining resistance. In this new European army, they had become cannon fodder.

Next, the scouts would have spotted the main body of the expedition, with its wings spreading out to the east and the west, each one advancing much like the front column. Except that in each wing, the orderly formation of slingers, archers, macaneros, and lancers flanked a small group of the odd bearded men they had heard of. Some of these men sat atop the strange beasts the refugees had described. The largest group of these men marched in the center. The scouts would have spotted the porters and other attendants mentioned by Velasco walking for the most part behind this group. They would have been mainly women. The man-eating dogs several of the crazed survivors raved wildly about walked alongside the strange men at the center and in each wing. Were it not for these men and their outlandish animals, the scouts might have

mistaken this army for the one that they had long heard of, which had conquered half the Pastos only a lifetime before.⁴⁷

There is little documentary or physical evidence for this particular reconstruction. But recent archeological findings like those at the site of the battle of Cotaguacho suggest that indigenous armies played a bigger role fighting alongside the Spaniards than Spanish chroniclers were willing to admit. Excavations at Puruchuco, outside Lima, for example, have revealed that in the Cuzco rebellion led by Manco Inca II against the Spaniards, it was a woman, the second wife of Huayna Capac, Coya Hatun Jauja, and her army (on the side of the Spaniards), which proved decisive in the final Spanish victory over Manco Inca Yupanqui.⁴⁸ Studies like those of Chilean scholar, Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, on the participation of Inca armies in the Spanish campaign against the Mapuches, also reveal the prominent role played by *aucarunas* in the Spanish conquest of Chile.⁴⁹ We also know that thousands of Indians who had been subjugated by the Incas before the arrival of the Spanish seized the opportunity to fight alongside the Europeans against their former conquerors. Common sense also suggests that Spanish chroniclers often tended to subsume entire armies of Quechua-speaking allies under the guise of servants or *yanaconas*. To begin, the number of *indianos* described here by Velasco is four times greater than the average number of Indian attendants described by the royal officers of the Audiencia de Santafé for any single Spanish soldier. This number alone raises the question: why would a band of three hundred men require four-thousand porters and personal attendants? Such a disproportionate number of unarmed men could only be a hindrance. And if all four thousand of them were unarmed porters and servants carrying food and other valuables supplies, why would any experienced military commander in his right mind place them at the forefront of his troops? Furthermore, Velasco writes that the *indianos* at the helm of Belalcázar's expedition

were “*batidores recogiendo vituallas*”, but the word *batidor* in Spanish was originally a military term designating scouts gathering military intelligence, not men gathering provisions. Almost certainly many of the *indianos* described by Velasco were employed as scouts. But a thousand scouts? The idea seems preposterous, not to mention self-defeating. Therefore it is only reasonable to think that in his description of Belalcázar’s incursion into modern-day Colombia, Velasco subsumed thousands of aucaunas under the guise of yanacunas. Belalcázar and his men must have known that the Incas had attempted to penetrate the region forty years before. And no doubt they sought to capitalize on the Incas’ prior knowledge of the terrain and the people by integrating former Inca troops into their own ranks.

But Velasco’s description did not just ignore aucaunas. It also excluded Quechua-speaking women who were an important part of this expedition. Fortunately, Juan de Castellanos and Fray Pedro Simón did remember to mention them in their own accounts of Belalcázar’s journey north of Quito:

Pusieron muy en orden sus personas
 Muchos indios e indias de servicio
 Que por acá llamamos *yanacunas*
 Y en busca de región más eminente
 Caminaron la vía del oriente⁵⁰

[...] trescientos hombres, los ciento de a caballo, con gran carruaje de *yanacunas* y otros indios e indias sirvientes, en prevención de cuatro años de sedas, lienzos, paños y otras cosas de Castilla, y caballos en que se cargasen, comenzó su jornada a la parte del oriente, por donde les decía el indio Bogotá estaba su tierra.⁵¹

A conservative reading of the average number of female Indian attendants suggested by the royal officers of the Audiencia de Santafé for every Spanish soldier and those implied by Terence D’Altroy’s description of Inca armies puts the number of women in this expedition alone (that is, excluding Ampudia’s reconnaissance party) anywhere between a thousand to

fifteen hundred women.⁵² Significant female presence in military enterprises may seem surprising from a Western point of view, but as D'Altroy shows, it was sanctioned by Inca culture. It should be remembered that Mama Guaco, one of the four Coyas in the foundational myth of the Inca dynasty, was portrayed as a warrior-queen, who actively participated, along with her seven siblings, in the foundation and expansion of Tawantinsuyu.⁵³ Together with her brother, Manco Capac, she commanded the Inca armies that consolidated the empire. The Spanish chronicler, Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, even depicted her bearing a *boleadora* in the campaign against the Guallas.⁵⁴ And this kind of female behavior was not limited to the mythical realm. Elite Inca women, like Coya Hatun Jauja, who aided the Spanish in their fight against Manco Inca II, incarnated the warrior-Coya ideal personified by Mama Guaco, by actively playing the political chessboard and commanding entire armies to back their political pretensions. Along with Hatun Jauja, María Rostworowski cites another famous *curaca*, Chanan Curi Coca, who governed the ayllus of Chocos-Cachona and whose armies helped the Incas break the siege the Chancas were laying to Cuzco.⁵⁵ Rostworowski argues that long before the Spaniards set foot in Peru, European diseases had already ravaged the Inca army. She goes on to claim that this loss of manpower would certainly have translated into a greater participation of women in war, especially in terms of logistical support.⁵⁶

On the other hand, anthropologist Sonia Alconini has suggested that in the early stages of the Inca Empire, parallel descent may have been responsible for Inca coyas' personal investment in war and the subsequent development of a parallel political structure. Alconini contends that since coyas' and female curacas' only means of increasing their wealth and status was through their mothers or through their own personal effort, they may have viewed war and military adventures as a legitimate means of acquiring new subjects (and thereby tribute) or of sealing

advantageous political alliances.⁵⁷ It is therefore possible that Inca culture, Inca social structures, and European diseases may have come together to encourage both elite and plebeian women to actively participate — often on a large scale (at least for common women) — in military enterprises; in which case it is not unlikely that after the Spanish conquest this tendency may have carried over into the troops that fought alongside the Spaniards. This of course would help explain the considerable presence of women in Belalcázar's expedition into present-day Colombia.

Traditional explanations for the large numbers of Indians auxiliaries or so-called *yanaconas* — whether men or women — in Spanish expeditions long favored the idea of bondage and enforced servitude as the single most plausible root-cause behind the countless contingents of men and women who followed the Spaniards throughout the continent. Chilean scholar, Rolando Mellafe's 1970 seminal article, "The Importance of Migration in the Viceroyalty of Peru,"⁵⁸ as well as more recent interpretations (Sánchez-Albornoz 1974; Wightman 1990; Powers 1995), however, have tended to view this phenomenon as part of a more complex migratory dynamic that was initiated in the late Inca period and exacerbated by the arrival of the Spaniards. An examination of the indigenous participation in Belalcázar's exploration and conquest of the territories north of Quito through a similar framework opens up a richer, more complex, and perhaps more accurate historical universe. The analysis of how the large presence of Indians in Belalcázar's expedition could have been in keeping with earlier Inca practices in the Chinchasuyu⁵⁹ region might help to shed light on some of the motives that the Indian men and women who were a part of this campaign might have had for making such an arduous journey other than the sometimes hard to believe (especially in light of the ratio of Indians and Spaniards) accounts of bondage and servitude. This is not to say that there were not many

instances in which Indians were forced into such expeditions and migrations. But it is hard to see how a group of barely three-hundred Spanish soldiers could have compelled four-thousand women and men to make such a journey through the use of sheer force alone. As discussed earlier, Ann Wightman in her study of sixteenth-century migration in the Andes contends that the Spaniards were adept at adopting “those features of Inca society which they could adopt to their own purposes.” Surely Belalcázar and his men had informed themselves thoroughly before setting off on this new venture. The *adelantado* must have been aware that only forty years before, in 1495, the Inca, Huayna Capac, and his troops had finally succeeded in opening up modern-day Ecuador’s northernmost province of El Carchi to Inca settlement and colonization by using *yanacunas* and *mitmakunas*.⁶⁰ As the seasoned soldier that he was, Belalcázar must have sought to implement a similar strategy, enticing thousands of indigenous allies to join him on his journey north of Quito.

The Incas had indeed preceded Belalcázar’s foray into modern-day Colombia by approximately eighty years. In 1455, Tupac Yupanqui, the reigning Inca at the time, had undertaken a military campaign to expand the northern province of the empire or Chinchasuyu. Forty years later, in 1495, as the Spaniards were revelling in the Caribbean, his son, Huayna Capac, was himself putting the finishing touches to his conquest of Ecuador’s highlands. After the decisive battle at the fort of Tontaqui, in which “*el Señor de señores*” of the Quitus, Cacha Duchicela, was killed, Huayna Capac married his eldest daughter and successor, Paccha Duchicela,⁶¹ securing through this marriage, the region made up by today’s Pichincha, Imbabura, and El Carchi provinces. The northernmost province of El Carchi, along with Colombia’s present-day province of Nariño, formed a single cultural area inhabited by the Pastos. The Incas were able to conquer the southern Pastos who inhabited the province of El Carchi, thereby

dividing the Pastos into two groups along the Carchi or Angasmayo River. This territory became a new frontier zone. Although the Inca had managed to conquer the southern Pastos, the northern Pastos, who inhabited today's Colombian province of Nariño, were able to retain their autonomy. According to Colombian historian Luis Fernando Calero, in spite of the fact that they had been divided by the Incas, the Pastos on either side of the Carchi River insisted on carrying on with their commercial, social, and cultural exchanges.⁶² This may have even been encouraged by the Incas who built a fortress and a bridge (still standing today) over the Carchi River.⁶³ At the same time, Calero claims that this was not a meeting place just for Incas and Pastos, but for other Indians as well: Muisca from Colombia's heartland, Tumacos from the west, and Amazonian groups from the east — making the region an area of heavy trade and a truly multicultural frontier.⁶⁴

We know very little about who the Indians that accompanied the Spanish north into present-day Colombia were, or why they did so. One thing is clear, though: there were many of them. So many that, as discussed earlier, on August 30, 1538, the Governor of Quito, Lieutenant Governor Gonzalo Díaz de Pineda, accused Belalcázar before the city council of having emptied the town, taking with him all the horses and “[...] *más de cinco mil ánimas e acopio de vecinos [...]*” Fray Pedro Simón described an intriguing scene in his account of Belalcázar's war against the Paeces in 1544, in what is today the Colombian province of Cauca, which may well point to the identity of some of the anonymous *ánimas* that Belalcázar took north with him :

Pero sobrevino luego un inconveniente, de que los peones pretendían tomar la vuelta de Popayán y hacer para allá su jornada y los jinetes para este Nuevo Reino. Los indios de servicio *yanaconas*, que servían a los de a caballo, clara y llanamente mostraron sus voluntades diciendo querían seguir a los peones. Y era, porque como habían bajado del Perú y eran *orejones*, los más querían volverse allá.⁶⁵

This passage suggests not only a large presence of Indian allies in Belalcázar's army, but moreover that Spanish chroniclers like Simón made no distinctions between the Inca servant class of the *yanaconas* properly speaking and the Inca noblemen or *orejones* in their midst. Castellanos also described *orejones* taking part alongside the Spaniards in the defense of the town of Timaná when it was attacked by the Yalcones:

Hicieron en los fuertes sus garitas
 Con pretiles, amparos y coronas,
 Do con dardos y piedras infinitas
 Entraron muchos indios *yanaconas*,
 Para que desde allí cuando las gritas
 Oyesen, señalasen sus personas,
 Por ser algunos dellos *orejones*
 Cursados en belígeras cuestiones.⁶⁶

On the whole these excerpts indicate that the *yanaconas* were not exactly fettered; moreover, they suggest that the *yanaconas* may have quite possibly perceived themselves as taking part in a joint venture rather than a forced march. Finally, it suggests that there were quite a few soldiers of fortune among these so-called *yanaconas* and that many of them were noblemen or *orejones*. If we concede that not all five thousand of those who left Quito in 1538 did so at the point of a harquebus, then we should be able to look into other possible reasons that could have led them to join the Spanish.

The area north of Quito, as we have seen, was very much a frontier territory and a crossroad for many different cultures. Fray Pedro Simón's account that Belalcázar learned of the Muisca⁶⁷ lords who bathed in gold dust from a Muisca Indian by the name of Muequetá⁶⁸ who happened to be in Quito suggests that Quito itself was visited by foreigners coming from as far as modern-day Bogotá:

[...] recién poblada la ciudad de San Francisco del Quito por el capitán Sebastián de Belalcázar el año de mil y quinientos y treinta y cuatro, siendo adelantado del Perú don Francisco Pizarro y su teniente general

el Belalcázar, este capitán, andando con cuidado inquiriendo por todos los caminos que podía, sin perder ocasión de todas las tierras y provincias de que pudiese tener noticias, entre los demás indios de que se andaba informando la tuvo de que había allí en la ciudad un forastero. Y preguntándole por su tierra, dijo: Que se llamaba Muequetá y su cacique, Bogotá'; que es, como hemos dicho, este Nuevo Reino de Granada que los españoles le llamaron Bogotá. Y preguntándole si en su tierra había de aquel metal que le , que era oro, respondió ser mucha la cantidad que había y de esmeraldas, que él nombraba en su lenguaje piedras verdes, y añadía que había una laguna en la tierra de su cacique, donde él entraba algunas veces al año en unas balsas bien hechas en medio de ellas, yendo en cueros pero todo el cuerpo lleno desde la cabeza hasta los pies y manos de una trementina muy pegajosa y sobre ella echado mucho oro en polvo fino. De suerte que, cuajando de oro, toda aquella trementina se hacía todo de una capa o segundo pellejo de oro que, dándole el sol por la mañana que era cuando se hacía este sacrificio y en un día claro, daba grandes resplandores. Y entrando así hasta el medio de la laguna, allí hacía sacrificios y ofrendas, arrojando al agua algunas piezas de oro y esmeraldas, con ciertas palabras que decía y haciéndose lavar con ciertas yerbas como jaboneras todo el cuerpo, caía todo el oro que traía a cuevas en el agua, con que se acababa el sacrificio y se salía de la laguna y vestía sus mantas.⁶⁹

This passage also suggests that people in and around Quito were familiar with the land and the people on the other side of the Carchi River, and that perhaps they viewed them as more than just foreigners from the north. Perhaps some of them had a father, or a grand-father — or maybe even a mother or grandmother — who had participated in Huayna Capac's campaign against the Pastos. Maybe some of them even had relatives at the border. Many Pastos had been forcibly resettled as far south as Lake Titicaca,⁷⁰ and we can surmise that an equal number of loyal subjects to the Inca or mitmakunas had been transplanted and settled along the border some forty years before as this was the standard colonizing procedure of the Incas. Although more research needs to be done to determine precisely the kind of connections and relationships that people on both sides of the Carchi River sustained before the arrival of the Spanish, we can easily guess that they were connected by a varied and intricate web of ties and affiliations. At the same time it is safe to say that the entire region was most likely inhabited by a large number of people who were essentially migrants, men and women whose parents or grand-parents had relocated to the area only a few decades earlier. Thus the idea of picking up their belongings and heading even farther up north with the Spaniards would not have seemed too strange an idea. It is also possible that in this region the Spanish may initially have been perceived as liberators. After

all, the Incas had conquered the Duchicela kingdom only forty years before. Almost certainly resentment against Inca rule still hung heavily in the air. Perhaps there were even some old accounts to be settled. And what better way to settle them than to align oneself with the victors over one's former tyrants? At the end of the day, joining these powerful men in their quest for the Muisca lords who bathed in gold farther up north might have seemed like the better bargain — better than staying behind to work in the mining *mita* and *encomienda* regime that the Spanish were threatening to establish.⁷¹ Besides, even Indians could expect to get their hands on some kind of booty. There were other Indians to be captured and enslaved and also other Indians' lands to be seized. The Spanish were offering special compensation and other privileges to those who were willing to join them. There were even rumors that those who were willing to sign up would be exempted from *demoras* and *mita* duty for as long as they served.⁷²

Pedro Cieza de León, who traveled extensively throughout the area between 1536 and 1548, depicted a land in turmoil even before the arrival of the Spanish: “*En el Perú no hablan otra cosa los indios, sino decir que los unos vinieron de una parte y los otros de otra, y con guerras y contiendas los unos se hacían señores de las tierras de los otros.*”⁷³ Now there was a new wave of invaders threatening to throw the area into total mayhem all over again. Although historian Karen Vieira Powers accurately points out that the perplexing overlay of peoples and cultures that ensued as a result of the fifteenth and sixteenth-century aboriginal, Incaic, and Spanish conquests of the Ecuadorean sierra “has made it singularly difficult for scholars to define, let alone resolve, the demographic and ethnohistorical problems of the area,”⁷⁴ we can easily see that such a world did not harbor a great deal of cohesiveness — loyalties and allegiance must have been precarious to say the least. In such a scenario, Spanish and indigenous interests might have converged more often than is usually conceded. Although Indians were probably

faced with limited choices, the crisis created by the Spanish invasion no doubt afforded individuals new opportunities as well. Just as it probably provided some of those who forty years before had been forcibly removed by the Incas from *138s* (communities) farther south with the opportunity to return to their original homes, it likely afforded many formerly conquered Pastos the chance to reunite with their brothers on the other side of the Carchi River. All in all, however, what the Spanish invasion afforded thousands of yanacunas would have been the hope of bettering their lot.

In their meteoric conquest of South America, the Incas had indeed created the continent's first proletariat: a caste of mostly landless and dispossessed men and women who were forced to hire themselves out to the highest bidders. And the highest bidders now were the Spaniards. The possibility of accompanying the Spanish in their military ventures could have harbored for many dispossessed Indians the prospect of securing a patch of land — the much coveted *chagra*⁷⁵ — and of course, a minimum of status. Throughout history armies everywhere in the world have constituted instances of speedy social integration and promotion. The Spanish army would likely have been perceived as providing such an opportunity by thousands of yanacunas who had very little to lose. At the very least, they must have viewed this as a chance to distance themselves — physically as well as socially — from the Indians who were being left behind to work in the *encomiendas* and the mining *mitas*. As Ann Wightman points out, the Spanish would have been quick to capitalize on the frustrations and aspirations of an entire caste of people who already felt disenfranchised within the Tawantinsuyu. Ironically, the same group of people who by and large had made possible the expansion of the Inca Empire would now propel the expansion of the Spanish empire in the region.

As for yanacona women specifically, the idea put forward by anthropologist Sonia Alconini that parallel descent encouraged the participation of women in military campaigns among the Incas should not be overlooked. Although Alconini only considers elite Inca women, parallel descent played out throughout the entire pyramid of Inca society. Therefore we can safely consider that it may well have had a similar impact on plebeian women. Of course, in a culture that valued so highly the idea of complementarity in all aspects of life and which viewed the relationship between man and woman essentially as a complementary relationship, one can argue as Terence D'Altroy does, that most women would have followed their husbands to help them and tend to them. Yet the fact that Inca women did not inherit any wealth from any male relatives could have pushed some women to seek, as Alconini contends, other means of securing property and wealth that they would in turn be able to pass down through the female line to their own daughters. Military expeditions — whether Inca or Spanish — might just have provided the ideal avenue for such a purpose.

But let us go back to Velasco. In his description of Belalcázar's expeditionary force, he claims that the majority of the *indianos* in it did not make it past the Patía Valley. Historians Kathleen Romoli and Luis Fernando Calero subscribe to Velasco's account. Both argue that many of the Indians who accompanied Belalcázar died not only because of the oppressive heat in the Patía Valley but also because of the constant attacks of the Sindaguas.⁷⁶ Only archeological excavations will be able to determine the number of Indians who died in Belalcázar's first expedition into present-day Colombia. But the fact that the Yanacona community in Colombia is one of the most prominent and thriving indigenous communities in the country today, with some twenty-five thousand individuals, the majority of whom live in what is known as the Macizo Colombiano,⁷⁷ suggests that at least some of them survived and that they were most likely

followed by others in subsequent expeditions and migrations. Colombian indigenous historian, Ary Campo Chicangana, believes that at least seventeen-thousand yanaconas settled in Colombia over the course of the sixteenth century: *“Lo cierto es que más de 17.000 Yanakunas, de incógnitos rincones del Tawantinsuyu o ‘Imperio incaico’, fueron separados violentamente unos y por voluntad propia otros y trasladados como guerreros, agricultores, pastores y cargueros. Algunos murieron guerreando, otros se fueron quedando a lo largo de la ruta recorrida por los invasores españoles. Un número significativo se quedó en el Macizo Colombiano, otros en el valle de Pubén, alto valle del Magdalena y un buen número vivió en el Valle del Cauca.”*⁷⁸ In the following pages, we will examine a few of the brief appearances that some of these men and women consistently make in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spanish colonial documents, which attest to their colonization of what was to become Colombia.

Many of the yanaconas who perished in the Patía Valley probably died a horrible death at the hands of the Sindaguas. Advancing as cannon fodder in the frontlines, they would have been the first ones to sustain the onslaught of what Castellanos described as highly disciplined squadrons of frighteningly-painted, deafening cannibals, fighting with body-length shields, poisoned darts, long spears and hunting nets to trap escaping enemies and horses:

Y así todos entraron en Patía
 Para ver los secretos que tenía
 Asentaron real en los ejidos
 Para se defender acomodados,
 Y tres días después de ser venidos,
 Estando del asalto descuidados,
 Fueron de multitud acometidos
 No menos que por todos cuatro lados,
 Cada cual indio con pavés de danta
 Que cubre de los pies a la garganta.
 Los rostros con pinturas espantables,
 Muestra de la braveza de sus pechos,
 Caribes, carniceros, detestables;
 Lanzas y dardos eran los pertrechos
 Que defensivos hacen penetrables,

Por ser de palma, duros y bien hechos;
 Un ruido feroz, un ronco canto
 Que no dejaba de causar espanto.
 Escuadras a su modo bien compuestas,
 Regidas por caudillos principales;
 Sobre coronas de oro van enhiestas
 Plumas y colas de otros animales;
 Gran número de redes dejan puestas
 En los caminos y cañaverales,
 Con todos los avisos y recados
 Que suelen en las cazas de venados.
 Porque si de sus manos escapase
 O ya caballo, ya peón ligero
 Allí se detuviese y ocupase
 En los opuestos lazos del sendero,
 Y gente que los pasos resguardase
 Y en ellos prevenido carnicero,
 Que cuando cae la fugace caza
 Con mano liberal la despedaza.⁷⁹

One of those who did not make it was not exactly a yanacona, at least in the sense that he was not a former subject of the Inca. His name was Muequetá. It is not clear who Muequetá was or why he was in Quito at the time, but he may have been a *nipa* or merchant as Muisca were renowned tradesmen and he may well have been one of these.⁸⁰ Fray Pedro Simón, however, tells us that Juan de Ampudia enlisted him as a guide, but that he died of heartbreak without ever seeing his homeland again:

No se le cocía, como dicen, al Belalcázar el pan en el horno de los deseos que se le habían encendido en el de hacer jornada para esta tierra del Dorado o Bogotá, de que el indio había dado noticias y el nombre. Y así [...] despachó con buen avío la gente con que se hallaba de presente y con el capitán Juan de Ampudia para que fuese delante de él, que se quedaba a llevar más soldados a la villa de Pasto, que estaba recién poblada, y desde allí pasase a la provincia de Popayán, de que se tenía noticias de sus muchas riquezas, desde donde pasase a la tierra del Dorado, para donde le iba guiando el indio que había dado las noticias. Salió con estos propósitos del Quito el capitán Ampudia y llegando a Pasto, pasó a dar vista a la tierra de Popayán y de allí a la del Cali donde, advirtiendo se enfermaba la gente, determinó de hacer el camino a la mano izquierda, banda del norte, contra las voces que daba el indio de Bogotá diciendo que su tierra y Dorado estaba a la mano derecha. Pero no queriendo seguir por entonces lo que el indio decía, el cual murió de allí a pocos días por ventura de pena en ver no guiaban los soldados hacia su tierra, llegaron a la provincia donde después se pobló la ciudad de Cartago [...] ⁸¹

Castellanos, however, claims that the Muisca never made it as far as Cali, but that he died before they even reached Popayán.⁸²

Mas por entonces no se pretendía
 Dejar en Popayán pueblo fundado,
 Porque tenían ojo todavía

A los descubrimientos del Dorado:
 Habíaseles muerto ya la guía
 Que las noticias les había dado,
 Y la tal ocasión no fue bastante
 Para que no colasen adelante⁸³

If Muequetá died before reaching Popayán, he may very well have died in the Patía Valley, halfway between Pasto and Popayán, where so many of the others are said to have perished. Although the Muisca guide never made it past Cali, as the following example shows, others — perhaps from this same expedition, or the other expeditions that soon followed in their wake⁸⁴ — made it as far as Neiva and even into Tunja,⁸⁵ one of the two capitals of the Muisca kingdom and Muequetá's homeland.

Indeed, years later, on a Thursday morning, May 16, 1569, in the market place of Tunja, an “*yndio lengua anacona de quito cristiano e ladino*” addressed the assembled multitude. He was relaying the mayor's latest and rather long proclamation which had just been read to the vecinos and encomenderos in the central plaza by the town's official crier. Although the Spaniards had conquered the place thirty years before,⁸⁶ city officials were worried that the locals persisted in carrying on as if the Spanish had never set foot in the area. We cannot know whether or not his address was a verbatim report of the bill, but the yanacona lengua — a native speaker of Quechua — would have to have transmitted the mayor's decrees to the crowd in the local language — Chibcha — more or less along these lines:

En la ciudad de tunja deste nuebo reyno de granada de las indias doze días mes de mayo de myll y quinientos y sesenta y nueve años el ylustre señor licenciado Juan Lopez de cepeda oydor y alcalde [...] dixo que por quanto [h]a sydo y es ynformado que todavía los caciques principales e yndios desta provincia no obstante que se les [h]a predicado y predica el sagrado evangelio y doctrina de nuestra santa fe católica y religion cristiana tienen sus santuarios e ydolos y templos e hacen uso de otros rritos y areytos [areitos] diabólicos antiguos en ofensa de nuestro señor dios ofreciendo oro piedras y mantas e otras cosas al demonyo e queriéndolo rremediar y hebitar los dichos areytos y rritos mandava y mando que de aquí en adelante nynguno ny algunos zaques principales e yndios asy chontales como ladinos y cristianos conversos por años no tengan ny consyentan tener ny usar de los dichos santuarios ny ydolos ny de otros rrytos ny cirimonyas [ceremonias] que solyan usar ny bayles gentilicios y diabólicos y dentro de quynze días deste mes y año los tengan acabados de quitar so pena que abiendo pasado el dicho termino de los

dichos quynze días todos y qualesquiera españoles y otras personas les puedan tomar y tomen todo el oro mantas piedras e otras cosas que ellos tuvieren y les hallaren syn pena alguna [...] atento que es informado que a causa de la gran libertad que a los yndios de los rrepartimientos se les [h]a dado y da y de las granjerias de mercaderías y otras cosas que grangean y contratan están rricos de cuyo cabsa [causa] no obedecen a sus caciques y capitanes principales a quien son sujetos y están obligados a servir y rreconocer señorío y dominio natural ny a oyr la dotrina cristiana y sagrado evangelio que se les predica y doctrina oyen ny aprenden la oración ny biben en las publicas y buenas costumbres que se les dan y enseñan conforme a lo por su magestad mandado antes se mudan vagando de unos pueblos a otros en las dichas sus granjerías rritos y contrataciones syn rreconocer a sus caciques y señores que antes los solyan señoriar contra las nuevas leyes cedula y provisiones rreales por donde su merced manda que a los dichos caciques y principales se les guarde su dominio y señorío natural que tienen con los dichos yndios sujetos atento al que ellos lo den y son obligados a le dar [...]⁸⁷

The yanacona lengua described as being “*muy diestro en la lengua de los dichos naturales*” was in the service of an encomendero, Francisco de Carvajal. No doubt, in such a situation where neither Spanish nor traditional indigenous authorities were being obeyed, a trustworthy, acculturated Indian translator, a Christian able to relay to the locals everything that was bothering Spanish authorities and what they planned to do about it in case the Indians persisted in their ways, came in handy:

[...] atento todo lo qual y para subvenir y rremediar lo susodicho y los daños E ynconvenientes que dello podían rrecrecerse – dixo [el alcalde] que mandava e mando A todos los dichos yndios y principales y capitanes de todos los rrepartimientos de toda esta provincia de tunja a cada uno por lo que le toca y atañe de por sí que todos y cada uno por oy obedezca y acate sirva y rreconozca a su cacique y principal en todo lo que le mandare como a su señor y cacique natural y le obedezca y cumpla sus mandamientos como de tal su cacique y señor natural en lo que justamente fuere y biba [viva] y rreze [rece] oy justicia y no ayente [huya] y acuda e oyga la dotrina cristiana y palabra evangelica syn escusa alguna – so pena que el que lo contrario hiziere el dicho su cacique capitán y principal los pueda apremyar a ello y castigallos açotándolos [azotándolos] moderadamente en presencia de su encomendero o del rreligioso de la dotrina y cortalles el cabello o manta como el delyto fuere y si se fueren a otros rrepartimientos y partes fuera de sus [torn] poblaciones los puedan sacar y a los caciques [torn] de los tales rrepartimientos donde se uvieren [hubieren] absentes [ausentes] [torn] tuvieren los tales yndios mando so pena de [torn] buen oro para la cámara de su magestad [...] Otro sy manda a los dichos caciques capitanes y principales [torn] e yndios de todos los dichos rrepartimientos y en cada uno dellos que dentro de diez días primeros oy mesmo de cómo este auto fuere publicado como de la presencia en qualquier manera que estén y hagan quitar todos y qualesquier ydolos templos y santuarios y ofrecimientos mohanes y santeros que tengan – y no usen mas dellos ny los consientan tener en ninguna manera [...] Otro sy atento que los rreligiosos que los dotrinan en las cosas de nuestra santa fe católica tienen necesidad demás de la comida hordinaria de alguna leña e yerva [yerba] la que ny pueden ny ay donde la comprar ny donde la aver oy los dichos naturales y muchos otros que endotrinan no se la dan y traen entretanto que sobre ello se da la horden que mas convenga mando que los dichos yndios que endotrinan les traygan y den alguna leña e yerva de que tuvieren necesidad para su sostenimiento e cabalgaduras de lo que también mando dar a cada cacique y principal un mandamiento [...]⁸⁸

The document says the yanacona lengua described everything, carefully interpreting, so that it could be heard well because Diego de Robles, his majesty's secretary, "*tenya delante a Sebastian Ropero y Hernando Avendaño meztijos hijos de los que entienden su lengua destos yndios como nacidos en esta dicha ciudad siendo testigo de todo.*"⁸⁹ Hence the yanacona lengua or interpreter was not alone as he addressed the crowd. Standing right beside him were two mestizos, making sure his translation was a faithful and accurate one:

"[...] atento que es informado que muchos yndios ladinos y cristianos se [h]an ydo o absentado [ausentado] de sus amos y están y biben entre los yndios ynfieles syn oyr la dotrina cristiana ny bibir como tales cristianos que son antes andan vagando y en sus borracheras e rritos de unos pueblos a otros y haciendo daño a los de los otros rrepartimientos e otras causas de que dios nuestro señor y su magestad son deservidos y los dichos naturales rreciben daño para el rremedio delo qual dixo que mandava y mando a todos los dichos yndios ladinos y cristianos que dentro de diez días primeros oy mesmo de como este abto [auto] fuere pregonado salgan de los dichos rrepartimientos y no estén mas en ellos ny buelban a ellos para rresydir ny bibir en ellos so pena de veinte açotes [azotes] y se bengan a bibir y rresydir en esta dicha ciudad y acudan a gaspar arias alguacil y admynstrador dellos para que conforme a su comisión los asysta con amos que los dotrinen y den de comer y vestir y el salario conveniente según su servicio al qual el dicho gaspar arias mande que pasado el dicho termino pueda yr y vaya por todos los rrepartimyentos desta dicha ciudad donde supiere que ay [ahí] están los dichos yndios ladinos y cristianos y de los que andan vagando y syn amos que ellos los prendan y traygan a esta dicha ciudad y acate en ellos la dicha pena y conforme a la dicha comisión que por la dicha rreal ciudad le fuera dada los ponga y syente [siente] con amos de los que tengan mas necesidad y urgencia dellos [...]"⁹⁰

The mayor's decrees reveal not only a state of affairs that the Spaniards were far from having a good handle on, but also, and perhaps more importantly, a scenario in which even those *ladino* Indians, whom they had managed to convert and baptize over the course of the thirty years since they had conquered the region, were now running away from their masters, joining the *chontales* (unaccultured Indians) in their hide-outs and taking part in their ceremonies, rituals, and borracheras.⁹¹ This would explain why the town's officials felt it was necessary to place two mestizos — two men who were half Spanish, half Indian, whose mother tongue was Chibcha but whose loyalties apparently lay with their Spanish fathers — next to the yanacona lengua to make sure he conveyed everything in the way it was intended to be conveyed.

What it does not explain is why Diego Robles did not have Ropero or Avendaño directly translate the bill in the first place. After all, they were native speakers of Chibcha — "*hijos de los*

que entienden su lengua destes yndios como nacidos en esta dicha ciudad” — which obviously the yanacona lengua was not. Ropero and Avendaño would certainly have embodied more local authority than the lengua from Quito could ever have done. So what was it about this yanacona lengua that made him an ideal broker for the Spaniards? Did he exert any influence over the locals? We have no way of knowing this. But perhaps by choosing an indigenous translator Spanish officials were electing to take a more conciliatory approach to the state of general anarchy they faced. Perhaps they needed someone the locals could relate to, someone who might be able to overcome the locals’ distrust and animosity — in a nutshell, someone who could win over some hearts and minds. In such a situation, “*los indios amigos*” — as Spanish authorities liked to call Indians who cooperated with them — were not only useful, but sometimes even preferable to mestizos.

Overall, the world this edict allows us to see is a precarious world not unlike the one Belalcázar and his men had left behind in Quito thirty four years before. It is a world reeling under the pull of displacement and migration, one in which the incumbent authorities are shunned and the old ones are no longer heeded, a world fractured along multiple fissures. In such a world it is easy to make friends, but just as easy to lose them. Moreover, friends, if made, have to be carefully watched and surveyed. As Chilean historian, Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, points out, the instability of “*los indios amigos*” was a permanent concern for the Spanish who constantly worried that “*los indios amigos [...] concertasen con los enemigos.*”⁹² And it was not because the Spanish were particularly paranoid, but because “*los indios amigos*” so often did consort with the enemy.

On occasion, they even instigated the enemy. Colombian historian Juan Friede cites a 1562 report on the “excesses” committed by one Lieutenant Luis de Guevara against *los*

naturales in a punitive expedition organized to put an end to the second Quimbaya rebellion of 1557.⁹³ The process against Lieutenant Guevara took place in Popayán. The charges against him were brought by the then city bishop, Francisco González Granadino. Guevara was accused of being reckless — so reckless that even the yanaconas had turned against Spanish troops and sought out the local Indians in the region to ally themselves with them against the Spanish: “[...] *porque una india yanacona llegó a la población de Anserma*⁹⁴ *para ‘invocar e incitar a todos los caciques de esta provincia, con achaque y color de sal.’*”⁹⁵ The idea that they were expendable was not lost on the yanaconas. They were well aware of the wanton abuse they were the object of, and the fact that they were often used as bait in the fight against “*los indios de guerra*” (or enemy Indians) must have been a consideration that no doubt prompted them to team up with the enemy as suggested above.

Proof of just how entrenched this practice of using yanaconas as decoys and cannon fodder was among Spanish troops is found in a 1603 report from the war against the Pixaos.⁹⁶ In a letter addressed to the President of the Audiencia Real in Santafé, don Juan de Borja, don Francisco Pulgar, a member of the city of Ibagué’s cabildo⁹⁷ describes how a group of ten Spanish soldiers from Ibagué had disguised themselves as yanaconas and joined two hundred other friendly Indians with the hope of luring the Pixaos into a trap: “[...] *y aunque los vecinos con su pobreza se animan a defenderse y a hacer lo que pueden, como de presente han hecho, pues a su costa han salido agora [ahora] diez españoles arcabuceros en aviso de yanaconas con sus cabelleras disfrazados y ducientos indios amigos que van en su alcance de los dichos indios salteadores [...]*”⁹⁸

The stakes for yanaconas of such a close association with the Spaniards were thus quite high. As servants and allies to the Europeans they were often the favorite target of “*los indios de*

guerra.” The Spaniards knew it well and used it to their advantage, strategically placing them in the line of fire at every turn. Likewise, seeking the help of the locals, let alone striking alliances with them, would have been a risky business. The locals were often just as adept at capturing and enslaving them as the Spaniards — if and when they did not kill or cannibalize them in the first place.⁹⁹ Yet, the possibility of obtaining land grants from the Spaniards in exchange for their services constituted powerful motivation for more than two-hundred and eighty years of colonial rule. The following case exemplifies the complexities that the yanacona struggle for land often entailed under Spanish rule.

In 1696, don Tomás Quimbaya, the indigenous man who was governor of the yanacona Indians living in Neiva, took his case to court. Don Tomás petitioned the Real Audiencia in Santafé to allow the yanacona Indians under his charge to resettle less than a quarter of a league¹⁰⁰ outside the city of Neiva,¹⁰¹ in the village where the Duho Indians used to live before they all died off. He argued that the abuse of the Spanish governor, don Juan Marruto, had become intolerable, and that if his charges were to be prevented from running away, they would have be allowed to relocate in the old Duho village:

[Santafé, Mayo 10, 1696] El fiscal protector [de los naturales] por Thomas quimbaya Gobernador de los Yndios Anaconas de la ciudad de Neyba Dise le informan que en el corto tiempo que [h]a que llevo por Gobernador della Don Juan Marruto [blotted] [h]an experimentado [blotted] del que deviera mostrar y son como piezas tan miserables como dichos yndios siendo en tanto grado lo referido que no satisfecho de los castigos y maltratos que en sus cuerpos [h]a executado los molesta con extraordinario modo en la continua y perpetua servidumbre en que intenta tenerlos de suerte que los apremia y utiliza para que sirvan en los ministerios en que trata de ocuparlos y embarasarlos dándoles mucho menos de lo que deben merecer por su trabajo de que resulta el que además de los quebrantos y rigores que padecen perescan por no contribuirseles con grueça [gruesa] equivalente y nesesia para el sustento cotidiano y presiso y reconociendo el que no tienen ya fuerzas para resistir el yugo insolente del dicho Gobernador les a [ha] compelido su misma nesiedad por redimirse de las vejaciones intolerables que experimentan a acudir a esta corte como lo [h]asen a manifestarlas ante sus Señoría y que para que no se les continúen representan que el único medio para conseguirlo es la mudanza de dichos yndios para lo qual [cual] refieren que a un quarto [cuarto] de legua desta dicha ciudad de Neyba [h]ay un pueblo llamado los dujos que [h]a benido en suma disminucion adonde piden ser agregados y que para lo principal de resguardos tienen un mercado a [adonde] dicho pueblo de los dujos tierras propias para sus labranzas y en caso de nesesar de otras respecto de estar bacas [vacas] las de los dujos por la disminucion con que se hallan se les den donde se bieren menester y que el cura de dicho pueblo les administre los sacramentos y concurren en dicho sitio todos los requintos prebenidos por la ley para la manutencion de dichos yndios y concediéndose por Vuestra Señoría lo referido ofresen dicho Gobernador [Don Tomás Quimbaya] y demás yndios fundar en

dicho pueblo de los dujos sien [cien] almas y que es muy posible que avista de su fomento y del alibio que con el tiempo reconosieren se agreguen muchos mas en cuia [cuya] atención y respecto de redundar en conocido benefisio destas almas y de la causa publica y ser el remedio y reparo único para que no se ausenten y anden dispersos en perjuicio de la Real Hacienda por los tributos con que a ella contribuien [contribuyen] sea de servir Vuestra Señoría de permitirles la agregasion que llevan pedida [...]¹⁰²

According to don Tomás the final straw had been the order Marruto had given for a yanacona man by the name of Bernabé to be whipped after he had requested permission to tend his fields. The audiencia granted don Tomás' request and ordered the city of Neiva to carry out the *reducción*.¹⁰³ But the city fought back. In a court hearing held in Neiva, don Diego de Rojas y Vargas, the city's prosecutor, summoned several yanacona witnesses — Agustín Moreno, Julio Criollo, Marcelo Henriquez, Gaspar, and Joseps Bunbuca — all five of whom testified that, except for Bernabé's whipping, there had been no such abuses. Julio Criollo even added that the Indians had abandoned the town only after Bernabé's whipping:

en la ciudad de Neyba a dose de diciembre de mil y seiscientos y nobenta y seis años para la ynformacion el dicho procurador general presento por testigo a Julio Criollo Yndio *Yanacona* nasido y criado en esta dicha ciudad del qual [cual] su merced dicho alcalde por ante mi el dicho escrivano recibió juramento fecho [hecho] por Dios nuestro señor sobre una señal de la crus bien y cumplidamente y conforme a derecho prometió desir verdad y aviendolo dado a entender la fuerza del juramento por ser muy ladino y de mucha rason dixo que en quanto [cuanto] a que diga este declarante si los vecinos rexidores [rejidores] o alcaldes le [h]an [h]echeo agravio al susodicho gobernador thomas quinbaya su casa y familia y parentela y a los demás yndios *yanaconas* responde que asi este declarante como a los demás referidos no se les a echo bejasion [vejación] ni agravio ni la an resivido y que es siniestro y contra la verdad [torn] si hubiera susedido lo hubiera visto y savido este declarante como quien vive y asiste con dichos anaconas en esta dicha ciudad en sus resguardos donde tienen sus roserias [rocerías] labransas y ganados porque lo dicho no a susedido ni pasado ni mas de que el governador Don Juan Marruto hizo asotar a Bernave yndio anacona porque le pidió lisensia para yr a ver su rrosa [roza] y que por esta rason se retiraron de la ciudad y que es esta la verdad so cargo del juramento que fecho tiene y ratifico siéndole leído no supo desir su edad y por el aspecto parecía tener quarenta [cuarenta] años poco mas o menos [...]¹⁰⁴

However, Tomás Cacota Moreno, a witness who testified on behalf of don Tomás, declared that the Indians had dispersed long before the whipping of Bernabé *por no tener tierras en donde poblarse*. Still, the city's prosecutor argued that the city of Neiva could not forfeit in any possible way the yanaconas' services and that besides, don Juan Marruto was no longer

governor of Neiva, and that on top of that, since the Indians had lived in town for more than two years before the Bernabé incident, they had lost the right to remain in their *chagras*:

Don Diego de Rojas y Bargas En Nombre del el Cabildo Justicia y Regimiento de la Ciudad de Neiba digo que [...] dicha ciudad esta en posesion de la vecindad de dichos yndios de mas de sesenta años a esta parte y ser utilidad de la república por no tener otra gente, ni mita y assi esta a las obras publicas pagándoles su trabajo con mucha puntualidad como hasta aquí se ha hecho, a que se llega el que la utilidad representada de contrario en razón de cura y administración de sacramentos es mas la que gozan en dicha ciudad pues en ella asiste continuamente su cura sin ausencia alguna, con que por este lado antes vien fueran dichos yndios perjudicados en la reducion [reducción] mandada [a] hacer, además que por diferentes disposiciones reales esta mandado que si los yndios se hubieran ydo a bivar de su voluntad las justicias no lo impidan, y que si, passados dos años en las chacras no hubieren buuelto a sus pueblos, tengan por reducción la mesma hacienda, y que estando una ves avecindados no puedan ser removidos aunque se pida por los mesmos yndios en cuyos términos y a la antigua posesion que tiene dicha ciudad de la vecindad de sus anaconas, y aver cessado el ynconveniente que representaron con la desistencia que hizo Don Juan Marruto de dicho gobierno, y que al faltar de dicha ciudad dichos yndios queda ymposibilitada de quien asista a las obras publicas y assi se ha de servir Vuestra Merced y le supplico [blotted] se suspenda la reducción mandada a hazer al pueblo de los dujos [...]"¹⁰⁵

It is not clear whether the audiencia overturned its decision (the document is incomplete and badly damaged), but this case is a good example of the interests at play in the yanacona struggle for land and of the way the yanaconas attempted to negotiate them for their own benefit. Don Tomás' insistence in being allowed to settle in what used to be a Duho village becomes even more significant when we learn through one of his witnesses — Francisco Rey Manrique — that “[...] *el Governador Don Thomas quinbaya y los demas sus sujetos anaconas de dicha ciudad de Neyva tienen sus casas rosas [rozas] platanares y maizes inmediatos a dicho pueblo [de los dujos].*”¹⁰⁶ According to Fray Pedro Simón and Juan Rodríguez Freyle,¹⁰⁷ the Duhos were the traditional captives of the fierce Pixao Natagaima and Coyaima, whom the Spaniards were in the habit of “rescuing.”¹⁰⁸ In exchange for their lives, the Duhos became bondservants for the Spanish. Through abuse, disease, malnutrition, and no doubt flight, the Duho village had been decimated. Don Tomás and the yanaconas detected an opportunity to avail themselves of

some land which was conveniently located next to their own *resguardo*. At the same time they no longer saw any reason to continue to put up with Spanish abuse in Neiva. But the *yanaconas* represented a critical source of cheap labor for the *vecinos* or residents¹⁰⁹ of Neiva, especially since, according to the city's prosecutor, the town could not rely on *mitayos*¹¹⁰ to carry out public works. The *yanaconas* — whom as the document clearly shows had settled in the area around 1630 — probably supplemented the ever waning labor force of *encomienda* Indians. Don Tomás, however, was well aware that Crown officials — and therefore the Real Audiencia in Santafé — were more concerned with how much the Indians could contribute to the royal coffers than with any provincial dispute between *encomenderos*, *vecinos*, and Indians. He knew that the argument he was making that the *yanaconas* under his charge would start running away — making it very difficult, if not altogether impossible, for Crown officials to collect taxes from them — if they were not given more land or allowed to settle in the former Duho village was a powerful argument in the ears of royal officials.

Indigenous migration to escape Spanish labor demands, resettlement policies, and taxation had been a terrible headache for colonial functionaries throughout the sixteenth century. “All over the Andes, the words *ausentes* (absentee), *forastero* (outsider),¹¹¹ and *rezagos* (tribute arrears) punctuated the desperate reports of colonial bureaucrats.”¹¹² Historian Karen Powers argues that this started to change in the seventeenth century as Indians began to migrate more and more towards the Spanish sphere, yet don Tomás' success in the Audiencia Real in Santafé shows that the shadow of absenteeism and tribute arrears still haunted colonial bureaucracies at the end of the seventeenth century, at least in some areas. The endemic labor shortage that afflicted Spanish colonies in the Americas throughout the colonial period turned *caciques* and indigenous governors like don Tomás into key labor brokers. In an attempt to raise their leverage

in their dealings with Spanish authorities, they sometimes pitted Crown officials against encomenderos and vecinos.

The New Laws of 1542 had sought to limit the power of encomenderos by limiting their access to indigenous labor through the gradual transfer of Indians from encomiendas to royal jurisdiction. The laws met with stiff resistance from encomenderos and the ever-growing number of Spaniards who were now arriving in New Granada demanding access to cheap Indian labor. Don Miguel Díez de Arméandariz had been sent to New Granada in 1545 to enforce the new legislation but had relented in the face of their unpopularity. The New Laws were never truly implemented in New Granada. Crown jurisdictions or *parcialidades* and reducciones,¹¹³ however, multiplied throughout the seventeenth century, thanks in part to royal incentives such as *mita* exemptions and a tribute rate one-third or one-fourth that of encomienda Indians. At the same time, tension between encomenderos, vecinos and Crown officials intensified. Men like Don Tomás were well aware that they walked a fine line between powerful and conflicting interests. It is noteworthy, for example, that don Tomás skillfully raises the possibility — and expectation — that allowing his charges to settle in the old Duho village could eventually attract other Indians — yanaconas as well as other forasteros.

According to Powers, yanacona reducciones and yanacona status were much coveted by indigenous migrants escaping from encomiendas, forced labor, and tribute throughout the Andes.¹¹⁴ Since these men and women supplemented the labor supply of both the Spanish towns and the reducciones that were under their jurisdiction, Spanish authorities tended to look the other way while caciques rejoiced because their new charges not only contributed to a reducción's overall economy, but also increased each cacique's political capital. Yanaconas, on the other hand, constituted perhaps the one indigenous group who could get the most out of this

kind of maneuvers and negotiations. In the colonial social pyramid, they were better placed than most: better than encomienda Indians, better than indios *rescatados*,¹¹⁵ and certainly better than *piezas* (slaves). Nowhere is this more evident than in don Tomás and his charges' outright rejection of Marruto's abuse ("*son como piezas tan miserables como dichos yndios*") and in their decision to remain in Neiva rather than settle permanently in the *resguardo* (reservation) — a decision which clearly shows how they attempted to make the most out of the fact that they enjoyed both land grants and the possibility of earning wages in Spanish towns.

"*Indio sin tierra queda como árbol en el aire, secarse y ser leña para bien de desconocidos,*" don Abraham Chicangana, the governor of the Río Blanco Resguardo,¹¹⁶ told indigenous historian, Ary Rolando Campo Chicangana, in 1984 as he tried to explain to his grandson the utter significance of land for the Yanacona community.¹¹⁷ Land, don Abraham knew well, often marked the difference between a life of self-sufficiency and relative independence and a life of total subservience as sharecroppers or *terrajeros*. It also very often determined whether or not a yanacona community survived as an ethnic and cultural entity. It was the flair for seizing opportunity and the political and navigational skills of men like don Tomás Quimbaya which eventually allowed some yanacona communities to secure land and prosper. Many of the yanaconas who made their way north from Quito into present-day Colombia settled in the Macizo Colombiano where they were first brought to work in the goldmines of Almaguer, Bolívar, and Chisquío. Their descendants still live there today in five resguardos and three civil communities.¹¹⁸ But resguardos like the one don Tomás headed sprang and flourished in towns and cities all along what was known as the *camino real de Quito*, from Popayán to Neiva and Ibagué. Neighborhoods like the barrio José Galán in Popayán which until recently was called Yanaconas, or the Yanacona Cabildo in Cali, stand as a testimony to the

journey and role of yanaconas in Colombia as migrants and colonizers. The importance of yanaconas as allies and partners in the Spanish conquest and colonization of the southern and central regions of moder-day Colombia cannot be overemphasized. As military allies they were comparatively familiar with the terrain and the enemy, but most of all, they constituted the bulk of the forces without which such an enterprise might not have ever been achieved. They also proved to be critical cultural brokers, often bridging not only the linguistic gap, but also the cultural and idiosyncratic divide between Spaniards and locals. As a labor force that was already in part familiar, through its former standing in Inca society, with a labor rationale and protoindustrial forms of work which the local population rejected tenaciously, yanaconas were also key success factors in this enterprise. Although Spanish chroniclers were never keen to acknowledge the scope and relevance of the yanacona participation in the conquest and colonization of New Granada, Spanish colonial officials understood quite well the import and usefulness of their yanacona allies, putting them under close surveillance, as “*los indios amigos*” were always carefully watched by Spanish authorities, and cajoled whenever it seemed convenient.

But what of the women? What of the thousands of yanacona women who also made their way along the *camino real de Quito*? Many, most likely, made the journey with their husbands, looking for land on which to settle. Some, as we’ve seen, in order to escape Spanish abuse, sought out “*los indios enemigos*” and probably settled among them. Many others followed Spanish men, either as servants or lovers or both. At least one of them followed Sebastián de Belalcázar. Indeed, in the *residencia* trial¹¹⁹ that was carried against him in 1550 in Popayán for the killing of field marshal Jorge Robledo in 1546, Francisco Briceño, the *oidor* or judge in charge of the trial, was instructed among other things to find out “[...] *si es verdad que el dicho*

Adelantado Benalcázar era públicamente amancebado y que mató a un Baltazar de Ledezma porque se había echado con una india, su amiga.”¹²⁰ Others, however, followed neither Indian nor Spanish men. The cronista, Pedro Ordoñez de Ceballos, recounts a telling incident that he witnessed on the Isla de Cocos off the port of Buenaventura:¹²¹

Amaneció el sábado y vi una india y un indio que venían una cuesta abajo, y de cuando en cuando se paraban, y el indio quería como abrazarla y besarla, y ella se defendía [...] cogieron de lo que hallaron [mariscos], y el indio fue cargado; a cabo de más de una hora que ella miró a todas partes y vio que no parecía nadie, desató de su afligido corazón los suspiros que estaban detenidos; oíle decir: ‘Dios mío, sácame de aquí y llévame a Guayaquil; marido mío e hijos amados, ¿cómo estaréis?’ y otras lástimas [...] Contóme que la había hurtado un cacique de aquella isla tres años había, y que era casada y tenía hijos en Guayaquil y otro en aquel cacique, y que este indio herido era de los rescatados cautivos de otras islas y le había tomado aquel amor, y ella sólo lo tenía en su primer marido.”¹²²

Often, as in this example, yanacona women were simply *rescatadas*, that is — captured and sold off by Indians and Spaniards alike. Human traffic was big business in sixteenth-century New Granada and indigenous women — yanacona as much as local women — occupied centerstage in these dealings. But whether they were following their husbands, or their Spanish masters or lovers, or whether they had become *rescatadas*, yanacona women would, as we shall see in the next chapter, have a significant impact on the kind of relationships that the Spaniards established with the local population in this new frontier.

Chapter 2

Behetrías tejidas por guarichas: Unruly land, unruly women¹²³

“En todo lo precedente he dicho ser esta tierra fraguosa y áspera y falta de los mantenimientos que en otras sobra, como en la Nueva España y Guatemala y la Nueva Castilla, y así mismo los naturales indómitos, faltos de toda razón y sobre todo sin reconocimiento de superioridad como en otras partes, que cada provincia reconoce su señor natural; éstos, al contrario, que cada uno es señor en su casa y algunos que hay mal obedecidos [...]” Sebastián de Belalcázar, *Carta a su Magestad (1544)*¹²⁴

“Viven cada casa por sí, desviados unos de otros a trecho de un tiro de arcabuz y a un cuarto de legua y a media legua y a más y a menos, que casi no se hallaran pobladas dos casas juntas, ni aún se tratan ni conversan casi unos con otros. Por lo cual hay tanta barbarie en sus lenguas que de una lengua unos a otros no se entienden y habla cada uno su lengua. Es cierto haber más lenguas diferentes unas de otras, que leguas hay en toda la provincia. Es de un temple extraño cual otro jamás se vio, que en unas partes es muy cálida y a media legua es fría y a otro cuarto de legua demasiado caliente, y de allí a dos leguas nieva que se hielan los hombres, y junto allí a poco camino es muy templado. Y de esta manera no se andarán dos leguas de camino que no se hallen dos o tres temples de tierra.” *Relación Anónima de la Provincia de Popayán (n.d.)*¹²⁵

“I am like an anaconda
No one can get near my house
Because there is a lake around it.
I am a jaguar,
The bravest that is,
And no one
Can get near my house.” Shuar song (1972)¹²⁶

According to Belalcázar, when he and his yanacona allies penetrated into present-day Colombian territory, they walked into a land unlike anything they had seen before. Belalcázar, however, was not the only one taken aback by the region. Words attesting to the so-called strangeness of the land — its rugged geography, its piecemeal climate, its unruly people — abound. Again and again, seasoned soldiers like Belalcázar, cronistas, and Crown officials, testified to their sense of confusion and disarray: “*Los naturales de ella [de la provincia de Popayán] son pocos, y más en algunos pueblos que en otros; son de poca razón, no hay señores entre ellos que los manden, comen carne humana generalmente en toda esta Gobernación y en*

*unos pueblos más que en otros [...]”*¹²⁷ The Europeans conveniently perceived only chaos and irrationality.

But contrary to Belalcázar’s and the cronistas’ beliefs, the world the adelantado and his troops walked into was not so different from their own. In fact, had they been a little less politically invested they might have been able to see through the *strangeness* of the land to a few of the commonalities that they shared with the locals. Indeed, the world they walked into, much like the Spanish world, was a universe governed by the supernatural.¹²⁸ But unlike European ideas of a transcendental supernatural realm, these Indians probably perceived it as an immanent realm, one you could easily access, interact with, and affect. Sixteenth-century people living in the Alto Magdalena region most likely held a worldview in which human agency could be aided by both the natural and the spirit world. Normal waking life was probably viewed as a wily illusion, while the determinant forces behind daily events were to be apprehended in a world beyond the realm of earthly deception. However, Indians very likely believed they could tap into these forces at will and even harness them to their own advantage through different types of mediation or shamanic techniques. What’s more, the belief that the spirit world could be accessed in order to increase an individual’s personal power was most likely as pervasive then — if not more — as it is still today among many Amazonian groups, including the Shuar.

In fact, one very popular way of enhancing one’s personal power in the Amazon and among the Shuar today is the idea that one can gain influence over others through the assistance of spirit aids. Very often this assistance comes in the form of illnesses and deaths which are induced upon a third party. For example, “The Jívaro,” Michael Harner writes, “believe that witchcraft is the cause of the vast majority of illnesses and non-violent deaths.”¹²⁹ In Amazonian societies such as the Shuar, where feuding is common, such forms of self-empowerment

frequently take on warfare dimensions: when the members of a group fall ill or die, people tend to interpret their diseases or deaths as the result of a witchcraft attack by an enemy group. According to tradition, the people are obligated to retaliate either through witchcraft or by organizing a raid on the presumed culprits in what can be described as a kind of witchcraft warfare. The widespread Amazonian and Shuar belief that most illnesses and non-violent deaths are the result of this type of witchcraft warfare was probably just as prevalent in the sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region. This is important, especially in light of the fact that Belalcázar and his yanacona allies were probably not the first sixteenth-century intruders to penetrate what was to become present-day Colombian territory. The microbes they harbored had most likely beaten them there.

Indeed, according to historian Karen Vieira Powers, disease followed on the heels of Inca conquest and preceded Spanish arrival: “Several years before Pizarro’s band of gold-hungry expeditionaries set foot on Inca soil, the microbes they and their cohorts harbored were already wreaking havoc on the unsuspecting populations of the Andes. Besides the staggering mortality usually engendered by smallpox and measles in nonimmune populations, such epidemics also gave rise to general flight.”¹³⁰ In considering such a probability it is necessary to contemplate the effects — other than flight — that such a catastrophe might have had on cultures in which disease was generally associated with witchcraft and warfare. Regardless of whether or not we believe that diseases can be caused by witchcraft, we must consider the kinds of impact that European epidemics would have had on societies which attributed most illnesses and non-violent deaths to an enemy’s ability to harness supernatural forces in order to harm or kill somebody. Pedro Cieza de León, who travelled through the province of Popayán between 1536 and 1548, wrote that at

the time of the Spanish invasion, many of the different Indian communities in the region had been at war with one another for quite some time:

[...] y aunque todos ellos son morenos lampiños y se parecen en tantas cosas unos a otros, hay tanta multitud de lenguas entre ellos, que casi a cada legua y en cada parte hay nuevas lenguas. Pues como hayan pasado tantas edades por estas gentes, y hayan vivido sueltamente, unos a otros se dieron grandes guerras y batallas, quedándose con las provincias que ganaban. Y así, en los términos de la villa de Arma, de la gobernación de Popayán está una gran provincia, a quien llaman Carrapa, entre la cual y la de Quimbaya (que es donde se fundó la ciudad de Cartago) había cantidad de gente; los cuales, llevando por capitán o señor a uno dellos, el más principal llamado Irrua, se entraron en Carrapa, y a pesar de los naturales, se hicieron señores de lo mejor de su provincia. Y esto sé porque cuando descubrimos enteramente aquellas comarcas, vimos las rocas y pueblos quemados que habían dejado los naturales de la provincia de Quimbaya. Todos fueron lanzados della antiguamente por los que se hicieron señores de sus campos, según es público entre ellos. En muchas partes de las provincias de esta gobernación de Popayán fue lo mismo.¹³¹

Belalcázar and his hosts did not walk into a historical void. The Indians were not waiting for them (or their microbes for that matter) to become part of history. When the Europeans and their yanacona allies first appeared on the horizon, they probably had been fighting each other over land, resources, access to resources, territorial control, power, women, etcetera, for hundreds of years. Neither the Spanish invasion nor Spanish viruses triggered the wars Cieza de León describes, but in a universe where feuding was pervasive and where disease and non-violent deaths were associated with hostilities and aggression, we can't help but wonder at the kind of additional strain that European epidemics must have brought to bear on indigenous communities. Consider, for example, the seventeenth-century anonymous description of the way in which the belief in disease as a form of aggression operated among the Iroquois:

And of all those sicknesses which happen to them in particular they attribute to some spell cast upon them. The one, then, who is attacked by one resorts immediately to the juggler or magician and beseeches him kindly to tell him the cause of this indisposition. And immediately this false soothsayer enters into a sweatlodge wherein he makes all sorts of hideous contortions and imitates the call of several kinds of animals and sings continuously and yells as he were being beaten in his sweatlodge. Wearied, at last, by all his madness, he comes out of his sweatlodge and tells the one who is ill that he knows those, male or female, who have bewitched him, and he names them [...] And all that is caused by a grudge held by this false soothsayer, which is often the cause of an entire family's ruin, since the characteristic of this nation is to be infatuated with waging war.¹³²

And Michael Harner's account of the same principle at work among the Shuar:

An additional factor of no minor significance is that a high proportion of persons who have been accused of hostile acts probably did not commit them at all, but there is no way of satisfactorily demonstrating their ‘guilt’ or ‘innocence.’ This situation is primarily due to the tremendous emphasis among the Jívaro on ascribing almost all non-epidemic illnesses and deaths, and non-violent deaths, to witchcraft and poisoning [...] This leads, in the case of assumed witchcraft death, to punitive retaliatory sanctions in the form of homicide, against the presumed bewitchers. With the guilt determined through divination with the aid of a hallucinogenic drug, and the subsequent vengeance probably wreaked on the wrong person (even if one believes in witchcraft deaths), it is clear that the shamanistic beliefs and practices have repercussions which heighten the sense of outrage and injustice that permeates the society and sets household against household. Under these circumstances, Jívaro witchcraft clearly promotes rather than decreases physical violence.¹³³

It is therefore easy to see how Belalcázar and his yanacona allies walked into a world that was probably being ravaged not only by disease and exodus, but also by internal suspicion, misgivings, aggression, and retaliation. The world the adelantado described as strange and unruly was, above all, a world that was extraordinarily stressed — where feuding may have been at an all time high.

Feuding, however, had probably been a way of life long before the arrival of the Spaniards and their yanacona allies. The isolation which the Europeans and their Indian allies encountered in regards to the settlement patterns of the indigenous inhabitants was likely in part a response to the popularity that this activity enjoyed among the local population: “*Nunca acostumbraban vivir en pueblos ni en rancherías que constasen de algún número de personas, sino distribuidos en sus casas particulares a proporcionada distancia. Esparcidos por las cumbres de las montañas y sus contornos, fabricaban sus casas sobre las peñas más fragosas e inaccesibles, para que estuviesen naturalmente defendidos de sus enemigos.*”¹³⁴ Two reports, one drafted in 1559 and the other in 1581, attest to the fact that the atomization in settlement patterns extended far and wide across the Kingdom of New Granada:

No hay caciques ni señores; es todo behetría y gente mal vestida. Su habitación es en buhíos de paja como las demás, apartados unos de otros. On the city of San Sebastián de la Plata, 1559¹³⁵

Cada indio tiene su roza o sementera a la puerta de su morada, y a esta causa están las poblaciones algo apartadas unas de otras. On the Muiscas, 1559¹³⁶

La poblazón de los naturales es casas grandes de paja y en cada una viven cinco o seis indios cada casa por sí muy apartada una de otra. Son todos caribes. On the city of Mariquita, 1559¹³⁷

Pueblan por las cuchillas y cumbres de las lomas y por las medias laderas dellas, divididamente y lejos unos de otros; pero donde el lugar y sus antojos se conciertan, se congregan algunos barriezuelos de seis o siete vecinos, en casas juntas, sin guardar concierto [...] Es la manera de su población llevada sin seguir orden de pueblos, sino de casas salteadas a la medida de sus antojos; en la mudanza de las cuales también son regidos por ellos, dejándolas a los tiempos que les parece, y pasándose a donde les agrada.” On the city of La Palma, 1581¹³⁸

Among the Shuar, who exhibit similar settlement patterns,¹³⁹ Harner tells us that the individual household constitutes the basis of all social life:

The center of Jívaro life is the individual house, normally occupied by a polygynous nuclear family and surrounded by a garden in deep isolation in the forest. The house is typically built beside a small stream on a hillock [...] The location of the house on high ground is not only for better drainage, but also furnishes a view across the surrounding garden to facilitate defensive fire in case of enemy attack [...] Most Jívaro households are very close-knit economic and social units, in contrast to the neighborhood and tribal society as a whole. Each house, averaging about nine occupants, is usually isolated a half-mile or more from the next; but sometimes two, or rarely three, houses may be located within three hundred yards of one another. Adjacent houses, when they occur, invariably belong to close relatives, usually one being that of a middle-aged man and the other(s) of his son(s)-in-law. Even such limited concentrations are not very permanent, due to such factors as quarreling between the neighboring relatives or the gradual depletion of the local wild game supply.¹⁴⁰

But there is more to understanding the settlement patterns in the region. The Andes with their distinct ecological zones have traditionally offered their inhabitants five clearly different ecological niches known as *pisos*: 1) *la tierra caliente* (under 1000 m.a.s.l. or 3280 f.a.s.l.; 19-32°C or 66-90°F); 2) *la tierra templada* (1200-2200 m.a.s.l. or 3900-7200 f.a.s.l.; average 19°C or 66°F); 3) *la tierra fría* (2200-2600 m.a.s.l. or 7200-8500 f.a.s.l.; average 14°C or 57°F); 4) *la montaña* (2600-3000 m.a.s.l. or 8500-9800 f.a.s.l.); and 5) *el páramo* (3000 m.a.s.l. or 9800 f.a.s.l.). Although *la tierra caliente*, *la tierra templada* and *la tierra fría* produce a wide variety of products, none of these five niches are self-sufficient enough to furnish people with acceptable standards of living. Yet the close proximity of these five ecological *pisos* (only 400 meters, or 1300 feet on average) and their complementariness have allowed people over the course of centuries to develop a uniquely Andean lifestyle based on a vertical economy which is itself dependent on highland to lowland movement. This system, called *microverticalidad*, allows

people to move in just a few hours' (or a few days' journey at the most) from one niche to another. For example, nowadays, among the Yanaconas of the Macizo Colombiano who claim they have inherited this way of life from the first yanacona colonists who settled in the area in the sixteenth century, *la tierra caliente*, or "*lo caliente*" as they call it, is a place where crops such as coffee, corn, sugarcane, yucca, plantain, and fruits are grown. It is rarely a place for permanent living. *La tierra fría* or "*lo frío*" is the *piso* where most people live and where corn is harvested along with beans, squash, wheat, potatoes, and onions. Most peasants plant gardens around their houses where they grow vegetables, fruits, and herbs. *La montaña* provides farmers with wood and grasses for cattle and sheep. Vegetation is very scarce in *el páramo*. Only the famous *frailejón* (*Espeletia*)¹⁴¹ and other lichen-like plants grow at this altitude. *El páramo* is considered sacred. It is believed to be the place where the spirits and the ancestors dwell. It is also the place where many rituals are carried out and where people and *taitas* or shamans¹⁴² go in search of medicinal herbs. Peasants may build temporary housing in "*lo caliente*" or "*la montaña*" where they will stay overnight or for a few weeks while they sow or harvest a specific product. It is well known that people commonly look to buy patches of land in all three *pisos* (in "*lo caliente*," "*lo frío*," and "*la montaña*") as this gives them access to a wide variety of products without having to depend on markets or market prices.¹⁴³

This vertical economy, or *microverticalidad*, has no doubt undergone significant changes since the Spaniards first set foot in the region. Still, based on modern-day Yanaconas' assertion that they have lived this way since ever since their ancestors first set foot in the area as well as anthropologist Dale Quattrin's study of prehispanic chiefdoms in the Valle de la Plata region and their vertical economic systems,¹⁴⁴ we can safely say that it has remained in essence much the same over the last five hundred years: in part, this is due to the challenge posed by the very

steepness and ruggedness of the Colombian Andes — one of the most difficult geographies throughout the entire Andean Cordillera. But perhaps nowhere is the coalescence between the fierceness of the terrain and the indomitable independence of its original indigenous inhabitants better expressed than in Juan de Velasco's description of the Alto Magdalena region:

La nación de los Páes numerosísima, estaba como al centro: la más que mediana de los Guanacas al poniente; y las pequeñas naciones de Timanaes y Neivas hacia el oriente. Habitaban estas la parte más alta de la cordillera de los Andes [...] El terreno sobre ser uno de los más elevados de la América meridional, es tan quebrado, áspero, fragoso y lleno de precipicios y malezas, que excede con la realidad todos los hipérboles, sin que ninguno pueda formar concepto de lo que es, sino al verlo con los ojos. Si estos países eran espantosos a la vista, lo eran mucho más los Guanacas y Páes que los habitaban en la más alto, rígido y fragoso de ellos.¹⁴⁵

The Andes were thus silent agent and ally in the settlement patterns adopted by the Indians and in the spirit that animated them. Even more, they made viable and probably reinforced a style of political organization that eschewed any rigid and centralized form of government or authority. These entirely self-governing household compounds were, according to Juan Friede, what the Spaniards called *behetrías* “*por haber observado entre ellos la carencia de un fuerte poder central de cacicazgo o sacerdocio.*”¹⁴⁶ There are countless testimonies regarding the extended pattern of *behetrías* throughout the greater part of the Kingdom of New Granada. We can see this if we look past the hostile language embedded in these accounts:

[...] y los cristianos que así han muerto todos se los han comido, con los caballos y cosas vivas, porque los dichos indios [de Guacacallo] son como brutos animales, sin ningún juicio ni razón, y comen carne humana y no tienen señor como cosa de behetría. *Fragmentos de una probanza (Guacacallo, 1544)*¹⁴⁷

No han reconocido [los Muzos] señor; siempre han seguido el consejo de los indios viejos y de las viejas, por quien se han gobernado. Son gente que sobre sí no reconocen señor ni cacique, ni lo ha habido en esta tierra, más de que los indios más valientes y emparentados se hacen temer y les tienen algún respeto.” *“Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas Ordenada Hacer por el Gobernador Juan Suárez de Cepeda... (1582)*¹⁴⁸

Estos colimas son hombres que no se entiende dellos que jamás reconociesen señor ni mortal que sobre sus libertades tuviese imperio, hasta que se sujetaron a la majestad real del rey don Felipe nuestro señor [...] *“Relación de la Palma de los Colima por Gutierre de Ovalle” (1581)*¹⁴⁹

El mando que tienen los caciques o señores [de la Provincia de Arma] sobre ellos ni es más de que les hacen sus casas y les labran sus campos; sin lo cual, les dan mujeres las que quieren, y les sacan de los ríos oro, con que contratan en las comarcas; y ellos nombran capitanes en las guerras y se hallan con ellos en las batallas que dan. *Pedro Cieza de León (1536-1548)*¹⁵⁰

Pedro Cieza de León who tried to make sense out of it all, wrote:

A lo cual diré que todos los indios sujetos a la gobernación de Popayán han sido siempre, y lo son, *behetrías*. No hubo entre ellos señores que se hiciesen temer. Son flojos, perezosos, y sobre todo, aborrecen el servir y estar sujetos, que es causa bastante para que recelasen de estar debajo de gente extraña y en su servicio. Mas esto no fuera parte para que ellos salieran con su intención; porque, constreñidos de necesidad, hicieran lo que otros hacen. Mas hay otra causa mucho mayor, la cual es, que todas estas provincias y regiones son muy fértiles, y a una parte y a otra hay grandes espesuras de montañas, de cañaverales y de otras malezas. Y como los españoles los aprieten, queman las casas en que moran, que son de madera y paja, y se van una legua de allí o dos, o lo que quieren; y en tres o cuatro días hacen una casa, y en otros tantos siembran la cantidad de maíz que quieren, y lo cogen dentro de cuatro meses. Y si allí también los van a buscar, dejado aquel sitio, van delante o vuelven atrás, y adonde quiera que van o están, hallan qué comer y tierra fértil y aparejada y dispuesta para darles fruto; y por esto sirven cuando quieren, y es en su mano la guerra o la paz, y nunca les falta de comer. Los del Perú sirven bien y son domables, porque tienen más razón que éstos y porque todos fueron sujetados por los reyes incas, a los cuales dieron tributo, sirviéndoles siempre, y con aquella condición nacían; y si no lo querían hacer, la necesidad les constreñía a ello; porque la tierra del Perú toda es despoblada, llena de montañas y sierras y campos nevados. Y si se salían de sus pueblos y valles a estos desiertos no podían vivir, ni la tierra da fruto ni hay otro lugar que lo que dé que los mismos valles y provincias suyas; de manera que por no morir, sin ninguno poder vivir, han de servir y no desamparar sus tierras [...] ¹⁵¹

As Cieza shows here, Spaniards were familiar with the kind of political organization they found in this new land. Back in Spain similar social bodies were a popular form of political and social organization during the Middle Ages, in which Spanish peasants elected their own lords: this type of self-governing community was called *behetría*. Spanish *behetrías*, however, had begun to disappear towards the end of the twelve century when feudal lords increased their monopoly over land, hunting grounds, and waterways. Cieza, who had travelled extensively throughout the Peruvian Andes, understood that this type of political and social organizations rested to a great extent on the ready accessibility of resources, and that in contrast with the aridness of the Peruvian Andes, the bountifulness of the land in New Granada was in large part responsible for the natives' total disdain for any form of centralized control or rulership. In a land dominated by mostly benign microclimates, where wild food plants and crops grew on a year-round basis, where resources were plentiful, where game and fish thrived, and where the system of microverticality provided people with access to a wide variety of products and a rich and nutritious diet, the idea that an individual had to submit for whatever reason to another

seemed completely out of place. Since resources were readily available to just about anyone and since it was fairly easy for individuals to make a livelihood with the help of a small number of relatives or family members, people resisted doggedly not only Spanish attempts to impose or exercise any form of domination but probably similar efforts arising from within their own communities. As in many other tribal societies where resources had not been monopolized by any one group and where power did not depend on anyone's deprivation or inability to access basic resources, any formalized or permanent forms of leadership were firmly rejected. Power and authority rested on a whole different basis. The excerpts above provide us with some clues: old age, courage and bravery in war, accomplishment as a farmer (and presumably as a hunter and fisherman also), generosity, and last but not least, family connections.

If anything, Harner's explanation of Shuar settlement patterns allows us to break through the opacity of colonial accounts. The indigenous settlement patterns depicted in sixteenth-century descriptions of the province of Popayán were probably an adaptive and multifaceted response to at least three elements: feuding, Andean micro-verticality, and what the Spaniards called *behetrías*. Spanish *cronistas* and Crown officials insisted on highlighting only one of these elements — feuding — because this would have been the most conspicuous characteristic at the time, but also because it provided them with the perfect, ready-made excuse for pillage and massacres. What they failed to see was the ingenuity that such atomization represented amidst one of the most challenging geographies in the Andes as well as the spirited individualism and independence that it concealed.

Elderly men and women were most likely highly respected — in part because the ability to reach an advanced age despite all the vicissitudes of life in a feuding-prone world was likely regarded as a mark not only of wisdom but of acquired supernatural power. People probably

thought twice about disrespecting or crossing an elder for fear of the consequences that incurring their wrath could bring upon them.¹⁵² Elderly men and women were in all likelihood consulted whenever important decisions had to be made. In fact, just as in many sixteenth-century North-American groups, elders' councils were probably essential features of the political landscape.

A successful farmer also commanded respect and admiration, especially if he was willing to share his good fortune with as many people as possible. Despite their apparent insularism, socializing was probably a favorite activity among the locals. People in this region, as elsewhere in the Kingdom of New Granada, probably placed a high value on eating and drinking corn beer or *chicha*.¹⁵³ Festivities and social gatherings were frequent and widely appreciated occasions where people came together to eat, dance and sing: “[...] *cuando un indio quiere holgarse, hace hacer mucho vino de maíz o de otras frutas y llama a sus amigos y parientes comarcanos para beber aquella chicha y asidos de la mano unos con otros cantan las cosas pasadas entre ellos [...]*”¹⁵⁴ It was also an opportunity for a man to make a big impression on his neighbors or relatives while at the same time creating or reinforcing bonds of mutual obligation. We should remember that here as elsewhere in pre-Hispanic America, the principle of reciprocity — the idea that people became mutually obligated or indebted to one another through marriage, the sharing of food or the performance of certain services — was rigidly observed. No man could expect to have many friends unless he was willing to be a good host. Neighborhood status was greatly affected no doubt by one's generosity with beer and food. People were especially fond of *chicha* (also called *vino amarillo*) — so much so that whenever it rained people believed the gods were having a great party up above: “[...] *el demonio, a quien ellos llaman maquipa, les dice y da a entender que para que llueva ha de hacer y hace arriba una borrachera de mucho vino, y que lo*

que orinan arriba es el agua que llueve, y con ellas se crían las sementeras y árboles y frutos de la tierra.”¹⁵⁵

A successful farmer would therefore have been anxious to celebrate a good corn harvest by throwing a party and inviting as many people as possible and treating them to large amounts of food and chicha. Such a man would of course have had at least two or three or even more wives since women were responsible for both growing corn and making chicha. The number of wives, a man had would have been an important part of a man’s prestige, since so much of it depended on his ability to host others with abundant food and drink. Since women were responsible for growing corn and making chicha, the more wives a man had, the greater the surplus production of corn, which ultimately made possible the adequate entertainment of guests from other households. Good hospitality therefore would have required, most certainly, a labor force made up of several wives. In this way, both a satisfactory household production of food and a man’s prestige were directly dependent upon polygyny. Needless to say this type of socializing would have meant a lot of work for both men and women, since men had to clear a patch of land for each of their wives¹⁵⁶ while women had to tend their fields once the corn was planted, harvest the corn ears, thresh the corn and chew it (so that their saliva would set off the fermentation process necessary for making chicha).¹⁵⁷

But wives were also a source of social connections for a man. The more wives a man had, the wider his social network. The wider his social network, the bigger his prestige and influence and of course his safety net. Polygyny was indeed predominant throughout the Kingdom of New Granada:

Los señores [de la provincia de Arma] se casan con las mujeres que más les agradan; la una destas se tiene por la más principal; y los demás indios cásanse unos con hijas y hermanas de otros, sin orden ninguna y muy pocos hallan las mujeres vírgenes; los señores pueden tener muchas, los demás a una y a dos y a tres, como tiene la posibilidad [...]¹⁵⁸

Cásanse [los indios de la provincia de Ancerma] con sus sobrinas y algunos con sus mismas hermanas, y hereda el señorío o cacicazgo, el hijo de la principal mujer (porque todos estos indios, si son principales, tienen muchas); y si no tienen hijo, el de la hermana dél [...] Son los caciques muy regalados; muchos dellos, antes que los españoles entrasen en su provincia, andaban en andas y hamacas. Tienen muchas mujeres, las cuales para ser indias, son hermosas; traen sus mantas de algodón galanas con muchas pinturas.¹⁵⁹

Otros compran las mujeres dando por ellas a sus padres algunas cosas de las que ellos tienen, y sirviéndoles y ayudándoles en sus trabajos algún tiempo, y después le dan la hija. El que más mujeres puede sustentar y dar de comer, más tiene.¹⁶⁰

Polygamous marriage probably established a bond of mutual obligation and non-aggression between men. Among the Shuar for example, married men are expected to side with their fathers- and brothers-in-law as well as with their aunts' husbands and sons in disputes against their own consanguineal relatives.¹⁶¹ We have of course no evidence that this was the case for Indians in sixteenth-century Colombia, but we do have some indication that a similar principle may have been at work: *“No tienen por pecado matarse unos a otros con yerbas ni a lanzadas ni de otra manera, y si acaso un apellido con otro tiene guerra, acontece por causa de los casamientos, ser el padre de un pueblo y el hijo de otro y hallarse en la guerra el padre contra el hijo y el hijo contra el padre, tirándose crueles flechazos, y en forma de escarnio decir el hijo al padre: ‘Allá va esa flecha: guárdate de ella, y si no, sabrás cuan buena yerba tengo.’ Y a la noche irse a dormir el hijo con el padre y a la mañana irse cada cual a su puesto.”*¹⁶²

Harner explains that in a universe such as the Shuars' where the normatively unrestricted practice of polygyny creates a high demand for unattached women, the exchange of women among men usually entails a pact of reciprocity as part of the agreement. We should remember that in feuding-prone groups such as these, by the time a man is ready to take a wife, her father may already be dead, in which case he commonly must instead ask her brother for her. Since there is a scarcity of marriageable women, it is considered perfectly normal for her brother to demand reciprocity as part of the marriage agreement. Thus brothers-in-law generally look forward to and expect an exchange of sisters. In addition, since wherever polygyny is practiced,

sororal polygyny is usually preferred over other forms (because sisters are reputed to get along better with one another), a man normally hopes that his father-in-law will eventually give him all the latter's daughters as wives. Therefore the potential reward of obtaining more wives from a father- or a brother-in-law is, according to Harner, a powerful, but unspoken incentive, for a man to take the side of his in-laws in a quarrel.¹⁶³

Harner's interpretation provides us with the missing clue to the excerpt above. If in this passage father and son appear to be fighting each other, it may well have been because the son felt obligated to side, not with his father or brothers, but with his in-laws. In such a world, consanguineal obligation would not have been the norm: only a man and his son(s)-in law — not a man and his sons — would have considered themselves mutually obligated to defend each other's households from enemies. Polygamous marriage therefore afforded a man not only a plural source of labor, but also and very literally a band of brothers-in-arms — *“Pocas veces tienen pasiones [los muzos] ni diferencias los de un apellido con otros del mismo ni con los que casan, sino con los demás comarcanos, porque dicen que con los que casan son hermanos en armas [...] El casar en estas provincias los unos de unos apellidos y repartimientos con otros, es seguridad de amistad.”*¹⁶⁴ This type of alliance could come in handy in times of war or feuding. It also provided a man with an extended social network that could prove helpful during the sowing season for example, when he would be able to rely on additional assistance from his in-laws. It could even, in case a harvest went bad, supply him with a temporarily loaned patch of land in which to sow new crops. His in-laws of course would have expected him to reciprocate the favor at some point by assisting them one way or another — in war or in peace.¹⁶⁵

Polygyny, however, would have been at the same time a source of great tension among men. Indeed, in a world where the demand for single, unattached women was especially high,

competition among men would have been particularly fierce.¹⁶⁶ This in turn would easily have given way to frequent feuding.¹⁶⁷ But polygyny itself was possible because of feuding: the elevated mortality of men would have seriously skewed the ratio between women and men, leaving a great number of women without potential mates. Polygyny offered a perfect answer to this problem. Paradoxically one of the very causes behind feuding was also its best solution.

Polygyny was probably not the only cause of feuding, however. People's belief in shamanistically induced illness and death, the conception of justice in terms of retribution, and the idea that a man could increase his own personal power — both here on this earth and in the other world — by appropriating and incorporating the power of those he killed, probably constituted very powerful catalysts in feuding dynamics.¹⁶⁸ I have already discussed how the idea that disease and non-violent deaths were brought about by hostile witchcraft could have given way to bloody and protracted cycles of violence. There are indications that retributive justice was just as predominant throughout the region: *“No tienen ley ni precepto que guardar ni que les obligue, apenas más de aquella quell damnificado pueda dar al dañador. Entre ellos todo es venganza, que llaman pagamentos.”*¹⁶⁹ Spanish colonial officials attempting to implement the Crown's resettlement policies or *reducciones* in the second half of the sixteenth century often complained that their efforts were thwarted by the Indians' constant feuding and vengeance-taking. A Spanish priest working among the Muzos complained *“[...que] le parecía cosa imposible que los indios se pudieran reducir a pueblos, por ser gente que por cosas muy frágiles se dan yerbas y se matan unos a otros y que la tierra no es acomodada para pueblos por ser montuosa y que no tienen asiento fijo que hoy rozan en una parte y después en otra [...].”*¹⁷⁰ A cacique in the same area echoed the priest's views: *“[...] en años pasados se poblaron los dichos indios y se querían mal y se mataban [...].”*¹⁷¹ and a Crown functionary concluded in his

final report that his efforts had met with “[...] *dos dificultades, una...es que por ser tierra áspera no se puede hacer lo que su majestad manda, y la otra segunda causa es que...les ha dado doctrina y [ellos] faltando a las obligaciones de cristianos, se matan unos con otros con yerbas [...]*”¹⁷²

In a universe ruled by the principles of reciprocity and affinity — where like begets like — the emphasis on retaliatory sanctions would have been pervasive. The Spaniards were certainly among the first Europeans in the New World to bear the full brunt of this type of justice. Take, for example, the account of the death of Belalcázar’s lieutenant, Pedro de Añasco, at the hands of the Yalcones. The Spanish cronista Pero López claims that before killing him, the Indians poured molten gold down his throat, “*diciendo que, pues que había muerto a sus indios por oro, que se hartase de oro.*”¹⁷³ Whether this story is apocryphal or not, because of the retaliatory nature of sanctions, any person or group of people who felt they had been wronged would have been required to take action by paying back in kind: such an avenging action would have initiated long and drawn-out hostilities between the people involved, thereby giving way to seemingly endless cycles of violence.

But perhaps the biggest factor of all behind feuding was a dominant warring ethos. One of the greatest sources of social prestige for a man was almost certainly his reputation as a brave and accomplished warrior (“*Dicen que entre ellos nunca hubo caciques ni señores a quien respetasen ni acudiesen, sino a un indio valiente y brioso [...]*”). This stature was of course probably acquired by performing bold acts in war and by killing as many enemy warriors as possible. Yet there are indications that the warring ethos that prevailed in the sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region and indeed in large parts of the Kingdom of New Granada may have rested on a complex body of beliefs which probably structured people’s view of reality, and thus,

affected their overt behavior. Specifically, accounts regarding the region's widespread cannibalism abound:

En esta provincia [de Popayán] hay unos pueblos fríos y otros calientes, unos sitios sanos y otros enfermos, en una parte llueve mucho y en otra poco, en una tierra comen los indios carne humana y en otras no la comen. *Pedro Cieza de León (1536-1548)*¹⁷⁴

Yamba dio muerte a la india Ysabel y a las yanaconas que la acompañaban, y después de muertas se las comió. *Apaca, young Indian witness cited in official report on the Quimbaya rebellion (1542)*¹⁷⁵

Los panches es gente noble de condición [...] algo inclinados a comer carne humana [...] “*Relación del Nuevo Reino*” (1571)¹⁷⁶

Sus comidas [de los Pijaos] son maíz – trigo de las Indias -, y yucas, que es cazabe, patatas y otras raíces y hierbas; mucho pescado, pumas y ocumares, que son leones y osos; y ahora a todas las naciones comarcanas de indios, salvo la suya, comen y a todos los españoles, y dicen es la más sabrosa carne; comen también a los negros; solían comer a los frailes, y, por una grande mortandad que les causó uno, ya no los comen, aunque los matan; sólo son reservados los clérigos. *Pedro Ordoñez de Ceballos (1616)*¹⁷⁷

Spanish reports of indigenous cannibalism in sixteenth-century New Granada have been a source of controversy for Colombian historians, archeologists, and anthropologists. In general, historians have shunned the issue by attributing these reports to the Spaniards' efforts to justify their own treatment of those groups which resisted Spanish rule. Many archeologists and anthropologists have followed suit by arguing that material evidence is not conclusive. Cannibalism as such is of course a tremendously contentious subject, but more so in a country like Colombia with such a long history of violence. Nonetheless, the abundant number of sixteenth-century Spanish reports adducing acts of cannibalism on the part of indigenous peoples throughout New Granada remains intriguing. Although few archeologists or anthropologists have been willing to delve into this most sensitive issue, two studies stand out: Gonzalo Correal's 1990 excavations at the Aguazuque site in Soacha, Cundinamarca; and more recently in 2007, Sonia Blanco's findings at the Malagana site in Palmira, Valle del Cauca. Both studies deal with the excavation of burial sites and both report evidence of ritual cannibalism. In the first one, Correal reports finding graves in which “[...] *huesos humanos calcinados y cráneos aislados*

sugieren la práctica del canibalismo.”¹⁷⁸ In the second one, Blanco reports finding “[...] *tres tumbas, una de ellas perteneciente a una chamana que estaba enterrada boca abajo, su ajuar consistía en huesos de otro humano labrados y utilizados como instrumento. En los otros dos casos encontramos esqueletos dispersos a los cuales les hace falta algunas partes y los cráneos tienen evidencias de haber sido raspados para ser consumidos.*”¹⁷⁹ These findings indicate that at least some form of ritual cannibalism was practiced in two very different and distant regions in pre-Hispanic Colombia. It is quite likely that Spanish accounts of indigenous cannibalism were indeed exaggerated and ill-intentioned; but, it is also quite possible, as Colombian historian, Leovigildo Bernal Andrade has suggested, that what was once a ritual practice — carefully controlled and regulated according to religious prescriptions — may have turned in the sixteenth century into an all-out weapon of war and terror against the European invaders and their Indian allies.¹⁸⁰ In any event, the idea of reconstructing a vision of the pre-Hispanic Alto Magdalena indigenous world requires that we seriously consider cannibalism as an integral part of this universe and its worldview. This is why I have resorted to anthropologist Michael Harner’s work on the Shuar of Ecuador and Anna Meigs and Peggy Reeves Sanday’s studies of cannibalism in New Guinea whose work provide an ideal entry point from which to access such a worldview.

Although the Shuar do not presently practice cannibalism, they are famous for their *tsantsas* or head-shrinking — a process which closely resembles some of the preservation techniques applied to the bodies (or parts of bodies) of enemies described in the following excerpt:

[...] es de notar que cuando [los Paucura] quieren matar algunos de aquellos malaventurados para comerlos, los hacen hincar de rodillas en tierra, y bajando la cabeza, le dan junto al colodrillo un golpe, del cual queda aturdido y no habla ni se queja, ni dice mal ni bien. Yo he visto, lo que digo, hartas veces matar los indios, y no hablar ni pedir misericordia; antes algunos se ríen cuando los matan, que es cosa de grande admiración [...] las cabezas destes que comen ponen en lo alto de las cañas gordas.¹⁸¹

En medio deste pueblo está una gran casa de madera muy alta y redonda, con una puerta en el medio, en lo alto della había cuatro ventanas por donde entraba la claridad; la cobertura era de paja; así como entraban

dentro, estaba en alto una larga tabla, la cual la atravesaba de una parte a otra, y encima della estaban puestos por orden muchos cuerpos de hombres muertos de los que [los Lilis] habían vencido y preso en las guerras, todos abiertos; y abríanlos con cuchillos de pedernal y los desollaban, y después de haber comido la carne, henchían los cueros de ceniza y hacíanles rostros de cera con sus propias cabezas, poníanlos en la tabla de tal manera, que parecían hombres vivos.¹⁸²

An examination of the Shuar warring ethos and the logic behind head-shrinking may shed some light on sixteenth-century cannibalism in the Kingdom of New Granada. According to Harner, a Shuar man who wishes to obtain the respect of his peers must first acquire a large quantity of power or *kakarma*. In order to acquire or increase *kakarma* a man must kill as many enemies as possible since it is through the killing of his enemies and the shrinking of their heads that he acquires and accumulates his enemies' own *kakarmas*. Once acquired, *kakarma* protects its owner from death, violence, and disease, and also drives him on to kill as often as possible. An enemy's head must be shrunken and turned into a *tsantsa* to make sure that his *muisak* or avenging soul does not come back to avenge his death on the man who killed him. In other words, the *tsantsa* is a way of locking-in an enemy's *muisak* in order to fully appropriate his *kakarma*.

An examination of cannibalism among the Hua, Gimi, and Bimin-Kuskusmin of Papua New Guinea make these beliefs and concurrent behaviors even clearer. Cultural anthropologist Anna Meigs explains that “The ultimate reality [for the Hua] is not society but the mysteries of the body.”¹⁸³ She goes on to write that the Hua are obsessed with the transformation processes of the body (procreation, birth, growth, aging, illness, and death) as much as the substances produced thereof. According to Meigs, for the Hua every bodily substance or effusion — sexual fluids, feces, urine, breath, body odors, sweat, body oil, hair, saliva, finger-nails, blood, fat, flesh — are *nu*, and *nu* is the source of life, vitality, and fertility. *Nu* can be obtained from just about anything that is alive, anything that can be eaten or otherwise ingested. Whenever someone eats

something that person is believed to be absorbing not only the *nu* of whatever it is that he or she is eating but also its properties.

In relation to the concept of *nu*, Peggy Reeves Sanday explains that “all aspects of the physical life cycle from birth to death are understood in terms of gradual gains and losses of *nu* and shifts between [...these] states.”¹⁸⁴ The growth of children depends, for example, on the expenditure of *nu* by parents. The *nu* that brings children into being and sustains them is drained from their parents’ bodies. Their growth is therefore directly related to their parents’ decline. Sanday points out that implicit in this conception of life and development is the idea that human *nu* is not a renewable source and that it is not produced inherently through individual or collective effort but received from other people who have received it themselves in turn from other sources. Anytime *nu* is obtained from any one source that source, while considered a taproot of life, is simultaneously viewed as waning. This type of belief system operates as an inversion vis-à-vis Western beliefs where growth and development — both social and biological — are regarded not as a progression from life to death but from death to life. In the former world view, since this progression of life from death is secured through a finite quantity of *nu* available to the community as a whole, individuals must be extremely careful in its expenditure.

Life, then, is viewed as a closed system of *nu* transfer in which a community’s survival is secured by feeding on one another’s *nu*. In fact, almost all social interactions including eating and sexual intercourse are conceived in terms of *nu* transactions, where *nu* is permanently shared and exchanged between individuals. There are of course a variety of strict rules concerning the appropriate exchange of *nu* as there is both a good and a bad *nu*. “The positive or negative value of *nu* depends on the nature of the social relationship that exists between the donor and the receiver of *nu* and their sex.”¹⁸⁵ Some *nu* can stunt or even kill you, but other *nu* will strengthen

and even enhance your wellbeing. It is, for example, customary to eat one's dead parents (provided one eats one's same-sex parent) as this is believed to pass on the older generation's strength and experience to the younger generation, but it is forbidden for parents to eat their children, as this is regarded as a way of depleting the community's most basic source of *nu*. Through the transfer between generations, this type of cannibalism (known as mortuary cannibalism) ensures not only the transmission of basic community assets like experience and wisdom accumulated through the ages, but also inter-generational cohesion and continuity. In such a world, cannibalism is not only a reality; it is an all-encompassing metaphor that accounts for and regulates nearly all social exchanges.¹⁸⁶

We have of course no way of knowing what kind or kinds of cannibalism were practiced in sixteenth-century New Granada. Spanish accounts are for the most part too sensationalistic and politically motivated for us to infer anything other than the fact that cannibalism was practiced throughout the region. Besides, it is almost certain that the Spanish invasion altered the practice considerably. Yet the core beliefs at the heart of cannibalism (as a ritual practice, not a last-resort-solution for famine or starvation) can help explain much of what the cronistas described in their accounts. Meigs claims that cannibalism undergirds a religious system that centers on the body. The body in cannibalistic societies, she says, is “sacred temple of all power [...it] is approached directly, its contents assessed and monitored, its intake and output carefully regulated.”¹⁸⁷ According to Meigs, the body literally provides cannibalistic societies with a cognitive framework through which both the self and the world are interpreted, which is to say that it gives way to both an ontology and an epistemology. Personhood — both physio- and psychologically speaking — is thus conceived in terms of a composite system of parts and substances, each of which constitutes the specific seat of a specific life force, which in turn is

susceptible of being appropriated, circulated, and shared within a group of people. Among the Bimin-Kuskusmin of Papua New Guinea, semen, for example, is infused with the agnatic blood of a man's lineage and that of his two grandmothers. Likewise a woman's menstrual blood carries the woman's lineage, that of her mother and two grandmothers. A woman's navel constitutes the repository of all her knowledge. In such a context, anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday tells us, the predication of the individual and more specifically of the individual's social persona is done physically and it is dramatically done.¹⁸⁸ This explains why in this type of cultures the ritual torture, killing and consumption of an enemy take on such preeminence: "The torture, killing, and butchering of the victims disassembles the constellation of personhood into its culturally defined components."¹⁸⁹

Ritual torture, killing, dismemberment, and ingestion of an enemy allow for the neutralization and disintegration of the evil that the victim represents while consumption of parts of that same victim that are associated with positive aspects of the self contributes to the enhancement and vitality of those that consume them. Because the underlying core belief here is that evil can only be transformed — that it cannot be blown off or repressed — torture is an essential part of the process, in that it purifies the victim and the victim's body parts of all evil and thus transforms them into acceptable and edible parts which can only then potentiate whoever eats them. On the other hand, torture also allows the victim — when it is undergone without emitting so much as a whimper — to die an honorable death; in turn, an honorable death confers even more power on the body or body parts to be consumed, thereby increasing the desirability of the said body or body parts. Finally, since different body parts and substances are differently valued and gendered, special attention is paid to how each part is "processed" and how and to whom they are distributed for consumption.

Beliefs such as the idea that the life force of an individual or a community exists in limited and non-renewable amounts that circulate from one individual to another also explain how disease — the waning of one’s life force — can be viewed as a kind of theft or tampering with of one’s vitality. This also explains why people would engage in endless cycles of warring witchcraft in an effort to reclaim their stolen life force by stealing or attempting to steal in return their aggressor’s (or aggressor’s family’s) vital energy. Likewise, this explains why it is desirable for a warrior to kill as many enemies as possible. Through the killing and consumption of an enemy, a warrior not only rids himself of a threat and an opponent, but can actually appropriate and incorporate his enemy’s life force, which in turn will reinvigorate and protect him against other enemies. Such a belief would have, of course, fueled any warring ethos.

Harner, for example, says that among the Shuar, “The majority of young men interviewed expressed a strong desire to kill, not only to avenge the deaths of their fathers and other close relatives, but to acquire the *arutam* soul power and to become known, respected, and feared as *kakaram*.”¹⁹⁰ He then goes on to explain how this complex set of beliefs plays out in feuding:

To be acknowledged as a *kakaram*, a man must have killed at least several persons. Early in his career, he does this by going on killing expeditions led by others, whether intra-tribal assassinations or inter-tribal raids for *tsansa*.¹⁹¹ As his reputation increases, he will eventually successfully organize and lead such an expedition himself, usually the more modest local assassination raid, probably against a specific personal enemy who is believed to have, sometime earlier, caused the death of a member of his immediate family. If he acquits himself well in achieving this assassination, especially as evidenced by firing the first shot into the victim, word will rapidly spread of his apparent power. Soon he will be approached by other men to lead them in killing expeditions against their own enemies. The *kakaram*, anxious to further his reputation as well as to gain additional supernatural power through more killing, rarely refuses such a request, even though it often means that he is agreeing to kill a fellow tribesman who is not even an enemy of his. As his reputation grows, the *kakaram* tends to dress himself in elaborate feather headdresses and ornaments when visiting other households or receiving guests.¹⁹²

While a *kakaram* is greatly feared by his enemies, he is usually considered by his neighbors to be a great local asset since he becomes a deterrent to attacks upon them.¹⁹³

Violence, however, is not the only means of discouraging enemy attacks among the Shuar. Harner, for example, describes an ingenious system called “trading-partners” or “*amigri* relationship” which the Shuar have devised in order to circumvent some of the difficulties that arise as a result of feuding. The idea behind “trading-partners” is to secure a shatterproof, life-long friendship among men: “The *amigri* relationship is viewed as being closer than that of siblings and, in fact, if two brothers happen to be trading partners they will use the ‘friend’ form of address (*amici*) in preference to that normally used by brothers (*yatsuci*). Brothers, fathers, and sons can and often do fight with one another, but it seems to be unthinkable for a man to fight with his ‘friend.’ A man is born and married into his personal kindred and it is recognized that he does not necessarily have to like his relatives, but in the case of a trading partner, he is honor-bound to live-up to the obligation which he has ritually undertaken. If he failed to do so, he would lose the respect and trust of others to a degree dangerous to his safety.”¹⁹⁴

According to Harner, men formalize their trading friendship through the ritual exchange of trade goods. Once they have done so, they will trade and exchange goods for the rest of their lives in a relationship where they are mutually obligated to one another to a degree well beyond the obligations of other relationships, including siblings.¹⁹⁵ For example, a trading-partner host who is being visited by a trading-partner guest has the moral obligation to provide his guest with safe conduct and protection even though this guest may find himself in a neighborhood where he or close relatives of his may have enemies. Since a man can have several “trading-partners,” the system gives way to a wide and extensive network that allows for the circulation of goods throughout the heartland of Shuar territory and as far away as Iquitos in Peru.¹⁹⁶ Yet, as vital as these goods (steel cutting tools, guns, ammunition among others) may be for Shuar livelihood, the emphasis does not seem to rest on the goods themselves, but rather on the kind of bonds and

obligations that are formed around the distribution and exchange of these items. In reality, it is the neighbors of any one “trading-partner” that hold the key to the entire system: “A man becomes an *amigri* not to accumulate and hoard wealth, but to dispense it in his neighborhood, to gain prestige and obligations. The distribution of these goods locally is normally done piecemeal as the trading partner’s relatives and others ask him for them. Informants, in saying that a man becomes an *amigri* ‘so that people will like him,’ explicitly recognize that the main purpose of being a trading partner, and of distributing the goods obtained thereby, is to acquire friends. The people who receive goods from a partner become morally obligated to him until they reciprocate with either an equivalent amount of goods or with services, the latter usually in the form of aid in the trading partner’s social disputes and feuds.”¹⁹⁷

There is no direct evidence that such a system operated among indigenous peoples in sixteenth-century New Granada, but the fact that a Muisca Indian like Muequetá, from the altiplano region surrounding modern-day Bogotá, had made it as far as Quito, across a region inhabited by cultures vastly different from his, many of which may have practiced cannibalism, suggests that these cultures may well have had mechanisms similar to the one described above. According to Harner, for all their feuding, the Shuar were able to call a general truce among all the Shuar neighborhoods along the Ecuadorian frontier in 1941, when the Ecuadorian army threatened to attack them in the war between Ecuador and Peru: “Almost all the Jívaro neighborhoods along the frontier of Ecuadorian colonization rapidly called a truce among themselves and made secret plans to conduct a coordinated revolt at the first sign of a general attack by the Ecuadorians. Elaborate strategic plans and tactical assignments were agreed upon by the leading warriors of the normally feuding neighborhoods.”¹⁹⁸ No doubt the politics that went into this emergency alliance were similar to those involved in the 1599 Shuar defeat of the

Spaniards. Juan de Castellanos, who throughout his 113,609-verse-long poem revels in the belligerent nature or “*belicosidad de los naturales*” of New Granada, observed a similar capacity for suspending animosities whenever they faced exterior threats:

No reconocen rey ni presidente
 Que les imponga leyes y preceptos,
 Mas cada cual lo es de su cabaña,
 Y el que mas rico es, mayor compañía.
 Pero todas las veces que se piensa
 Sobrevenir belígeros aprietos,
 Están unidos para su defensa,
 Y entonces tienen príncipes eletos,
 Los cuales tienen potestad estensa,
 En ejercicio de ella circunspetos,
 De cosas a la guerra concernientes;
 Y a estos son subyectos y obedientes.¹⁹⁹

As this excerpt suggests, one such peace-achieving mechanism was the very figure of the cacique whose chief purpose was to integrate differences among groups or sub-groups in order to consolidate alliances that would eventually allow them to face bigger threats. Again and again the Spaniards complained that these men had little or no authority whatsoever and that the only time that they were obeyed was whenever they went to war. However, in a sense, the Spaniards may have misinterpreted the evidence they had at hand: they may have failed to see that the authority caciques lacked in their eyes was somehow vested in the people. Through their fierce autonomy the people permanently contested a cacique’s authority. Since he could never be sure that his “orders” would be carried out, his power ultimately depended on the goodwill of the people. And caciques went to great lengths to secure this goodwill using high doses of diplomacy and generosity. While caciques were without any coercive or decision-making power and could do nothing to prevent a dispute from turning into a feud, or anyone individual or group from breaking away and celebrating an alliance with some other party, they did have the responsibility to try as hard as possible to maintain peace and harmony, appease quarrels and settle disputes. In

the end, their authority rested on their ability to bring about as much understanding as possible among people. It goes without saying that extensive family connections (through as many wives as possible) and bonds of mutual obligation (most probably secured through mechanisms not unlike the Shuar trading-partner system) constituted an important part of the recipe for reaching this understanding.

Another peace-reaching mechanism present in societies where retributive justice is widely practiced is of course its flip-side aspect: compensation. There is some indication that this may have been a favored recourse for putting an end to conflict in sixteenth-century New Granada:

No tienen por pecado matarse unos a otros con yerbas ni a lanzadas ni de otra manera [...] Y si acaso algunos indios vecinos se meten de por medio a poner paz entre ellos y las concluyen, allí se satisfacen con mantas y cuentas, las muertes y daños, y luego toman los unos y los otros unas varas largas de dos varas y más de medir, y con ellas se dan de ambas partes de palos los unos a los otros, hasta que las quiebran y desmenuzan y quedan con un pedazo de vara en las manos, y abrázanse y de allí se van a beber, y dura la borrachera más de un mes y más.²⁰⁰

On the other hand, it is also possible that the widespread violence reported by the cronistas may have been — as it is among the Shuar²⁰¹ — primarily directed at adult males rather than women and children. We should remember that the anonymous priest who in the seventeenth century drafted an ethnography of the Iroquois and who in all likelihood witnessed the gruesome torture and cannibalism of one *Sieur Brignac*²⁰² also had this to say about the Iroquois: “There is no more politic nation in the world than that one, and which would know better how to govern itself. They are always in extensive communication with one another.”²⁰³ Although feuding may have been an important part of social dynamics in these communities, it appears that there were just as many social mechanisms designed to regulate, contain, and settle feuding disputes.

Pierre Clastres, the French anthropologist and ethnographer, has argued that the atomism and isolationism attributed by European invaders to these societies was meant to convey an image of predominantly aggressive societies, in a state of infancy and therefore in need of supervision.²⁰⁴ Clastres argues that “generally speaking, intertribal relations were much closer and more sustained than the emphasis on the bellicose spirit of these peoples would lead us to believe.”²⁰⁵ Since men were required to side with their in-laws, neighboring groups allied through marriage were prevented from regarding each other as foreigners or outright enemies. This in turn allowed for the incorporation of different communities into a whole. According to Clastres, marriage and other bond-forming mechanisms (i.e. Shuar amigri system) gave way to far-reaching social structures that while diffuse and fluid were still defined by an implicit system of mutual rights and obligations which formed the basis of an extensive social solidarity.²⁰⁶ Just as the significance of small plots of cultivated land, burned forest undergrowth, and seasonal residence patterns often escaped the notice of Spaniards habituated to landscapes shaped by plow agriculture and permanent settlement, the large spans of apparently empty land were in reality striated with complex relations of community, control and authority, although this was not particularly evident to Spanish eyes. Clastres emphasizes the need to acknowledge the fierce spirit of independence as well as the acute political and diplomatic vein that infused many of these cultures. Rather than painting a picture of myriad groups hopelessly fearful and hostile to one another, he invites us to take in the full scope of their complexity — the violence as much as the sophisticated social mechanisms designed not only to deter violence but also to avert the rise of despotic power.²⁰⁷

This, then, was the universe into which Belalcázar and his yanacona allies walked on a fateful day in September 1535. As we have already discussed, his incursion into modern-day Colombian territory was almost certainly preceded by European-spawned epidemics. Indeed, sometime between Pascual de Andagoya's 1522 reconnaissance expedition²⁰⁸ along the Colombian Pacific coast (or perhaps even earlier) and Belalcázar's 1535 invasion, the first of a series of pandemic waves hit Colombia in the sixteenth century and may have reached the south-central region for the first time. Such an event would have caused thousands of deaths as well as massive exoduses. It may have also disrupted and debilitated existing social structures and networks. Moreover, in a world where disease was associated with witchcraft and warfare, it very likely exacerbated internal dissension and friction.

Eight months before setting out, Belalcázar had dispatched his lieutenant, Juan de Ampudia, on a reconnaissance mission. Ampudia followed the course of the Cauca River and although Velasco tells us that he was given clear instructions to stay out of trouble, he soon earned the nickname "el Atila del Cauca" which speaks not only to his own ferocity, but also and perhaps more importantly, to the fierce resistance that he encountered along the way. From the beginning, the Sindaguas in the Patía Valley constituted a major threat, constantly raiding Spanish expeditions and travelling parties attempting to make their way from Pasto to Popayán. Only after a hundred years, in the 1630s, would the Spaniards, under the command of Captain Francisco Godoy y Prado, be able to penetrate Sindagua territory in any significant way.²⁰⁹ The Pastos to the east were apparently easier to overcome, perhaps in part due to their close association with the Pastos on the Ecuadorian side of the Carchi River who had been incorporated into the Inca Empire forty years before. Almost from the start, the Spaniards began

setting up small settlements (Timbío,²¹⁰ 1535; San Juan de Pasto,²¹¹ 1537; Popayán,²¹² 1537), yet they were far from exercising complete control over these areas.

In fact, for most of the sixteenth century, ambivalence would characterise the relationships between Spaniards and Indians in the region. During this century, neither Spaniards nor Indians were ever able to completely defeat the other side. A complex cohabitation ensued. The locals seem to have alternated between overt warfare and tentative rapprochements. Hostilities were frequently followed by renewed truces. Again and again Spanish officers and soldiers complained of the duplicity of the Indians: “*Envió [Pigoanza] a decir a nuestro capitán que tuviésemos paz con él y que nos serviría de enviarnos bastimentos, y que bastasen las guerras hechas y se dejasen para otro verano. Y esto decía el perro a fin cauteloso, para nos descuidar y saber los que éramos, para se aprovechar de nosotros por la mejor manera que pudiese, que palabra ni verdad no la tienen ni la saben cumplir.*”²¹³ The locals realized soon enough that they could not defeat the Spanish and their yanacona allies head-on in open-warfare. There are sufficient indications that they quickly switched from their initial pitched battle tactics to a more guerilla-like strategy of striking suddenly, striking hard, and getting out quick.

At the same time, they may also have tried, as they had done in the past with other groups of invaders, and as it was customary among them, to build alliances with the newly arrived foreigners by offering them their sisters and daughters in marriage. The Spaniards were almost certainly perceived as powerful potential allies who would be an asset to any one group. In a land where men presumably established bonds of mutual obligation and non-aggression with their fathers- and brothers-in-law, it is only logical to think that this was what they had in mind when they presented the Spaniards with their sisters and daughters.²¹⁴ However, unlike other groups of indigenous invaders before them, the Spaniards did not understand the political intent behind this

gesture. They mistook the initial hospitality to which they were often treated and which included sexual privileges for sexual license and promiscuity. The locals almost certainly sought to diffuse the threat that the Spaniards represented by either securing alliances with them or by diminishing their military potency through the encouragement of Spanish sexual activity.

Indeed, since heterosexual intercourse was probably understood as an exchange — and thereby loss — of male properties/vitality for female properties/vitality, the locals most likely attempted to spend Spanish maleness and aggressiveness by indulging Spanish sexuality. After all, here as in many other parts of the Americas, it was the fear of losing male power that prompted warriors to observe ritual abstinence before going to war. But in general the strategy backfired. The Spaniards with their peculiar understanding of sexuality and relationships with women viewed these displays of calculated generosity as a sign of weakness. Moreover, they would soon take the power relationships they had established with Indian men to a sexual level with native women by increasingly objectifying them. In addition, it is also possible that the great number of yanacona women who accompanied Belalcázar and his men may have frustrated even further the locals' attempts at securing alliances with Spaniards through women, as the Spanish, who were already travelling with one to two yanacona women per man, would have been even less interested than usual in any long-term relationships with local women.

Peace, therefore, if it ever existed, was short-lived. Indigenous resistance was quick to organize itself. In the Alto Magdalena region where resistance would last well into the 1700s,²¹⁵ Pascual de Andagoya was already in 1540 writing a letter to his Majesty, Charles I, in which he informed him that the Indians had risen against the Spaniards. The Indians, he wrote, were threatening to take over the town of Timaná, which had been founded only two years before in 1538 at Guacacallo:²¹⁶ “[...] y pues agora plaziendo a nuestro señor en esta guerra se abrirá el

*camino que tienen cercado los señores de perama y yalcón pareciome que sería bien escribir al que allí esta por capitán trayéndole a la memoria el servicio de dios nuestro señor y de vuestra majestad y reprehendiéndole lo que aca se dize que alla se aze y ofreciéndome si alguna necesidad tuviere de socorrerle como vuestra majestad Vera por el traslado que con esta envío plega a nuestro señor que sea alguna parte para que dios ny vuestra majestad no sean también bendidos en aquella tierra [...]*²¹⁷ A month later, Belalcázar was also writing to the king about the necessity to build two forts in the region: “[...] y agora por vuestra parte nos ha sido hecha relación que los indios de la dicha provincia [de Popayán] es gente belicosa, y que para guarda de los españoles que en ella residieren y seguridad de la tierra, es necesario hacerse en ella dos fortalezas [...]²¹⁸

The war that ensued was brutal. Spanish ferocity apparently flourished in relation to local cannibalistic practices in strange ways: in the *residencia* trial against Belalcázar in 1550, Francisco Briceño was instructed to find out whether it was true “[...] que es cosa común que en la dicha Gobernación [de Popayán], que ceban los perros con los indios vivos y matan muchos de ellos; Item, si es verdad que, si algún español mataba algún indio, luego le hacían cuartos al tal indio muerto y lo ponían en su cocina, y de aquella carne humana cebaban a los perros, y lo consentía el dicho Gobernador [...] Item, que el dicho Gobernador [Benalcázar], después que se alzaron los dichos indios, les dio gran guerra con españoles e indios, y consentía que los indios comiesen carne humana de los otros indios que mataban, contrarios.”²¹⁹ Juan de Velasco would later accuse several of Belalcázar’s men (Juan de Ampudia, Alonso Sánchez, Francisco García de Tobar and Roque Martín, among others) of establishing “*carnicería pública de carne humana para mantener grandes partidas de mastines, con qué hacer sus cacerías de los*

fugitivos indianos.”²²⁰ And Cieza would describe the terror that the man-eating dogs caused among the Indians:

Los indios nuestros amigos, por la parte de abajo cercaron el Peñón y los cristianos por lo alto echaron delante los perros, los cuales eran tan fieros, que a dos bocados que daban con sus crueles dientes, abrían a los pobres hasta las entrañas. Pero no era pequeño dolor ver que, por haberse puesto en armas por defender su tierra a los que venían a se las quitar, los tratasen de aquella manera. Y los muchachos muy tiernos, espantados de ver el estruendo, andando de una parte para otro huyendo, eran hechos pedazos por los perros, que no era pequeño espectáculo para los tristes. También hacían con las ballestas camino en sus cuerpos para que las ánimas saliesen. Y viéndose de esta manera, gemían y llamaban el ayuda de sus padres o de sus dioses, y huyendo de los españoles se despeñaban por aquellos riscos. Y los que escaparon de los españoles encontraron no menos cruel muerte de los indios que los mataban y comían.²²¹

This passage not only shows the horrendous violence amidst which many Indians suddenly found themselves, but also the fact that the Spaniards by now had other Indian allies besides the yanacunas. The Spaniards had indeed walked into long-standing and bitter divisions, especially between Indians living in the sierra and those living in the valleys. With more than twenty years of experience of taking advantage of indigenous internal conflicts, Belalcázar was quick to take note of them: “*Los naturales de Guacacallo tienen guerra con los de la provincia de Yalcón, y en cierta batalla que entre ellos hubieron, uno de Guacacallo prendió a otro de Yalcón [...]*”²²² Henceforth, many Indians would find themselves trapped between Spanish brutality and indigenous ferocity. The Huilean poet Guillermo Martínez González has recently suggested that it was probably during this time of carnage that the legend of that famous and mythical Colombian creature — la Patasola — that haunts the Colombian countryside (and most Colombian childhoods), devouring everything in its path, was born: “*En las selvas del Magdalena, estrellándose aquí y allá con los matorrales, deambula la Patasola. Enemiga de los hombres, acosada por una culpa antigua, poseída del horror de su propia apariencia, jamás se detiene en su vértigo de odio y espanto.*”²²³ Another Huilean, historian Leovigildo Bernal Andrade, claims that it was during this decisive stage that what was once a religious and ritual practice, most likely governed by strict rules and taboos, became an all-out instrument of terror

and total war: “*Y que se sepa sólo los pijaos, entre todos los pueblos antropófagos del mundo entero, hicieron de esa costumbre un arma de lucha contra los enemigos de su raza y de sus hermanos los otros indios.*”²²⁴

But if the Spaniards managed to ally themselves with some of the local groups, other communities were able to overcome their differences and form a united front that would tenaciously oppose the new invaders. A document drafted in Guacacallo, on November 13, 1544, in response to the New Laws issued in 1542 by Charles V, allows us to see how the situation had evolved over the course of just six years, since the Spanish founding of the town in 1538. In it, the encomenderos refused to meet the king’s ordinances because, they argued, the Indians in the region had never fully submitted in the first place:

[...] los dichos indios y la mayor parte de ellos siempre han estado y están alzados y de guerra y no quieren venir a dar la obediencia a Su Magestad y al dominio de los cristianos, aunque por muchas veces han sido requeridos, y las veces que la han dado, debajo de la paz y obediencia, han muerto más de cien españoles cristianos, así capitanes como mercaderes, como de otras personas que debajo de la dicha paz venían seguros por los caminos reales, además de muchos negros y esclavos y otras personas a su servicio que consigo traían. Y que esto es así público y notorio [...] que a los que así han muerto les han robado y tomado los dichos indios oro y plata y ropa y yeguas y caballos y otras cosas, valor de muy gran suma de pesos de oro, además de doscientos mil pesos de buen oro, y todo ello se lo tienen y han llevado [...] que los dichos cristianos que así mataron y a los demás esclavos indios de su servicio y a los caballos, yeguas y cosas vivas se lo comían todo, porque son de tal condición que comen carne humana, y desde que no hallan cristianos, ellos mismos se matan unos a otros para comer y se comen [...] que los indios de esta dicha villa y tierra, más que otros de ninguna parte, son sin ningún juicio ni razón, más como brutos animales, que no como hombres humanos, ni tienen señor conocido sino como cosa de behetría [...]

Apparently old and bitter enemies like the Paeces and the Yalcones had come together to face the Spaniards.²²⁶

[...] muchas veces se han juntado mucho número de los dichos indios debajo de la dicha paz y han venido a esta dicha villa con muchas armas de lanzas y hondas y dardos y flechas para asolar y matar a los cristianos que están en ella y lo han puesto por obra y quemado mucha parte de ella y muerto y herido muchos cristianos en la dicha villa, porque, por estar debajo de la dicha paz, estaban salvos y seguros [...] Y habrá ocho meses, poco más o menos, que tenían puesto en mucho estrecho al gobernador [Belalcázar] y a todos los cristianos que estaban en la provincia de Páez, adonde mataron al capitán Tobar y a muchos otros españoles; y por verse en tanto estrecho de la mucha gente de indios que les hacía la guerra, les convino retraerse [...]

Antón Vásquez, one of ten witnesses cited in this process, declared:

[...] que por ser los dichos naturales de tan mala decisión e indómitos, se han rebelado y alzado de la servidumbre de Su Magestad y se han convocado unos a otros, según los indios han dicho, para dar guerra a los cristianos y ha visto venir algunas veces muchos indios a dar la dicha guerra al pueblo, acometiendo por todas partes y quemaron parte de él, y que venían con sus armas, como la pregunta lo relata, y que vió que hirieron algunos cristianos [...]²²⁸

And Hernando Lorigón, another witness, testified that:

[...] este testigo ha visto en lo que toca a esta villa lo que la pregunta relata, y en lo de la provincia de Páez lo sabe porque lo vió escribir así como lo relata su pregunta, y el señor adelantado envió a esta villa un mandamiento pidiendo socorro para tornar a hacer la guerra, como tornó, y en el dicho socorro contaba las muertes del dicho capitán Tobar y españoles que mataron cuando el dicho señor gobernador se retiró y salió por la poca gente que tenía [...]²²⁹

Perhaps the best-known episode from this period is that of the death of another of Belalcázar's lieutenant Pedro de Añasco, at the hands of the legendary Gaitana.²³⁰ Although this episode has been immortalized by Colombian nationalist history as a symbol of home-grown bravery and fierceness, it is worth examining what it reveals about an aspect of sixteenth-century indigenous society that is much less willingly acknowledged. According to the version of Añasco's death that has come down to us, in 1538, before moving on north in his quest for the mythical Eldorado, Belalcázar entrusted the region to his lieutenant, Captain Pedro de Añasco. Popular oral tradition (disseminated in school textbooks across Colombia) tells us that at first, Añasco was able to befriend several of the caciques in the area, in particular one whom the Spaniards called Don Rodrigo, the son of a powerful Yalcón cacique named Pigoanza. But when Añasco began to exact more tribute from the Indians, many rebelled, among them, La Gaitana's son. He was a powerful lord by the name of Timanco who refused to pay tribute or become a vassal to the Spaniards. Añasco, determined to set an example for the rest of the Indians to see, captured him and burnt him at the stake. Upon hearing the news, La Gaitana vowed to avenge her son's death and began to rally the principal caciques in the region to attack Añasco. She enlisted the help of her relative, Pigoanza, the powerful chieftain of the Yalcones. Pigoanza, whose son, Don Rodrigo, was held captive by the Spaniards, agreed to capture Añasco and turn

him over to La Gaitana. Eventually Añasco was taken prisoner by Pigoanza's warriors and handed over to La Gaitana who killed him with her own hands. According to oral tradition, when Captain Juan del Río was sent from Popayán²³¹ to put down the rebellion, La Gaitana once again summoned the Indians to fight off the invaders. Pigoanza led his troops against del Río but was defeated. Undeterred, La Gaitana continued to rally the Indians. Eventually, she was able to bring together Yalcones, Piramas, Pixaos, Guanacas, Timanaes and Paeces.²³² However, the Indians were betrayed by the *cacique* Inando who informed the Spaniards of the Indians' plan to attack them. Del Río immediately sent a messenger to the provincial capital Neiva,²³³ asking for reinforcements. He was joined by Captain Juan Cabrera and his troops, and together they were able to put an end to the rebellion in Timaná. Although the Spaniards were able to quell the insurrection in 1543, it would take them another seventy years to suppress the entire regional revolt spearheaded by La Gaitana.

That Añasco died a brutal death at the hands of the Yalcones is confirmed by three of the witnesses summoned in the November 13, 1544 Guacacallo probanza: Florencio Serrano, Francisco García de Escobar, and Diego López de Valderas. Florencio Serrano "*de edad de treinta y cinco años poco más o menos*" testified:

[...] que en los términos de esta villa hay mucha cantidad de indios que han estado y están alzados de guerra toda la mayor parte de ellos, y ha visto que han sido llamados a las paces muchas veces por los capitanes y justicias que han sido en esta villa, y que han estado y están contumaces, no queriendo venir a dar la obediencia a Su Majestad; y las veces que algunos la han dado, ha visto que la han quebrantado debajo de cautelosa paz, y han dado guerra de noche a los cristianos, estando viviendo los dichos indios en su propia tierra, a los capitanes y españoles que con ellos estaban; y han muerto debajo de la dicha paz, a veces, y hasta en cantidad de setenta y ochenta españoles; y han muerto mercaderes entre ellos que venían seguros por los caminos reales, demás de muchos negros esclavos de su servicio y naborías cristianas que consigo traían, como la pregunta lo relata. Preguntado cómo lo sabe, dijo, que porque este testigo venía a esta villa con ciertos mercaderes que venían con el capitán Añasco y este testigo venía por guía de ellos para esta villa y vió que entonces, estando de paz los dichos que residen en el dicho camino, y debajo de ella, dieron en ellos una mañana a la hora del alba, como a manera de salteadores, y mataron de quince que venían con dicho capitán, mataron y prendieron los catorce; y los que llevaron presos hicieron sacrificios de ellos, cortándoles un día los brazos y otro día las piernas para comer, como se los comieron. Y este testigo se escapó de aquella guerra y después lo oyó a los propios indios cómo habían comido y martirizado los dichos

españoles y halló este testigo en las casas de los propios indios las cabezas de algunos españoles que él conocía, y de otros, piernas [...] ²³⁴

Francisco García de Escobar, “*conquistador de esta gobernación y villa [...] de edad de treinta y tres años poco más o menos*” added:

[...] que entrando este testigo en la guerra con el capitán Juan de Ampudia en las dichas provincias, tomó este testigo en la guerra en una celada a un indio lengua, paje del cacique de los Yalcones, donde habían muerto los dichos españoles, y preguntándole que ¿qué habían hecho de los cristianos que mataron con el capitán Osorio, y de los caballos, negros, servicios y mercaderías que le habían tomado?, dijo el dicho lengua que así al capitán Pedro Añasco, que haya gloria, como al capitán Osorio con toda la gente que ambos capitanes llevaban, sin escaparse sino cuatro o cinco, dijeron que los habían muerto y que los habían hecho pedazos, así a los cristianos como a los caballos, yeguas y negros y servicio, y lo demás; y que de todo ello después de haberlo hecho pedazos, tomaron de cada cosa de ello cierta parte y que la cocieron en muchas ollas, todo junto y con hierbas, y muchas veces hacían ollas cocidas de la dicha carne para comer y la comieron, según confesó el dicho indio [...] ²³⁵

And Diego López de Valderas, “*conquistador de esta villa y sus términos [...] de edad de cuarenta años poco más o menos*” also declared:

[...que] vió salir de esta villa dos capitanes a los términos de ella a pacificar y conquistar los indios comarcanos, y es público y notorio que mataron al dicho capitán Pedro de Añasco con veinte y dos hombres, y al otro capitán dieron en él y los que llevaba, y les mataron dos españoles y caballos y otros tuvieron heridos. Y este testigo los vió salir y no los vió volver. Y lo supo, porque así es cierto, [sabe] de las personas que se escaparon [...] Y que también sabe por cierto que en la misma tierra y camino y provincia a esta villa comarcana mataron otros capitanes, que fueron el capitán Juan de Ampudia con ciertos españoles, y asimismo el capitán Osorio en otra guazabara otra copia de españoles; y que después de esto desde en cierto tiempo viniendo a hacer el castigo de lo susodicho el señor gobernador [Belalcázar], en el propio camino en la provincia de Páez mataron los indios al capitán Tobar con otros diez y seis españoles, y esto lo sabe, porque se lo han dicho los que escaparon de ella, que muchos de ella están en esta villa, y que otros han muerto en los términos de esta villa. Y todos los más ha sido sobre paz fingidamente y como a traición [...] ²³⁶

None of these men mentioned La Gaitana. However, Florencio Serrano apparently told Juan de Castellanos about her because the “soldier-priest-poet” (as Castellanos is known) later immortalized her in his famous work, *Elegías de varones ilustres de India*. ²³⁷ Although Castellanos was not an eyewitness to these events, he did take part in the conquest of New Granada as a cavalry soldier. At the same time, he knew personally many of the men who took part in the conquest of New Granada and some of the men who fought against the Indians in the

Alto Magdalena region. In the *Elegías* he claimed that his account of La Gaitana's rebellion was based on those of three eyewitnesses, Florencio Serrano, Juan de Orozco, and Arias Maldonado.²³⁸

De todos ellos uno solo vivo/Que milagrosamente se valía/Y aun me dan razón de lo que escribo/Y es Florencio Serrano, de quien siento/Que cuenta la verdad en lo que cuento/A todos consta bien ser su costumbre/Sin interposición de vil artista/Y él y Orozco, que me dan la lumbre/De la dificultad desta conquista/No hablan cosa con incertidumbre/Antes lo que deponen es de vista/Y un Arias Maldonado, cuya fama/Otra pluma mas diligente llama/Con los tres tracto, hablo, comunico/Y con su relación me favorecen.²³⁹

We know that Florencio Serrano later became an encomendero and as such settled in the city of Tunja, where Juan de Castellanos also lived from 1562 until his death in 1606.²⁴⁰ It was probably during this time that Serrano narrated the events dealing with La Gaitana's wars to Castellanos. German anthropologist, Hermann Trimborn, has argued that in addition to eyewitnesses' accounts, Castellanos also based parts of his descriptions on some of the writings (now lost) of Sebastián de Belalcázar.²⁴¹

However, Colombian historians for the most part have doubted the existence of La Gaitana arguing that hers is more the stuff of legend and folklore than historical fact. Among the few who have studied the indigenous pre-colonial cultures of the Alto Magdalena region, Ramón Gómez Cubides²⁴² and Bernardo Tovar Zambrano²⁴³ have suggested the existence of *cacicazgos femeninos* or female chieftainships in pre-colonial times in the region. Both mention that in a dispute over *encomienda* rights in Timaná between Pedro de Molina and Alvaro Botello, which flared up in 1550 and dragged on through 1563, there are a number of documents that mention a “*señora Guatipán, de la provincia de Otongo.*” *Guatipán*, they hold, was according to Huila tradition, La Gaitana's indigenous name. They are probably correct in their claim, because in colonial Spanish the word *señora* conveyed the idea of a noble woman in possession of some

kind of property, domain or territory; thus the fact that the woman by the name of *Guatipán* is referred to as a *señora* — and not an “india” the term by which Spanish cronistas commonly referred to indigenous women — is significant and almost certainly points to the existence of female chieftainships in the area.

My examination of the twenty-one folios that make up the court case reveals that the *señora Guatipán* is mentioned twice in connection with her people, the Otongos.²⁴⁴ The first time she is mentioned is in a transcription or *traslado* of an encomienda deed issued in Popayán, on February 15, 1550 by Sebastián de Belalcázar to Pedro de Molina. The deed made Molina encomendero of some fourteen hundred Indians in the Otongo provinces, headed by several principales, among them “a lady (señora) that calls herself *Guatepan*:”

El adelantado don Sebastian de belarcaÇar governador e capitan general en estas provincias e gobernacion de Popayan por su magestad [...] encomiendo en vos el dicho pedro de molina en los términos y limites de la dicha villa los yndios caciques e señores siguientes el pueblo llamado *cencenoca* con un principal que se dize *costanca* y en las provincias de otongo mil y quatro cientos yndios de visitación con el señor principal de las dichas provincias que es *el señor principal maquila* o como quiera que se llamare e con una señora que se dize *guatepan_e* con un principal que se dize *tamaypan* y otro que se dize *caluana* e otro que se dize *gualoca* e otro que se dize *gualura* e otro principal que se dize *chanquira*_que están poblados el rrio arriba donde estuvo aposentado el capitán juan cabrera los quales se os an de contar primero que a otro ninguno que allí tenga yndios asi e según e como fueron encomendados al capitán francisco de la coba e asimismo os encomyendo el pueblo que se dize Calamo con dos principales que se dizen *alvi* y *colo* e con los demás que ubiere e asimismo otro pueblo que se dize *laCaco* con dos principales que se dizen *polla* e *yamani* todos los quales dichos caciques e señores e pueblos vos encomyendo con todos los yndios cosas tierras y estancias a ellos sujetos asi e como los tenia y poseya por cedula de encomienda el dicho capitán francisco de la Coba por cuya dexacion yo vos los encomyendo [...]²⁴⁵

The file also includes a transcription of the *posesión* ceremony²⁴⁶ that took place in the town of *Guacacallo* — traditionally believed to have been the hometown of La Gaitana — on March 1, 1550. The description of the ceremony depicts a single but central Indian figure, a man by the name of *Yaxaban*, as he is taken by the hand by Pedro de Molina and made to pull out some grass which he is then made to present to Molina, thereby sealing the *posesión* ceremony.

The text further indicates that Yaxaban is the son of the *señora Guatypán* of the *Otongo* province and that henceforth Molina is to become encomendero of all the Indians in that province:

En la Villa de *guacacallo* en primero dia del mes de marzo de mil e quinientos e cinquenta Años ante el muy noble señor Hernando diaz alcalde ordinario por su magestad en esta villa por presencia de mi francisco de albarado escribano de su magestad publico y del cabildo desta villa e de los testigos yuso escritos parecio pedro de molina vecino desta villa y presento la cedula de encomienda de yndios aqui contenyda e que del señor adelantado tiene y pidio a su merced que conforme a ella le meta y anpare en la posesión de *los yndios de la provincia de otongo* que en ella se contiene e pidió justicia testigos francisco de Aguilar y diego lopez truxillo y gonçalo carrillo vecinos desta villa E luego el señor alcalde dixo que lo oya y lo vera y hara justicia testigos los dichos [...] E luego el dicho señor alcalde dixo que trayga yndios y que rresta por esto e de meterle en posesion de los dichos yndios testigos los dichos/ E luego el dicho pedro de molina truxo un yndio llamado *yaxaban que dixo ser hijo de la señora guatypán de la provincia de otongo* y lo tomo por la mano y lo dio y entrego y metio en posesión del al dicho pedro de molyna y por este dixo que le metia en posesion de todos los demas pueblos principales e yndios que en la cedula rrelata [...] y asi el dicho pedro de molyna tomo e contino la dicha posesion como el señor alcalde se la da y en señal della mando al dicho yndio arrancar un poco de yerba sirbiendose del en la qual posesion dixo el señor alcalde que le metia en tanto quanto de derecho a lugar y no mas ny aliende testigos francisco de aguilar y garcia de baeça vecinos desta villa y el dicho pedro de molyna lo pidio por testimonio y lo firmo el señor alcalde Hernando diaz paso ante mi francisco de albarado escribano de su magestad publico y del consejo.²⁴⁷

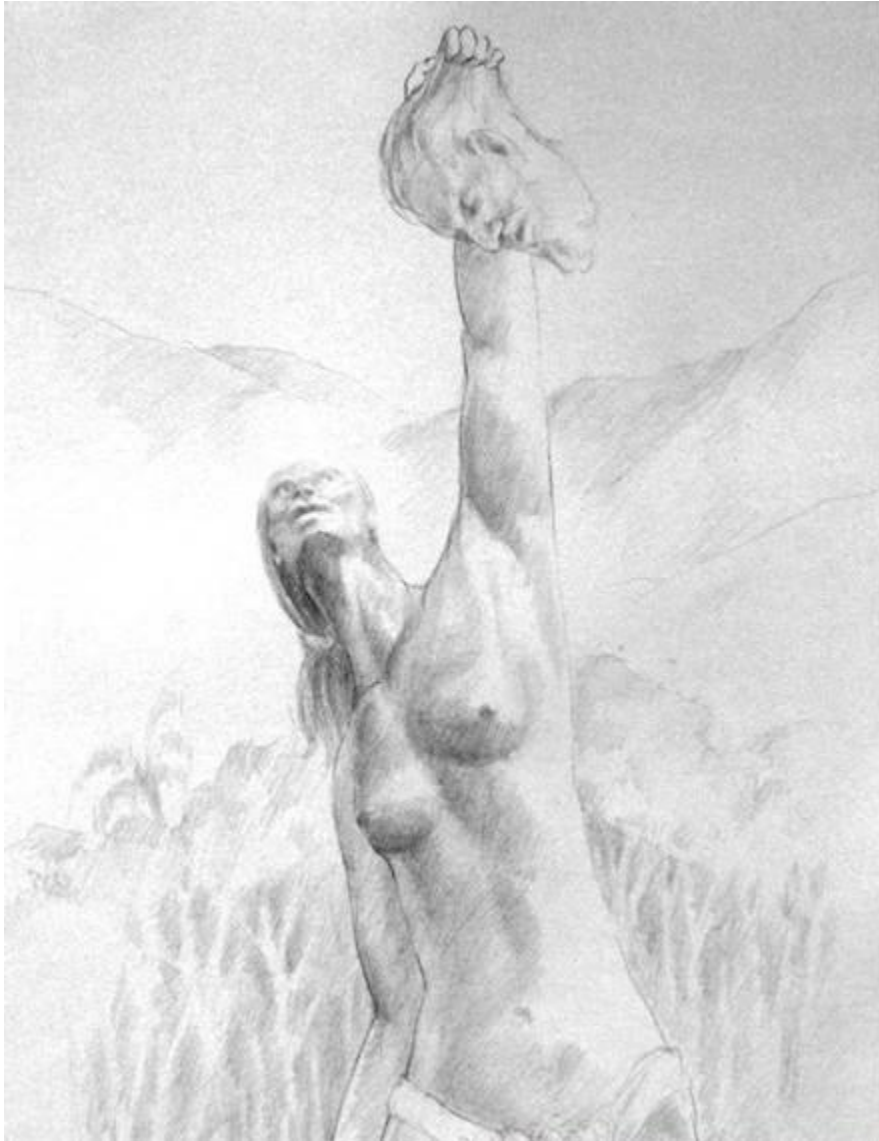
The document shows Molina taking part in two other posesión ceremonies four days later, on March 4, 1550, in the same town of Guacacallo. In the first ceremony, although there is no mention of the *señora Guatepán*, a reference is made to the *Yalcones* — the name most commonly associated with La Gaitana's people:

En esta villa de *guaCacayo* en quarto dia del mes de marzo de myll e quinientos e cinquenta Años ante el muy noble señor Hernando diaz alcalde ordinario desta villa por su magestad y en presencia de mi Fernando lafonte nombrado por ausencia de francisco Albarado *por ser ydo a los yalcones* e de los testigos de yuso escritos parecio pedro de molina vecino de dicha villa e presento ante el dicho señor alcalde diaz cedula del señor Adelantado pidio a su merced dese la posesion del cacique *coyllo* e de todos sus sujetos e tierras e estancias segun en la dicha cedula se contiene testigos garcia de baeça e bartolome alba e anton vasquez.²⁴⁸

In the second ceremony, an Indian man by the name of *Coyllo* is described as a principal from the town of *Gualtelban*. Although the spelling of the word differs somewhat from *Guatepán*, given typical differences in phonetic representation, it is almost certainly the same word as the name of the famous *señora*: “Luego el dicho pedro de molina trajo un yndio que por lengua se dixo ser del dicho pedro de molina el qual es cristiano dixo que se llamava *coyllo* el

qual es principal del pueblo *gualtelban* hijo del cacique *gualura* contenido en la dicha cedula testigos los dichos”²⁴⁹

Ramón Gómez Cubides has argued that the name *Guatépán* or *Guatipán* comes from the Quechuan word *waqtaqpay* (also spelled *huactaqpay*) which means to instigate, to stir up. He claims that this corresponds precisely to the role played by La Gaitana in the Timaná uprising since she was responsible for rallying the Indians and urging them to rebel.²⁵⁰ One of the very first Quechuan-Spanish dictionaries published in Lima in 1608 by the priest Diego González Holguín reveals that a related word — *huactacpacuni* — also conveys the idea of laying over or on the side.²⁵¹ This is intriguing because Juan de Castellanos describes La Gaitana as “a powerful lady who lay over all the land:” *“Todos al fin andaban de mal arte/E ya servían muy de mala gana,/Para lo cual no fue pequeña parte/Una india llamada la Gaitana/O fuese nombre propio manifiesto/O que por españoles fuese puesto/En aquella cercana serranía/Era señora de las mas potentes/Y por toda la tierra se tendía.”*²⁵²



La Gaitana. Héctor Osvaldo Pérez. 2008

González Holguín lists yet another word — *huactani* — which he translates as beating to pieces.²⁵³ This word is similar to the Quechuan word — *waqtana* — meaning “bludgeon” or “club.” Again this is significant because in his poem Castellanos calls the Indians’ principal weapon *a macana* and describes it as a mace or club: “*Los de Pigoanza fueron los primeros/Mas de seis mil cursados combatientes/Serían validísimos guerreros [...] Que meneaban procelosas*

ondas/De macanas, de flechas, lanzas, hondas”²⁵⁴ Furthermore, the word *huactana* sounds strangely similar to the word *gaitana*.

Depending on how Quechua-speaker/listeners heard and/or understood her name, perhaps she *who lay over the land also covered the land urging* the Indians to fight while *wielding a mace with whom to beat the enemy to pieces*. If so, the two names by which the legendary *cacica* is remembered today may have originated in two different but closely related Quechuan words: Guatépán — the name given by popular Huila tradition to the *cacica* — stemming from the word *waqtaqpay*; while the Spanish form of La Gaitana could have evolved from the way the Spaniards heard the word *waqtana*. We cannot know for sure what language the Spaniards used to communicate with the Indians in the *posesión* ceremony in which the *señora de Guatypán*’s son — Yaxaban — yielded to Pedro de Molina. It is not specified, nor is there any mention (curiously enough) of an interpreter or *lengua*. However, thirteen years later, in 1563, in a *posesión* ceremony in which governor Pedro de Agreda granted Molina’s *encomienda* to Alvaro Botello, Agreda ordered a man by the name of Gerónimo de Torres to ask the Otongo envoy several questions. Gerónimo de Torres did so in “*lengua de Quito*” or Quechua.²⁵⁵ Perhaps it was some of Belalcázar’s 6000 *yanaconas* — many of whom served as *lenguas* — or some of the many who later followed in their wake, who dubbed the legendary *cacica* with these two Quechuan nicknames.

What’s more, in a series of four *visitas*²⁵⁶ carried out by Spanish officials among the Otongos in 1629, ninety-three years after the Spaniards’ initial arrival in the area, the Indians repeatedly told crown officials that even though people in the area spoke many different languages, they all communicated among themselves “in the general language of the Ynga [Inca].”²⁵⁷ Colombian historians and linguists have long debated whether Belalcázar’s invasion

introduced Quechua into present-day Colombian territory or whether it was already spoken in the southern part of the country before the Spanish-Yanacona incursion. Luis Fernando Calero reminds us that in 1593 the bishop of Quito, Luis López de Solís asked that *el catecismo* — the basic religious instructional book for Indians — be translated to the Pasto and Quillacinga languages,²⁵⁸ a fact which indicates that at the time Quechua was still not widely spoken in Colombia's southernmost province of Nariño (except for the Sibundoy region — an area of former Inca expansionism). This would also seem to suggest that it was Belalcázar's yanacona allies who were largely responsible for introducing and later generalizing the use of Quechua in New Granada. But perhaps most important for the story of the legendary cacica is not that the two names by which she is known are of Quechuan origin but that popular as well as indigenous Huila oral traditions seem to remember her best by the one Quechuan word that links her most intimately with the land: Guatepán or *she who lay over and exhorted all the land*. In this regard, both Friede and Tovar have argued that the indigenous memory of Guatepán is closely tied to the indigenous struggle for land rights. Hence, if the Spanish tradition remembers her by the name that links her to the weapon that she may have wielded against the Iberians — *waqtana* — indigenous accounts tend to privilege the tradition that immortalizes the cacica as the original keeper of the land — *waqtaqpay*.²⁵⁹

In fact, indigenous oral tradition seems to remember the legendary *curaca*²⁶⁰ in quite a different light from that of the Colombian nationalist account. The nationalist version, which began to exalt the figure of La Gaitana for the first time in the nineteenth century after the war of independence, immortalized the cacica as a beautiful, still young, grief-stricken, but very composed mother-figure who, despite having lost her only son to the Spanish oppressor, mustered enough courage to lead the Indians in their search for freedom.²⁶¹ Indigenous oral

historians, however, have a very different recollection. Between 1971 and 1973, the Colombia Nuestra Foundation recorded a series of interviews with Páez²⁶² oral historian, don Julio Niquinás, in which he recounted the legend of La Gaitana. In contrast with the nationalist portrayal of the famous curaca, don Julio describes her both as an *old woman* and an *old lady*. He says she flew into a rage after witnessing her son's death and that later, when Añasco was captured, she took great pain in torturing him a little at a time in order to prolong his agony as much as possible. Don Julio then ends his account of La Gaitana's story by saying that Añasco was paraded throughout the land for all the Indians to see and that when he died "thousands of Indians got to eat a little bit of meat:"

Lo de la cacica es una historia más vieja [...] Por allá por la Primera Independencia [Q: ¿La Primera Independencia? ¿Cómo así?] Eso era porque la anciana mujer tenía un hijo, el príncipe Güiponga. Güiponga era muy rico [...] Pedro Ñasco que estaba en el mismo pueblo [Avirama] mandó una comisión a llamar a la anciana señora y al príncipe [...] Lo quemaron vivo [...] La anciana señora cogió rabia [...] La mujer se organizó en Tacueyó y en todos esos sitios donde había muchos indios [...] Cuando [los españoles] estaban en misa [los indios] les cayeron encima. Mataron a todos los españoles. Pero dijeron que no había que matar a Pedro Ñasco [...] se lo dieron a la cacica [...] le sacaron un ojo y después el otro [...] Después lo amarraron y lo pasearon por todas partes donde había indios. Después de dos semanas de sufrimiento, se murió [...] miles de indios alcanzaron a comer un pedacito de carne. Lo desollaron pero no botaron ni un solo hueso. Los tenían que guardar como reliquias. Guardaron todos los huesos [...] Luego ella dijo: 'Caciques, jefes, recuerden que estos son los más grandes enemigos de nuestra raza. Hay que asar estos huesos.' Engrasaron unas ollas y lo asaron todo sobre la candela y lo molieron, maldito sea! Se volvió cenizas. Y luego delante de toda esa gente, ella saltó al río Páez y dijo: '¡Véte de aquí! ¡Véte a España! ¡No te quiero ver! ¡Que el río te lleve y te deje en España!' Eso fue lo que dijo la anciana señora.²⁶³

Predictably, the nationalist portrayal of La Gaitana says nothing of the cacica's terrible temper, her vindictiveness or her (and that of her people's) particular appreciation for human flesh. It hardly fits the blueprint for the birthmother of a Catholic nation. Yet what is perhaps most interesting about don Julio's account is how closely it coincides with Juan de Castellanos' version.²⁶⁴ Although many of the names and locations differ, Castellanos depicts La Gaitana as a widow and an old woman: "*Viuda regalada que tenía/Un hijo que mandaba muchas gentes/Al cual por no acudir como vasallo/Añasco procuró de castigallo*"²⁶⁵ He says she followed her son

when he was taken prisoner believing the Spanish would not dare harm him, and that she became incensed after witnessing his death at the stake and vowed to take revenge:

Al hijo sigue la mujer viuda/Sin acordarse de pedir ayuda/Nunca creyó tan ásperos sucesos [...] Y dióse vocalmente la sentencia/Que muera hecho brasas y cenizas [...] Su vida consumió la viva llama/Y ya podeis sentir que sentiría/La miserable madre que lo via/Decía: '[...] Bien puedo yo morir, pero tus penas/De pagármelas han con las septenas.'/Con esto se partió dando clamores/Todas las horas sin cerrar la boca/Los extremos que hace son mayores/Y de mas furia que de mujer loca/A todos los caciques y señores/Se queja, y a venganza los provoca/Hasta tanto que ya ganó los votos/De los cercanos y de los remotos.²⁶⁶

Perhaps even more intriguing is the fact that Castellanos also describes her as going about the land, along with a group of old ladies like herself, entreating all the *caciques* — many of whom were her relatives — to avenge her son's death:

La que su madre fue, que mas lo siente/La cual con otras dueñas tan ancianas/Allí llegó mesándose las canas/Ronca la voz, los ojos hechos fuentes/Turbada, despulsada y amarilla/La voz apenas saca de los dientes/Despedazada cada cual mejilla/Diciendo: "Deudos míos y parientes/Muévanos mis desdichas a mancilla/A ti más que a ninguno, Pigoanza/Competen los rigores de venganza/A ti me quejo, y el favor invoco/Con que mi gran agravio se castigue/Pues nuestro parentesco no es tan poco/Que por muchas razones no te obligue [...]"²⁶⁷

The idea of a group of elderly women going from one village to another exhorting the men to take action is strongly suggestive of the role ascribed to older women in other Native American cultures like the Iroquois Confederacy or some of the Algonquian-speaking peoples. The best known example is perhaps that of the Iroquois council of clan mothers who had the power to choose and remove sachems, veto decisions, dictate policy, start a war or stop it, and even determine the fate of captives. Many of the Iroquois and the Algonquians nations were matrilineal societies: men rose to power through their mothers and sisters. Evidence suggests that the Páez, close neighbors of the Yalcones, were a matrilineal society in which women held the office of *cacicas* and laid claim to land titles well into the eighteenth century.²⁶⁸ The Molina-Botello encomienda dispute suggests that this was also the case among the Yalcones in 1550. Among the many *caciques* and *principales* to whom Pedro de Molina became an *encomendero*,

one of them at least was a woman: the *señora de Guatepan*. Furthermore, the fact that her name is mentioned in the description of the posesión ceremony in which Molina laid claim to the land and the people of the Otongo province is significant. Although the document shows that it is her son — Yaxaban — who officiates as a representative for the Indians, it also stresses the fact that when Yaxaban presented himself, he did so by stating that he was the son of the *señora de Guatepan*. This suggests that he held this office through his connection to his mother.

Another relevant aspect of don Julio Niquinás' description is the emphasis he places on the role played by La Gaitana in the ritual torture and death of Añasco. In it he specifically recounts how Añasco was flayed, his flesh distributed among the greatest number of Indians for all to consume, and his bones carefully roasted and turned into ashes which were later thrown in the Páez River. Again Castellanos' account coincides closely with don Julio's:

Llamó pues Pigoanza la Gaitana/Pare le dar al mísero paciente,/La cual contra la gente castellana/En el recuento se halló presente:/Ella lo recibió de buena gana,/Y no menos cruel que diligente/Descubrió luego con acerbo hecho/La rabia y el coraje de su pecho./Pues como de mujer son sus antojos,/Si tiene mano contra quien la injuria,/Que da satisfacción a sus enojos/Dejándolos correr a toda furia;/Y ansi primero le saca los ojos,/Según a Mario la romana curia,/Porque lo que durase de esta suerte/Viviese con deseo de la muerte./Despues desto la desapiadada,/Cruel de suyo con la pena loca,/La barba por debajo horadada,/Grueso cordel en cantidad no poca/Le metió por aquella cuchillada,/Cuyo cabo sacaron por la boca,/Y allí le dieron a la sogá ñudo,/Con gran aplauso deste vulgo rudo./Desta manera fue dél triunfando,/Aquel cordel sirviendo de trailla,/La victoria y trofeo publicando/Por los mercados de ciudad o villa;/Y de los estirones que va dando/Desencasada cada cual mejilla,/Con tal alteración el bello rostro,/Que ya no parecía sino mostro./Reconociendo que de ser humano/Huían los espíritus vitales,/El pié le cortan, otra vez la mano,/Otra vez pudibundos genitales,/Hasta que con paciencia de cristiano/Salió de las angustias de mortales,/Para volar, según píos motivos,/A la quieta tierra de los vivos./Los atroces tormentos acabados/Según feroz bestialidad ordena,/Los caballos y dueños desollados/Y de ceniza la pelleja llena,/Unos y otros fueron cuarteados/Para guisarse la nefanda cena,/Y de los cascos ya limpios y rasos/Para beber en ellos hacen vasos.²⁶⁹

In typical Western fashion, Castellanos construes the behavior of La Gaitana as the result of one individual barbarian woman's maddening grief at the loss of her son. Yet as an old and important curaca woman — probably connected to many of the caciques in the region either as a mother, sister or aunt — La Gaitana may well have been proceeding according to set cultural

standards, in a ritual and political capacity that surpassed her individual dimension as the grief-stricken and vengeful mother of a murdered son. Among the Muzos and Colimas²⁷⁰ for example, we are told that the obligation to avenge a person fell on that person's maternal side of the family.²⁷¹ La Gaitana's story suggests that this was also the case among the Yalcones. Therefore, if the story is true, the curaca was following custom when she called on all her *deudos*²⁷² and *parientes*, and most insistently on Pigoanza (*"A ti más que a ninguno, Pigoanza/Competen los rigores de venganza"*), who in addition to being the most powerful lord in the land, may have been her brother. In fact, Castellanos tells us that La Gaitana's son was Pigoanza's relative: *"Porque él [Pigoanza] estaba ya mal indignado/Desde que supo cuán atrocemente/Mataron al mancebo desdichado,/A quien reconocía por pariente [...]"*²⁷³ In which case, the man Añasco burned at the stake may well have been Pigoanza's nephew — a detail of crucial political importance that Añasco pitifully missed when he ordered the young man's execution. Indeed, Añasco — who held Pigoanza's son, don Rodrigo, captive — apparently felt quite secure believing that by holding hostage the son of the most powerful lord in the region, he was practically untouchable: *"Pareciéndole ser el mozo prenda/Para seguridad de su vivienda."*²⁷⁴ Yet, this proved to be a fatal mistake, for here as in many other parts of pre-Hispanic America, political succession passed from uncles to nephews and the most important relationship a man could have was to his sister's (male) children.²⁷⁵ Pigoanza thus probably chose to honor his obligation to his nephew above his own son — a fact Añasco could never have foreseen.

As for La Gaitana, as the mother of a slain warrior, and as a curaca in her own right, she would have been expected to carry out herself the ritual process of slaying her son's murderer. However vindictive and gruesome they may appear, her actions would have had not just a personal, but a collective and political significance: by blinding Añasco, La Gaitana would have

been making sure that his avenging soul would not be able to seek retribution on the living; by parading him through the land for all to see, she would have been showing the people that justice and balance had been restored; by torturing and cutting him to pieces she would have been attempting to disintegrate and transubstantiate the evil that he represented; and in distributing his tortured and thus purified flesh to her people, she would have been enabling her people to partake of the strength of a most powerful enemy; finally, in throwing his ashes into the Magdalena River, she would have been making sure he found his way to the other world, never to return again. Thus, La Gaitana carried out not just a personal and familial obligation. Acting as a political leader, she attempted to control and diffuse the threat to her people by rallying them around a common cause; acting as a ritual and religious leader she also endeavored — following her culture's belief system — to transform evil into good by turning the threat to her people into a life-giving and affirming source of renewed vitality and power. That La Gaitana may have been both a political and a religious leader is further suggested by fray Pedro Simón who described her both as an instigator and an *hechicera*:

Aunque quedó quebrantado con estos sucesos el gran cacique Pioanza, no le quedó en los deseos de su venganza la hechicera vieja Gaitana, pues le parecía ser todos estos sucesos pocos para tomarla cumplida, hasta ver totalmente destruídos a los nuestros. Y así, acudiendo a su santuario con sus prestigios, sacrificios y ceremonias a consultar al demonio (que muy de ordinario le hablaba) de lo que sucedería si otra vez volvían a la empresa de la guerra contra cristianos, le respondió con palabras equívocas como él suele, y de doblados sentidos, diciendo que vencería si volviesen otra vez a las manos con los castellanos los que más verdad y justicia tuviesen. Con lo cual contenta la vieja y atribuyéndose a sí ambas estas dos cosas, volvió a dar vuelta por las provincias convecinas una y muchas veces, y manifestándoles el oráculo, les volvió a irritar para de nuevo tomar las armas y venir contra los nuestros.²⁷⁶

Now, whether or not La Gaitana was the same woman who appears in the Molina-Botello encomienda dispute remains to be determined. We may never be able to establish for a fact whether the *señora de Guatepan* cited in this document is the woman behind the legendary figure. But the name *Guatepan* need not be the name of a single woman; it could very well be a

title designating a kind of function or office held by women, and more specifically, older women. We know that its Quechuan meaning conveys the idea of going about the land urging the people to take arms against the enemy. The scene described by Castellanos' in which he depicts La Gaitana accompanied by a group of old women going from one town to another, calling on the caciques and entreating them to avenge her son's death suggests a society in which older women — perhaps through their blood connections to male leaders — wielded a considerable amount of political power that allowed them to impose on caciques and influence their decisions much in the way that Iroquois and some Algonquian clan mothers exercised their own political capital. The description of Añasco's death suggests a culture in which women held important ritual and religious roles. Perhaps women held offices that combined political as well as religious functions. If such were the case, if the Quechuan word *Guatépán* or its Spanish equivalent *Gaitana* conveyed not a woman's name, but a political, religious, or politico-religious office held by elderly women, then there may have been not one but perhaps many *Guatépáns* or *Gaitanas*.

Colombian historiography of indigenous peoples is interspersed with countless indications that at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, women held important positions within indigenous societies throughout large parts of the country. It is also clear that many of these women resembled *la Gaitana* in that they participated actively and in leadership positions in the fight against the Spanish. Juan Friede (1902-1990), the father of Colombian ethnohistory, in his study of the indigenous insurrections that took place in the Quimbaya region,²⁷⁷ mentions at least three sixteenth-century *cacicas*: *Ague*, *Peromboco* and the *señora* of *Andica*.²⁷⁸ He then goes on to say that *Peromboco* took part in one of the *juntas de guerra* or war councils that preceded the Quimbaya rebellion: “*A esta junta asistió la cacica de Peromboco con todos sus indios, declarando estar dispuesta a matar a todos los cristianos, ‘porque a su marido lo habían comido*

los perros’.”²⁷⁹ In his book, *Chiefdoms Under Siege* (1997), Luis Fernando Calero describes the ceremony in which Micaela García Tulcanaza became a cacica in the town of Guachucal, Nariño, in 1676: “*Ella estaba sentada en una silla y habiéndose quitado los indios principales les mandó quitar las mantas y que se las volvieran a poner [...] uno a uno fueron besándole la mano [...] la cargaron cuatro indios principales rodeándola por la dicha plaza y la trajeron a casa de su morada donde la bajaron de la silla y se le entregó la numeración del pueblo.*”²⁸⁰

And Joanne Rappaport cites the case of three generations of Páez cacicas in the town of Togoima, Cauca: Doña Pascuala Subix Gueyomuse, who in the eighteenth century was succeeded by her grand-daughter, Doña Clara Noquez Gueyomuse, who was later succeeded by her illegitimate daughter, Doña Angelina Gueyomuse, irrespective of the fact that Doña Clara had a legitimate male heir, don José.²⁸¹ We may also speculate, following the claims of the priest and ethno-linguist Pedro José Ramírez Sendoya, in the sense that the Alto Magdalena region is dominated by Quechuan, Páez and Carib toponyms,²⁸² that the Coyaimas²⁸³ who became crucial allies to the Spaniards in the war against the Pixaos in the seventeenth century, may have been dubbed thus by Belalcázar’s yanacona allies; in which case their name would mean *land of queens* or *people of the land of queens*, the root *coya* deriving from the Quechuan word for princess or queen, and the Carib suffix *-ima* signifying place, location (very much like the Nahuatl suffix *-tla* or *-tlan* and the Mayan *-tan*).²⁸⁴

All in all, the evidence clearly suggests that Belalcázar and his yanacona allies walked into a land not only of fiercely independent cannibal warriors, but moreover, a land where women held important political and religious functions, where men rose to power through them, and where the diffuse and fluid but nonetheless far-reaching social structures were negotiated

and sustained through women. This way of life would be heavily affected by the Spaniards' intrusion, and it would be women who would bear the brunt of this cultural collision.



Mural in honor of La Gaitana. San José de Isnos, Huila. Foto: Alejandrino Tobón

Chapter 3

Ni chinas ni guarichas: Women Gone Missing²⁸⁵

“No hize más ynformación con los capitanes por que fuy ynformado q(ue) no me aguardaría yndio por ser yndios sobre si y enemigos de xpi(sti)anos y asy pareçio porque estando haziendo la ynform(aci)ón de suso con los dichos tres yndios que de Repente se hallaron huyeron çinco o seys yndias y otros yndios y aún uno de los dichos yndios que no pareció nynguno.” Francisco Hernández (1559)²⁸⁶

Beads of sweat trickled down Francisco Hernández’s face. Even though they were inside Nucabue’s hut, the heat was oppressive. His Majesty’s notary public had just finished writing down the Indians’ answers as Juana, the lengua, had relayed them back to him in broken Spanish. To his question on whether or not the Indians in this *repartimiento*²⁸⁷ had any cattle, sheep, or pigs, the three men — Nucabue, Dacabue, and Guala — had said no. He was just about to ask them another question when all of a sudden the women in the hut stampeded out followed by the other Indians. Hernández found himself alone. Not even Juana was anywhere to be found.

This scene, which took place on Friday, June 23, 1559, while Francisco Hernández was carrying out a visita in Melchor de Sotomayor's encomienda in the province of Chapayma,²⁸⁸ briefly points to the plight faced by Indian women in the northern part of the Alto Magdalena region (some 330 km/200 mi. north of Timaná or the land of La Gaitana) shortly after the Spanish conquest. A close analysis of historian Hermes Tovar Pinzón's transcription of the 1559 "Visita a la Provincia de Mariquita"²⁸⁹ reveals disturbing evidence: in this region, during this period, Indian women — girls and women under the age of forty — had for the most part simply vanished. The document clearly shows that the entire region was up in arms. But surprisingly, it is the women that have gone missing, not the men. This chapter seeks to unravel the mystery behind these findings. At the same time, in doing so, it seeks to ascertain how indigenous culture and society in the region had been changing since the Spaniards' initial intrusion in 1535.

Francisco Hernández had been commissioned as his Majesty's visitador in Santa Fé de Bogotá on February 16, 1559. Hernández was to visit the Province of Mariquita,²⁹⁰ also known as San Sebastián del Oro. The following is an anonymous description of the region drafted between 1559 and 1560:

De la ciudad de Ibagué a la de Mariquita hay diez y ocho leguas [...] Tiene su asiento en sabana llana, arimada a la cordillera. El temple muy caliente [...] Tuvo antes su asiento esta ciudad en la sierra, entre la poblazón de los naturales, y así por no poder tener ganados en este asiento, como por ser pocos los españoles para defenderse de los indios, se mudaron al asiento que hoy tienen, y los indios de la sierra nunca más han servido y se están de guerra. Hay en esta sierra cuatro provincias, que son Bocaneme que tendrá 300 indios; Guarinó, que tendrá seiscientos; el Valle de la Miel, que tendrá otros seiscientos; Arbe y Chirigua, que tendrán otros quinientos; Gualí y Los Bagures, que tendrán mil y quinientos. Todas estas provincias son caribes; estuvieron en servidumbre y obediencia de su majestad. Hay en todas ellas generalmente muy ricas minas de oro y se han sacado gran suma de pesos de oro; cesa de sacarse ya, porque es mucho el riesgo que la gente trae en el sacar del oro de los naturales de las dichas provincias, porque como están rebelados, vienen al asiento de las minas continuamente y matan españoles y indios y negros que están labrando las dichas minas, y por temor de los dichos naturales ha cesado el buscar y descubrir minas, si se diese orden cómo se tornasen a la servidumbre, sacarserían gran suma de oro [illegible] La ciudad no se puede sustentar, porque no sirven a la dicha ciudad más de otras dos provincias que caen lejos del, que se llama Calamoina y Chopaima [Chapayma], y entre ellos la ciudad de Mariquita está en el río Grande de la Magdalena, como parece en la pintura. Y para ir a servir al dicho pueblo los indios destas provincias han de pasar el dicho río, donde a la ida o a la vuelta a sus casas se ahogan harto

dellos. Habrá en la dicha provincia hasta mil y setecientos indios. Es gente toda desnuda y que come carne humana. No hay señores; es behetría. “*Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino...*” (1559-60)²⁹¹

Hernández’s mission was thus a dangerous one. The Panches or mountain people²⁹² who inhabited this region were for the most part up in arms. Along with the Pixaos, the Panches have been described as one of the fiercest of native peoples in New Granada. Writing in 1571, fray Gaspar de Puerto Alegre portrayed them as follows:

[...] de la estatura y tamaño de los españoles y algunos mayores, generalmente desbarbados, aunque algunos pocos con ellas [...] cabellos largos como el de las mujeres, las cuales mujeres son también de buen parecer, aunque todos bazos, sin diferencia sensible en la color. En las cabezas difieren, porque los moscas las tienen redondas; las de los panches como tablas, porque cuando los crían se las empresan entre dos tablas, una por la frente y otra por el colodrillo [...] “*Relación del Nuevo Reino*” (1571)²⁹³

However, Hernández’s mission was dangerous not just because of the Indians who were up in arms, but also because the encomenderos in New Granada, whose encomiendas he was to visit, were thoroughly opposed to the King’s visitas. In fact, the encomenderos in New Granada had managed to have the New Laws of 1542 (which sought to prevent the exploitation of the natives and limit the power of the encomenderos) revoked in a special provision.²⁹⁴ But with more and more Spaniards arriving every day in New Granada, it seemed to the Spanish authorities that the land was lately “[...] *mal Repartida y en poder de personas que no son conq(ui)stadores sino en los que han ydo de Nuevo allí [...]*”²⁹⁵ Hernández’s instructions were therefore to enforce the 1548 bill²⁹⁶ which although issued eleven years earlier, had still not been implemented in the land. His orders were:

[...] averiguar y saber el número de yndios que avía en la dicha provincia del Nuevo Reyno de Granada así los que están en nuestra cabeça como los que an vacado y están al presente encomendados y con qué títulos y permysión los tienen. Y hecha esta diligencia y sabido lo cierto de lo que es ny más ny menos [...] asi hareys el dicho Repartimyento lo más justo e ygualm(en)te q(ue) pudiéredes apuntando lo q(ue) se debe dexar pa(ra) nos q(ue) a de ser las cabeçeras puertos de mar y pueblos principales y del Resto de los yndios se hará un tiento Repartiéndolos por los conquistadores y pobladores y las mujeres e hijos de los que lo

fueron y por los otros españoles que en esa tierra Resyden que tengan méritos pa(ra) ello tenyendo Respeto y consideración a la calidad y servicios de cada uno para que sean gratificados y satisfechos como lo mereçen y nayde se pueda agraviar y que así mismo se debe dejar alguna parte para que se pueda hazer merced a los que fueren de nuevo porq(ue) de otra manera ya sabeys q(ue) faltándoles esta esperança avría pocos q(ue) lo hiziesen.²⁹⁷

Hernández took off his hat and placed the bill over his head, thereby pledging in front of the oydores in the Audiencia Real to faithfully and loyally carry out his Majesty's orders. He was to be paid "*tres pesos de buen oro* [for each day on the job]" by the very same men whose encomiendas he was to audit: "*los cuales vos den e paguen los cabildos de las dichas Çiudades Repartiéndolos por los encomenderos de los yndios [...]*"²⁹⁸ On February 18, 1559, he set out from Bogotá. He had ninety days to complete his assignment and he had to visit the encomiendas of some twenty-four encomenderos. It would take him almost a month to make his way down the treacherous 2100 meters (approximately 6900 feet) that separated la tierra fría from la tierra caliente.²⁹⁹ He was almost certainly escorted by Spanish soldiers and Muisca attendants.

On Monday, March 13, 1559, he arrived in Mariquitá. Two days later, he ordered Pedro, "*yndio ladino de mi servicio,*" to proclaim throughout the town that the encomenderos in the province had three days to present themselves before the King's visitador along with the royal deeds entitling them to their encomiendas.³⁰⁰ Blas Martínez and Diego de Posadas were the first to heed Hernández's summons on March 19. Melchor de Sotomayor presented himself the next day. Antonio de Toledo, Juan López and Alonso Vera did so in the following days. But none of the other eighteen encomenderos showed up.³⁰¹ Hernández was informed that two of the missing encomenderos, Diego González and Francisco Pérez Zambrana, no longer had any Indians for him to visit because they were all up in arms. On March 30, Hernández ordered that whosoever had claims to the encomiendas of the encomenderos who had still not presented themselves,

should come forward. But no one else showed up. Hernández proceeded to examine the deeds that had been presented to him.

Visitas usually comprised four stages: in the first stage, after being summoned, the encomendero had to present himself before the visitador, bringing with him the royal deed entitling him to his encomienda; in the second stage, the encomendero had to present himself a second time before the visitador, but this time around, he had to bring with him witnesses who were to bear testimony to his merits; it was only then that the visitador actually visited the Indians in the encomendero's encomienda. Following a standardized questionnaire, and usually through an interpreter or lengua, the visitador interviewed the Indians. Although visitas were purportedly intended to find out how well the Indians were doing and whether or not they were being mistreated by their masters, in reality, many of the questions were designed to keep tabs on the productivity of the encomiendas. The Indians, however, did have the opportunity to express any complaints they had. But, as we shall see, very few dared or bothered to do so. After questioning the Indian as to whether there were any charges against the encomendero, the visitador drafted an indictment in which the charges were written up. The encomendero was then notified of the indictment. In a fourth and final stage, the encomendero presented himself one more time before the visitador in order to explain his actions and defend himself against the accusations brought against him. After this hearing, the visitador issued his final verdict. Encomenderos were rarely deprived of their encomiendas no matter how outrageous their behavior against the Indians had been. They were usually only required to pay the Crown a fine and compensate the Indians by providing them with clothing or religious indoctrination.

During the first week of April, in sessions called "*audiencias de méritos*," the seven encomenderos³⁰² who had responded presented witnesses. In reality, they rotated as witnesses for

one another, testifying to the effect that all of them had participated in the conquest of the region along with Captain Francisco Nuñez Pedroso³⁰³ nine years before. Finally, on April 19, two months after he had set out from Bogotá, Francisco Hernández made his way to visit the Indians in Juan López's encomienda in Onda.³⁰⁴ Hernández's visita was taking place six years after López had first taken *posesión* of the Indians in the area. The *posesión* ceremonies, which were summarized in the royal deed that López presented to Hernández, reveal that between 1553 and 1554 López had taken *posesión* of more than three-hundred and twenty "*casas de yndios de visytación con todos los caciques capitanes principales dellas e yndios que les son sujetos*;"³⁰⁵ which is to say that at a (very conservative) ratio of four people per house,³⁰⁶ Hernández had become in 1554 encomendero to at least some 1280 Indians.

Hernández began by questioning three Indian men: Biamba, Pedro (Biamba's brother), and another man by the name of Pintado. Hernández had to rely on two *lenguas*: Pedro, his Muisca attendant, and another Indian by the name of Alonso, "*yndio ladino q[ue] dijo no hera cristiano*,"³⁰⁷ who was probably a Panche who spoke Muisca. Hernández's Muisca attendant, Pedro, would have acted most likely as a *sobrelengua* here, translating into Spanish what Alonso had first translated from Panche into Muisca. Biamba told the *lenguas* he was "*caçique de los yndios de onda q(ue) t(ien)e Juan López e que no hera cristiano*."³⁰⁸ When asked how old he was, Biamba said that he had not counted his age, but Hernández estimated that he was about twenty-two years old. The *lenguas* then asked him how many Indians there were under his charge. Using grains of corn, Biamba began counting. He counted twenty-one Indian men, seventeen of whom were married and four of whom were single. Of the four single men, he said only one had both parents alive, one had only a mother, and two were orphans with no mother or father. Biamba added that there were three other Indians: "*uno estaba flechado y el otro malo*

que tenía una mano cortada y el otro está en la Roza [in the fields].”³⁰⁹ He also told the lenguas there were eight guaricha sor women “[*que*] *no tenía(n) maridos q(ue) se avian muerto.*”³¹⁰ Finally, he said there were twenty-five boys (in addition to his own son, who was not there) between the ages of two and ten, and six girls, two of them between the ages of eight and ten, the other four being younger.

Hernández then asked the lenguas to ask Biamba what they gave Juan López for tribute. Biamba said that during three moons (or months) every year they caught fish in the *Río grande* (de la Magdalena) and that López sold it and that they would also sometimes bring pitchers of wine in their canoes from the pier in Mariquita when López required them to do so. When asked what kind of trade or commerce they engaged in with other Indians, Biamba said they traded in fish, *mantas* (blankets), and beads. To the question of what kind of crops and other products they harvested or obtained from the land, Biamba answered that they grew corn and yucca, raised chickens, and only hunted a few deer and rabbits. When asked how they would rather pay their tribute, Biamba said they could give López fish, mantas for making *camysetas* (shirts for Indians),³¹¹ yucca, and chickens, “*y no mayz que cojen poco.*”³¹²

Hernández then began asking Biamba’s brother Pedro the very same questions he had asked Biamba. Pedro said that he didn’t know how old he was either (Hernández estimated he was about twenty), but that he was a Christian. Pedro confirmed everything his brother had told the lenguas and emphasized the fact that they had very little corn. It was then Pintado’s turn. Pintado told the lenguas that he was not a Christian. Hernández wrote down that he looked to be twenty-four years old. Pintado told Hernández that the Indian whom Biamba had said had been *flechado* or arrowed was on the verge of dying. He added that in addition to the wine pitchers,

they also brought clothes in their canoes from Mariquita and that they had “*mayz poquyto y que se coja mucha yucca y se crían gallinas y venados poquytos e poquytos conejos.*”³¹³

Hernández interviewed one more witness: the Spanish overseer, Juan Jiménez, who told him that he had been in charge of the Indians in López’s encomienda for the last twenty-one months. Jiménez told Hernández that the Indians fished some three to four-hundred *arrobos* per year (between 3.5 and 4.5 tons of fish).³¹⁴ He said that each arroba sold for about one golden peso. Jiménez added that the Indians sold grilled fish to the miners and also to travelers and that they also traded in mantas, beads, and gold, and that sometimes they took passengers across the river and that for every Spaniard or horse that they carried over to the other side, Juan López got one *tomín*,³¹⁵ and that for every other person, he got half a tomín, and for every 100 pigs, he got two pesos. Jiménez also added that besides the clothes that the Indians carried in their canoes, “*algunas vezes hazen unas ollas las yndias pa(ra) casa del dicho Juan López.*”³¹⁶ Hernández noted down that the land was not much good for growing anything (“there being too many stones”). Although he was informed that the Indians planted their crops in fields on the river banks and that it was there that they grew cotton next to their huts. He also wrote down that he had seen a few cows grazing about which belonged to the vecinos from Mariquita. With this he concluded his visita of Juan López’s encomienda in Honda. Hernández did not inquire how the Indians were being treated or if they had any complaints. The next day, on April 20, he went to visit Melchor de Sotomayor’s encomienda in the vicinity.

Juan López, however, had two more encomiendas in the region: one in Calamoina³¹⁷ and another in Chapaima. Melchor de Sotomayor also had three encomiendas: one in Honda, another in Calamoina, and the third in Chapaima. The Licenciado Venero had one encomienda in Honda and another in Calamoina. Although he was no soldier and had not participated in the conquest

of the Panches, he had served his Majesty both as Justicia Mayor and prosecutor in New Granada's Audiencia Real. According to one of the witnesses who testified in his absence in the audiencia de méritos³¹⁸ that took place in Mariquita during the first week of April, he had obtained his encomienda because the former encomendero, Pero Hernández de Bustos, had abandoned it (“[...] hizo dejación della”).³¹⁹ Alonso de Vera had one encomienda in Honda and another in Cuamo. Antonio de Toledo had two encomiendas: one in Calamoina and the other in Chapaima; and Blas Martínez, and Diego de Posadas each had an encomienda in Calamoina. Therefore, Hernández first went about visiting all of the encomiendas located in Honda, then moved on to those in Calamoina, and then on to those in Chapaima. He then returned to Mariquita for the seven encomenderos' final hearings. All in all, he completed fourteen visitas,³²⁰ and although he didn't spend more than a day visiting each group of Indians, he requested the Audiencia Real in Santafé to grant him an extension in order to finalize his assignment. On July 11, he visited the last group of Indians who belonged to Alonso Vera's Cuamo encomienda.

Sticking strictly to his questionnaire, Hernández had asked all thirteen groups of Indians much the same questions and not surprisingly had gotten much the same answers. The standard procedure required that all the Indians in an encomienda be present during the visita, but this was seldom the case. The overseers argued that it was almost impossible to round up all the Indians living as they did one to two leguas (11 km. or 7 mi.) apart from each other. So Hernández made sure that he spoke to at least three *principales* or *capitanes* each time: “yo el d(ic)ho Fran(cis)co Hernández escribano e juez de comysyon siendo ynformado q(ue) era inposyble poder juntar los yndios del rrepartimi(ent)o del dicho don Antonio [de Toledo] por estar poblados una y dos leguas poco mas o menos y [d]esviadas las casas hize parecer ante my a los capitanes e yndios

ancianos [...]”³²¹ Many of these capitanes were young men in their twenties like Biamba, Pedro, and Pintado. Others were in their thirties and forties.

Sometimes, however, it was hard for the overseers to find any capitanes at all since many were dying as a result of the smallpox epidemic that was ravaging the Kingdom of New Granada at the time. So Hernández had to make do with some of the oldest men. When he visited, for example, Juan López’s encomienda in Calamoina, the overseer, Julián Llardó, told him that the Indians were “[...] *poblados una legua de aquy y tiene(n) los buhíos ap(ar)tados unos de otros y es menester mucho t(iem)po y que demás desto están algunos enfermos y aún se han muerto uno o dos capitanes que los capitanes q(ue) pudiere traer los trayrá pa(ra) que dellos se ynforme de lo q(ue) quysiere.*”³²² Eventually, Llardó was able to round up four men, Naca, Nacabue, Ulanbita, and Chocoa, who described themselves as being “*viejos e ançianos eçito [excepto] el uno que se llama chova [Chocoa?] que no es muy viejo.*”³²³ Hernández wrote down “*çinquenta años poco más o menos*” for Naca who appeared to be the oldest, and “*treynta años poco más o menos*” for Chocoa. Though he was still alive, Chocoa was sick with smallpox. Hernández offered little comfort. He told the lenguas to warn him not to lie because if he did “[...] *se enojará dios y si dize v(er)dad luego sanará destas viruelas [...]*”³²⁴

When, on April 29, Hernández visited Diego de Posadas’ encomienda in Calamoina, it became clear that the Indians were dying at an alarming rate: “*Fue d(ic)ho a la d(ic)ha lengua q(ue) pregunte al d(ic)ho yndio [capitán Zicuma] si Echicua y Panche y Cuneba yndios si son muertos y q(ue) por q(ue) los nonbro por yndios bivros y la lengua hablo con el y dixo q(ue) dezia que ayer estaban bivros y se murieron anoche.*”³²⁵ It was also obvious the Indians were having a difficult time replacing their leaders: “*E luego fue d(ic)ho a la d(ic)ha lengua q(ue) preg(un)te a*

*este cap(i)t(an) [Zicuma] si ay otro cap(i)t(an) en este Rep(ar)timy(ent)o y la lengua hablo con el y dixo q(ue) dezia q(ue) si avia y se llamava Canoa y questa en su casa malo de viruelas e q(ue) Muya es cap(i)t(an) y esta malo tambien.”*³²⁶ In Antonio de Toledo’s Chapaima encomienda, for example, there were no captains to be found: “*Fue d(ic)ho a la d(ic)ha lengua [Alonso] q(ue) diga a los d(ic)hos yndios si ay alg(un)os capitanes en este Repa(rti)my(ent)o de don Ant(oni)o y la lengua hablo con ellos y dixo q(ue) dezia[n] q(ue) no avia nyng(un)o porq(ue) se an muerto todos.”*³²⁷ And on July 11, when Hernández visited the last encomienda in Cuamo, the Indians told him that they were having to name caciques practically overnight: “*Yo el d(ic)ho iscrivano dixen al Alonso [lengua] q(ue) llame a los preñçipales deste pueblo o a algunos yndios de los viejos y el d(ic)ho Alonso dixo que no avía mas de un caçique y que agora poco a que le hizieron caçiq(ue) y traxole ante my [...]*”³²⁸

But it was not only the men who were dying. The epidemic was killing women and children, too. When asked to count the Indians in Diego de Posadas’ Calamoina encomienda, Zicuma, the capitán, told Hernández “*[...] q(ue) avía casados treynta y tres yndios y los otros están por casar y que a alg(uno)s se les a[n] muerto las mujeres y que ay treynta y uno q(ue) no tienen padre ny madre [...]*”³²⁹ When asked to tell the Indians to count the children in Melchor de Sotomayor’s Chapaima encomienda, the lengua said the capitanes had counted “*[...] nueve nyños y seys nyñas pequeños y medianos y q(ue) [Nucabue] dezía que no avía más en este Repartimy(en)to porque todos los otros se an muerto.*”³³⁰

Indeed, between Belalcázar’s initial penetration of present-day Colombian territory in 1535 and Francisco Hernández’s 1559 visita to the province of Mariquita, at least two great epidemics had ravaged the land of the Panches. Travelling through the neighboring Quimbaya

region in 1546, Pedro Cieza de León wrote that the Indians bathed themselves over and over in a desperate effort to rid themselves of the disease:

“Cuando [los indios] están enfermos se bañan muchas veces, en el cual tiempo cuentan ellos mismos que ven visiones espantables. Y pues trato desta materia, dire aquí lo que aconteció en el año pasado de 46 en esta provincia de Quimbaya [...] vino una general pestilencia por todo el reino del Perú, la cual comenzó de más adelante del Cuzco y cundió toda la tierra; donde murieron gentes sin cuento. La enfermedad era, que daba un dolor de cabeza y accidente de calentura muy recio, y luego se pasaba el dolor de la cabeza al oído izquierdo, y agravaba tanto el mal, que no duraban los enfermos sino dos o tres días. Venida, pues, la pestilencia a esta provincia [...]”³³¹

It is almost certain that this epidemic (probably a mumps epidemic) also devastated Panche territory since the northernmost tip of the Tolima province (Panche territory) borders with the province of Caldas (Quimbaya region). As for the 1559 smallpox outbreak, there is clear indication that it not only swept through the entire Kingdom of New Granada, but that it was also accompanied by measles: “*Este año de sesenta ha habido una pestilencia de viruela y sarampión entre los naturales, de que han muerto la tercia parte de los que había [...]*”³³² Eleven years later in 1571, fray Gaspar de Puerto Alegre claimed that this pandemic had hit the Panches especially hard: “*Hay notable falta de los muchos indios que antes había, especialmente de los panches, a causa de enfermedades y trabajos, y que ahora doce años murió gran copia de indios, especialmente en el distrito de Vélez, de viruelas [...]*”³³³

But Hernández was not interested in dead Indians. He had to make sure he counted the survivors as accurately as possible so that they could be better distributed among the King, the encomenderos, and the new Spanish arrivals. It was also important for the Crown that he establish exactly how much money the encomenderos were making off the Indians. Historian Hermes Tovar calculates that in 1559 Juan López alone made at least some 2,638 pesos from the Indians’ fishing and ferrying activities in Honda and the sale of the corn they grew for him in Calamoina and Chapaima — an impressive sum compared to Puerto Rico’s total of 4,064 pesos,

Yucatan's total of 1,025 pesos or New Granada's total income of 19, 144 pesos for 1559.³³⁴ Encomiendas in Honda, for the most part, were apparently very profitable businesses yielding on average four tons of fish during the yearly *subienda* season (December through April) when the fish swim upstream. In Honda, the Magdalena River becomes narrower and there are also many drops which make for rapids and easier fishing. Tisima, the capitán in Melchor de Sotomayor's encomienda told the lenguas "[...] *que en este rrio grande le matan [a Sotomayor] pescado tres lunas y el pescado que le dan es bagres y sardinatas y boquychicos y ques mucho pescado y que su amo lo vende [...]*"³³⁵ Since the *subienda* season encompasses the celebration of Lent during which there is a general ban on meat consumption, the encomenderos' fisheries in Honda must have been particularly successful during this time of year. As is still done today, the fish were salted and sold (mainly) in Bogotá: "[...] *dixo [Melchor de Sotomayor] q(ue) un año con otro le parece q(ue) seran las q(ue) le dan los dichos yndios en dos cosechas qui(nient)as arrobas de pescado poco más o menos, e que las cuaresmas lo vende a peso y ducado y otras vezes a peso cada arroba e que gasta en salallo çien panes de sal.*"³³⁶ This meant that the Indians had to make the journey up the mountains to fetch salt from the salt mines in Bogotá and then back down again carrying heavy loads on their backs. Although the practice had been banned, the encomenderos took little notice: "[...] *los yndios van a Bogotá por sal q(uan)do se lo manda su amo.*"³³⁷ In fact, many of them owned salt stores called *alfolies* in Honda and Mariquita because the salt was also used to extract silver from the silver mines in Mariquitá.³³⁸ The encomenderos in Honda made additional money (Tovar calculates that Juan López made 150 pesos a year on this product alone)³³⁹ by using the Indians as *bogas* or rowers to ferry passengers and merchandise across the Magdalena River. Although a ban against this practice was issued by the Audiencia Real in Santafé in 1558,³⁴⁰ the Indians would serve as *bogas* until the end of the

sixteenth century, when Honda became one of the most important ports in the Kingdom of New Granada, attracting great numbers of Spaniards, who brought African slaves to replace the Indians.³⁴¹

Although the natives planted a great variety of crops in this region, the encomiendas in Calamoina and Chapaima were essentially exploited for corn. When asked, the Indians told the *lenguas* working for Hernández that they gave their Spanish masters two to three harvests of *mayz* each year: “[...] *las d(ic)has lenguas hablaron con él (capitán Chocoa) y dixeron q(ue) dezía q(ue) cada çinco lunas q(ue) ens(e)ño çinco dedos con su mano hacían dos rrozaz una en Marequita [Chapaima] y otra en esta tierra [Calamoina] y que las haze(n) todos los yndios deste rrepartimyento y que echan en cada Roza que sienbran ocho cataures [baskets] de mayz no muy grandes y este capitán señaló el cataure por su mano y por esta señal me pareçe que hará menos de media hanega [fanega or fanegada] de mayz cada uno y que alinpian las rrozaz y cojen el mayz y lo llevan a Marequyta [...]”*³⁴² Juan López’s overseer in Calamoina, a freed African slave by the name of Rodrigo, told Hernández that each year’s harvests yielded between five- and seven-hundred *fanegas* of corn which sold for one to two pesos each.³⁴³ Tovar calculates that Juan López made some two-thousand pesos on average each year from the sale of corn alone.³⁴⁴ For the most part, the corn was sold in the silver and gold mines in Mariquita where it was used to feed the Indians working in the mines: “[...] *dixo [Loloma] q(ue) dezía q(ue) Roza pa(ra) su amo cada çinco lunas y hazen dos Rozas en Marequyta la una en las mynas y la otra en Honda [...] e q(ue)l mayz q(ue) se coje lo llevan a las mynas.*”³⁴⁵

But lately the harvests had not been so good. The smallpox epidemic and the rebels were taking their toll on the encomenderos’ profits. Equa, a thirty-year-old capitán in Melchor de

Sotomayor's Calamoina encomienda told the lenguas "[...] *que esta vez pasada no senbraron mayz pa(ra) su amo en su tierra porque tienen viruelas y tienen mal [...]*"³⁴⁶ Alonso de Vera, on the other hand, told Hernández that all he had were *treynta yndios de mal servicio*: "[...] *nunca tovo yndios en esta çibdad [Mariquita] pa(ra) que le diese(n) mayz pa(ra) el gasto de su casa por q(ue) siempre an estado alçados e que metió en esta dicha çibdad mucha cantidad de vacas y hazienda q(ue) tenía y q(ue) la a gastado e q(ue) sabe q(ue)stá muy pobre e adeudado porque a comunicado e mucho con él e q(ue)l día de oy podrá tener q(ue) le sirvan en ella hasta treinta yndios de mal sevi(cio).*"³⁴⁷ He also told him that before the Indians had risen up in arms, his Cuamo encomienda yielded more than one-hundred corn fanegas, but that now they barely produced sixty: "[...] *dixo q(ue) de algunas Rozas q(ue) an hecho se an cogido çien fanegas y de otras más y esto hera antes q(ue) se alçase la t(ie)rra e que agora sienbran poco mayz cada Roza e se cojerán a parezer deste t(estig)o hasta çinq(uen)ta e sesenta fanegas de mayz cada Roza.*"³⁴⁸

Aside from fish, salt, and corn, the Indians provided the encomenderos with a wide variety of products: yucca, pineapples, *curas* (avocados), guavas, guamas (guamo fruit), pumpkins, potatoes, prunes, melons, plantains, chili peppers, papayas, beans, wood, honey, wax, and chickens which they had begun to raise. They also told Hernández that they hunted deer and rabbits for their masters. With regard to the latter, it is clear that the environment was already showing signs of overhunting and stress because the Indians explained that there were fewer and fewer animals to be found: Pintado, from Juan López's Honda encomienda, said, for example, "[...] *que [cojían] mayz poquyto y que se cojía mucha yucca y se crían gallinas y venados poquytos e poquytos conejos.*"³⁴⁹ And Cuzana from Diego de Posadas' Calamoina encomienda added "[...] *que mayz cojen piñas e curas e guamas, yuca, batatas e aullamas y conejos y*

*venados que no pueden matar por arcabuco [forest] y no tiene(n) mas.*³⁵⁰ The next day, on April 28, when Hernández visited Blas Martínez's encomienda in the same area, he wrote down that it seemed to him that the forest had been largely cut down: “[...] *desarcubucado el monte parezeme [...]*”³⁵¹

Hernández then asked the Indians what it was they traded in. Sasapa, a thirty-five year-old Indian from Alonso de Vera's Cuamo encomienda seemed to remember better times when the Panches had gold to trade: “[...] *dezía q(ue) primero compravan oro con quantas [beads] y q(ue) agora conpran ma(n)tas con pescado y sal [...]*”³⁵² Equa and Calanbizo, two capitanes who belonged to Melchor de Sotomayor's Calamoina encomienda, made the situation even clearer. Calanbizo said “[...] *q(ue) él no t(ien)e nada e que los otros yndios quando tenyan oro compravan quantas y q(ue) agora no compra(n) nada ni tienen tratos nyngunos e luego dixo que quando tienen q(ue)ntas conpran ma(n)tas por ay [ahí]*”³⁵³ Equa added “[...] *q(ue) quando tenyan hambre compravan mayz por que(n)tas y que primero tenían oro y daban oro por mayz y agora no lo tiene(n).*”³⁵⁴ If the Indians no longer had any gold to trade in, it seemed as if they were also having trouble feeding themselves for they were now having to buy corn from other Indians. Nucabue, Dacabue, and Guala from Sotomayor's Chapaima encomienda told Hernández “[...] *q(ue) no tenyan nada sino que quan(n)do an hambre conpran con quantas mayz con otros yndios y que no ay mas.*”³⁵⁵ However, Soto, a twenty-three-year-old Indian from Venero's Honda encomienda, who had survived smallpox and had even been baptized on the verge of death (“[...] *q(ue) quando se q(u)eria morir le echaron agua en la cabeça y le hicieron cristiano [...]*”),³⁵⁶ told the lenguas that they often traded with Indians as far downriver as Tamalameque in the coast: “[...] *dezía q(ue) venden a los yndios pescado y toman mantas y camysetas y sal y quantas tomar y q(ue) también ellos dan mantas a los yndios de Tamalameq(ue) por hachas y*

machetes y que no tienen más que vender ny tomar.”³⁵⁷ Venero’s overseer in Honda, Juan Jiménez,³⁵⁸ said the Indians even traded with the Malibues from Mompo: “[...] *dixo q(ue) [los yndios] dan pescado asado a yndios de muchas p(ar)tes y les dan oro y mantas y quantas y sal y con los Malibues de Mo(n)pox quando vienen aquí con canoas contratan en que les dan lo q(ue) rescatan y pescado por hachas y machetes.*” Orure and Oloba said they obtained knives and pewter dishes from other Indians as well.

Life had indeed changed in the nine years since Pedroso’s invasion. The Indians were now using steel axes, knives, and machetes. Some of them, like Quylima from Blas Martínez’s Calamoina encomienda, were even using the traditional wide, baggy, pleated trousers or *zaragüelles* worn by Spanish men, even though they were not Christians and did not speak Spanish:

Este d(ic)ho mes e año [April 28 1559] yo el d(ic)ho is(cri)vano [Hernández] hize parecer ante my a un yndio q(ue)stava vestido con camyseta y çaraguelles y un sombrero de paja y parecido, pareçiéndome dél q(ue) sabía alg(un)a cosa de la lengua castellana le preg(un)te si era cristiano y otras cosas y no me dio Razon de nyng(un)a por donde entendí q(ue) hera bozal y dixee a la d(ic)ha lengua q(ue) le preg(unt)e q(ue) como se llama y si es cristiano y la d(ic)ha lengua hablo con él y dixo q(ue) dezía q(ue) se llamava Quylima en nombre de yndios y por otro n(ombr)e P(edr)o e q(ue) no es cristiano.³⁵⁹

Market places had sprung up outside the mines near Mariquita. There the miners bought corn and grilled fish in exchange for mantas and *ropa de la tierra*.³⁶⁰ “[...] *Alonso lengua] dixo q(ue) [Amicari] dezía q(ue) tenían mayz y pescado y q(ue) Rescata(n) ma(n)tas en las mynas con pescado y conpran sal con los yndios q(ue)sta(n) en ellas y que conpran camisetas con pescado.*”³⁶¹ The mantas and camisetas the miners traded for fish and corn to feed themselves were probably made by their mothers and grand-mothers because Coma, a forty-year-old Indian from Calamoina, told the lenguas that it was the “[...] *guarichas viejas [que] hazen mantas*

[...]”³⁶² It was also the women who made the clay pots or *múcuras* for the encomenderos’ solares or for the miners to trade in exchange for food: “[...Dacabue] *dezía q(ue) no tenyan nada y que Rescata(n) mayz con quantas y múcuras conpran con mayz y no más.*”³⁶³ And it was probably the women who prepared and sold the grilled fish to the miners outside the mines. In what had been a land of plenty, food had become a precious commodity.

The Panches were having to feed an ever growing number of incoming Spaniards, most of whom were settling in the altiplano cundiboyacense on the eastern cordillera,³⁶⁴ where the majority of goods and food products were channelled. The encomenderos exacted enormous amounts of corn leaving little for the Indians to feed themselves. On top of that, the people were dying from smallpox while others were being taken to the mines. As a result, there were fewer and fewer Indians to work in the fields or *rozas*. The *guarichas viejas* — whose sons and husbands were forced to work in the mines and could no longer tend their own *rozas* — tried their best to feed the men by providing them with the mantas they wove and the camisetas they made so that they could exchange them for food. Others, more fortunate, still worked side by side in their fields with their husbands: “[...] *dixeron [las lenguas] que otro yndio que se llamaba beta está Rozando con su muger.*”³⁶⁵ The corn they harvested was sold to the miners in exchange for “ropa de la tierra” which was then traded for steel axes, knives, and machetes brought all the way upriver by Indians from the Caribbean coast. “La ropa de la tierra” may have even procured other goods about which the Indians said nothing to Hernández, goods like French harquebuses and gun powder which the Indians on the coast obtained from French pirate ships.³⁶⁶

The women and men were spread thin; not only because they were dying at an alarming rate or because the men were being taken to the mines, but also because some were running

away: “*Fue d(ic)ho a la d(ic)ha lengua q(ue) diga a los d(ic)hos yndios si faltan mas o sy ay en otra p(ar)te alg(uno)s ocultos o encubiertos yndios alg(un)os y la lengua hablo con ellos y dixo q(ue) dezia(n) que no faltava nyng(un)o sino Chonbia y su muger que se an huydo no saben donde.*”³⁶⁷ Perhaps Chombía and his wife had run away to join the rebels in the mountains. As Alonso de Vera had told Hernández, the Indians in the region “*siempre an estado alçados.*” And indeed, the signs of indigenous rebellion were everywhere. Nine years after the Spaniards’ invasion, the missionaries still did not dare to venture through the land for fear of being killed by rebel Indians. As a result, evangelization was sluggish: only two of the more than forty Indians interviewed by Hernández said they were Christians; all the others told him they were not and for each of them Hernández wrote down *bozal*, a term used to designate natives who had had no previous contact with Spaniards. Oftentimes it was the encomenderos themselves or their overseers or maybe even a recently converted Indian who preached the new faith to the natives and performed the basic Christian rites of baptism, marriage, and burial. Juan Bretón, one of Belalcázar’s lieutenants, accused in 1562 of abusing the Indians in his encomienda in Natagaima,³⁶⁸ told the visitador Tomás López “[...] *que no ha tenydo este q(uerellant)e, clérigo ny frayle saçerdote en los dichos yndios porque ha tenydo un hombre español lego en ellos hasta que se alçó la tierra que los ha enseñado e que después acá no ha osado estar nadie en ellos e que no ha tenydo el dicho sacerdote por no lo aver e que por culpa deste q(uerellant)e no se ha muerto ningún yndio sin ser cristiano antes este q(uerellant)e a nesçesidad ha bautizado algunos que se han muerto [...]*”³⁶⁹ And Ytetima, the cacique, told López “[...] *que los an enseñado la dotrina un yndio ladino xp(istian)o questá en el pueblo deste t(estig)o e cada noche se la dize q(ue) se lla(ma) Dieguyto [...]*”³⁷⁰

With the Indians up in arms, the encomenderos in the land were required to maintain arms and horses. Ibagué, for example, had been attacked several times since its founding in 1550, and there is evidence that Antonio de Toledo, one of the encomenderos mentioned in Hernández's visita, participated at one point in its defense, most likely during the siege the Pixaos laid to the city in 1557: “[...] supo este testigo [Francisco Perez Desquibel] por cosa muy notoria q(ue)l dicho don Antonio [de Toledo] fue a los Musos a los paçificar con el capitán Valdés y después fue a socorrer a los vecinos de Ybagué con armas y cavallo q(ue)stavan çercados por los naturales [...]”³⁷¹

But the Panches in the encomiendas were not just threatened by the impact of the recent Spanish conquest; they were also having to deal with their traditional enemies, the Colimas.³⁷² An incident, during Hernández's visita to Licenciado Venero's Calamoina encomienda in which he was informed that some of the Indians were hiding, suggests this was still the case even after the Spanish conquest: “[...] detras dellas orillas de un aRoyo fuy ynform(a)do q(ue)stavan los otros yndios poblados q(ue) se avian metido allí por temor de los colimas yndios de guerRa, q(ue)stán junto a ellos una cuesta alta en m(edio) y q(ue) los hacen guerra y an muerto muchos.”³⁷³ It also suggests that perhaps the Indian from Juan López's Honda encomienda, whom Pintado had told Hernández was sure to die as a result of having been *flechado*, was killed by a Colima poisoned arrow.

The evidence provided in this visita demonstrates that from the time of the first posesión ceremonies (1553-1554) to the time of Hernández's visita (1559), the Spaniards, their diseases, forced labor, the war of resistance against the invaders, ongoing feuding with neighboring groups and even hunger had diminished the Panche population by 77% on average over a period of just

six years. Indeed, for those encomenderos whose *títulos de encomienda* or royal deeds were summarized and included in Hernández's visita, it is possible to calculate the decline in numbers between their original *encomendados* and those who were still living in their encomiendas in 1559. In Juan López's case, for example, we know that between 1553 and 1554, he became an encomendero to at least some 1280 Indians. Six years later, in 1559, the Indians in his Honda, Calamoina, and Chapaima encomienda totaled 807 individuals for a 37% decrease in population. The decline, however, was even more extreme for the Indians who belonged to the other encomenderos. According to the summary of the royal deed included in Hernández's report, on November 7, 1554, Melchor de Sotomayor was made encomendero to some four-hundred and sixty "*casas de yndios*," for a minimum of (at a rate of four people to a house) 1840 Indians:

Por hazer bien e m(erced) a vos Melchor de Sotomayor vezino de la çibdad de San Sevastián de Marequyta acatando los servicios que en estas p(ar)tes de las yndias nos aveys hecho y los que adela(n)te nos hareys en algún apremio e gratificación dellos es n(uest)ra m(erced) y voluntad de vos encome(n)dar como por la presente vos encomendamos en los t(e)rmynos e jurisdiscion de la dicha çibdad en la p(ro)vi(nci)a de Calamoyna sesenta casas de yndios pobladas de visytaçión con los caziq(ue)s Bali e Yequa y en la p(ro)vi(nci)a de Chapayma otras sesenta casas de yndios pobladas de visytaçión con el pueblo de Coare questá en la barranca del Río grande de la Madalena con los caziques Mania e Tunache e Macabeo y mas otras çiento y quarenta casas de yndios pobladas en los Colimas las más cercanas del Chunbe y en el Pançenú otras çien casas de yndios pobladas y en los palenques otras çien casas de yndios entró el capitán Pedroso con los caballos con todos los caziques e yndios dellas y que le son sujetos [...] ³⁷⁴

Yet, in 1559, there were only 256 Indians in all three of his encomiendas — a decline of 84% in population. In the case of Alonso Vera, on January 8, 1553 he became an encomendero to some two-hundred and ten "*casas pobladas*" or some eight-hundred and forty Indians. Seven years later, there were only one-hundred and twenty-five Indians in his Cuamo and Honda encomienda, for an 85% decrease in population. Between 1554 and 1558, Antonio de Toledo became an encomendero to a total of 1060 "*casas de yndios poblados*" or approximately 4240 Indians. However, when Hernández visited his Calamoina and Chapaima encomienda, there

were only five-hundred and fifty Indians to be found, for an 87% decrease in population. In the case of Blas Martínez, the only other encomendero whose title deeds are included in Hernández's visita, on May 19, 1556, he was made encomendero to some three-hundred "*casas de yndios poblados*" or 1200 Indians. Three years later, however, there were only ninety-seven Indians in his Calamoina encomienda, for a 92% decrease in population. It is possible, however, in Toledo and Martínez's case, since both men were handed down encomiendas which had been previously abandoned by other encomenderos, that such a decline in population could have occurred over a longer period of time. Nonetheless, a 77% on average population decrease over a period of just nine years speaks to the demographic cataclysm that befell indigenous communities in the years immediately after the arrival of the Spanish. But, surprisingly — *cuando la tierra se alço* and Panche men were joining the resistance against the Spaniards — it was the women, especially girls and young women — *chinas* and *guarichas* — who were hardest hit by this catastrophe; which brings us back to the opening scene in this chapter.

It was on a Friday, June 23, 1559 that Hernández visited Melchor de Sotomayor's Chapaima encomienda. Following standard procedures, Hernández asked that the Indians be rounded up so that he might interview them. But, as usual, only a few could be found. They were gathered in capitán Nucabue's hut. There Hernández began asking them the questions listed in the standard visita format. He was told there were seventy-nine Indians in this specific *repartimiento*. He was informed the men outnumbered the women: there were thirty-seven adult men and only twenty-four adult women. Twenty-one of the men were married; the rest — sixteen — were single. Yet, the difference between males and females became even bigger when children and young boys and girls were taken into consideration. The male population (adult men and boys) amounted to two thirds (60.5%) of the total population, whereas the female population

(adult women and girls) amounted to 39.4%. In fact, boys made up 11.8% of the total population while girls only 7.8%. Hernández, of course, did not make any such analysis. His visita was cut short by the sudden incursion of a group of “*yndios sobre si y enemigos de xpi(sti)anos*” who caused the Indians to stampede out of Nucabué’s hut with the women leading the way. Although Hernández recorded the incident in his report, saying that as a result he was thereafter unable to gather any more information, he made no attempt to offer any further explanations regarding the sudden attack, the perpetrators behind the attack, why they were attacking this particular repartimiento or why the women were so scared.

In fact, Hernández seemed strangely unafraid and uninquisitive. Although wherever he went he was confronted with a dire absence of girls (on average girls represented only 15% of all children and only 4% of the total population versus boys’ 17.6%), a surprising imbalance between females and males (with the male population accounting on average for two thirds of the population in each repartimiento), and a striking number of adult single men (on average 36.6% of the total adult male population), not once in the entire report did Hernández express any kind of perplexity, surprise or concern; nor did he seem to think it was strange that the Panches were sending young boys and not girls to serve in the encomenderos’ solares in Mariquita. Indeed, one of the most intriguing answers that the Indians repeatedly gave Hernández on the matter of how much tribute they paid their Spanish masters was that they provided their encomenderos with young boys to serve them. Chocoa, for example, told him “[...] *que también dan los capitanes muchachos pa(ra) servir en Marequyta [...]*”;³⁷⁵ and Naca said “[...] *que quando [su amo] pide muchachos pa(ra) llevar a Marequyta se los dan los capitanes [...]*”;³⁷⁶ and so did seven of the other Indians and two of the overseers. There is no mention of girls being sent to serve in the encomenderos’ solares or houses in Mariquita. In fact,

there is almost no mention of girls at all because, as the tables below clearly demonstrate, there were so few of them. But perhaps, Hernández was only too aware of the situation and thought it best not to bring it up in an official report.

Table 1. Population in Juan Lopez's encomiendas:³⁷⁷

	Onda		Calamoyna		Chapayma	
Total population	78		398		326	
Adults	60%		76.3%		71.6%	
Children	40%		23.6%		27.3%	
Adult women	33%		29.3%		34.3%	
Adult men	26.9%		47%		38.3%	
Females (women, girls & elderly)	41%		34.4%		40%	
Males (men, boys & elderly)	59%		65.5%		60%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	26	21	117	187	112	125
Married	18	17	96	96	91	91
Widows/ers	8	?	14	16	18	2
Single	?	4	?	91	?	34
Adult, children & elderly	32	47	137	261	129	196
Children	6	25	20	74	20	69
% / children	19%	80%	21.2%	78.7%	22.4%	77.5%
Children/total population	7.6%	32%	5%	18.5%	6%	21%

Table 2. Population in Melchor de Sotomayor's encomiendas:

	Onda	Calamoyna	Chapayma
Total population	32	141	76
Adults	81%	83%	80.2%
Children	18%	17%	19.7%

Adult women	40%		33%		31.5%	
Adult men	40%		50%		48.6%	
Females (women, girls & elderly)	46.8%		34.7%		39.4%	
Males (men, boys & elderly)	53%		65.2%		60.5%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	13	13	47	70	24	37
Married	12	12	42	42	21	21
Widows/ers	1	0	5	0	1	0
Single	?	1	?	28	?	16
Adult, children & elderly	15	17	49	92	30	46
Children	2	4	2	22	6	9
% / children	33%	66%	8.3%	91.6%	40%	60%
Children/total population	6%	12.5%	1.4%	15.6%	7.8%	11.8%

Table 3. Population in Bachiller Venero's encomiendas:

	Onda		Calamoyna	
Total population	25		113	
Adults	64%		68%	
Children	36%		31.8%	
Adult women	28%		23.8%	
Adult men	36%		44.2%	
Females (women, girls & elderly)	40%		27.4%	
Males (men, boys & elderly)	60%		72.5%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	7	9	27	50
Married	7	8	26	26
Widows/ers	?	?	1	0
Single	?	1	?	24
Adult, children & elderly	10	15	31	82
Children	3	6	4	32
% / children	33%	66%	11%	88%
Children/total population	12%	24%	3.5%	28.3%

Table 4. Population in Alonso Vera's encomiendas:

	Onda	Cuamo
Total population	26	92
Adults	84.6%	80.4%
Children	15.3%	19.5%

Adult women	34.6%		35.8%	
Adult men	50%		44.5%	
Females (women, girls & elderly)	34.7%		38%	
Males (men, boys & elderly)	63.3%		63%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	9	13	33	41
Married	7	7	22	22
Widows/ers	1	0	8	0
Single	?	6	?	19
Adult, children & elderly	?	19	35	62
Children	?	4	2	16
% / children	0%	100%	11%	88%
Children/total population	0%	14%	2%	16%

Table 5. Population in Antonio de Toledo's encomiendas:

	Calamoyna		Chapayma	
Total population	409		69	
Adults	71.6%		85.5%	
Children	28.3%		14.4%	
Adult women	26.8%		40.5%	
Adult men	44.7%		45%	
Females (women, girls & elderly)	32.5%		42%	
Males (men, boys, elderly)	67.4%		58%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	110	183	28	31
Married	64	64	26	26
Widows/ers	14	0	2	0
Single	?	119	?	5
Adult, children & elderly	133	276	29	40
Children	23	93	1	9
% / children	19.8%	80%	10%	90%
Children/total population	4.8%	19.4%	1.4%	13%

Table 6. Population in Blas Martínez's encomienda:

	Calamoyna
Total population	97
Adults	88.6%
Children	11.5%

Adult women	35%	
Adult men	53.6%	
Females (women, girls & elderly)	35%	
Males (men, boys & elderly)	65%	
	Female	Male
Adult	34	52
Married	27	27
Widows/ers	7	0
Single	?	25
Adult, children & elderly	34	63
Children	0	11
% / children	0%	100%
Children/total population	0%	11.3%

Table 7. Comparative table for all six encomiendas

Encomenderos	Females	Adult W.	Girls	Girls/Children	Adult Men	Boys
López	38.4%	32.2%	6.2%	20.8%	37.4%	23.8%
Sotomayor	40%	34.8%	5%	27.1%	46.2%	13%
Venero	33.7%	25.9%	7.7%	22%	40%	26%
Vera	36.3	35.2%	1%	5.5%	47.2%	15.6%
Toledo	37.2	35.7%	3.1%	14.9%	42.7%	16.2%
Martínez	35%	35%	0%	0%	53.6%	11.3%
Average	36.7%	33.1%	3.8%	15%	44.5%	17.6%

While there may be several reasons behind the near-absence of Panche women and girls, this scene provides us with a strong hint: Hernández writes that the women were the first to storm out of Nucabue's hut; at the same time, he describes the attackers as enemies of both the Indians ("*yndios sobre si*") and the Spaniards ("*enemigos de xpi(sti)anos*"), but curiously enough, they never seek him out (nor does he seem afraid that they will), despite the fact that he was a royal bureaucrat from Santa Fé and that he would have made a handsome hostage. Instead, the attackers seemed intent on going after the women in the repartimiento. At least, this is what

the women's initial reaction along with their very low numbers suggests: that both chinas and guarichas were being regularly kidnapped. The question is: who was abducting them and why?

The land, we know, was up in arms. Throughout Hernández's visita both Spaniards and Indians repeatedly tell him so. But it was not just the Panches who had rebelled against the Spanish; in fact, the resistance had spread north, all the way up from the Yalcones and Paeces living in the southernmost tip of the Huila province, to the Pixaos who inhabited the northern part of the Huila province as well as the south-central region of the Tolima province, and from there to the Panches living in the northernmost tip of the Tolima province. If we are to believe Juan de Castellanos, it was La Gaitana and her people, the Yalcones, who nineteen years before had set the entire region ablaze:

Tuvo [La Gaitana] de Pigoanza la respuesta/En nada discrepante del deseo/Y así luego despacha sus recados/Para juntar amigos y aliados/Y ella misma con deudos y parientes/Otros algunos bárbaros visita/A los cuales con lágrimas ardientes/A que la favorezcan los incita/Y para tener buenos expedientes/Halaga, sarjentea y solicita/Atrajo los panaes o panaos/Y la brava nación de los pijaos.³⁷⁸

The Panches and the Pixaos seemed to have shared several traits and maybe even perhaps a common origin. Both groups flattened their foreheads in much the same way the Maya did. Both have come down in history as the two fiercest Indian groups in the Kingdom of New Granada and those who put up the toughest resistance against the Spanish. As for the relationship between the Pixaos and their neighbors to the south — the Yalcones and Paeces, it seems, according to Juan Rodríguez Freyle (1566-1640), soldier and author of the seventeenth-century novel on the conquest of New Granada, *El Carnero* (1639), that they alternated between war and peace:

Los paeses eran naturales de aquella cordillera [Cordillera Central]; los pijaos no lo eran, porque aquellos naturales todos decían que esta nación vino de aquella parte del Darién, huyendo y vencidos. Atravesando las muchas y ásperas montañas que hay desde aquel río a esta cordillera, allegó esta bandada de langostas al asiento y población de los paeses, con los cuales trabaron amistad y parentesco, y como gente belicosa se apoderó de lo más de aquella cordillera. No me haga cargo el lector de que me detenga en estas relaciones, porque le respondo: que gasté los años de mi mocedad por esta tierra, siguiendo la guerra con algunos capitanes timaneses [...] Las armas de toda esta gente eran lanzas de treinta palmos, dardos arrojados, que tiraban con mucha destreza, macanas, y también usaban de la honda y piedra; porque pijaos y paeses traían guerra; y siempre la trajeron con coyaimas y natagaimas, aunque para ir contra españoles o a robarlos y saltarlos, todos se aunaban.³⁷⁹

Apparently, the Pixaos had split into two groups: on the one hand, the Natagaimas and Coyaimas living along the Magdalena River basin, and those, on the other hand, who had befriended the Páez and settled along the Cordillera Central. The Natagaimas and Coyaimas would later prove themselves decisive allies to the Spaniards in the final campaign against the Pixaos from the cordillera in the seventeenth century. Yet, as Freyle suggests here, the Pixaos who had settled among the Yalcones and Paeces in the mountains, seem to have worked out alliances with their neighbors in order to oust the Spaniards. These alliances, which may have begun to form around 1545, seven years after the Spanish first invaded Páez and Yalcón territory,³⁸⁰ may have included the Panches by 1559, if not earlier. Whatever the case, the Pixaos acquired early on such a reputation for their ferocity in the fight against the Spanish that pretty soon the word *pixao* became a catchword for any and every Indian up in arms:

[...] y ahora [los pijaos] a todas las naciones comarcanas de indios, salvo la suya, comen y a todos los españoles [...] Pues esta tan belicosa gente e indomable y valiente nación han venido a quedar tan pocos, que en mi tiempo no había cuatro mil, aunque con otras naciones que les ayudan, que ellos han hecho levantar, son más de veinte mil, que son: pijaos, cuatro mil; paeces, nueve mil; omaguas, cinco mil; sutagaos, dos mil, que todos roban y matan con nombre de pijaos, aunque sobre todos estos son los más valientes y atrevidos, y así son temidos, como dicho tenemos [...]³⁸¹

In fact, during the second half of the sixteenth century, every attack on any major town (Ibagué, 1550, 1557, 1592; Timaná, 1558; Neiva, 1570; Ciudad de Páez, 1572; San Sebastián de La Plata, 1564, 1577) was indistinctly attributed to the Pixaos.³⁸² It is possible that Yalcones,

Paeces, Pijaos, Panches, and other groups could have come together early on in the fight against the Spaniards under what historians like Leovigildo Bernal Andrade have called the “Pijao Confederacy.”³⁸³ In time, as communities were greatly diminished in numbers through disease, warfare, enslavement, and displacement, pockets of resistance or “*ladroneras*” as the Spaniards called them,³⁸⁴ began to form, offering a safe haven to rebels, survivors, runaways and refugees alike. Almost certainly, these strongholds became hubs of inter-tribal coexistence. As these groups intensified their resistance against the Spaniards and the Spaniards’ “*yndios amigos*” — escalating their tactics into total war terror strategies — they may have been dubbed with the name of the fierce Pixaos, despite counting among their members several other ethnicities as well.

What is certain is that for more than seventy years after the Spaniards’ initial incursion into present-day Colombian territory, there ensued a period of low-scale endemic war where neither side was able to defeat the other. The Indians were faced with a new enemy, who unlike previous invaders, was not content to carve out a territorial conquest and settle in their midst. This new enemy sought to impose its ways on them. The Indians attempted to assimilate the new invaders as previous generations had done with other groups who possessed useful tools and knowledge. They offered the Spaniards their daughters and sisters hoping that the new and powerful invaders would side with them as was the custom of the land among in-laws. Perhaps, they also hoped that in time and under the influence of their Indian wives, the strangers would curb their belligerence and change their ways. When this strategy failed, they tried as they had done in the past to move out and away, but they found their new enemy came in hot pursuit, intent as it was not just on gaining land, but also manpower. The Indians were left with few choices as they faced physical and cultural extermination. Initially, and as long as Spaniards and

Indians experienced relative parity, both sides found themselves in a deadlock, forced to contend and compromise. At the same time, neither side ever really abandoned the hope of completely defeating the other. In this situation, both Spaniards and Indians alternated between cycles of violence punctuated by short-lived truces. During the cycles of violence, each side preyed upon the other and — as these two official reports dating from 1560 and 1572 respectively show — terror was a part of everyday life for most people living in the region:

Los naturales della [de Timaná] son muy pocos y cada día van a menos, porque hay una provincia de indios caribes junto a ellos, que llaman el Rincón de Timaná, que ordinariamente vienen a los matar para comerlos, y de los que matan tienen carnicería pública en esta provincia. El licenciado Tomás López cuando fue a visitar y tasar [1557], vio por vista de ojos que ciertos españoles les habían quitado a estos indios del Rincón de Timaná cincuenta cargas de carne que llevaban de los que habían muerto en Timaná, caso de gran lástima. Y es cosa tan ordinaria, que no pasa mes sin que vengan y es tanto el miedo que los de Timaná tienen a estos del Rincón, que uno sólo basta para diez y los matan sin que hagan resistencia ninguna. Vanse acabando, así por esto como por ser ellos pocos, y los encomenderos muchos y pobres, y ser forzoso haberse de sustentar con el trabajo demasiado dellos.³⁸⁵

[...] la villa de Neiva, la cual se ha despoblado por causa de unos indios caribes que comen carne humana, muy guerreros, que se llaman los pijaos, que los han despoblado por guerra y porque han acabado de comer todos los naturales de aquella tierra, y por esta causa, por aquella tierra hay mucha tierra despoblada y pocos naturales, aunque es tierra de mucho oro, y se criaba mucho ganado.³⁸⁶

The entire region settled into what Ramón A. Gutiérrez has described for New Mexico during roughly the same period as a “monotonously uneventful career of inert and non-progressive existence.”³⁸⁷ But the Alto Magdalena region was far from being New Mexico: as evidenced in the description of the situation in the town of Neiva, the region was rich in gold and silver mines as well as fertile land. The 1560 official report cited above informed that the cities of Neiva, Timaná, and Popayán were continually harassed by the Páez and the Pixaos who were up in arms. It also claimed the rebels prevented the mines surrounding the town of San Sebastián de La Plata from being exploited.³⁸⁸ Juan de Velasco later wrote that the prosperity of the land came to a halt when the town was destroyed by the Indians in 1564³⁸⁹ and that even though it was

later rebuilt thirty kilometers (18 m.) away from its initial location, San Sebastián de La Plata never again fully recovered:

Noticioso del fatal suceso el Gobernador de Popayán, se esforzó a levantar tropas, y disponerse para ir en persona a un ejemplar castigo [...] Más a pesar de todos sus esfuerzos y diligencias, quedó sin castigo alguno; porque siendo numerosas aquellas naciones bárbaras, y habitando países naturalmente defendidos e impenetrables, jamás pudo conseguir otra cosa, que fundar 6 leguas más abajo fuera de la cordillera, la nueva ciudad de San Sebastián de la Plata. Unió en ella los residuos que escaparon con vida y mantuvo por largo tiempo una formal guarnición, no ya para pensar en minas, las cuales quedaron para siempre abandonadas, sino solo para conservar libre de bárbaros el tránsito forzoso de Popayán al Nuevo Reino de Granada. Nunca llegó a ser la nueva ciudad ni sombra de la primera, por la misma razón de no trabajar sus minas.³⁹⁰

The encomenderos and their “yndios amigos” lived in permanent fear. The towns were walled to protect them against the rebels’ reiterative raids. Few dared to venture outside unless they were heavily escorted. For more than seventy years, the encomenderos in the region had to rely on the dwindling number of “yndios amigos;” and even then, they were not always sure they could fully trust them. Trade all but came to a stop. According to Juan Friede, in just ten years, from 1540 to 1551, the collection of the *diezmo eclesiástico* in Timaná decreased by 75% (a figure that closely parallels the native population drop of 77%) from 475 gold pesos to 120 gold pesos and stayed so until the end of the sixteenth century.³⁹¹

But it was not just the prosperity of the land that was compromised. Indigenous women bore perhaps the heaviest brunt of this low-scale endemic violence. Faced with extermination, indigenous rebel men must have realized very early on that the survival of their communities depended in large part on their ability to secure young fertile women. This almost certainly explains the near-absence of girls (only 15% of all children and just 4% of the total population versus boys’ 17.6%), the imbalance between adult men and women (two thirds men versus one third women) and the great number of adult single men (one third of all adult males) in the encomiendas visited by Francisco Hernández. But the ability to procreate was probably not the only reason Indian rebels were kidnapping women. In the war of resistance in which the Indians

were now engaged, women would play other key roles as well. They would hereafter provide the rebels not only with a way of stabilizing and potentially increasing their numbers, but also with sex, food, trade goods such as mantas and camisetas, and military intelligence among other things. We know, for example, that in the first two decades of the seventeenth century, a crucial component of the Spanish strategy in the final assault against the Pixaos was the systematic capture of Pixao women and children who played a vital role as the economic backbone of the resistance. Left with no one to plant and harvest corn for them, Pixao rebels were driven to starvation and soon after were defeated.³⁹² This in turn suggests that it was women and children who, from the very outset of the resistance and for as long as it lasted, planted, tended and harvested the crops that fed the rebels.

It is also almost certain that it was the women who provided the men with the trade goods (mantas and camisetas) that allowed them to obtain European tools and weapons. Furthermore, it seems women performed certain religious military functions such as the one described in a 1581 report written on the Panches' enemies — the Colimas — in which the old guarichas are depicted as being traditionally in charge of making the poison or *yerba* with which arrows and darts were daubed to make them deadly: “[...] *una vejezuela, plegada maestro de hacer muertes con ponzoñosa yerba [...]*”³⁹³ It is likely that this was also the case among the Panches and the Pixaos. In addition, fray Pedro Simón tells us that Pixao women often followed men into battle because they were the ones who dismembered the bodies of slain enemies: “*A las indias mandaron que cuando Beco tocase un gran caracol que traía al cuello, advirtiesen que era señal de victoria y que saliesen a cargar la carne de los españoles muertos.*”³⁹⁴ Perhaps this was a traditional role for women among the Pixaos; or, perhaps, as anthropologist María Rostworowski has argued for the Incas in Peru, European diseases had so ravaged indigenous communities that

the loss of manpower almost certainly translated into a greater participation of women in war, especially in terms of logistical support — a hypothesis further supported by several Spanish reports on captured spies which consistently describe the spies as being women: “[...] *Juan de Mosquera, caudillo que fue nombrado para correr las tierras [...] enderezó su camino a la casa del dicho principal, lo más encubiertamente que pudo, lo cual no bastó para dejar de ser sentido de las espías y atalayas que los enemigos tenían puestas sobre el campo de los españoles, como siempre estos indios acostumbran a hacer [...]*”³⁹⁵ Perhaps women were selected to act as spies because the Indians knew they were less likely to be killed by the Spaniards. Perhaps they did so, like in so many other indigenous cultures of the Americas,³⁹⁶ because it was through women that alliances were sealed between different groups: women among the Panches and the Pixaos may have also officiated as intermediaries and go-betweens, brokering peace in times of war or alternately serving as informers and spies. Perhaps there were just not enough warriors and women were required to take on the role of spies. Whatever the case, the evidence suggests that Indian women played a key role in the first seventy years of the resistance against the Spanish.

Now whether or not the kidnapping of Indian women by Indian rebels — instead of the traditionally more participatory political and polygamous exchange of women among men — diminished their status remains to be determined. It is quite likely that the demographic catastrophe, the competition among rebels over women, and the very centrality of the roles women held in the resistance may have actually increased their status among the rebels, at least initially. In addition, because indigenous resistance cannot be separated from indigenous religion, in that most if not all of the Indians’ wartime leaders were also spiritual and religious leaders or *mohanes*, it is quite likely that here again women may have continued to play a crucial

role as well. At least, this is what the story of La Gaitana, or as we shall see in the next chapter, that of the legendary cacica Tulima,³⁹⁷ suggest.

As for the women who stayed on or were left behind as part of the “yndios amigos” in the encomiendas, they were, as we have seen, for the most part “guarichas viejas.” Almost certainly, they were faced with a daunting challenge: feeding their husbands, sons and grandsons in the mines by providing them with the mantas and “ropa de la tierra” which they made and their kinsmen later exchanged for food; and planting, raising, and harvesting crops on their own, while at the same time producing food and other commodities for an ever growing number of Spaniards for little or nothing in return. We have only to imagine how devastating it must have been for these “guarichas viejas” — raised in a culture where old women were not only held in high esteem but actively consulted on most matters — to suddenly find themselves in a world where they were now being taxed with an incredibly heavy social responsibility yet relegated to the last of the social rungs; a world where they were suddenly and inexorably supplanted by the likes of Biamba, Pedro and Pintado — young men half their age who were rapidly becoming part of a European-style bureaucracy that did not even consider women to be legitimate interlocutors, let alone fit for any administrative or official position. The world they had known when they came of age, in which women commanded parallel and separate political spheres as well as autonomous authority, was crumbling around them. Yet some would not give up so easily...

Chapter 4

Yndios contra yndios: Indians against Indians

“[...] digo que yo la dicha elena tengo un pedazo de tierra que lo herede de mis padres Los quales lo ganaron en otros tiempos con la lanza en la mano de otros enemigos [...]” (1590)³⁹⁸

“[...]las guarichas] no durmían en sus casas, porque si durmieran en ellas las llevaran los indios, y que ellas duermen en el arcabuco que está allí cerca de sus casas [...]” (1603)³⁹⁹

On Wednesday, June 6, 1590, Elena yndia walked into the office of don Bartolomé de Mújica Guevara, governor and captain general of Ibagué. It is quite possible that she may have waited for several days for the governor to grant her an audience, but in the end her stubborn determination got the better of the governor’s indifference. She had made the journey from her farm in Chucuni to Ibagué and she was not about to give up now. Carefully wrapped in her *mochila*⁴⁰⁰ was a *mandamiento* which mandated that her freedom and property and that of her husband, Juan Natayma, be protected and guaranteed. Elena was accusing two Spanish men — Captain Alonso de Meneses and Pedro Talaverano de Escavías — of ignoring the *mandamiento* she had so carefully kept over the years. The governor did not want to appear negligent so he immediately ordered, through a second *mandamiento*, the two men to leave Elena and her husband Juan alone: “[...] mando señores al capitán alonso de meneses deje a los dichos joan natayma y elena yndios bibir en su libertad y no se la perturbe ny estorbe en manera alguna guardeseles antes de verdad a los dichos juan natayma y elena yndios para lo qual mando parezca ante su merced El dicho juan natayma yndio y el dicho alonso de meneses lo cumpla so pena de cinquenta pesos oro para la cámara de su magestad y gastos de justicia por mitad demás de que se procederá contra él con todo rigor y En quanto a lo de las tierras que pide la dicha elena yndia se notifique a los dichos don alonso de meneses y pedro talaverano descavías la dejen libremente y no se sirvan della [...]”.⁴⁰¹ Before leaving the governor’s office, Elena was

careful to request a copy of this second mandamiento. The governor was kind enough to oblige her, but as he probably anticipated, this second mandamiento did little to help Elena and her husband.

Six months later, Elena would set out again from Chucuni to demand her rights. Only this time she did not bother calling on Bartolomé de Mújica Guevara; she made the long journey across the plains to the east of Ibagué and then up the eastern cordillera to Santa Fé de Bogotá. There, on Monday, December 17, she presented before the Audiencia Real a petition written in the first person and addressed to the then president of the audiencia, don Antonio González. In the letter, she entreated González to grant her and her husband a “*mandamiento de libertad*” so that they could return to her husband’s hometown of Tocayma⁴⁰² to live freely among his relatives. She explained that Alonso de Meneses had sold off her land to his brother-in-law, Pedro Talaverano, and that the two men prevented her and her relatives from planting any crops on the property. She claimed Meneses and Talaverano had allowed horses and pigs to roam freely on the land destroying all of her family’s harvests. She also accused Meneses of throwing her and her husband in jail when they had tried to leave for Tocayma. Finally, she requested González to grant her a “*mandamiento de amparo*” for the land which was rightly hers and which her parents had won “*en otros tiempos con la lanza en la mano de otros enemigos.*”⁴⁰³ Don Antonio González acquiesced and issued a mandamiento in which he ordered the governor of Ibagué to protect Elena’s liberty and property as well as that of her husband. Again, Elena was mindful to request a copy of the said mandamiento which she carefully took back with her to Chucuni. There is reason to believe that this time don Bartolomé Mujíca Guevara had no choice but to enforce the president of the Audiencia Real’s orders because Elena did not return to the Spanish courts until nineteen years later.

In the last decades of the sixteenth century, the Pixaos had escalated their war against Spanish occupation.⁴⁰⁴ Elena's story must be analyzed within this context — a context in which the “yndios amigos” were of crucial importance to the Spaniards. Among the “yndios amigos” were the Coyaimas and Natagaimas, a subgroup of the Pixaos who inhabited the flatlands of the Alto Magdalena River basin and who played a decisive role as allies to the Spaniards in the fight against their Pixao relatives from the sierra. But there were also some older friends and allies: the yanaconas who fifty-five years before had made the journey north from Ecuador, fighting and conquering alongside the Spaniards. Indeed, in the documents, Elena clearly states that she owned a property called *chucuni*: “[...] yo la dicha elena tengo Un pedaço de tierra que lo herede de mis padres Los quales lo ganaron en otros tiempos con la lanza en la mano de otros enemigos [...] la dicha tierra la qual se llama chucuni [...]”⁴⁰⁵ The priest and linguist, Pedro José Ramírez Sendoya in his *Diccionario Indio del Gran Tolima* lists *chucuni* (also spelled *chacuni* at other times in the document) as a hamlet or *vereda* outside Ibagué originally settled by “*indios Yanaconas del Perú*.”⁴⁰⁶ This suggests that Elena was a second-generation descendant of the Yanaconas who had originally founded Ibagué in 1550.⁴⁰⁷ It also points to the active role the yanaconas played in the conquest and colonization of this region — something which is further substantiated by Elena's insistence on claiming that her parents had obtained the property “*en otros tiempos con la lanza en la mano de otros enemigos*.” In addition, it explains why the governor of Ibagué and the president of the Audiencia Real in Santafé both felt compelled to acknowledge Elena's petition. The fact that Elena had inherited land from her parents, who had fought alongside the Spaniards, suggests that the Spanish had granted land titles to their yanacona allies in exchange for their services and loyalty. Indeed, when Elena first approached the governor of Ibagué Bartolomé de Mújica Guevara, she showed him a mandamiento which

guaranteed her freedom as well as her property rights over Chucuni. Almost certainly this mandamiento was the land deed itself — a legal document which neither the governor of Ibagué nor the president of the Audiencia Real in Santafé could afford to ignore. This is most likely why they both felt compelled to issue a second mandamiento acknowledging the first one she had presented them with, and thereby reinstating the special *amparo* her family had been granted warranting their property rights over Chucuni as well their exemption from any obligation to serve in the encomienda system.

It is not clear how old Elena was when she made the journey from Chucuni to Ibagué and then to Santa Fé de Bogotá. In the letter she presented before the Audiencia Real she described her husband as being very old and unable to serve his encomendero any longer. Nineteen years later, when she returned to the Spanish courts, she was a widow and described herself as an old woman.⁴⁰⁸ It is reasonable therefore to presume that she may have been in her forties when she first sought the protection of the Spanish colonial courts. If this were the case, she would have been born right around the time when the Spaniards and their yanacóna allies had first entered the region. As for her husband, Juan Natayma, he was most likely a Panche. Ramírez Sendoya lists Juan's last name — Natayma — as an affluent of the Caima River near the town of Alvarado.⁴⁰⁹ At the time of the conquest, the region in and around Alvarado was inhabited by the Calucaymas, a subgroup of the Panches. According to the document, Juan belonged to the repartimiento of one don Martín Tafur, a vecino of the town of Tocayma, the heartland of the Panche nation. That Elena, a descendant of the first yanacónas who had conquered this region, was now married to a Panche man and a descendant of the original inhabitants of the land, suggests that already within a generation of the yanacóna-Spanish conquest, yanacóna and local Indians were intermarrying.

Interestingly enough, Elena was careful to point out in the document that even though Juan was from another repartimiento, when he had married her, he had come to live with her in the repartimiento of Captain Meneses el Viejo (presumably the father of don Alonso de Meneses) to which she belonged, and had gone to work for him: “[...] *elena yndia cristiana digo que yo soy natural del rrepartimiento de don alonso de meneses Vezino de ybague y estoy casada según orden de la santa madre iglesia con juan yndio del rrepartimiento de don martin Tafur vezino de tocaya y el dicho mi marido a causa de estar y tenerme a mi por mujer a servido siempre al capitán meneses el Viejo dende muchacho y después que murió a servido al dicho don Alonso [...].*”⁴¹⁰ This seems to suggest that matrilineal residence operated in this case. Matrilineality is further substantiated by the fact that Elena claimed Chacuni as her property, not her husband’s: “[...] *yo la dicha elena tengo Un pedaço de tierra que lo herede de mis padres [...] la dicha tierra la qual se llama chacuni [...].*”⁴¹¹

As a second-generation Inca woman, Elena had probably inherited her property from her mother through the Incas’ system of bilateral descent. But bilateral descent was not exclusive to the Incas. In fact, there are indications that it was widely practiced throughout what is present-day Colombian territory. In fact, although we do not know for sure that parallel descent operated among the Panches, we do know that among the Panches’ neighbors to the West, the Quimbayas, daughters inherited from their mothers and sons from their fathers.⁴¹² It is possible that this may have also been the case among the Panches. In any case, the fact that Elena and Juan married and that he came to live with her on her property suggests that the two ethnic groups to which they belonged shared sufficient characteristics to make their marriage viable or even desirable.

But perhaps what is most intriguing here is the fact that as a second-generation yanacona woman Elena was heir to the conquering yanaconas’ original settlement outside Ibagué.

Although the word *cacica* never appears in the documents, it is very likely that Elena headed an entire family clan: in the letter she presented before the Audiencia Real in Santafé, Elena clearly stated that she and her husband did not live alone in Chucuni, but that she lived and worked on the land along with her other relatives: “[...] yo la dicha elena tengo Un pedaço de tierra que lo herede de mis padres Los quales lo ganaron en otros tiempos con la lanza en la mano de otros enemigos en que yo y otros mis parientes sembramos maíz yuca plantanos y otras muchas frutas que esta junto a nuestro pueblo de donde nos sustentamos [...] suplicamos A Vuestra señoría me dé su mandamiento de anparo de la dicha tierra prohibiendo con pena al dicho talaverano no nos la quite ni perturbe sino que nos la deje a mí y a mis parientes sembrarla y gozarla [...].”⁴¹³

In addition, we should remember that land among the Incas was by and large held communally. Therefore when Elena claimed Chucuni as her own, she was not making an individual, personal claim on a piece of land, but acting on behalf of an entire community asserting its rights over a certain territorial domain — in this case called Chucuni. Hence, she was not acting as a private person but rather as the chosen representative of the descendants of the original yanacona settlers of Chacuni. This is most interesting because it not only speaks to the high status of women among sixteenth-century yanaconas, but also possibly to the important role that women like her mother may have played among the yanaconas who accompanied Spaniards north into present-day Colombia. Indeed, we should keep in mind that although Elena could have inherited her charge from her father, she most likely inherited it from her mother through bilateral descent. Such a scenario would further support Sonia Alconini’s claim discussed in the first chapter that parallel descent was largely responsible for Inca women’s personal investment in war expeditions.

Now as the leader and representative of a community of “*yndios amigos*” whose forefathers had helped conquer Ibagué, Elena was certainly not someone to be dismissed so easily. We should remember that in 1590 the Spaniards were in the thick of the war against the Pixaos who roamed freely throughout the entire Alto Magdalena region stoking the fires of rebellion whenever and wherever they could. Furthermore, as a yanacona leader married to a Panche man, Elena probably also had influential and important connections among the Panche community. This may explain why the supreme authority of the land, the president of New Granada’s Audiencia Real in 1590, don Antonio González, may have thought it prudent not to upset her. By acknowledging the document Elena presented him, don Antonio González knew full well that he was sending a crucially opportune message to the “*yndios amigos*” in the region: that the Spanish kept their promises and that it paid to side with them. As it happened, Elena and the yanaconas would manage to keep their autonomy and their land during the next twenty years. But as we shall see, by 1612 when the bulk of the Pixaos were finally defeated, Elena would have to go back to court.

Twelve years later, after Elena returned to Chucuni with the Real Audiencia’s special amparo securely folded in her mochila, sometime during the early days of October 1602, somewhere in the mountains of the rebel province of Mayto,⁴¹⁴ a Putimae mohán (shaman) by the name of Bilapue was getting ready to end his fast. For the last seven days, he had remained in his hut, making sure the sun’s rays never touched him. Wearing only his breechcloth, he lay in his hammock stirring a small fire from time to time. He had only one more night left to dream a vision so he tried as hard as he could to fight-off sleep.⁴¹⁵ Since the start of his fast, he had only taken a few sips of chicha, just enough to keep him going

for eight days. He had also avoided salt and axi⁴¹⁶ as well as any contact with his wives. All this time, he had implored Locombo,⁴¹⁷ the god of time, eternal and infinite, to grant him a vision to guide his people in the war against the Spaniards. He was certain Locombo would bless him with such a vision before the next dawn when he was to break his fast and gather his people to tell them what he had dreamed.

Bilapue must have dreamed an auspicious vision because on Wednesday, October 30, 1602, at dawn, a party of four-hundred *gándules* or Pixao spearmen⁴¹⁸ under his command attacked the fort protecting the entry to the town of Ibagué. It was not the first attack of its kind, nor would it be the last, but it was certainly one of the most vicious attacks Ibagué had suffered at the hands of the Pixaos. Five days later, on Sunday, November 3, three of the “yndios amigos” who had survived the attack described to Captain Alonso Ruiz de Sahajosa what had taken place on that fateful Wednesday morning. Pedro Chalema “yndio cacique” told Captain Sahajosa:

[...que] puede haber cinco días que vinieron a este pueblo quatrocientos indios pijaos, poco más o menos, y en el acometer al fuerte llegaron en escuadrón formado, y a las puertas de la dicha fuerza echaron cantidad de leña y las quemaron, quemando cuatro torres y escalando y rompiendo las paredes con barras y con los recatones de las lanzas, y aunque el español y demás indios se pusieron a la defensa de las dichas fuerzas, a las siete horas que duró la pelea ganaron los dichos pijaos la plaza fuerte y, apoderados del dicho pueblo, lo asolaron y quemaron todo, quemando la iglesia y ornamento, y llevándose un cristo y la campana y robado cuanto había en el dicho pueblo y asoládolo, habiendo muerto y capturado más de veinte indios e indias, despedazando los muertos y llevándole la cabeza al español y haciendo otros daños, quedando heridos en el dicho pueblo diez indios, y más habiéndoles dejado destruídos y robados se retiraron y ausentaron [...]⁴¹⁹

Don Juan, another of the friendly Indian survivors, confirmed cacique Pedro Chalema’s account, adding that the Spanish captain in charge of the fort had died from a spear wound and that the Pixao warriors had burnt five-hundred fanegas of wheat and stolen all of the town’s textiles woven by Indians.⁴²⁰ Pedro, a third friendly Indian ally and witness, told Sahajosa that the Spanish captain had been speared while trying to prevent the Pixaos from entering the fort

through a door in one of the four towers. He also told him that besides taking all of the Indians' woven goods, they had stolen all of the *escopetas* (shotguns) and other weapons.⁴²¹

As a result of this attack and “[...] *por cuanto los indios salteadores que llaman pijaos, putimaes y otras naciones, continuamente, de muchos tiempos a esta parte, están molestando las provincias, sus fronteras, infestando los caminos y cometiendo en ellos innumerable insultos y muertes de indios y españoles, robando los caminantes y hacienda otras atrocidades que son notorias, de manera que con sus desusadas crueldades tienen despobladas grandes provincias [...]*,”⁴²² on Friday, November 22, His Majesty's Real Audiencia in Santafé ordered both the governor of Popayán and Timaná, don Vasco de Mendoza y Silva, and Mariquitá's corregidor, don Juan de Aguilar, to organize a general *entrada* or punitive expedition against the rebels. The general *entrada* was to set out on June 1 of the following year. Groups of thirty well-armed men from the towns of Tocaima, Ibagué, Cartago, Buga, and Timaná were to make their way into the nine mountainous rebel provinces of Metayma, Cacatayma, Bulira, Otayma, Mayto, Beuni, Tetuan, Ambeyma, and Amoya.⁴²³ The audiencia, in an attempt to encourage encomenderos to participate in this *entrada*, also decreed that any captured rebel was to be made a *pieza* or slave: “*Y se declaran, desde luego, los dichos salteadores por esclavos por tiempo de diez años continuos y que, como tales, sean tratados durante el dicho tiempo [...]*”⁴²⁴

But June 1, 1603 was a long way away. On Christmas Eve 1602, another Pixao party attacked at dawn the *hato* of Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo, Ibagué's mayor, located two leguas (11 km/7 mi.) outside of Ibagué. Alonso Cobo de Luna, a vaquero from a neighboring ranch, managed to alert the mayor in Ibagué, who immediately organized a *salida* or punitive expedition to pursue the assailants. Thanks to this early warning, del Olmo and his men were able later that same day to catch up with the attackers in the River Coello.⁴²⁵

Three days later, on Friday, December 27, the mayor would inform the corregidor, Juan de Aguilar that “[...] *por ser la tierra áspera y haber sido descubierto este testigo de los dichos enemigos antes de llegar a ellos, no pudo tomar más de una india de los dichos enemigos que dice ser natural de la provincia de Cacatayma, la cual tiene este testigo en su poder como esclava conforme a lo dispuesto por su Magestad, de la cual y de la otra india deste testigo, que se huyó de poder de los dichos enemigos, habiendo hecho algunas diligencias este testigo supo como los dichos enemigos trataban de venir a esta ciudad a quemarla, porque tenían noticia de la poca gente y fuerzas que hay en ella [...]*”⁴²⁶ The vaquero, Alonso Cobo de Luna also testified before the corregidor. He told him that on Tuesday, Christmas Eve, he had risen at dawn and that just as he was getting ready for work, he had seen smoke coming from the mayor’s ranch half a legua (3 km/1.8 mi.) away. He claimed that he had immediately mounted his horse and that when he got to the mayor’s ranch there were headless bodies of Indians strewn all over the place, three in the house’s *patio* (courtyard) and one which had been set on fire by the Pixaos inside the house. Alonso also told the corregidor he had buried the bodies and that he was sure the Pixaos had taken with them “[...] *once indios e indias, chicos y grandes porque los conocía este testigo por haberlos visto muchas veces en el dicho hato [...]*.”⁴²⁷

On December 27, 195 km/120mi. southwest of Ibagué, warriors from the Putimae people, a subgroup of the Pixaos, from the province of Cacatayma, who had climbed up the Cerro Peón overlooking the town of Cartago,⁴²⁸ began screaming at the top of their lungs how they were going to burn the town down to the ground. Cartago’s *cabildo* (council), painfully aware that the town was a “*pueblo pajizo [...]* *metido en una montaña,*” immediately dispatched *un indio mensajero* to the city of Popayán, asking it for assistance.⁴²⁹ A month later, on January 24, 1603, with the Putimaes still laying siege to the town, the *cabildo* sent a desperate letter to Santafé

asking for help. It was the second letter they had written to Santafé in less than a month.⁴³⁰ In the letter, addressed to the president of the Audiencia Real, Francisco Sande, the cabildo described in pressing words the war they had been waging against the Pixaos for the last twenty years. They also informed the audiencia that the rich mining town of Toro, situated between Buga and Cartago, had recently been destroyed by the Chocoos, who had apparently crossed over the western cordillera from their Pacific coastal homeland into the Cauca River valley.⁴³¹

Muy poderoso señor, la ciudad de Cartago, tan infestada, destruída y oprimida de los indios caribes, pijaos y putimaes quanto por otras nuestras cartas y súplicas hemos informado a Vuestra Alteza, con las muchas muertes de españoles, indios, pérdidas de minas, ganados y robos de haciendas en tanto suma que no lo numeramos por excusar un largo y lastimoso proceso. Y como por ser esta ciudad de paja (está en mucho peligro de ser abrasada) aunque la cercamos de tapia y que ni esto, ni el traer nuestros hijos y amigos en campo y todos en vela con las armas en la mano no es poderoso a defender de los naturales que cada día nos lo vayan acabando y comiendo, está con mucho cuidado visto el poco remedio que ha tenido presumiendo, o que no se han dado nuestras cartas a Vuestra Alteza, o no han tenido el crédito que la causa pide para mandarlo remediar, y así van ejecutando su crueldad con muchas muertes y comídose muchos naturales; y como por estar esta ciudad poblada en montaña le entran los bastimentos de fuera parte, há hoy cuatro días que nos han cercado y tomado los caminos por donde nos entraban los ganados y muerto los vaqueros, sin que pudiésemos despachar seis soldados, porque cansados de los muchos trabajos y gastos, los que no tienen encomienda se han ido a vivir a otros pueblos, por lo cual y la continua guerra que en veinte años hemos sustentado a nuestra costa y poco fruto, está tan gastada que no podemos sustentar ni defender los naturales, porque si salimos la ciudad se pierde; si ésta guardamos, nuestros encomendados mueren. El remedio desto solo es de la poderosa mano de Vuestra Alteza, a quien suplicamos que, como nuestro Rey y señor natural, se sirva de lo mandar remediar con la disipación destes nefandos sepulcros de humana carne, con que entre campo suficiente y no salga hasta su final acabamiento, o nos dé licencia para que con nuestros encomendados nos pasemos a sitio seguro, porque aunque padece inconvenientes de perderse el comercio y contratación destes Reinos y nuestras casas y estancias, y el ir a buscar tierras ajenas, incultas, no tan fértiles ni sanas no remediándose con la brevedad que el caso pide, parezca razonable salvar lo poco que ha quedado y no aguardar a la final destrucción, cual estos hicieron de las ciudades de Neiva, La Plata, Páez, Santiago y Medina que las hemos visto quemadas y destruidas, pero ninguna reedificada. Y lo mismo, de pocos días a esta parte ha sucedido en la ciudad de Toro y sus minas de oro, de las más ricas de estas Indias, de que Vuestra Alteza perdió buenas rentas, que los indios chocoos de guerra las despoblaron, destruyendo los naturales de paz [...]⁴³²

The governor of Popayán dispatched Captain Pereira, nicknamed “el valeroso” because of his feats of prowess against the Indians. But the Putimaes killed him along with all of his men. The people of Cartago were eventually forced to abandon the town and seek refuge in Cali.⁴³³ However, small groups of encomenderos were organized to pursue Cartago’s assailants. One such group was led by a man called Miguel de la Peña.

At the end of January 1603, as he and nine other Spanish men made their way through the province of Cacatayma in pursuit of the Putimaes who had attacked Cartago, a group of some one-hundred Coyaima⁴³⁴ warriors met them as they were getting ready to cross the Ortega River.⁴³⁵ Alonso Vicario, one of Miguel de la Peña's men, later told the mayor of Ibagué, Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo, that the said Coyaimas “[...] *de muy buena voluntad, mostrando siempre buen ánimo, se ofrecieron de ayudarles, y así fueron en su compañía a la dicha provincia de Cacatayma y lo hicieron muy bien acudiendo a lo que se les mandaba con mucha fidelidad, y este testigo y sus compañeros trataban con ellos sin recelo ninguno [...y que] los dichos coyaimas, como dicho tiene, siempre les sirvieron muy fielmente, acudiéndoles con algunas cosas de comer, como son pescado y plátanos y otras cosas [...]*”⁴³⁶ Vicario went on to tell del Olmo how the Coyaimas had faithfully guided them through Putimae territory because being themselves Pixaos, but from the *llano* or flatlands, and being as they were the sworn enemies of the Pixaos from the sierra, they knew the land and the ways of the enemy like no other.

Four months later (and a month into the start of the general entrada that had been ordered by the Audiencia Real back in November of the previous year), early in the morning of July 2, 1603, Alonso, “*un yndio ladino y cristiano,*” rode his horse into Ibagué to inform his encomendero, Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo (who was also Ibagué's mayor), that just a few hours ago, at dawn, a group of Pixao warriors had attacked the repartimiento of Hernando de Lorenzana and burnt three houses. The guarichas in the repartimiento had told him “[...] *que habían venido muchos indios pijaos y que faltaban cinco indias e indios del dicho repartimiento, y que los habían llevado los pijaos que llegaron esta madrugada, cuando cantaron los gallos, al dicho repartimiento, y que ellas no durmían en sus casas, porque si durmieran en ellas las llevaran los indios, y que ellas duermen en el arcabuco que está allí cerca de sus casas [...]*”⁴³⁷

Later that day, when Alonso Ruiz Galdámez, his Majesty's notary, reached Lorenzana's estancia along with some twenty soldiers, he was able to spot in the distance the retreating raiders, making their way up the sierra in disciplined squadrons. A short while after that, he heard the shots of an arquebus and then the fearful sound of the *fotutos*, the large seashells used by the Pixaos as a call to battle, and he knew the soldiers the mayor had dispatched to capture and punish the raiders had caught up with them: “[...] yo el escribano vide que se estaba acabando de quemar la cubierta de una casa de tapias que ya estaba en tierra, desde el sitio de la cual estancia se vieron ir subiendo por una loma arriba cantidad de indios en escuadrones divididos, a quien seguían los dichos capitanes y soldados y muchos indios amigos que con ellos y en su ayuda iban [...] y dende a muy poco se oyeron en lo alto de la loma algunos tiros de arcabuces, que parecía disparaban los dichos soldados a los enemigos, que parecían estar cerca de ellos, cuyas voces y algarazas, con una forma de trompetas que llaman fotutos, se oían al pie de la dicha loma [...]”⁴³⁸

Sometime later that same day, his Majesty's notary caught up with the rearguard of the mayor's punitive party. Alonso Ruiz Galdámez took note of everything they found as they tracked down the bulk of the marauders. He described how they had found a small hut which the “*yndios amigos*” had said was probably where the leader of the Pixao raid party had spent the previous night: “[...] vide pedazos de madera a manera de yesca en que estaba encendido fuego y mazato, sustento de indios, envueltos en unas hojas y pedazos de raíces, de que usan para su sustento y un poco de madera de bija colorada y hojas de tabaco, de que los presentes dijeron usaban los naturales en sus ceremonias y ritos; y junto al dicho sitio [...] un pan de azúcar, de que el dicho capitán Hernando de Lorenzana dijo tenía en el dicho aposento treinta e tantas arrobas [...]”⁴³⁹

It was almost dusk when the headless body of Martín, “*un yndio amigo*” was brought back to the Spaniard’s rearguard. The body’s left leg was also missing. The oidor Lorenzo de Terrones ordered the corpse to be buried. His majesty’s notary wrote down carefully everything the “*yndios amigos*” reported back: “[...] *llegó un indio amigo que dio por nueva que habiendo alcanzado a los enemigos como veinte de sus compañeros que se habían adelantado de los demás habían combatido con los dichos enemigos que dijo ser mucha cantidad [...]*.”⁴⁴⁰ Another Indian ally who was bleeding profusely from a spear wound said that “[...] *en la lid que habían tenido con los contrarios habían visto que de ellos habían herido algunos y que caían y que sus compañeros los alzaban y llevaban luego [...]*”⁴⁴¹ Then Roldán, another friendly Indian from Ibagué, told the oidor and his Majesty’s notary “[...] *que él y sus compañeros habían herido y visto caer algunos indios, los cuales sus compañeros los dichos enemigos, con mucha presteza tomaron y llevaron y que hasta este tiempo no habían llegado los españoles que iban un poco atrás en seguimiento de los dichos indios enemigos, a quien alcanzarían con brevedad, porque se iban retirando y dejando parte de las lanzas y comidas que llevaban, de que mostró una larga de palma [...]*”⁴⁴² Because it was getting dark and it was threatening to rain, the oidor, Lorenzo de Terrones, and his Majesty’s notary public, Alonso Ruiz Galdámez, made their way back to Ibagué where Terrones before going to bed ordered guards to be posted outside the town.

Three weeks later, on July 23, Yachimba, a fifty-year-old Pixao woman was found hiding in a “*roza de maíz*” in the province of Mayto. Although Miguel de la Peña had been combing the area “*que era lugar muy peligroso de riscos y desbarrancaderos,*” all he was able to find was the old guaricha and two abandoned houses “*que la gente que en ellas vivían estaban alzados y huídos.*” Before leaving the area, De la Peña made sure he burnt all the Indians’ corn fields. When, three days later, De la Peña brought Yachimba before Captain Gaspar Rodríguez del

Olmo, she told them “[...] cómo los indios andaban huyendo y no vivían en sus casas de miedo de los españoles porque estaban con miedo de que habían de venirlos a buscar [...].”⁴⁴³ Then, on August 1, with Alonso Cobo de Luna as lengua, Captain Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo was able to interrogate Yachimba. The mayor wanted to find out which provinces had participated in the attack against Ibagué in October of the previous year. Yachimba told him it had been the people of Mayto, Ambeyma, Otayma, and Cacatayma. When del Olmo asked her about the church bell the Indians had taken from the belfry in Ibagué, Yachimba said her people, the people of Mayto, had brought the bell back, but that the people of Otayma had asked for it, and later won it in a contest. She said they had paid for it with clothes, and then had taken it back to their people where they had broken it into pieces which they had distributed among everyone: “*Preguntado que una campana que trajeron de la dicha mesa de Ibagué, en qué provincia la tenían, dijo que los naturales de esta provincia de Mayto la habían traído y que los indios de Otayma tuvieron competencia con ellos diciendo que a ellos les venía de derecho y la rescataron con ropa, y que la dicha campana estaba en poder al presente de los indios de Otayma, y que la tenían hecha pedazos y repartida entre todos ellos [...]*”⁴⁴⁴ According to fray Pedro Simón, the Pixaos were able to cut Spanish canons (and as evidenced here, Spanish bells as well) to pieces which they then used to make spearheads.⁴⁴⁵

The mayor also wanted to know who was behind the recent attack on Hernando de Lorenzana’s repartimiento and why the Indians had not attacked Ibagué. Yachimba confessed “[...] que un indio principal llamado Gualara había convocado toda la tierra y provincias de ella, excepto a Ambeyma, a que fuesen y diesen en la ciudad de Ibagué y asimismo fue toda la provincia de Bulira, y que después que hubiesen dado en el pueblo lo quemasen y hiciesen todos los daños que pudiesen y de vuelta quemasen las estancias que hallasen por allí a la redonda

[...]”⁴⁴⁶ Yachimba told del Olmo that the Indians had decided not to attack Ibagué because they had counted too many men inside the fort. When del Olmo asked her if she knew what the Indians were planning to do next, Yachimba told him, the Indians had agreed to wait for a better opportunity to attack the Spaniards and that the mohán Bilapue had already begun to fast anew: “[...] *Fuele preguntado que después acá lo que pretendían hacer o qué propósitos tenían, dijo esta testigo que después que volvieron de Ibagué consultaron que en asentando más el tiempo volviesen a dar sobre el valle de Metayma, y que un indio principal llamado Bilapue, había consultado aquesto, y que para hacer buen efecto empezaban a ayunar, como es costumbre entre ellos [...]*”⁴⁴⁷

Vivi, a sixteen-year-old Pixao youngster who had been captured by Juan de Mosquera a few days before, was also interrogated that same day. He told del Olmo that he was from Cacatayma, but that because food was scarce there he had come to Mayto to live with a relative. He said Bilapue, the mohán, was also from Cacatayma, but that he was now hiding in the province of Mayto “[...] *por ser tierra más cómoda para que los cristianos no le hagan daño y estar más apartado de Ibagué.*”⁴⁴⁸ When Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo asked him why they were all hiding and how they had found out that the Spaniards were coming into their land, Vivi answered “[...] *que cuando fueron a Ibagué que vieron mucha gente de donde coligieron que tanta gente no podía ser sino para entrar en esta tierra y por eso vivían con cuidado, y asimismo por otros agüeros que vieron, como son unas garzas blancas que pasaron por encima de sus casas y que por esto entendieron venían españoles a su tierra.*”⁴⁴⁹ Then del Olmo asked him what it was he had heard they planned to do now that the Spanish were in their land: “*Preguntado que qué decían los indios que harían después que los españoles estuviesen en la tierra, dijo este testigo [Vivi] que decían que si fuesen pocos embestirían a ver si los podían*

matar, y que si fuesen muchos se pondrían en partes secretas y peligrosas donde con galgas y emboscadas procurasen matarlos a los que pudiesen [...]”⁴⁵⁰

On August 7, in the real de Santiago de Mayto, Juan de Mosquera informed the mayor of Ibagué, Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo, that although he had made every effort to capture Bilapue — “[...] *principal [...] natural de la provincia de Cacatayma y muy temido y respetado de todas las demás provincias por ser gran hechicero y el movedor de todos los asaltos, muertes, traiciones y robos que cometen todos los indios de ellas [...]”⁴⁵¹* — who was hiding in the province of Beuni — “[...] *que es en un valle como a cuatro leguas de este real [...] tierra asperísima y muy fuerte y acomodada para sus malos intentos y desviada de donde pudiesen ser hallados de los españoles y de otra gente con quien tengan guerra [...]”⁴⁵²* — he had only been able to find the mohán’s empty house which he had proceeded to burn along with the surrounding cornfields: “[...] *puso fuego a la dicha casa del dicho hechicero Bilapue, haciendo talar todas las comidas que había a la redonda de ella, y después, asimismo, fue buscando todas las más casas que había en distancia de dos leguas y halló siete casas que quemó, talando asimismo muchas rozas de maíz, frisoles y otras cosas de que se sustentan los naturales de aquella provincia, y este declarante se ocupó tres días en hacerles todo el daño que les fue posible [...]”⁴⁵³* Before ending his report, Juan de Mosquera added that he had captured “[...] *tres piezas que trajeron a este real, que son una india y un muchacho y una muchacha [...]”⁴⁵⁴*

One of the *piezas*, a young woman by the name of Calaga, who seemed to be twenty-five-years of age “poco mas o menos,” was interrogated four days later on August 11. She told Alonso Cobo de Luna, the lengua, that even though she had been born in the province of Otayma, she had been brought to Beuni as a little girl and that she had lived there ever since. She also said the Indians were now very much afraid because they were well aware that their

enemies, the Coyaimas, were helping the Spanish: “*Fuele preguntado por qué vivían con tanto cuidado teniendo espías en esta tierra para ver si entraba alguna gente, dijo que como los indios sus parientes vieron salir el día que fueron a Ibagué tantos españoles tras ellos, que por eso vivían con mucho cuidado, porque entendieron que tantos hombres no podían haberse juntado sino para venir a su tierra, y que los coyaimas los habían de traer por aquí y que por esta causa no vivían en sus casas y andaban con mucho cuidado.*”⁴⁵⁵

On August 18, near the Tetuán River,⁴⁵⁶ Alonso Vicario reminded Captain Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo and the other encomenderos, who had now spent almost two months in the mountains fighting the Pixao rebels, why it was important to prevent Captain Pedro Jaramillo de Andrade from attacking the Coyaimas and seizing their wives and children to sell them as *piezas* or slaves. Vicario recalled how six months before, when he was pursuing the Putimaes in the province of Cacatayma along with Captain Miguel de la Peña, a party of some one-hundred Coyaima warriors had met them by the Ortega River and offered to join them in their punishing expedition against the Putimaes. Vicario even suggested that perhaps Captain Pedro Jaramillo was moved by “*algún particular interés.*”⁴⁵⁷ So Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo and the other encomenderos sent an urgent letter to the president of the Audiencia Real in Santafé asking him to forbid Pedro Jaramillo de Andrade from attacking the Coyaimas: “*Lo otro, porque el mayor y más acertado camino que se puede hallar para que se consiga vitoria contra los dichos pijaos salteadores y sea Su Majestad servido, es guardar la paz a los indios coyaimas, capitales enemigos de la sierra, porque como ofendidos de ellos para se vengar todas las veces que se ofrece entrar españoles a hacerles guerra, siendo llamados los coyaimas, acuden como amigos nuestros, y es de grandísima importancia su ayuda, porque como naturales saben la tierra y sirven de guías y descubridores, abriendo camino, atalayando los enemigos, lo cual se ha visto*

hacen fidelísimamente como lo hicieron en compañía de Miguel de la Peña más de cien indios coyaimas que fueron con diez españoles y en nuestra compañía, asimismo, lo han hecho."⁴⁵⁸

They also reminded the audiencia that should the Coyaimas unite with the Pixaos from the sierra, it would be the death of them all because "[...] *serían mucho más en número los enemigos y los dichos coyaimas, como indios que saben nuestras casas y haciendas, juntos con los otros, serían el todo para destruirnos [...]*"⁴⁵⁹ But on August 31, Pedro Jaramillo de Andrade himself sent a letter from the town of Tocaima⁴⁶⁰ to the Audiencia in Santafé. In the letter, he claimed the Coyaimas were responsible for many of the crimes that had been committed in the land: "[...] *aunque yo con mi compañía quisiera hacer otra cosa no me fue posible por no ser número bastante para quedarme solo en ella, mayormente contradiciéndome los dichos vecinos de Ibagué por la dicha petición, en que alegaron que los indios coyaimas son de paz y traigo yo averiguado por informaciones que son los que han hecho y hacen los daños que ha habido en esta tierra, la cual queda en mucho riesgo y tiene necesidad de que yo vuelva a este castigo, u otro capitán que Vuestra Alteza se sirva de nombrar [...]*"⁴⁶¹

Captain Pedro Jaramillo de Andrade may have been (as Alonso Vicario had suggested earlier to del Olmo) out to enrich himself through the capture and sale of Coyaima Pixaos, but it is also quite possible that, as the president of the Audiencia Real, don Juan de Borja, later informed the King,⁴⁶² that the Coyaimas sought to use the Spanish in their struggle against their sworn enemies from the sierra and therefore opportunistically joined them whenever they organized expeditions against the Pixaos from the sierra, while they continued to carry on attacks against Spanish troops, merchants, and travelers in other circumstances.

The previous passages offer snapshots of what the situation in New Granada was like by 1603. They are based on field reports drafted on the spot by "embedded" royal notaries, like

Alonso Ruiz Galdámez, who accompanied Spanish troops as war between the rebel Pixaos and the Spaniards and their Indian allies raged throughout the land. The low-scale endemic war that had been taking place since the 1550s had escalated dramatically and the Spanish forces were now beating a retreat. According to Juan de Velasco, the Spanish even feared a general indigenous uprising: “*El trágico suceso de la tenencia de la Plata [...] el cual se quedó sin castigo alguno de los agresores, porque no lo pudo tener, insolentó a todos estos bárbaros con el mal ejemplo y ese mismo trágico suceso puso en consternación a todas las colonias españolas, temiendo alguna sublevación general.*”⁴⁶³ Velasco went so far as to suggest that the Shuars’ successful 1599 uprising in the Kingdom of Quito — in which they destroyed the Spanish towns of Sevilla del Oro (present-day Macas), Yaguarzongo, Loja, Jaén, and Quijos, in the end driving out the Spaniards from their territory — could have stoked even more the already ongoing rebellion in the Province of Popayán: “[...] *ese fuego [...] revivió con mayor fuerza el año de 1601. No bien se informaron [los indios de la Provincia de Popayán] de los recientes estragos que habían hecho los Jíbaros, hasta destruir diversas ciudades del Reino de Quito, cuando no queriendo ser menos, se revistieron de infernal furia.*”⁴⁶⁴

What is certain is that for most of this period, the Alto Magdalena region became practically impassable. The main roads or *caminos reales* could only be traveled if people were heavily escorted:

Los caminos reales tiénelos todos ganados [los Pixaos] y por suyos y no se puede pasar por ellos sin escolta y guarnición de arcabuceros. Con esto tienen tan atemorizados y aflijidos los pueblos de españoles y naturales que han quedado, que no se hallan seguros ni lo están, y ansí todos se han fortificado y cercado de tapias y palenques porque no den sobre ellos de noche y los acaben a todos; y con este cuidado, fatiga y peligro tan grande padecen y sustentan la tierra y no será posible que la puedan sustentar muchos días según la pobreza general que todos los más vecinos tienen, si Vuestra Alteza no socorre con fuerza bastante y brevedad con remedio [...]

⁴⁶⁵

The fact that the Pixaos were now in control of the main caminos reales, and in particular of the camino real that led from the Kingdom of Quito to the Kingdom of New Granada, and that they had destroyed important mining towns such as San Sebastián de la Plata and Toro, and threatened the gold and silver mining in and around San Sebastián de Mariquitá⁴⁶⁶ prompted the Spanish Crown to finally take matters into its own hands.⁴⁶⁷ Indeed, until then the fight against the Pixaos had been left pretty much up to the private initiative of the encomenderos. But on April 25, 1605, the Spanish king, Phillip III, ordered the newly appointed president of the Audiencia Real in Santafé, don Juan de Borja, to take all the necessary measures “*in order to reduce, pacify, and subdue*” the Pixaos.⁴⁶⁸ In the same bill, Phillip the Third also ordered war to be waged on the Carares who had recently taken up arms in the northeastern provinces of New Granada.

Don Juan de Borja’s offensive against the Pixaos was inaugurated with the public execution of a group of seventeen “*yndios de lanza o gándules*” who were hanged sometime during the month of June 1606 in the central plaza of Santa Fé de Bogotá “[...] *Javiéndoles catequiçado primero los Padres de la Compañía de Jesús bastantemente conforme a la brevedad que la ejecución de la pena rrequería ellos y recibido agua de bautismo con general contento de toda la República ansi de ver lavadas como castigadas sus culpas, de manera que para comenzar con siguro fundamento la guerra precedieron tan importantes prevenciones y efectos [...]*”.⁴⁶⁹

The president of the audiencia enlisted the help of the cream of the crop of the Spanish army. Domingo de Erazo who had been fighting the Mapuches in Chile was appointed lieutenant captain general, “[...] *por ser persona bien a propósito y de experiencia en la guerra de indios rebelados, por la que tenía de los araucos de Chile, donde había militado desde niño.*”⁴⁷⁰; others

like Ysidro Coronado and Hernando Venegas — both of whom had fought in Flanders, Burgundy, Italy, and England — were also brought in. According to Borja's report to the King, at the outset of the campaign, the Spaniards faced “*doce mil yndios gándules.*”⁴⁷¹ Based on his previous experience in Chile, Domingo de Erazo implemented a total war strategy designed primarily to starve the Pixaos through the systematic destruction of their crops and the capture and enslavement of Pixao women and children who, as discussed earlier, constituted the economic backbone of the Pixao resistance. The campaign considerably weakened the Pixaos.

In 1607, a year into the offensive, the Indian spies in the service of the Spaniards reported “[...que] es mucho el número de yndios, mujeres y niños que se mueren de hambre y enfermedades y los que la guerra ha disminuido de un año a esta parte [...]”⁴⁷² So hard pressed were the Pixaos by this time that they were even leaving their dead behind without burying them: “[...] hallaron algunos yndios y niños muertos al parecer de hambre y sin enterrar que no causó pequeña admiración por la general costumbre que tienen de dar con extraordinario cuidado sepultura a los difuntos.”⁴⁷³ However, there is considerable debate as to how long the campaign against the Pixaos lasted and how effective it was. Fray Pedro Simón — who participated in the later stages of the campaign — claimed that by 1611 the offensive was over:

Con todo eso se fue continuando la guerra con la fuerza que pedía la necesidad con entradas y salidas de soldados, por los dos años siguientes de nueve [1609] y diez [1610], y aun hasta el de once [1611], hasta que quedaron todas aquellas largas provincias como hoy lo están, sin que se encuentre con un tan solo indio. Las ciudades circunvecinas, Ibagué, Cartago, Buga y Timaná, libres de tan terrible yugo como tenían de tantos sobresaltos, robos y muertes; todos los caminos del Perú tan seguros, así por Cartago a la gobernación de Popayán, como los de Neiva y Timaná, que cualquiera persona sola los camina a todas horas, lo que antes, como dejamos dicho, no se atrevían a hacer ni asegurar con grandes tropas.⁴⁷⁴

Historian Leovigildo Bernal Andrade claims in his book, *Los heroicos pijaos y el chaparral de los reyes* (1993), that the final blow to the Pixao came as a result of the public execution in 1610 of the *cacica* Tulima in the city of Ibagué. According to Bernal, this *cacica*

was a *moanera* in charge of a religious sanctuary or *guaca* near the Machín volcano. The Spaniards captured her and took her to Ibagué where they paraded her through the city before burning her at the stake, accused of witchcraft. Bernal argues that the Spaniards had figured out this would deal a deadly blow to the political organization of the Pixao since the *cacica* Tulima was the Pixao's oracle and as such was consulted for all important undertakings. Fray Pedro Simón ridiculed her in his *Noticias historiales*:

“Tenían [los Pixaos] también mujeres ayunadoras, como lo era una llamada Talima [Tulima] que hubieron a las manos nuestros soldados, de quien se enseñoreaba tanto el demonio, que la llevaba volando por donde quería. Y así se la arrebató casi de las manos una noche a las postas que la tenían en guarda.”⁴⁷⁵

However, the fact that on April 24, 1621, the Real Audiencia simultaneously granted two separate *resguardos* — one to the Coyaimas⁴⁷⁶ and another to the Natagaimas⁴⁷⁷ — guaranteeing their autonomy and promising “*no someterlos a encomendero alguno*,” clearly suggests that both Coyaimas and Natagaimas were still playing an important role in the fight against their cousins from the sierra long after 1610. Juan Friede even claims that there is evidence that the Pixaos were raiding towns as far west as the city of Cartago well into the late seventeenth century because on April 21, 1691 an order was issued by the Real Audiencia to move the city “due to the continuous attacks of the Pixaos.”⁴⁷⁸

What is certain is that the Coyaimas and the Natagaimas played a critical role in defeating the Pixaos from the sierra. Being themselves Pixaos they provided invaluable intelligence to the Spanish military. But as can be seen from the field reports above, they also actively sought to participate in the war. In his 1608 report to the King, don Juan de Borja claims the Coyaimas were drawn among other things by the possibility of capturing *piezas* or slaves: “[...] *aviendo tenido noticia en la Provincia de Maito que en un rincón oculto de la sierra de Calarama estaban retirados algunos yndios pixaos [los Coyaimas] los acometieron y mataron*

quatro prendiendo diez y seis saqueandolos de muchas ropas y otras cosas que allí tenían lo qual y los prisioneros se les dieron para que usasen de todo como avido en la guerra.”⁴⁷⁹ This is supported by a sales receipt from a slave auction which took place on Thursday, May 13, 1610, in the fort of San Joan del Chaparral, approximately 163 km/100mi southeast of Ibagué. The receipt clearly indicates that the Coyaimas had sold Diego Barrera, a vecino from Ibagué, three young Pixao girls between the ages of nine and seventeen years of age, and two young boys aged thirteen and nine: “*Joan de Ortega Carrillo capitan de Ynfantería española Y superintendente en este fuerte de san joan del exercito que campea contra los Yndios rrebeldes de las provincias de los pijaos [...] doy fee que diego barrera vezino de la ciudad de Ybague a comprado de los Yndios coyaymas las pieças de Yndios e yndias pijaos que en este rrecaudo van declarados que los dichos Yndios las an avido en buena Guerra Y sacadolos en las entradas que por su mandado an hecho a las provincias de los dichos Yndios pijaos [...]*”⁴⁸⁰ Historian Adolfo Triana claims that the Spaniards even allowed the Coyaimas to wear Spanish military insignia in the campaign against the Carares in the northeast and that they granted “*hojas de servicio*” to the Coyaima warriors who participated in the war.⁴⁸¹

Triana also claims that the Spaniards had strategically agreed to marry a Spanish woman to a Coyaima principal by the name of Combeima. It is worth noting that due to the continual harassment of the Pixaos from the sierra, the town of Ibagué had been transferred a year after its founding in 1550 from its original location (present-day town of Cajamarca, Tolima province) to its present location on the banks of the Combeima River. This suggests that the Combeima Indians may have in fact at some point offered asylum to the embattled Spanish settlers of Ibagué. Triana goes on to say that the Coyaimas’ cacique Combeima became a Christian known as don Baltázar and that as such he proved to be an invaluable ally to the Spanish: “*Esta alianza*

ha sido vista como resultado de la estrategia española, al haber casado una española con un indio principal llamado Baltasar a quien se le otorgó el derecho de usar el Don y a quien, en la mitología ibaguereña se le atribuyó la victoria sobre Calarcá."⁴⁸²

Yet, as can be deduced from the field reports on the dispute between Captain Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo and Captain Pedro Jaramillo de Andrade over whether or not to attack a group of Coyaimas, the loyalty of the Coyaimas and Natagaimas could not always be counted on. Don Juan de Borja was well aware of this when he informed the King that the Coyaimas would just as soon attack a group of travellers along a camino real as they would make war on the Pixaos from the sierra: *"En la tierra llana que ay entre la primera y segunda cordillera en las riberas del Río grande de la Magdalena avitan otros indios llamados Coyaimas, Guarox y Tamagalaes que son retirados de la sierra por grandes discordias y asentada enemistad que tienen los unos con los otros los cuales por estar en despoblado a vista de los caminos reales an hecho de ordinario en ellos y en los términos de la ciudad de Tocaima y en los Sutagaos muchos asaltos contra los naturales de pas, pasajeros y contratantes que andan de este Reyno al Piru y siendo encomendados en vecinos de la ciudad de Ibagué an vivido siempre en su libertad entre la pas y la guerra ayudando solamente a la que se hacía contra los de la Sierra sus enemigos.*"⁴⁸³ Of course, as Alonso Vicario suggested in his statement, the fact that all captured Pixaos were susceptible of being sold into slavery must have tempted many soldiers of fortune like Pedro Jaramillo Andrade to attack the Pixaos who resided in the flatlands. However, at face value, it seems the Coyaimas and the Natagaimas were skillful politicians who sustained simultaneous, multiple and opportunistic alliances with both the Spaniards and the Pixaos from the sierra.

The Coyaimas, however, were not the only indigenous group who collaborated with the Spaniards. As Triana claims many other groups participated alongside the Spaniards in the war against the Pixaos: *“Conformó [Borja] escuadrones de indios muzos, famosos por su combatividad como flecheros; llamó a los paeces y guanacas para que entraran desde Popayán; los sutagaos le sirvieron como abastecedores y cargueros, y no le faltaron los muiscas. Desde Cali y Cartago llegaron los indios gorroneos, y muchos yanacunas también estuvieron presentes. Los encomenderos de Timaná enviaron indios tamas; los panches fueron enviados por la ciudad de Tocaima, y otros indios dispersos, que servían a los españoles, entraron asimismo a participar en esta guerra.”*⁴⁸⁴ Don Juan de Borja certainly felt the Paeces were sufficiently important allies to be mentioned in his 1608 report to the King: *“[...] nunca estos [los Paeces] an tenido amistad ni correspondencia con los Pixaos por ser diferentes en lengua naturaleza y costumbre y gente más política generosa y limpia y de mucha industria y valor en las armas defendiendo con ellas solamente su tierra sin salir a buscar inquietudes en la agena. Tampoco acostumbran comer carne humana ni las crueldades, asaltos y traiciones que los otros hacen y se contentan con su libertad rehusando la servidumbre de los Hespañoles aunque están encomendados en ellos y acuden a servir de amigos en la guerra y a otros trabajos de poca importancia.”*⁴⁸⁵

If anything, these two quotes reveal the capital role played in the war effort against the Pixao resistance by the many other different indigenous groups in New Granada. What's more, the evidence suggests indigenous people were the primary actors in this conflict. The statements from both “yndios amigos” and captured prisoners included in the field reports certainly reveal the enormous human cost such a war brought to bear on the indigenous population as a whole. Fray Pedro Simón claimed, for example, that only four hundred Spanish soldiers perished in the

war against the Pixaos as opposed to “*cuarenta mil indios de paz.*”⁴⁸⁶ Indeed, for a time it seemed as if no one Indian — *yndio amigo o de guerra* — in the Kingdom of New Granada slept in his hut anymore: both the “*yndios amigos*” and the captured “*yndios de guerra*” were reported as concurring in declaring that they no longer slept in their huts for fear of being captured by the enemy. On both sides of the war, whether “*yndios amigos*” or “*yndios de guerra*”, all the Indians were now sleeping in the *arcabuco*.

It is important, however, to remember that the brunt of the war was overwhelmingly borne by indigenous women and children on both sides of the conflict. The Pixaos targeted particularly the women and children of the “*yndios amigos.*” On the other hand, don Juan de Borja financed the war effort through the sale of captured and enslaved Pixao women, children, and elderly people. That Pixao women constituted the bulk of the Pixao slaves sold in auctions across New Granada is suggested by the aforementioned auction bid in which out of the fourteen *piezas* or slaves up for sale that day, the majority were described as “*cabezas chatas de mujeres*” or Pixao women.⁴⁸⁷ A 1608 letter sent from the same fort of San Juan del Chaparral in which the slave auction would take place two years later reveals that even the Franciscan priest and chronicler, fray Pedro Simón, benefitted from the sale of Pixao women as slaves: “*Pedro Pozas lleva dos indias Pixaos, La Una Para el Padre fray Pedro Simón Confessor del presidente [don Juan de Borja] y la otra que yo se la ynbio de limosna a las monjas carmelitas descalzas Vuestra merced me haga don de tomar trabajo de encargarse dellas y de llevar o encaminarlas a santafee y si Vuestra merced fuera personalmente Las podrá dar por su mano y mandar que se tenga cuidado Con ellas de que no se huyan en el ható o en el camino [...]*”⁴⁸⁸ Of course, as Triana caustically points out, this was a present the renowned cronista chose to forget rather quickly when he wrote: “*También han quedado en esta ciudad y en otras de este reino algunos*

*indios e indias [Pixaos] que sirven muy quietos, algunos dicen que a título de esclavos, que si lo pueden ser o no, no es mío juzgarlo, pues solo soy historiador y no juez [...].*⁴⁸⁹

Nonetheless, the fact that men like fray Pedro Simón, who participated in the extermination campaign against the Pixaos, obtained Pixao women as booty clearly points to the fate that befell the majority of Pixao women and children. Now, whether the campaign against the Pixaos was over by 1611 as Simón claims or whether it dragged on “unofficially” (as was most likely the case) for several more years (or even decades according to Friede) remains to be determined, but what is apparent is that by 1610, the balance of power had significantly shifted in favor of the Spanish. As we shall see, this was to negatively affect not only the Pixaos, but also some of the Spaniards’ “*yndios amigos*.”

It was a very different Elena who made her way to San Sebastián de Mariquita on the morning of February 18, 1612. Twenty-two years had passed since she had made the long trip up the Eastern Cordillera to see the then president of the Audiencia Real in Santafé, don Antonio González. By now she was most likely in her sixties. She was also a widow: her husband Juan Natayma had died. Yet, the one thing people would have noticed about her as she made her way from Chucuni to Mariquita would have been her hair: it had been shorn. Indeed, in the letter she presented to the acting president of the audiencia who was residing in Mariquita, don Juan del Corzo, Elena described how don Bartolomé de Meneses and his mother doña Ynés Descavías had publicly humiliated her “[...] *maltratando my persona con açotes y quitándome El cabello [...].*”⁴⁹⁰ In fact, by cutting Elena’s hair, Meneses and his mother had committed the most outrageous act of personal disgracement any one could carry out against an Indian *principal* or dignitary — be it man or woman — in the Kingdom of New Granada.⁴⁹¹ That this act of humiliation bore heavily on Elenas is suggested by the way she went on to describe herself in the

letter: “[...] pues soy una pobre muger biuda [y] vieja [...]”⁴⁹² If anything, Bartolomé de Meneses and Ynés Descavías understood well the mentality of the land which regarded hair as a repository of personal vitality and power and therefore suspiciously viewed the lack thereof. To her credit, Elena insisted on making the journey from Chucuni to Bogotá — despite her age and despite the shame she must have felt as passerbyes and onlookers took notice of her waning influence and powers. And she did so because aside from having cut her hair and flogged her, Bartolomé de Meneses and Ynés Descavías had also thrown her out of Chucuni and set their cattle loose over the land: “[...] el dicho don bartolome de meneses y doña ynes descabial su madre saco[me] Con ser yo de su Encomienda me an inquietado maltratando my persona con acotes y quitándome El cabello y poblando En mys tierras y metiendo ganado [...]”⁴⁹³

In reality, the trouble for Elena had started three years before, when one night in 1609, Bartolomé de Meneses along with two Indian men, Pedro and Domingo, had attacked her house and attempted to kill her: “[...] Estanto quieta y pazifica en su posesión don bartolome de meneses su encomendero fue y la echo de la dicha su tierra y a echo Casas y aposentos en Ella para vivir El y porque ella lo quiso defender El dicho su encomendero En compania de dos yndios uno llamado pedro y otro domingo fueron a su casa de noche y entraron en ella y su amo con la espada desnuda y mando enzender lumbre y ella bisto el estrepito con que benía a matar y maltratar salió uyendo por un agujero que tenia La casa [...]”⁴⁹⁴ Elena was forced to flee for her life, and she later found out that the three men had also stolen all of her property — “[...] una caza de rropa y sus achas y machetes y quanto tenia y demas deso [...] un puerco [...]”⁴⁹⁵ and that Meneses was apparently planning to move into Chucuni because he had built a house to live in.

As a result, on November 21, 1609, Elena had gone over to Captain Sebastián Fernández de Bocanegra's ranch near Chucuni to ask for his help. Bocanegra, who was the official mayor of Ibagué, excused himself saying he was very busy "*en negocios de la guerra*," fighting the Pixaos, but referred her to the incumbent mayor, ordering the man to make sure justice was carried out. So it was that two weeks later, on December 5, don Baptista Gómez issued an arrest warrant against don Bartolomé de Meneses. It is not clear from the documents whether or not Meneses was ever arrested. Apparently Elena was able to return to Chucuni and lived there for two more years. However, on June 23, 1611, she was back in Ibagué soliciting a new amparo. Although the amparo was issued, the following year in 1612 things would take, as we have seen, a turn for the worse.

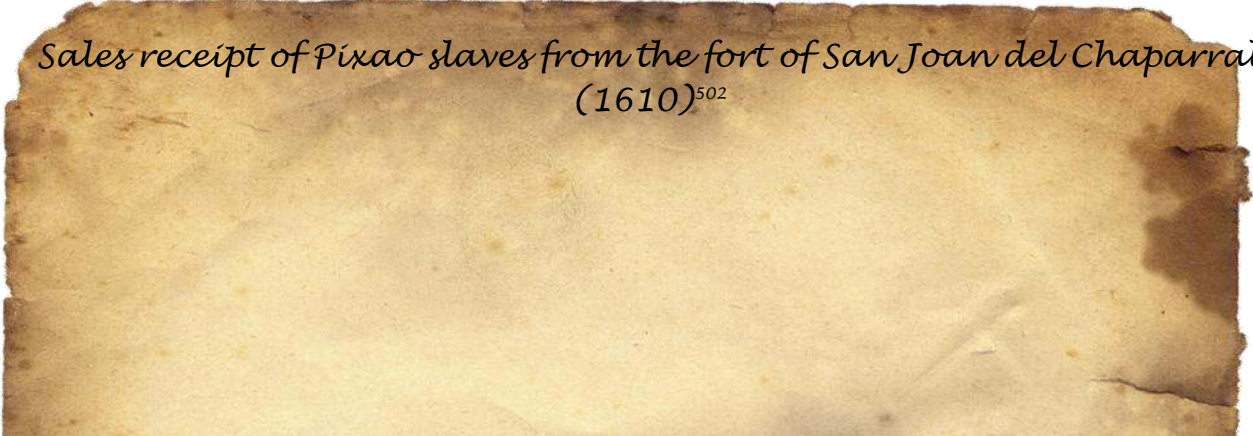
Although the president of the Real Audiencia in 1612, don Juan del Corzo, ordered an amparo to be given to Elena — "[...] *dar mandamiento Para Las Justicias de ybague [...] amparen esta yndia en Su libertad y en La Antigua Posecion que tiene destas Tierras e bando dellas [...]*"⁴⁹⁶ — the fact that Ynes Descavías and her son had dared to go so far in their attacks against a prominent member of the yanacona community suggests that perhaps the balance of power between Indians and Spaniards had begun to shift significantly in the region by 1609.

At the same time, it is also strange that Elena no longer mentioned her relatives; instead, she now described herself as an "*yndia pobre y miserable*."⁴⁹⁷ It is important here to remember what Friede has described as "*la personalidad colectiva del indio*"⁴⁹⁸ and how this collective sense of personal identity among indigenous people was most likely an integral part of Elena's sense of personal worth and even wealth in good and bad times. As discussed earlier, the war against the Pixaos had taken a terrible toll on the indigenous population — both on the "*yndios amigos*" and the "*yndios enemigos*." Historian Adolfo Triana reports that many yanaconas

participated in the campaign against the Pixaos.⁴⁹⁹ As “yndios amigos,” former allies to the Spanish, and conquerors of New Granada, they were almost certainly a target of the Pixaos. Many must have died at their hands in the raids that they systematically carried out against the settlements of “yndios amigos.” Chucuni, after all, was located on the outskirts of Ibagué which was repeatedly attacked and destroyed several times from its founding in 1550 through the first two decades of the seventeenth century. Yet, many other yanaconas must have also taken part (either voluntarily or through Spanish coercion) and perished in the military campaigns against the Pixaos. It is quite possible that Chucuni could have been decimated or at least heavily impacted as a community over the twenty-two-year-period since Elena had first turned to the Audiencia Real for help and the second time she solicited its protection — a period during which war raged on uninterruptedly in the region. This would certainly help to explain the sense of total dispossession and bereavement expressed by Elena in the words “[...] *como soy una pobre yndia vieja E miserable y no tengo quien me faboresca [...]*.”⁵⁰⁰ Of additional interest is the fact that in her 1612 petition to the Real Audiencia, she mourns the death of Captain Bocanegra and implies that it was because he was no longer there to protect her and her people that Meneses and his mother had dared to humiliate her publicly: “[...] *E agora despues que murió El capitan sebastian de bocanegra tenyente de corregidor E ansi mesmo my marido y ser como soy una pobre yndia vieja E miserable y no tengo quien me faboresca el dicho don bartolome de meneses y doña ynes descabial su madre saco[me] Con ser yo de su Encomienda me an inquietado maltratando my persona con acotes y quitándome El cabello y poblando En mys tierras y metiendo ganado En Ellas quebrantando Las penas que Les están puestas [...]*.”⁵⁰¹

Perhaps by 1612, as old Spanish allies and friends like Bocanegra died, as the yanaconas’ numbers dwindled and as the Spanish and their newfound indigenous friends — the Coyaimas

and the Natagaimas — closed in on the Pixaos from the sierra, the yanaconas of Chucuni could no longer claim to be the Spaniards' best Indian friends. Whatever the case, Elena's dispossession and humiliation at the hands of Ynes Descavías and her son were most likely only the final straw in what we may presume could have been a series of losses experienced by Elena over the course of the war against the Pixaos. In the following chapter, we shall look at other Indian women and the very different ways in which their lives were impacted by this very same conflict.



*Sales receipt of Píxao slaves from the fort of San Joan del Chaparral
(1610)⁵⁰²*

Joan de Ortega Carrillo capitán de Ynfantería española Y superintendente en este fuerte de san joan del exercito que campea contra los Yndios rrebeldes de las provincias de los píjaos de que hes capitán general el señor presidente don joan de borja doy fee que diego barrera vezino de la ciudad de Ybague a comprado de los Yndios coyaymas las piezas de Yndios e yndias píjaos que en este rrecaudo van declarados que los dichos Yndios las an avido en buena Guerra Y sacado los en las entradas que por su mandado an hecho a las provincias de los dichos Yndios píjaos que Las dichas piezas son Las siguientes

Una Yndia moça de hedad de diez y siete años poco mas o menos blanca espigada los dientes mal puestos Y en nombre de su tierra se llama anamba es natural de la provincia de namay y tiene la caveza chata e una china china [sic] que será de hedad de doze años poco mas o menos La caveza chata bien agestada Y en nombre de su tierra se llama cayra es natural de las provincias de calarama e otra china de hedad de nueve a diez años poco mas o menos natural de la provincia de maíto Y en su nombre se llama calamba tiene la caveza chata Un muchacho de hedad de treze años poco mas o menos natural de las provincias de mola y en nombre de su tierra se llama nambera tiene la cabeza chata y le prendieron los yndios natagaymas e otro muchacho que será de hedad de nueve años poco mas o menos bien agestado natural de la provincia de anulima y se llama ilaco tiene la caveza chata

todas las quales son ávidas en buena guerra Y no de pas y el susodicho puede disponer dellas a su boluntad conforme a Las cedula de su Magestad Y de su pedimiento di esta firmada de mí nombre ffecha en el fuerte de san joan del chaparral en treze de mayo de mil Y seiscientos y diez años Joan de ortega

Chapter 5

Cantares de moaneras: Subversive Shamans⁵⁰³

“[...] y la dicha lengua dixo que dice esta confesante que quando era moça cantava cantares de moanera y que agora no los canta ni sabe [...]” (1601)⁵⁰⁴

Sometime between 1590 and 1591, not far from Ibagué, two middle-aged Panche women, Barbola and Constanza, were hiding in the dense mountain forests or arcabuco. They had both been accused of killing an Indian man by the name of Antón through the use of witchcraft. Captain Francisco Del Pulgar had been commissioned to go after the two women, find them, and bring them to justice. For weeks, the women managed to hide in the arcabuco, outsmarting del Pulgar’s search party of Indian scouts and black soldiers: “[...] dixo [Barbola] que la verdad es que esta declarante y la dicha costança andavan huydas en el arcabuco porque las buscavan para prender el capitán francisco del pulgar que era alcalde hordinario [...] porque dezian que esta declarante avia dado yervas al dicho yndio anton de que era muerto [...]”⁵⁰⁵ Then the two women separated. Del Pulgar’s men eventually found Constanza and brought her to Ibagué where she was imprisoned. Barbola continued to hide in the arcabuco waiting for Captain Francisco del Pulgar to be replaced by the new *alcalde ordinario*, Pero Díaz Valderrama. When Valderrama succeeded del Pulgar as mayor, Barbola left her hiding place and presented herself in Ibagué: “[...] ella [Barbola] se escondió hasta que dexo la vara el capitán francisco del pulgar y la tomo el capitán pero días Valderrama y entonces se presento en la cárcel [...]”⁵⁰⁶ Once in Ibagué, she was put in prison along with Constanza. Sometime after, Captain Franscisco López Matosso, the encomendero in charge of both women, showed up in Ibagué, paid the two women’s bail, and returned with them to his encomienda. For years afterwards, it was rumored that Barbola had obtained the yervas she had presumably used to poison Antón from Constanza

by giving her some mantas in exchange (and maybe even gold according to some people) because Barbola suspected Antón (the man she was living with) of wanting to leave her for a woman called Catalina who was in the service of Juan Rodríguez Birbiesca. People in and around Ibagué believed it was the encomendero's wife, doña Leonor de Porras, who had saved the two women's lives because she had warned Barbola just in time to allow her to escape along with Constanza until things had cooled down a bit.

Almost eleven years had passed since Barbola and Constanza had managed to escape from the long clutches of Spanish justice. Now another Indian woman was accused of witchcraft...

Suddenly, it seemed to Catalina that she could clearly see the first time her parents had taken her to the páramo as a little girl. It had been a difficult and painful trek up the mountains, but she had been brave. Not once had she complained. She did not want to disappoint her parents, but most of all she wanted to obtain her ancestors' blessings. She remembered her mother had said the long hike up the mountains without any food or water was necessary to earn their blessings. It was a kind of offering, her mother had told her, because it proved she was earnest in her determination to become a moanera. It was also necessary because it purified the body and the mind and prepared them to receive the teachings of the old ones. The páramo, her parents had told her, was where her grandmother, a powerful and famous moanera, was now living. In fact, it was the place where they had said all of her people's ancestors lived. It was among the sacred plants of the páramo that the old ones came to teach those worthy enough to receive their teachings. For years after that she had continued to make on her own the long pilgrimage up the

mountains to fast and sing in the páramo. Even now, it seemed to her that she páramo evening could hear the first song her mother had taught her on that first trek. It was a song to call on the old ones. The first time she had sung the song by herself, alone and shivering under the cold drizzle, her grandmother had come to her even as she was doing now, smiling and beckoning her...

*A stabbing pain in her armpits brought Catalina back to this world.*⁵⁰⁷ The white devil was there in place of her grandmother, spitting unintelligible words of fire in her face. Juana, the lengua said something about the death of little Pedro Melendes, the son of her encomendero, Captain Francisco López Matosso, but no matter how many times Catalina told her that she knew nothing about it and that it was only “[...] *quando era moça [que] cantava los dichos cantares de mohaneria y esto lo hacía porque así lo mandavan sus padres y después aca como es cristiana y se confiesa le a[n] mandado los sacerdotes de la doctrina que no cante y por eso ya no canta [...]*,”⁵⁰⁸ the white devil did not relent. He had ordered her to undress, leaving her with only her short white petticoat on. Then the soldiers had strapped her to something that looked like a table. Juana the lengua had told her that if something happened to her arms or legs, that if they happened to break, it would be her fault and not the soldiers’.⁵⁰⁹ Catalina did not understand how this could be her fault, but perhaps Juana herself had misunderstood the Spanish man’s words. Every time he asked her a question, she felt a throbbing pain shooting through her body. A soldier had shown her the little bluish-purple flowers she used to cure people’s mouth and skin sores,⁵¹⁰ but she had been too afraid to tell the white devil what she used them for. Instead she had lied, telling him they were her husband’s. But then the lengua had told her Juan her husband had said they were hers. Then Juana told her the white devil wanted to know why Alonso had brought his mother Constanza two mantas. She told Juana she had never seen the

mantas herself, but that it was only her son-in-law who had told her so. But Juana insisted saying that “[...] *alosico llevaba las dos mantas para comprar las dichas yervas y que su señora doña juana durango le enviava a buscar yervas para matar y para inenquerer [malquerer] porque el dicho yndio alonso hijo de costança es del servicio y hato del capitán pulgar y de la dicha doña Joana Durango [...]*”⁵¹¹ Catalina wanted to tell her tormentors about all the times she had helped the *cristianos*. She thought maybe this would help...like the time when she had cured the little dead boy’s sister “[...] *su ama doña menga hija de su amo francisco lopez [...]*”⁵¹² But they weren’t interested. They kept asking her about the little Spanish boy’s death. She would have told them her own mother had killed him just to get them to stop, so in the end, she said yes, perhaps “[...] *constança pudo ser que matase al dicho pedro melendes porque estaba en la cocina [...]*”⁵¹³

By the time he was done with Catalina, the white devil, don Juan de Aguilar,⁵¹⁴ the corregidor in charge of the interrogation, had ordered the roller in the *potro* or rack to be turned a total of eleven times. Jusseppe Valserra, his Majesty’s notary, had faithfully written down everything Catalina had told Juana as she had referred it back to him in broken Spanish, except of course for Catalina’s moans and cries of pain, although according to the protocol established by the Inquisition for the “*Questión de Tormento,*” he was required to record every utterance made by the accused.

It was a Monday morning in Ibagué, October 16, 1601, when the Corregidor, Juan de Aguilar, had ordered Catalina to be brought in for interrogation. Catalina was only one of several Indians from Captain Francisco López Matosso’s repartimiento who had been accused of using poisonous herbs or yervas in order to kill Spaniards. For over a month now, Aguilar had been

after the culprits. On Saturday, September 8, he had ordered Jusseppe Valserra to go at once to Captain Francisco López Matosso's ranch or *hato* in order to conduct an investigation:

En la ciudad de Ibague en ocho días del mes de setiembre de mil y seis cientos y un año Don Joan de aguilar corregidor de esta ciudad dixo que por quanto a su notizia ha venido que en el repartimiyento de yndios del capitán francisco Lopes matosso Vezino desta ciudad algunas yndias e yndios han usado y usan de erbolarias y de yerbas venenosas para matar como lo hizieron con un hijo del dicho francisco lopes matosso llamado pedro melendes de que murió y para aberiguar La verdad y haber en el caso justizia mando se haga ynformacion y se de comicion a una persona para que baya al dicho repartimiyento y demás partes donde conbenga con días y salario a saber la dicha aberiguación y prenda Los culpados y secuestre sus byenes y Los traiga a La cárcel publica desta ciudad [...]⁵¹⁵

Aguilar was determined to deal swiftly with the matter. And indeed he did. Although twenty-four witnesses were summoned and interrogated in the case, the entire process lasted only a lightning-fast three months.

Before leaving for Captain López Matosso's *hato*, his Majesty's notary public, Jusseppe Valserra had carefully listened to the testimonies of two Indian women who served as kitchen hands on the captain's ranch: one Luisa, an old chontal⁵¹⁶ who appeared to be sixty-years old more or less, and whose testimony had to be translated by Juana, the *lengua* from doña Ana de Carrión's *encomienda*; and another, Lucía, a Christian, who swore by the cross. The old chontal had said little that was of any use, except that Constanza (the same woman who had been accused of witchcraft eleven years before) was a reputed *hechizera* among the Indians. Lucía, on the other hand, had provided Aguilar and Valserra with a rather lengthier and juicier deposition:

[...] dixo esta [Lucía] que es verdad y sabe que una yndia llamada costanÇa que esta en la cozina del hato de su amo es echizera y que esto lo sabe porque una noche a media noche esta testigo junto de su cozina y sifon del dicho su amo vieron que la dicha yndia costanÇa estaba soplando a un yndio llamdo Alonso del rrepartimiyento del dicho su amo que se dezia que estaba malo y quando lo curara le vido esta testigo que le azia siertos ademanes con la mano y de quando en quando le soplava con la boca y tambien porque vido esta testigo que un yndio llamado sebastin vaquero del dicho hato un dia vino con la dicha costanÇa hechizera y le dio el dicho yndio con el pie y en presencia desta testigo le amenazo la dicha costanÇa que pues le avia dado con el pie que muy prestomo vivía y asi vido esta testigo que estando bueno y sano por entonces el dicho sebastian dentro de pocos días cayo malo y en tres semanas se murió y esta testigo tiene para si que lo mato la dicha yndia costanÇa con yerbas o con algún mal que le hizo aunque ella no se las vido dar y le vido al dicho yndio que un dia antes que se muriera perdió el juicio y se levantava con rrabia y batentando al derredor del aposento y con esto murió por lo qual y porque entre los yndios es publico y notorio que la dicha yndia costanÇa es echizera y no sabe de otra yndia nada [...]⁵¹⁷

Towards the end, Lucía, who looked to be about twenty years of age, had added a significant fact: “[...] *que la dicha costanÇa estuvo en tiempo antiguo amancebada con su padre desta testigo [...]*”⁵¹⁸

Two days later, on Monday, September 10, his Majesty’s notary public, Jusseppe Valserra arrived at Francisco López Matosso’s hato. According to his *comisión* (assignment) he had five days to find the culprits and bring them to justice in Ibagué. For each day on the job, he was to be paid two gold pesos by the offenders themselves: “[...] *y asi fecha la dicha ynformacion y averiguación los que por ella resultaren culpados les prendieres los cuerpos y secuestrareis sus byenes y presos y a buen recaudo los traeréis a la cárcel Publica desta ciudad [...] y en ello os ocupareis de yda entrada y buelta a esta ciudad sinco días y ayais y llebeis de salario en cada uno de ellos a dos pesos de oro de diez y seis quilates de mas de lo escrito los quales cobrareis los culpados y sus byenes [...]*”⁵¹⁹ But the offenders must have been poor because Valserra spent only two days on López Matosso’s ranch. He was diligent, nonetheless. During those two days, he interviewed eleven witnesses, found two of the culprits, seized their property, and even frustrated an escape attempt by one of the accused.

Valserra’s first witness in López Matosso’s hato was Lorenzo, a young Panche man from Cayma⁵²⁰ of about twenty years of age. Lorenzo was a ladino who said that he worked as a *vaquero* or cowboy in the ranch. He told Valserra that there was an “*yndia vieja llamada costanÇa*” who worked in the kitchen who was an “*erbolaria*” and a “*curadora*” and that he had seen how she had cured an Indian man by the name of Alonso and that he knew many others who called on her to help them and that one time he had even witnessed (because he was a cowboy and had to get up very early to round up the cattle) how she talked to the devil in the middle of the night: “[...] *y la oyo que estando ella a solas con un calabacito en la mano que*

dentro tiene unas frutitas coloradas y con este aze sonar que los yndios le llaman cascabel y ella lo estaba tañiendo y de rrato en rrato parava ella y hablaba en su lengua y este testigo oyo que le rrespondia otra boz muy delgada y esto oyo porque este testigo se arrimo a su puerta a escuchar porque como dicho tiene sabia este testigo que ella sola estava en la cozina y por esta rrazon dixo este testigo que la a vido hablar con el demonio.”⁵²¹ Lorenzo also told Valserra how a vaquero friend of his named Sebastián had died shortly after he had beaten up the old woman: “[...] sabe que la dicha yndia costanÇa rriño con un yndio llamado sebastian y que la dicha yndia le echo maldiciones que muriese con postema y dezia plega a dios que mal apostema te mate y asi murió dentro de pocos días de un apostema y se torno loco antes que se muriera y porque murió tan presto después que rriñeron y porque la dicha yndia costanÇa en su muerte del dicho sebastian se mostro muy contenta y dezia públicamente que estava contenta por que su mano y su pie con que la avia dado lo comia la tierra y que no le daría ya otra vez [...]”⁵²² Valserra asked Lorenzo if he knew whether Constanza had used yervas to kill anyone and Lorenzo answered that he had heard mamá Juana say so, so Valserra interviewed her next.

Mamá Juana was the mulato wife of Juan Pacheco, the ható’s black overseer. She told Valserra she was in her mid forties. She also told him it was her daughter Ysabel who had witnessed how an Indian woman by the name of Barbola had once given some of Constanza’s chicha to the little Pedro Melendes who was sick at the time, and that when Constanza had found out about it, she had gotten very angry at Barbola, and that after that she had refused to drink from the same chicha. Mamá Juana also said that Constanza never liked the little boy “[...] porque le comia los pollos y los guevos y que después de muerto El dicho pedro melendes la dicha yndia costanÇa públicamente dezia que se holgava de que fuese muerto que ya no le comeria sus pollos ni sus guevos [...]”⁵²³

After that, Valserra proceeded to arrest Constanza. He also seized her only property, a *cataurillo* or small basket of corn which nonetheless provided him with the equivalent of a good acre of corn: “*E después de lo susodicho en este dicho dia mes y año dichos [September 10 1601] yo el dicho escribano fuy a la cozina destos aposentos a donde halle a la dicha yndia CostanÇa y la prendi el querpo y la traje presa a casa de Juan pacheco y no le halle de presente mas bienes que un cataurillo de maíz y abria como dos almudes y lo traxe para comer [...]*”⁵²⁴ It was around eight o’ clock in the evening that same day when Andrés Godoy y Matosso and Sebastián González, two of Juan Pacheco’s sons, warned Valserra that they had just captured two Indian men who were hiding behind the hat’s little chapel, one of whom said he was Constanza’s son. Valserra ordered the two men to be placed in chains and their horses confiscated.

Early the next day, Valserra began interrogating one of the two men, Juan, a ladino in his twenties from Tunja.⁵²⁵ Juan said that he was a friend of Constanza’s son, Alonso, and that both of them worked as cowboys in Captain Francisco del Pulgar’s hat not far from there, and that he had come to help his friend rescue his mother. Valserra then interrogated Alonso. Alonso, who was also in his twenties, said that he had been born “[...] *en la estancia del capitán francisco del pulgar y que sirve al dicho francisco del pulgar porque lo a criado desde chiquito y que anoche vino porque le dixeron en el hato de su amo como avia venido un juez a prender a su madre y por esto vino y traxo a Juan consigo acompañando [...]*”⁵²⁶ When asked about the two horses they had with them, Alonso said one of the horses was his and that the other, a mare, belonged to his mistress, doña Juana Durango, wife of Captain don Francisco del Pulgar. He also added “[...] *que si allara ocasión este declarante de llevar y soltar a la dicha costanÇa su madre que lo hizieran porque a eso vino y no vino a otra cosa [...]*”⁵²⁷

Next, Valserra interviewed two other Indian men: Francisco Asensio and an old cacique. Francisco Asensio said Constanza used tobacco to cure people: “[...] *dixo este testigo que ha visto a la dicha yndia costanÇa que de noche a media noche a sus solas estaba cantando y aziendo sus serimonias con ademanes y maxcando tabaco y que con el tabaco aze sus encantamentos [...]*.”⁵²⁸ As for the old cacique, he told Valserra that he didn’t know anything about Constanza — or for that matter Catalina — giving any yervas to the said Pedro Melendes, but that once he had witnessed how the young Melendes had hit Constanza because she was upset that he had stolen some plantains from her: “[...] *sabe este testigo que la dicha yndia costanÇa estaba mal con el dicho pedro melendes y delante deste testigo la aporreo el dicho a la dicha yndia costanÇa en la cozina sobre unos plantanos y ella le dixo mil vellaqueras y desto se enojo el niño y la aporreo y ella le echo mil maldiciones [...]*”⁵²⁹ Then it was Ysabel’s turn. Mama Juana’s daughter said that everything she knew about Constanza she had heard from Anna, an Indian woman who worked alongside her in the kitchen, though she added that “[...] *es publico y notorio entre todos los yndios y asi lo a oydo a muchas personas de que [Constanza] no sea querida [...]*”⁵³⁰

When Valserra interviewed Anna, she told him that once Captain López Matosso’s eldest son, Juan de Zúñiga, had flogged Constanza because he had found her in the kitchen healing an Indian man by the name of Alonso Bolo who was sick; and that another time when she was in the kitchen with Constanza, Constanza had said that there would come a time when the Spanish soldiers would come looking for her: “[...] *vendrán a azerme mal y llevarme al pueblo y esta testigo le rrespondio como lo sabeis que yo soy ladina y señor no dixo nada conmigo y ella dixo ya yo lo se que an de venir por mi y esta testigo le dijo pues mira no tengañe el diablo y no digáis algo y si sabeis algo calla la boca y beve y no habléis y ella dezia yo no tengo ganas de*

*bever ya yo se que an de venir por mi y me an de azer mal porque dizen que yo mate a pedro melendes y asi me echaron en culpa que yo mate a su yndio sebastian y esta testigo le dixo calla la boca y no digáis nada [...]*⁵³¹

Valserra also interviewed another Indian woman by the name of Magdalena. Magdalena, who appeared to be in her early thirties, was quick to explain that even though Constanza would sometimes stop to eat at her house, it was not true (as some people had said) that she used to leave things in her care, and that besides, the only cataure and *totumas* (small gourds) Constanza had left in her house, she had already turned in to the soldiers. She did add, however, that she remembered Constanza telling her that she needed to send something (she did not know what) to Santa Fé... Valserra dismissed her without any further questions. He then ordered Catalina to be brought in for questioning.

Catalina was a chontal from Chumba,⁵³² so a lengua by the name of Diego had to be brought in to translate for Valserra. But because it turned out that Diego was married to Catalina's grand-daughter, Valserra ordered a *sobrelengua* to be summoned to make sure Diego "[...] *no trocara palabra ninguna de lo que ella dixere ni quitara ni añadiera cosa ninguna [...]*".⁵³³ So Ysabel, the black overseer's daughter, was called to perform as *sobrelengua*. Before starting the interrogation, Valserra wrote down that Catalina seemed to be in her forties. Catalina told Valserra that the only "*echisera*" and "*curadora*" that she knew to be living in this region was Constanza and that she had seen her "[...] *cantar muchas vezes con un cascabel que es un calabacito puesto en un palo y dentro unas frutitas dentro y que esta testigo no sabe que frutillas son porque no lo ha visto que ella traxo de Tolima aquel cascavel la dicha costança quando vino a esta tierra y que esta testigo no sabe lo que dize quando canta mas de que ella habla y otro la rresponde como persona y que el enfermo que cura quando ella toca el cascabel no la*

*rresponde sino otro que es el demonio y que esta testigo la ha visto curar muchos enfermos quando la llaman y que los cura echando al enfermo en el suelo y ella anda a la rredonda del con el cascabel en las manos hablando entre si y soplando al enfermo y que ninguno de los que ella cura vive sino que todos se an muerto [...]*⁵³⁴ After that, Valserra ordered Constanza to be brought in for questioning.

Because Constanza was also a chontal, Valserra ordered Diego and Ysabel to stay in order to act as *lengua* and *sobrelengua* respectively. Valserra asked Constanza whether she was friends with Catalina and whether they were “*curadoras*” or “*echizeras*” and used “[...] *yervas algunas para curar o para matar [...]*”⁵³⁵ Constanza replied that she had known Catalina for more than twenty years now, but that she did not know that Catalina was a “*curadora*” or used any “*yervas*.” Then she told Valserra that although in the past she had been herself a “*curadora*,” this was no longer the case, and that it was true that some ten or twelve years ago she had been in prison “[...] *porque le achacaron a esta declarante que ella avia dado y vendido unas yervas a una yndia llamada barbola que al presente esta en el pueblo en casa del capitán francisco lopez su amo para que la dicha barbola las diese a un yndio llamado anton por zelos que la dicha barbola tenia de que el dicho yndio anton andava con ella y andava con otra yndia y se quería cazar con la otra que se llamava cathalina hera del servicio de Juan rrodrigues birbiesca y el dicho yndio anton murió de las dichas yervas y por esta causa porque dezian que esta declarante dio las dichas yervas a la dicha yndia barbola para que ella las diera al dicho yndio anton por esta causa estuvo presa y que ansi no mas la soltaron sin castigo ni cosa ninguna [...]* que ella no a dado ni vendido yervas a nadie ni se las dio a la dicha barbola que podrá ser que otra se las diese [...]”⁵³⁶ When Valserra asked Constanza how old she was she said it had been “[...] *tres tandas de viruelas [...]*” since she had been born. Valserra noted down that she appeared to

be in her sixties.⁵³⁷ Valserra then asked her what other property she had, but she replied that she had nothing else beside the maiz cataure that he had already confiscated. Nonetheless, Valserra managed to find a few other things that belonged to Constanza, and dutifully proceeded to seize them. His Majesty's notary public listed the following ítems in his report: “[...] *primeramente un cataure y dentro se fueron echando dos pares de tijeras viejas y un cuchillo viejo sin cabo y un yerro viejo [...] en una petaquilla chiquita un anillo de oro y un par de topos y una bolcilla de paño colorado con tres agujas capoteras dos ovillitos de hilo de algodón y en una mochilita un pan de xabon de la tierra [...] una mantilla vieja de algodón y un faldellín viejo de algodón [...] una media liquidilla vieja de portugal y una media mantilla de lana vieja todo lo qual se bolvió dentro del cataure [...] seis totumas viejas enteras e chicas e grandes [...]*”⁵³⁸ On Wednesday, September 12, two days after he had arrived, Valserra left Captain Francisco López Matosso's hat in Cayma and made his way back to Ibagué, bringing with him Catalina, Constanza and her son Alonso, and his friend Juan, to be imprisoned in the jail in Ibagué.

The next day, on Thursday September 13, Catalina and Constanza were interrogated again. This time Ana, a ladina Indian woman from doña Ana de Carrión's service, acted as lengua. Catalina must have greatly aged overnight because this time Valserra wrote down that she appeared to be sixty-five instead of forty-years-old as he had noted down the previous day. Ana asked her if she was married, and Catalina said “[...] *que su marido se llama Juan y que tiene una hija que se llama beatriz y que en su casa desta confesante esta y bibe un yndio que se llama diego casado con una nieta desta confesante llamada ysabel y que algunas veces están en su casa desta confesante y otras beÇes en la suya dellos que allí tienen [...]*”⁵³⁹ When Valserra asked her if she knew anyone else who was a “curador” she answered “[...] *que no ay ningún echicero ni curador ny ella lo conoce que quando están malos los yndios los sana y cura el*

*moreno Juan pacheco [...]”*⁵⁴⁰ Then Jusseppe Valserra showed her two small bones and asked her what she used those for. Catalina replied “[...que] *el un gueso dellos es de oso y es para curar desconciertos de braÇos o piernas quando da alguna cayda alguna persona [...] que la dicha yndia costanÇa curo a una nyeta suya desta confesante llamada Juana con el dicho gueso un braÇo que tenya desconcertado de una cayda de un caballo rraspando el dicho gueso en agua y halándole y sobándole el dicho braÇo con ella [...y el otro] es de tiguere y que también es para curar quebraduras y quebrantamyento del cuerpo y guesos de personas [...]*”⁵⁴¹ Valserra then showed her some purple herbs which she said belonged to her husband and that he used the roots for fishing.⁵⁴² So Valserra ordered that Catalina’s husband, Juan, be arrested immediately, along with her grand-daughter, Ysabel, and her husband, Diego, as well as a niece by the name of Angelina.

Then, it was Constanza’s turn to be questioned. She told the lengua Ana that she was from Cuyamayma⁵⁴³ and “[...] *que no tiene casa mas de que bibe en la cocina de su amo y lava la casa y cocina y trae agua para la tinaja [...]*”⁵⁴⁴ When Valserra asked her again about her work as a curandera she told Ana that the only time she helped people was when they fell off their horses, that only then did she use *verdulaga* soaked in hot water to bring down their swelling.⁵⁴⁵ When they asked her about the little Pedro Melendez, the only thing she added was that he had been sick with *calenturas* or fever shortly before he had died. She also told Valserra that she “was sick from crying over him.”⁵⁴⁶ But Jusseppe Valserra was not convinced.

Two days later, Constanza’s son, Alonso, was questioned a second time. Alonso told Valserra that even though he had gone to work for Captain del Pulgar as a little boy, he was still close with his mother: “[...] *que siendo chiquito se a apartado de su madre mas que siempre la a comunicado hasta oy [...]*”⁵⁴⁷ He also told him that people — both Spaniards and Indians alike

— often asked him to ask his mother to help them: that one time “[...] *un yndio llamado alonso natural de cali le dixo a este confesante que pues estaban juntos en una casa que pidiese con su madre costança algunas yervas para que le quiten las calenturas y luego este confesante ffue hablar a la dicha su madre que estaba en los aposentos de francisco lopez matosso y su madre le dixo a este confesante que ella quería venir a ver el yndio y ella vino al hato de su amo deste confesante porque estaba allí el dicho yndio alonso y luego la dicha su madre miro al dicho enffermo y lo atento y dixo que hera baço su mal y que el baço le dava calentura y que ella le daría con que quitarlo y asi le dio cogollo de piña y con unos orines desleydo[s] a beber y le sobo y lo curo y lo dexo bueno y sano [...]*”⁵⁴⁸ And that another time, a man named Pedro Rodríguez who worked with him in Captain Francisco del Pulgar’s hato and who was hurt while working gave him “*a manta colorada*” to bring to his mother in exchange for some “*yervas de bienquerer*,” and that even his mistress, doña Juana Durango, had asked Constanza for some “*yervas de bienquerer*,” and that she had also given him a manta to bring to his mother.⁵⁴⁹

On September 17, when Jusseppe Valserra no longer had any doubts that Constanza, Catalina, her husband Juan, and Barbola were guilty, he appointed Francisco Galeano as their defense attorney. Meanwhile, back in Captain Francisco López Matosso’s hato, Catalina’s granddaughter, Ysabel, had thought it wise to escape along with her husband Diego (who only five days before had served as lengua for Jusseppe Valserra’s interrogation of the Indians in the hato) and her cousin Angelina. When the soldiers, who were sent to arrest them, got to the hato, they were only able to capture Catalina’s husband, Juan. As soon as the soldiers brought him before his Majesty’s notary public in Ibagué, Valserra began to interrogate him. Juan told Valserra he was from Natayma.⁵⁵⁰ When they showed him some roots they had found in his house in a cataure, he said he used them to cure snake bites. Then they showed him “[...] *una figurita vieja*

*de cera negra fundida sobre unas cerdas blancas y liados con hilo de algodón que esta metido en un capullo de gusano [...],*⁵⁵¹ and he explained “[...] *que las cerdas blancas son de nutria que es el que anda en el agua y come pescado y que la tiene este confesante para matar pescado y que quando lo ba a matar lo rremoja en el agua y junta con ello la cabuya del ançuelo y que el capullo es de gusano [...]*”⁵⁵² Again, Valserra showed him “[...] *un pedacito de cola de animalejo algo que parece pequeñito la punta della color castaño un poquito de cera negra envuelto en un poquito de algodón pegados en la misma cera quatro o cinco pelos negros un poco largos que todo estaba metido en un capullo de gusano [...]*”⁵⁵³ and Juan replied “[...] *que el pedacito de cola de animalejo es suyo es del lomo de sardinata y que es para untar la flecha y matar pescado y que los pelos largos que están en la poquita de cera son barbas de conejo y que son para matar conejos [...]*”⁵⁵⁴ Finally, they showed him something that looked like a resin and he said he used it to cure *bubas* or pustules.

The next day, on Tuesday, September 18, Diego de Zúñiga, alguacil (constable) testified in a long and vivid deposition, that three days before, on the night of Saturday, September 15, while keeping watch over Catalina, he had heard the strangest of sounds coming from her cell and that when he had asked Catalina what it was she was doing, she had told him she was talking to her son (although she was all by herself in the cell) and that later she had told him she was talking to Captain Francisco López Matosso’s little dead son, Pedro Melendez:

[...] a ora de las dos de la noche poco mas o menos despertó este testigo despavorido y con temor del rruído que avia oydo hacer a la dicha yndia hechicera y fue que la susodicha estaba haciendo rruído con la garganta y soplando con la boca y tañendo un cascavel y este testigo se asento sobre la cama donde estava y estuvo atento al rruído que la dicha yndia hazia y oyo rrealmente que tañía con cascavel según el sonido del porque estuvo este testigo media ora oyéndolo y con gran temor encomendándose a dios deste temor y espanto que tuvo porque demás desto oyo que la dicha yndia hablaba en su lengua y otra persona le rrespondia en la misma lengua la qual no entiende este testigo y puesto que solo este testigo y la dicha yndia estaban en el dicho aposento y cerrada la puerta por de fuera se escandalizo este testigo demás de que oyo decir al que hablaba con ella en lengua española putaneja que pensaba deso y este testigo se levanto y dio boces al capitán martyñ de çuñiga que dormía en otro aposento a la pared y medro pidiendo que le abriesen la puerta y le traxeran lumbre y aviendole traído lumbre sin quitarse este testigo de la puerta del dicho aposento miro en el y no vio que oviese allí nadie mas de la dicha yndia catalina a la qual le pregunto

este testigo por el cascavel con que tañía y la susodicha le dixo que no tenya cascavel sino que este sonava no mas y este testigo le pidio que le diera aquello con que sonava la qual dixo que no lo tenia y este testigo le pregunto que con quien estaba hablando la qual dixo que con su hjo que le avia puesto mal coraçon y después desto aviendose este testigo acostado en su cama y aviendo la lumbré encendido de allí a un rato vio este testigo que la dicha yndia catalina estaba haciendo muy gran rruydo con la garganta y soplando muy rrecio y le pregunto este testigo que para que soplabá y hacia tanto rruydo y ella muy alborotada rrespondio que hacia aquel rruydo porque avia visto un niño el qual era hijo del capitán francisco lopez matosso y le avia puesto muy mal coraçon [...]”⁵⁵⁵

When his commanding officer, Captain Martín de Zúñiga was interviewed, he confirmed everything the constable had told Valserra. Then Joan de Zúñiga, Captain Francisco López Matosso’s eldest son, testified. He told Valserra he had often flogged Constanza, especially after Sebastián the vaquero had died because the Indians claimed it was she who had killed him. He then added that one time Sebastián had told him how “[...] *quando la yndia costança queria saber alguna cosa bestia [vestía] a una muñeca y la ponía en un rrincon a lo oscuro y allí ablaba con ella y la dicha muñeca le respondia y que el lo avia visto hacer a la dicha yndia costança en casa de un yndio llamado francisco de la encomienda de su padre deste testigo porque aviendosele huydo su madre para saber donde estaba avia hecho esto en su casa y que luego supo donde estava y la fue a traer [...]”*⁵⁵⁶

Four days later, on September 22, the appointed defensor, Francisco Galeano appealed. Although he protested that his charges could not be held responsible and were not “[...] *yndustriados en las cosas de nuestra fe y asi biben como gentiles por las quales rrazones [...] A vuestra merced pido y suplico mande soltar y dar por libres a los dichos mys menores ellos no tienen qulpa y padecen en la prisión en que están y son mujeres de mas de sesenta años y el dicho yndio de mas de cinquenta años [...]”*⁵⁵⁷ the corregidor, don Juan de Aguilar, rejected his appeal. Two weeks passed and then, on October 6, Barbola was brought in from Captain Francisco López Matosso’s house in Ibagué for questioning. She denied vigorously having given Antón any yervas, recounted the time when she had gone into hiding in the arcabuco with

Constanza twelve years before, and said that this had taken place at the time of the last smallpox outbreak (approximately 1590). When Valserra asked her how old she was, she replied “[...] *que a las primeras viruelas la traxeron chiquita [...]*”⁵⁵⁸ Valserra wrote down that she appeared to be in her forties.

Nine days later, on Monday, October 15, 1601, don Juan de Aguilar, “caballero del hábito de Cristóbal,” had the sentence proclaimed: “[...] *que atento a los yndicios que por este proceso y autos rresultan contra los dichos costança yndia chontal y contra barbola yndia ladina y contra Juan yndio chontal natural de natayma y contra cathalina yndia chontal que los devia de condenar y condenava a quistiión de tormento el qual mando les sea dado en esta forma que sean puestos y atados de pies y manos en el potro del tormento y les sean dados en cada pierna dos garrotes uno en el muslo y otro en la caña de la pierna de la rrodilla abaxo y otros dos garrotes en cada braço el uno en el morzillo del braço y el otro del cobdo abaxo de manera que sean ocho garrotes [...]*”⁵⁵⁹ That very same day, Barbola was the first one to be subjected to the “Quistiión de Tormento.”

Don Juan de Aguilar had just ordered the roller to be turned a second time when Barbola began blurting out that it was a mulata by the name of Catalina who was in the service of Francisco Galeano who had killed Antón using yervas “[...] *por zelos que tenia la dicha mulata del dicho yndio porque andava con esta confesante [...]*”⁵⁶⁰ When the corregidor asked her where the mulata Catalina lived, Barbola said she was now living in Tunja. When he asked how she was so sure it was this mulata who had killed Antón, Barbola replied that it was what Constanza had told her the devil had said after she had consulted with him using her rattle. Barbola then added “[...] *que a dado yervas de bienquerer la dicha costança [...]* a esta

*confessante siendo ella mosa y que le mando que se untase con ellas y asi se huntaba con ellas esta confessante [...]*⁵⁶¹ Don Juan de Aguilar ordered her to be released from the rack.

Juan Natayma,⁵⁶² Catalina's husband, was tortured on October 17. By the time the corregidor was through with him, he had ordered the roller to be turned a total of eleven times. The pain must have been excruciating because even though Juan was a chontal, he confessed everything he knew in Spanish: “[...] *esto dixo con su lengua española que estando echado [en el potro] hablo lengua española [...]*”⁵⁶³ He told Aguilar it was Constanza who had killed the young Pedro Melendes “[...] *que como comia de sus cosas de la dicha costança que cree que ella lo mato [...]*”⁵⁶⁴ He said the two women, Constanza and his wife, Catalina, were “[...] *compañeras en el curar y que entrambas curavan con aquellas yervas que están en la totumilla [...]*”⁵⁶⁵ He also told Aguilar about another yndio, “*un yndio casique que se llama martin viejo.*” He said it was he who had killed Sebastián Eca the vaquero “[...] *y lo mato con yervas y esto lo a oydo decir este confesante decir a muchas personas y que no se acuerda mas que esto en su cabeza que se lo dixeran a una yndia que sirve al capitán francisco lopez [...]*”⁵⁶⁶

Don Juan de Aguilar issued a warrant for the old cacique's arrest and that very same day, in the Indian village of Cayma, Lorenço Ramos, the bailiff, arrested Martín Cayme and seized his only property: “[...] *prendiale asi que indio desta encomienda del capitán francisco lopez matosso y para que mis salarios fuese[n] pagado[s] tome un potro y un fuste [horsewhip] porque son sus bienes y no le alle mas [...]*”⁵⁶⁷

Constanza was the only one to be tortured for two days in a row. The first day, on October 15, even though Aguilar had the roller turned six times, she refused to confess anything. It was only when they brought in Barbola to confront her⁵⁶⁸ that she admitted that it was true that she had once told her “[...] *hija no tengáis pena que la mulata catalina lo mato [...]* al yndio

anton [...] que el demonio que habla con esta confessante se lo ablo y se lo dixo y que por eso se lo dixo a la dicha barbola [...]”⁵⁶⁹ But she refused to tell Aguilar anything else, so he ordered “*[...] encomendar la cuerda de los braços al potro y asi se dexo por agora y mando que todos se saliesen ffuera para que se aquerde de decir verdad y con esto se estubo mas de una ora asi ligada [...]*”⁵⁷⁰ Still, Constanza would not confess; so because “it was getting late,” the corregidor ordered the session to be adjourned until the next day.

The followingt day, before they had even started torturing her, Constanza told Aguilar that they might as well kill her because she was getting tired of it all: “*[...] dize esta confesante que la maten de una bez que no quiere ohir [oir] tantas cosas [...]*”⁵⁷¹ With the second turn of the roller, she seemed to drift back in time because she told Ana the lengua about a time when she was pregnant and how it was the devil in the shape of a person who had appeared before her very eyes and told her not to worry, but that she would be well again, and that she had been happy: “*[...] ella estaba curándose la barriga y que ella se curaba y la vino a ver el demonio [...] que vino en ffigura de persona y que el propio se vino que ella no lo llamo y que el propio le dixo que era el demonio y que se holgó quando lo vido y le dixo que su mal era de la madre que no tuviese pena que luego sanaria [...]*”⁵⁷² Although this should have reminded Aguilar of a similar Christian story, he insisted that he wanted to know exactly what the devil looked like. So with the third turn of the roller, Constanza obliged him. She described the devil in the following terms: “*[...] tiene la figura de ombre y que tiene su carita pequeña y blanca sus manecitas pequeñitas y blandas y los pies chiquitos delgaditos [...]*”⁵⁷³ She then added “*[...] que le duele mucho [...]*”⁵⁷⁴ Satisfied, his Majesty’s corregidor relented.

On October 20, all four offenders ratified their confessions; without this, their confessions would have been considered invalid. Yet, had they refused to ratify them, they

would have been subjected to another round of torture. Then, on October 25, the corregidor, don Juan de Aguilar, and the mayor of Ibagué, Captain Hernando de Lorençana, sat down to determine the sentence for all four offenders. Aguilar wanted Constanza “[...] *colgada por el pesqueço en una horca que se haga fuera de esta ciudad en el camino real que va desta ciudad a la de santafe y della no sea quitada para exenplo de los naturales y españoles y que a la dicha yndia catalina y a su marido Joan se les den a cada uno trecientos açotes caballeros cada uno dellos en una bestia de albarda y sean llevados por las calles publicas desta ciudad con voz de pregonero que manifieste su delito y la yndia barbola sea desterrada desta ciudad y las demás de los términos de su corregimiento por tiempo de quatro años [...]*”⁵⁷⁵ Lorençana was a little more lenient; he did not think Constanza should be hung. He wanted her to be given two-hundred lashes in addition to having her hair shaven-off in public.⁵⁷⁶ He agreed with Aguilar that she should be paraded through the streets of Ibagué and then banished from the town for four years. As for Catalina, he thought she should be given a hundred lashes only. For Barbola and Juan, he voted to have Juan released and Barbola banished from Ibagué for a year. Since they could not reach an agreement, Lorençana and Aguilar decided to refer the case to the Audiencia Real in Santafé.

However, on November 3, Captain Francisco López Matosso — the four offenders’ encomendero and the father of the deceased and presumably murdered little Pedro Melendez — presented himself before Aguilar and Lorençana and protested that in his absence his charges had been greatly abused. He added that because the case was now being referred to Bogotá, his charges were being subjected to even greater and needless ill-treatment: “[...] *las dichas indias e yndio resiven por la dilación notable agravio y molestia por ser pobres y estar muy enfermos y maltratados del tormento que se les dio y ser viejos y algunas dellas decrepitas [...]*”⁵⁷⁷ and he

demanded that Aguilar and Lorençana issue a sentence as soon as possible. Three weeks later, on November 24, in the hat of an encomendero named Pedro Guerra, Aguilar, Lorençana, and López Matosso came to an agreement.

Two weeks later, on Wednesday, December 12, 1601, the punishment to which they had agreed was carried out: Constanza, Juan, and Catalina were led away from the public jail of Ibagué through the streets of the town. They were each mounted on a donkey, with a rope tied around their necks, their hands and feet also strapped by the same rope. Constanza was the only one made to wear a *coroza*, the infamous conical hat of public shame. She was given three-hundred lashes; Juan received two-hundred, and Catalina, one-hundred. The town crier yelled: “[...] *esta es la justicia que manda hazer el rrey nuestro señor y el señor corregidor desta ciudad en su rreal nombre a este hombre y estas mujeres por echizeros y esta encorosada porque hablava con el demonio y vendia y dava yerbas de bienquerer manda se le den trezientos açotes y al yndio duzientos y a su mujer siento quien tal haze que tal pague [...]*”⁵⁷⁸ as they were paraded through the streets of Ibagué. Barbola was exonerated of all charges. When their ordeal was over, Captain Francisco López Matosso took his charges back to his hat in Cayma. Constanza was to be secluded in the ranch for four years, during which time she was to be instructed in the word of God. Juan and Catalina were to go to church every Sunday as well as every holyday. Under penalty of death, neither one was to relapse into “*echizería*” ever again.

The old cacique, Martín Cayma, surprisingly managed to get off the hook even though Madelena,⁵⁷⁹ the wife of the Indian vaquero Sebastian Eca presumably poisoned by Constanza, testified that she was convinced it was the old cacique from Cayma and not Constanza who had murdered her husband with yervas. Martín himself testified that Sebastián had died “[...] *de su mal de cámaras [diarrhea] y que ningún yndio lo mato sino que dios lo llevo [...]*”⁵⁸⁰ The fact

that he was a Christian and a ladino probably helped. Maybe the black overseer Juan Pacheco's testimony that Sebastián Eca had died of asthma (instead of diarrhea as the old cacique had testified) also helped. But most likely it was the story about how the old cacique had helped the hato's black overseer capture "[...] un yndio [...] echizero y erbolario [...] yndio simarron llamado lambana [...]"⁵⁸¹ that really made the difference.

The "Officis de la Real Justicia contra Don Martín Indio del pueblo de Cayma y otros Indios E Indias por Herbolarios" portrays a rich and complex social tableau. No doubt, the indigenous society this trial reveals was one undergoing tremendous changes. The events portrayed in the case must be interpreted against the backdrop of the ongoing military campaign against the Pixaos. However, it must be remembered that this offensive was not launched until 1605. So that 1601, the year the trial against Constanza, Catalina, Barbola, and Juan took place, was probably a critical year in terms of indigenous unrest and upheaval. For example, it is interesting to see how it was relatively easy in 1590 for Barbola and Constanza, when they were first accused of witchcraft, to be set free. But by 1601, when the Pixao had intensified their terror campaign against the Spaniards and their indigenous allies, the situation had changed dramatically. By this time, Spanish officials were probably beginning to come to terms with the real magnitude of the threat they were facing. The surprising successes of the Pixaos were no doubt attracting many followers. Spanish officials must have been keenly aware of the need to deter anymore from doing so. At the same time, they would have been intent on strengthening and consolidating their friendship and alliances with "los yndios amigos." Above all, Spanish authorities would have been looking to send the right message to the indigenous population: that those who rebelled would be unequivocally punished; and that those who cooperated, would be rewarded.

Indigenous rebel leaders in the region had consistently been described by Spanish chroniclers beginning with La Gaitana as powerful and reputed mohanes. Aside from La Gaitana, fray Pedro Simón lists at least sixteen other indigenous rebel leaders who played an important role in the Pixao fight against the Spanish, all of whom he describes as powerful “hechiceros”: Tocuavi, Matora, Chequera, Beco, Tala, Plátano, Pucharma, Chanama, Paluma, Tuquimba, Belara, Cocurga, Coyara, Acaime, Tulima and Calarcá.⁵⁸² Among some of the most celebrated rebel mohanes mentioned alongside the Gaitana are the cacica Tulima and the famous Panche *hechicero* Acaime who, according to fray Pedro Simón, in 1552 led a major Quimbaya attack on the city of Cartago.⁵⁸³ Dressed in women’s clothes, the figure of Acaime is reminiscent of the North-American berdache: “[...] debajo de un palio [canopy], vestido con una camisa de pecho de mujer, y por capa un faldellín colorado que había sido de una María de Mercado, española, que habían muerto [...].”⁵⁸⁴ Since native military strategy relied so heavily on divination, most military leaders were also reputed mohanes. In fact, according to Simón, mohanes were held responsible if they failed in their predictions and had to compensate the families of those who were killed in war expeditions that did not turn out well: “*Los mohanes ayunaban y desenojaban a sus dioses con ofrecimientos de éstos [lanzas, dardos y galgas] y otros, antes de ir a la guerra, quemaban palos de balsa y aún bejuco que arde como tea y por la ceniza agorizaban los buenos y los malos sucesos de la guerra. Iba el mohán a ella: si tenían buen presagio y si salían con victoria, le daban todos los despojos y él los repartía, y si sucedía al contrario, pagaba el mohán todos los muertos a sus parientes, por cada uno una manta, un machete o dos cuchillos u otra cosa así.*”⁵⁸⁵

Therefore, almost without a doubt practicing mohanes or moaneros like Constanza, Catalina, Barbola, and Juan⁵⁸⁶ would have been viewed at the time with a great deal of suspicion

by Spanish authorities, as is quite evident here. The Spanish must have been aware of the prestige people like them commanded among the Indians. They must have been cognizant of the key roles mohanes often played in small and large scale rebellions. The potential for disruption that Constanza and the others represented would not have been lost on them. After sixty-five years in the region, the Spanish understood well the mentality of the land. They knew that the locals regarded witchcraft as a form of warfare, that there were few natural deaths for Indians and that most attributed non-violent deaths to successful bewitching by an enemy or a hostile mohan. As long as the Indians were using witchcraft on one another, the Spanish were probably willing to turn a blind eye, especially if the Indians involved were “yndios amigos.”

But it was altogether another matter if the Indians were reportedly using witchcraft to kill Spaniards. Spanish authorities would have been only too aware of how potentially disruptive it could be if word got out that indigenous witchcraft was succeeding in killing Spaniards. They knew full well that their Indian friends were wayward friends waiting for the smallest sign of Spanish weakness or Indian rebel power to switch sides. Therefore the fear that the influence and prestige of a moanera like Constanza who was suspected of killing a Spanish boy might spread might explain the diligence and swiftness with which don Juan de Aguilar acted. It is possible that the corregidor could have judged it wise to cut at its roots the potential for the rise in interest or maybe even expectations that the alledged murder of a Spanish boy by an Indian hechicera like Constanza could have aroused among the indigenous population. At the same time, he would have been anxious to stage an exemplary punishment.

At the peak of the rebellion, at a time when there were probably many mohanes leading small bands of rebels against the Spanish, a show of force like the one Ibagué witnessed on December 12, 1601, in which four suspected mohanes were publicly humiliated and chastised,

was an incredibly timely intervention designed to deter would-be offenders, but most of all, to demoralize the indigenous population at large. On the other hand, the ongoing war against the Pixaos also explains why the old cacique Martín Cayma managed to go free even though he was also accused of witchcraft. Martín Cayma was not only a ladino and a Christian; he was above all a collaborator — an “yndio amigo” who made a career out of capturing “*mohanes cimarrones*” or rebel mohanes. It would have been a mistake to publicly humiliate or punish him. This was probably why he was only fined after he was arrested and questioned. It is also most likely why he was never tortured. His friendship, loyalty, and services were crucial to the fight against the rebels and it was clear to Aguilar that he was not to be antagonized.

That this trial was probably more about politics than it was about an alleged murder or even witchcraft⁵⁸⁷ is also suggested by the behavior of Captain Francisco López Matosso, the encomendero of the four offenders in the case and also the father of the alleged murder victim, Pedro Melendez. Although López Matosso was absent when his charges were arrested, when he finally showed up in Ibagué on November 3, 1601, two months into the “investigation,” he was evidently upset that Catalina, Barbola, Constanza and Juan had been imprisoned and tortured. That he did not give much credit to the accusations brought against Constanza for having murdered his youngest son is evidenced by the fact that he demanded all four Indians to be released immediately so that he could take them back with him to his ranch in Cayma. As their encomendero, he probably knew them better than any other Spaniard residing in Ibagué. He was also probably aware that Catalina had at one time helped cure his daughter, doña Menga, and that Constanza often helped the vaqueros in his ranch recover whenever they fell off their horses. On the other hand, the fact that he agreed to meet three weeks later with don Juan de Aguilar and Captain Hernando de Lorençana in the hat of encomendero Pedro Guerra to determine the kind

of punishment that should be meted out to his charges suggests that the corregidor and the mayor of Ibagué were able to convince him in the end of the significance of the political implications that the conduct of his charges could have for law and order in the region.

Yet this trial reveals a deeper and more complex set of interactions between Indians and Spaniards. Clearly the relationship between Spaniards and indigenous curanderos was not one of simple, clear-cut mutual distrust and antagonism. If anything, the trial demonstrates how the Spanish relied on the medical knowledge of the mohanes both for their own wellbeing and that of their Indian encomendados. It can be seen in the way Catalina tells Aguilar how she once cured her master's daughter, doña Menga, and also because Constanza will only confess to having restored back to health indigenous cowboys who had fallen off their horses. However, sickness was not the only reason the Spanish sought the help of local moaneras. There were other occasions when Spanish women in particular enlisted the help of Indian women moaneras. This is evidenced when Juana Durango the mistress of Constanza's son Alonso gives him two mantas to bring to his mother in exchange for some "*yervas de bienquerer*." It is obvious Spanish women turned to indigenous witchcraft to entice a lover or subdue a husband. In this way, they recruited the help of indigenous curanderas to enhance what little power they had over Spanish male autocracy. In this case, Barbola's fate is illuminating. In 1590, when she was first accused of witchcraft, she managed to get away because her mistress, doña Leonor de Porras, Captain López Matosso's wife, was the one who apparently warned her just in time to allow her to escape. Eleven years later, when she was accused a second time, she was brought in for questioning a month into the investigation even though she had been singled out by witnesses since the start of Valserra's inquiries; and although she was imprisoned and tortured, she was spared public humiliation and punishment. It is almost certain that again doña Leonor intervened

on her behalf. The fact that Barbola was saved twice by her mistress suggests not only that doña Leonor de Porras was fond of her, but also that she probably thought Barbola was of great service to her. Undoubtedly, restoring back to health encomenderos, their wives, children, and Indian, or helping Spanish women seduce or subdue Spanish men, was a way for some indigenous curanderas to gain a measure of respect and even goodwill from their masters.

This trial also exposes the antagonism that had developed between indigenous and African curanderos. Throughout the case it is quite obvious that Juan Pacheco, the black overseer, and his family, his wife Mama Juana, his daughter, Ysabel, and his two sons, Andrés Godoy y Matosso and Sebastián González, disliked the old Indian curandera Constanza. But it is not until Catalina reveals during her interrogation that the only other person she knew who cured people in the area was Juan Pacheco that we understand why. That Constanza was feared and resented by Juan Pacheco's family is clearly evidenced by Juan Pacheco's daughter, Ysabel, when she tells Aguilar that "it was well known [even] among the Indians that she was not liked." This suggests that she was not perceived by Pacheco's mulatto family simply as an insignificant old Indian woman performing the lowliest of chores in the hato's kitchen (fetching water and washing dishes), but that they very likely viewed her as a powerful rival vying for prestige and power. Coexisting African slaves and indigenous encomendados may have rivaled each other around healing and witchcraft practices. As a curandero himself, Juan Pacheco may have felt challenged by Constanza. Both may have vied for the power, prestige, and influence that witchcraft and healing entailed in the Indian and African-slave communities as well as in the emerging mestizo culture. However, as a man, an overseer, and a cowboy, it may have been easier for Pacheco to rid himself of Constanza, despite being a slave. One thing is certain though,

the fact that he was not readily associated with the Pixaos rebels, probably redirected all suspicion away from him.

Ysabel's words, however, may reveal even deeper, burgeoning rifts within indigenous society itself. Ysabel's testimony was meant to convey to Aguilar the idea that it was not just she and her family who disliked the old Indian woman, but that Constanza was even resented by her very own people — the Indians. Although it is quite probable that she may have been lying out of sheer spite for the old woman, it is also possible that her statement may have had some truth to it. Constanza came from a place called Cuyamayma (probably located south of Cayma) and even though she was most likely a Panche, she was still an outsider to Cayma. This situation may have been further complicated by the fact that throughout the trial, Constanza, Catalina, and Juan are the only Indians described as *chontales*; all other witnesses are described as *ladinos*. As *chontales*, Constanza, Catalina, and Juan were most likely viewed as unassimilated, unacculturated “savage” Indians. Although they each had a Spanish Christian name and were presumably baptized, it is clear that they stubbornly rejected Spanish culture. On the other hand, Constanza, as an old woman and a moanera, represented traditional indigenous culture. As such she was probably resented by the *ladinos* who had opted for assimilation, acculturation, and in many cases, collaboration. Perhaps as an Indian elder she made a point of reminding or reproaching *ladinos* for what she may have perceived as weakness, treason, or just plain foolishness. Perhaps her mere presence was an uncomfortable reminder for *ladinos* of just how opportunistic their choices were.

At the same time, this rising antagonism between *chontales* and *ladinos* may reveal yet another budding division, this time between the young and the old. Indeed, except for three Indians — Martín Cayma, Luisa, and an elderly cacique who was summoned early on in the case

— all other indigenous witnesses were in their twenties and thirties. The fact that it was the young Indian witnesses who eagerly testified against the three elderly mohanes may suggest that an ongoing struggle for power and influence between young and old may have already been taking place at this time. Young indigenous people were evidently determined not only to survive but to advance and prosper under Spanish rule. The Spanish, on the other hand, encouraged the assimilation of young Indians whom they viewed as more pliable and docile than their elders. At the same time, by encouraging the acculturation and social ascent of the younger generation, the Spanish were well aware that they were creating a powerful counterbalance to the influence traditionally exerted by elders in indigenous communities.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the conflict between Constanza and the vaquero Sebastián Eca. According to the Indian witnesses in the trial, Sebastián had done the unthinkable: he had kicked and abused an elderly moanera woman. This incident alone is a telling measure of how much things had changed in just over sixty years and how much power and status older women were losing in the face of ascending young Indian men. Under traditional circumstances it is quite unlikely that a young man like Sebastián would have dared hit a reputed moanera like Constanza. In traditional indigenous settings, people, let alone young people, would never dream of crossing a shaman for fear of retaliation. Harner, for example, reports that among the Shuar “several cases were encountered in which men gave their daughters in marriage to shamans without the customary bride-service, or even the less common bride-price, because the girl’s father feared the bewitching power of the shaman.”⁵⁸⁸ However, in the new rising social context in which Constanza found herself, Sebastián was a vaquero — a young Indian man with a newly acquired trade and very real symbols of status in the new order like horses. Constanza, on the other hand, was rapidly becoming an old, suspect, and impoverished woman, performing the

lowliest of tasks in an *hato's* kitchen. While young Indian men like Sebastián were on the ascendency, Indian elders, in particular, Indian elderly women, may have already been on a downslide. Indians were beginning to look up to young men like Sebastián: he represented the future, successful acculturation, and a way to advance in a society in which Indians now occupied the bottom social rung. Constanza, Catalina, Barbola, and Juan on the other hand embodied the past, the old people who had lost out to the Spaniards and who were now losing power to the younger generation.

However, for all the respect traditionally accorded to them that they were now losing, it is clear they were still feared. This is suggested in the way Indian witnesses (except for Sebastián's wife, Magdalena) consistently traced his death back to Constanza, arguing that as he had disrespected and abused her, she must have retaliated and killed him through witchcraft. That Magdalena placed the blame for her husband's death on the old *cacique*, Martín Cayma, seems to further evidence the budding conflict between young and old. Indeed, as a young, successful and acculturated Indian man, Sebastián may have been challenging not just elderly *moanera* women, but also elderly male authority figures like Martín Cayma.

Of course, Constanza, Catalina, and Barbola also served their own indigenous communities and were no doubt greatly appreciated for it, especially at a time when these communities were beset by sickness and disease. Yet, the fact that their medical knowledge was unable to avert the demographic catastrophe caused by European diseases was most probably the greatest single cause behind their loss of power and status. Constanza's plight as well as that of Catalina and Barbola thus exemplifies the changing power balance between young Indian men and old Indian women. As the Spanish instituted a system that only offered opportunities for social advancement to young Indian men, old Indian women — and most of all *moaneras* among

them — suddenly found themselves marginalized, losing not only respect and traditional prestige, but above all, power and influence. Nowhere is this more evident than in the amount of male violence that Constanza had to endure. Not only was she beaten by Sebastián, she was also hit by a child, Pedro Melendez, and flogged on several occasions by another of Captain López Matosso's sons, Juan de Zúñiga. It is not difficult to imagine the kind of impact that this must have had on a woman raised in a culture where this would have previously been unimaginable. Perhaps after all, the old woman — who as a true curandera kept a careful track of time and of her own age in terms of all the episodes of smallpox that she had witnessed in her lifetime — did fight back (as people rumored) with the only weapons she still had at hand.

Indeed, perhaps the singing, dancing, drumming, and conjuring through which Constanza, Catalina, and Barbola sought to reconnect with the spirit world of their ancestors, provided them with a sense of empowerment which they had all but lost. It is also possible that just as they attempted to cure and heal their communities from unfamiliar and devastating diseases, that they also tried to protect them from brutal encomenderos by getting rid of them through the use of poisonous yervas. When they were unsuccessful in physically protecting themselves or their communities, they may have tried to retaliate, seeking to exact some degree of retribution and justice. In this way, they turned shamanism into a subversive activity through which they attempted to regain a measure of control over their lives and the lives of their people. Their *conjuros* and *encantamientos* may have provided them with a sense of retribution and hope amidst the terrible reality of conquest and colonization (Silverblatt 1987, Lewis 2003, Harrison 2009). The charms, amulets, talismans, and potions may have given these otherwise disenfranchised and now vulnerable women under constant threat of violence a sense of protection and control over their destinies. Against the wide spectrum of violence, oppression,

and flat-out terrorism directed at Indian women and girls, the attempt by these women to harness natural elements as well as cosmic and spiritual energies can be viewed as an act of resistance. By relying on native religious and cultural traditions as well as philosophical worldviews, these women may have attempted to combat the anarchy and social order reversal that they were now experiencing.

Chapter 6

“Como árboles en el aire ...”: Indians Without Land

“[...] los Yndios de esta encomienda no tienen mujeres [...]” (1629)⁵⁸⁹

“[...] de la diez y ocho pregunta dixeron los dichos yndios otongos que ellos son pobres y viejos y que están esperando la muerte [...]”⁵⁹⁰

It was on a Tuesday evening, December 19, 1628 that Captain Diego de Ospina arrived in the village of El Cálamo.⁵⁹¹ The next day he was to begin the first of a series of thirteen visitas that he would perform in the Timaná⁵⁹² area between the last days of 1628 and the first two weeks of the following year. These visitas, which were carried out almost a hundred years after the Spaniards had first entered this territory, take us back to the southern part of the Alto Magdalena region and allow us to glimpse the changes that had occurred in this area over the course of a century.⁵⁹³

Perhaps one of the first indications of just how much had changed is the very format and focus of these visitas. When compared, for example, with Francisco Hernández' 1559 visita to the Province of Mariquita in the northern part of the Alto Magdalena region, there is a noticeable shift in emphasis. As discussed in chapter three, only nine years after the conquest of the Mariquita area, the visitador Francisco Hernández had been specifically commissioned to divide the Indians among the King and his encomenderos in the most profitable way possible, taking good care to leave a number of Indians for future encomenderos lest they might not come at all. Seventy years later and 330 km (200 mi.) to the south, Captain Diego de Ospina's visitas convey a very different kind of preoccupation: indeed, Ospina the visitador was no longer as intent on distributing the Indians as he was on preserving and holding on to the few that remained in

Timaná. At least this is what the lengua, Juan Martínez de Larreaga, told the Indians in Quechua during Ospina's first visita:

En el sitio de calamo Encomienda del capitan Andres del campo Salazar jurisdicción de la villa de Timaná veinte de diziembre de myll seis[cientos] veinte y ocho años El señor gobernador [Captain Diego de Ospina] aviendo mandado Juntar Los Yndios de la dicha encomienda y estando juntos con su cacique Llamado Pedro Soverzilloman El dicho gobernador les hizo una platica dándoles a entender por lengua de Juan Martínez de larreaga Ynterprete que a venydo En nombre de su mag[estad] [...] a desagrabiallos de qualesquier agravios que ayan rrecibido de sus encomenderos mayordomos Y administradores Y de Traficantes Y a tratar de que se pueblen en forma de pueblo para que biban En pulicía Y a hacerles pagar Lo que se les deviere de su trabajo Y de otras Cossas Y a hacerles rrestituir y volver qualesquier bienes Y otras Cosas que Les ayan quitado Tomado Y osurpado Y Castigar los Culpados En cualesquier malos Tratamientos Ynjurias muertes o agravios que se les Ayan hecho [...]⁵⁹⁴

Two things in Ospina's platica or address to the Indians stand out: the fact that among the many maltreaters of the Indians that he enumerates, he lists the word "*Traficantes*" and the fact that he insists the Indians should settle in pueblos and live in "*pulicía*" (policía). Likewise some of the questions listed in the questionnaire used by Ospina are also very telling. Question number eight, for example, reveals a particular concern over non-natives living among the natives: "[...] *si an Consentido [los encomenderos] que entre Los yndios asistan o Bivan meztizos negros mulatos o yndios ladinos forasteros y Si estos Les han hecho Algunos agravios Exisiones o malos tratamientos o quitadoles Alguna hacienda o sus mugeres o hijos [...]*"⁵⁹⁵ And question nineteen exposes (in addition to the traditional worries over idolatry and the presence of mohanes) a singular preoccupation with the number of wives the cacique and his capitanes had: "*Si El Cacique o Capitanes an estado o estan amancevados Usurpando Las mugeres agenas [...]*"⁵⁹⁶ As we shall see, many of the Indians' answers to Ospina's twenty questions confirmed the Spanish Crown's concerns, while pointing at the same time to other issues as well.

Andrés del Campo Salazar's encomienda was by far the largest Ospina would visit in this area.⁵⁹⁷ The *naturales* or local Indians — the majority of whom were Otongos and as such probable descendants of La Gaitana's people — totaled a hundred and twenty-seven individuals

including men, women, and children. Of these, five were not exactly Otongos but Guanacas and two were Tama Indians: “*Martín Suma [...] que se ha criado en este pueblo desde muy pequeño de Treinta años [...]*”⁵⁹⁸ and forty-year-old Luis who worked as a vaquero in the encomendero’s hato in nearby Yaguelga. A woman by the name of Francisca was listed as a local next to her Otongo husband even though she was described as being a “*natural de Popayán criada en este pueblo de treinta y cinco años.*”⁵⁹⁹ However, among the one-hundred and twenty-seven locals, eight percent, which is to say ten individuals, had gone missing. Martín Suma’s twenty-year-old son, Felipe, for example, was one of them. He was listed as “*huído*” or “runaway” along with nine other Otongo men. A man by the name of Pedro Gualman was even described as having run away with his entire family, his wife Lucía and their two sons. The only other runaway woman was surprisingly vaquero Luis’s sixty-year-old wife, Isabel. Perhaps this is why the document included a separate group of twenty-nine Indians (men, women, and children) under the rubric “*Yndios forasteros agregados y concertados.*”⁶⁰⁰

This list, which seems to respond directly to the eighth question inquiring about whether or not there were any non-locals living among the local Indians describes a group of forasteros which included fourteen Indians from Popayán,⁶⁰¹ six from Iscanze,⁶⁰² four from the town of Almaguer,⁶⁰³ one from Quito,⁶⁰⁴ and another, a Mosca (Muisca) man by the name of Marcos, from Bogotá.⁶⁰⁵ Three others, a man named Fabián, his mother Catalina and his sister Juana are also included in this group of foreigners though their place of origin is not specified. According to the rubric, these Indians were all outsiders who had been *concertados* or hired to work for Salazar and thus added to his encomienda. Fabián, his mother Catalina and his sister Juana, for example, are all described as working in the *cocal* or coca plantation in Timaná. Four other forasteros, Pedro from Popayán, his wife Juana and their two sons Felipe and Francisco, are

listed as working alongside the other vaqueros in the hatu in Yaguelga. As a result, this group of forasteros comprised 17% of the total indigenous population of El Cálamo. As such, they clearly illustrate the expanding role which historians Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz (1978) and more recently Karen Vieira Powers (1995) suggest foreign Amerindians were beginning to play in Andean societies by the seventeenth century. As immigrants who roamed the Andes looking for work and a place to settle, they also point to the increasing mobility that characterized seventeenth-century indigenous Andean populations.

Together with the local runaways, the forasteros constitute an example of how indigenous Andean people were coping with colonial rule at this time. The fact that forasteros were usually exempted from paying tribute and performing the mita encouraged many individuals, both men and women, to leave their communities of origin in an effort to escape the heavy tax burdens that Spanish authorities imposed on local indigenous populations. At the same time, they started to look for paid work in other places. Yet, because forasteros did not have access to communal lands, they began to join the ranks of the continent's growing rural proletariat, a process which the Incas had initiated almost a hundred years before the Spaniards' arrival when they had created the landless caste of the yanacunas in order to build their own empire. The Spanish tried as best they could to contain and control the flow of indigenous workers. They insisted in much the same way Captain Diego de Ospina entreated the Indians in El Cálamo that indigenous people settle down in pueblos or policed communities. But the Indians in the region held on dearly to their mobility or at least to the traditional patterns of relatively isolated settlements which seemed to guarantee them a certain degree of mobility and autonomy. When faced with Ospina's pressure to settle in pueblos they were adamant in replying that there were "[...] *tierras bastantes y buenas para que se poblasen por parcialidades unos desviados de otros mas de*

media legua Pero que no sería bueno poblalos juntos porque no tendrían paz y se perdería la tierra Y que así lo piden y no de otra manera.”⁶⁰⁶

But the document reveals other aspects of life as well. It shows, for example, that several of the men in Salazar’s encomienda had acquired a trade by now. There was Baltazar Muelco “*Yndio official carpintero [...] que entiende la lengua española y la habla [...] de cincuenta y quatro años;*”⁶⁰⁷ and others who were just beginning to learn one like Juan Galixpa, who bled to death because his arm got caught in the press while trying to feed sugar cane into a *trapiche* or sugar mill.⁶⁰⁸ And then there were the vaqueros in the hatos in Yaguelga like twenty-year-old Alonso Soverzillo, the cacique’s son, and Luis the forty-year-old Tama man, and three other forasteros from Popayán, Pedro and his sons Felipe and Francisco, who like so many other indigenous men throughout the entire Alto Magdalena region were now becoming a ubiquitous sight atop their horses. As for the women, they were mostly (as we shall see even more clearly in Ospina’s subsequent visitas) in charge of the cocales.

These plantations had become an important source of revenue for encomenderos. As Ospina’s subsequent visitas will show, the coca leaves grown in the cocales rapidly became a crucial source of sustenance for the miners working in the gold mines in and around Timaná.⁶⁰⁹ The encomenderos made money by controlling the growing and selling of the leaves to the miners. Although it was Indian women who tended the coca plantations, indigenous men were the ones in charge of taking the *cargas* or loads of coca leaves to sell them in the mines. Despite the fact that encomenderos had been banned from using the Indians as *cargueros* (porters) or *arrieros* (muleteers) this had become a widespread practice throughout New Granada and would remain so even after Independence.⁶¹⁰ So common was this practice that among the various charges that Captain Diego de Ospina formulated against Salazar, there was one for “[...] aver

*Embiado a los Yndios de dicha encomienda cargados con cargas de coca sobre sus questas a la ciudad de Popayán Pagandoles tan solamente Tres Pesos sin costar de aver hecho la dicha paga conforme a la dicha ordenanza [...]”*⁶¹¹ Indeed, the Indians had testified before Ospina that Captain Andrés del Campo “[...] y Diego del Campo su hijo para algunas necesidades que an tenydo An despachado a los yndios de este pueblo con cargas de dos arrobas de coca para que la lleben cargada en las questas a popayan Y Por Ello Le dan a cada Yndio Tres pesos Y tasajos [de] sal y myel para matalotaje [...]”⁶¹² But coca leaves were not just a staple food of miners; they were apparently widely consumed by the indigenous population as a whole. In fact, when in question nineteen, Ospina pressed the Indians on the subject of idolatry, they made a point of telling him that their use of coca was for nutritional reasons only: “[...] Y que no tienen mohanerías ny hechizerías y que solo comen coca y beben chicha Y que esto no es por mal sino porque se sustentan con ella [...]”⁶¹³ The fact that Salazar and his son were sending arrieros loaded with coca leaves to towns like Popayán further suggests that there was a wider market for coca leaves beyond the mines and miners of Timaná, La Plata or Almaguer.⁶¹⁴

Question nineteen also conveyed the Crown’s worries over the number of wives that men like cacique Pedro Soverzilloman or any of his capitanes might have. The Indians told Ospina that “[...]los Yndios deste pueblo biben con sus mugeres quietos y contentos y que nadie se las quita [...]”⁶¹⁵ Yet as the table below shows adult women represented only 40% of the adult population (girls, however, represented 50% of all children) and there were no single women while 13% of the men were single. In addition, men between eighteen and forty years-old doubled the number of women within the same age group; also 15% of the men were widowers while only 2.7% of the women were widows. The data therefore contradicts what the Indians told Ospina. But an examination of the marriages in El Cálamo reveals something even more

striking: five (14.7%) of the thirty-four marriages in the village were constituted by couples where the women were significantly older — almost fifteen years older on average — than the men. As we shall see, these differences became even more extreme as Ospina moved on to the next encomienda.

Table 8. El Cálamo's local population*

Total population	127	
Adults	89 or 70%	
Children	38 or 30%	
Runaways	10 or 7.8%	
Locals	127 or 100%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	0 or 0%	
	Female	Male
Adult	36 or 40%	53 or 60%
Married	35 or 97.2%	34 or 63%
Single	0 or 0%	7 or 13%
Widows/Widowers	1 or 2.7%	8 or 15%
60 +	0 or 0%	4 or 7.5%
40-60 years-old	8 or 22%	8 or 15%
25-40 years-old	9 or 25%	21 or 39%
18-25 years-old	9 or 25%	18 or 34%
Runaways	2 or 3.3%	8 or 15%
Adult, children & elderly	55 or 43%	72 or 57%
Children	19 or 50%	19 or 50%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Table 9. El Cálamo marriages in which women were older than men

Marriages	34	Marriages in which women are older 5 or 14.7%	
Husband		Wife	Age Difference
Pedro Ymuamy	35	Ana 60	25
Agustín Albenba	22	Ysabel Masebela 50	18
Martín Suma	30	Ysavel 36	6
Juan Ybiral	20	Francisca 25	5
Luis Tama	40	Ysavel 60	20
Average age difference		14.8	

When Captain Diego de Ospina arrived on December 22, 1628 in the village of La Matanca to visit the Coniabongos who belonged to encomendero Jussepe de Valenzuela, he found a much smaller local population and no mention whatsoever of forasteros, agregados or concertados. The only “outsiders” were apparently cacique Andrés Camuquen’s wife, “[...] *doña Ysavel [...] natural de Popayán*”⁶¹⁶ and Ynes Iscanze whose last name seems to indicate that she came from the far-away province of Iscanze. The women represented 33% of the total adult population (all in all, females represented 37.5% of the total population); of the 25 adult men, less than half were married; 40% were single and 16% were widowers (while only 8% of the women were widows). The men doubled women in the twenty-five to forty-years of age group and tripled them in the forty- to sixty-years range while there were no women in the eighteen to twenty-five years of age group. The imbalance between men and women was such that one of the women, forty-year-old Catalina Pandi, was married to two men at the same time, Andrés Cuzagali (age not specified) and forty-year-old Pablo Yoguín. When she was interrogated on the subject, she told the lengua in Quechua “[...] *que pensando que El dicho su [primer] marido [Pablo Yoguín] se avía Muerto se casso otra vez con andres cuzagali [...] y que tiene por sus hijos a Francisco payanes de seis años y a Jacoba calpe de tres años y a Sebastian macte de un año.*”⁶¹⁷ Furthermore, of the eleven marriages in La Matanca, three (27%) were constituted by couples in which the women were on average nine years older than their partners. Alonso, one of the Indians who testified before Ospina, also made it clear that it was not just the encomenderos who benefitted from the sale of coca leaves: “*Marcos yndio cuñado del dicho alonso Testigo que murio en el camino del paramo no llevaba una carga del encomendero sino suya que era de coca y la llevaba a vender a la dicha mina [del páramo] y se murió a la buelta.*”⁶¹⁸

Table 10. La Matanca's (local) population*

Total population	48	
Adults	37 or 77%	
Children	11 or 23%	
Runaways	4 or 8%	
Locals	48 or 100%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	0 or 0%	
	Female	Male
Adult	12 or 33%	25 or 70%
Married	11 or 92%	11 or 44%
Single	0 or 0%	10 or 40%
Widowers/Widows	1 or 8%	4 or 16%
60+	2 or 16%	1 or 4%
40-60 years-old	5 or 41%	14 or 56%
25-40 years-old	2 or 16%	5 or 20%
18-25 years-old	0 or 0%	5 or 20%
Runaways	0 or 0%	4 or 16%
Adult, children & elderly	18 or 37.5%	30 or 62.5%
Children	6 or 54.5%	5 or 45.5%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Table 11. La Matanca marriages in which women were older than men

Marriages	11	Marriages in which women are older	3 or 27%	
Husband		Wife	Age Difference	
Alonso Ucarban	30	Catalina	40	10
Alonso Yasigue	52	Catalina Tiona	60+*	8
Pedro Maguita	30	Ynes Izcance	40	10
Average age difference				9

*The document reads "*Alonso Yasigue De cinquenta y dos años Su mujer catalina tiona de mas de sesenta años*"⁶¹⁹

Nine days later, on January 1, 1629 Ospina arrived in Captain Diego del Campo's encomienda to visit the Otongos, the Suaza and the Tama Indians who lived there. There were twenty-nine Indians, though only twelve were locals; the other seventeen were all Tamas whom, as we shall see, had all been *rescatados*, that is, obtained from traffickers. This is perhaps why this was the only encomienda visited by Ospina where the number of adult women (10 or 43.4%)

was only slightly below the number of men (13 or 56.5%), even though the female population represented only 35% of the total population (as all six children were male). This was also the only encomienda in which there were actually more young women — all Tamas rescatadas — than there were older women. Indeed, five of the eight Tama women were between sixteen and twenty-years old; only Marta was forty. The older women were in fact the only two local women and they were significantly older than the Tama women: Constanza Baquiza was eighty-years old and Ysavel Pataya was sixty-years old. Constanza and Isabel were also the only two married women in the entire encomienda aside from two Tama women — Margarita Carananda and Ana who had both run away and left their young Tama husbands to go live in Popayán. Constanza Baquiza was married to ninety-year-old Suaza cacique, Guillermo Chegue, and Ysavel Pataya was married to a young twenty-five-year-old Tama man by the name of Antonio (theirs was the only marriage in four in which the woman was older than the man). All the six other Tama women were described as being single, even though Barbolilla, who was sixteen, was breast-feeding an infant boy by the name of Francisco. Twenty-five-year-old Antonio Tama's marriage to sixty-year-old Ysavel Pataya is especially intriguing since there were six single — and much younger — Tama women whom he could have married. Also intriguing is the fact that only one of the eight local men — ninety-year-old Guillermo Chegue — was married; the other seven were all single (of these, one, Pedro Mosco, the Otongo's cacique, had run away) even though there were six potential Tama brides.

Table 12. Marriages in Diego del Campo's encomienda in which the women were older

Marriages	4	Marriages in which women are older		1 or 25%
Husband		Wife		Age Difference
Antonio Tama	25	Isabel Pataya	60	35
Average age difference				35

Table 13. Population in Diego del Campo's encomienda*

	General		Locals		Tamas	
Total population	29		12 or 41%		17 or 59%	
Adults	23 or 79.3%		10 or 83.3%		13 or 76.4%	
Children	6 or 20.7%		2 or 16.7%		4 or 24.6%	
Runaways	2 or 6.8%		0 or 0%		2 or 11.7%	
Women	10 or 43.4%		2 or 8.6%		8 or 34.7%	
Men	13 or 56.6%		8 or 34.7%		5 or 21.7%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	10 or 43.4%	13 or 56%	2 or 20%	8 or 80%	8 or 61.5%	5 or 38.5%
Married	4 or 40%	4 or 28.5%	2 or 100%	1 or 12.5%	2 or 25%	3 or 60%
Single	6 or 60%	9 or 64.2%	0 or 0%	7 or 87.5%	6 or 75%	2 or 40%
Widowers/Widows	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
60+	2 or 16%	1 or 7.6%	1 or 50%	1 or 12.5%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
40-60 years-old	2 or 20%	3 or 23%	1 or 50%	3 or 37.5%	1 or 12.5%	0 or 0%
25-40 years-old	1 or 10%	1 or 7.6%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	1 or 12.5%	1 or 14.2%
18-25 years-old	5 or 50%	7 or 53.8%	0 or 0%	3 or 37.5%	5 or 62%	4 or 57%
Runaways	2 or 20%	1 or 7.6%	0 or 0%	1 or 12.5%	2 or 25%	0 or 0%
Adult, children & elderly	10 or 35%	19 or 65%	2 or 16.7%	10 or 83.3%	8 or 47%	9 or 53%
Children	0 or 0%	6 or 100%	0 or 0%	2 or 100%	0 or 0%	4 or 100%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

That the local men acutely felt the absence of women is evidenced by their answer to Ospina's fifth question: "[...] *de la quinta pregunta dixeron que el sitio donde están poblados estos yndios no es bueno porque los puercos monteses y guadatinajas les comen sus rroças y labranças y que se quieren passar cerca de la estancia del capitán pedro saenz donde ay tierras bastantes y allí quieren hazer sus rroças y labranças porque no tienen mugeres y quieren estar donde están sus cocalas [...].*"⁶²⁰ The fact that they told Ospina that they wanted to be relocated not only because they wanted to protect their fields from the wild pigs, but also because they wanted to be near their cocalas in order to tend to them, clearly indicates the impact that having "no women" had on these communities. It also seems to indicate that under normal circumstances, the women would have been in charge of the coca plantations. But circumstances

were anything but normal. Local women amounted to only 20% of the encomienda's (local) adult population and they happened to be two elderly, married women.

So, what had happened to the women in this encomienda? Had they run away? The document shows that at least two women had: Ana had left her twenty-five year-old Tama husband, Gonzalo, and was now "huída" in Popayán; and Margarita Carananda had done the same with her eighteen-year old husband, Calixto Tama. But these were Tama women, not local women. The Indians' answers to Ospina's questionnaire, however, point to a probable cause behind the lack of local women. Indeed, to Ospina's sixteenth question, the Indians replied that the women had died: "[...] *que siendo bibo el dicho juan de leves el bviejo le sirvieron seis yndias desta encomienda y que en su vida murieron dos de la dichas yndias y que quedavan quatro y que después de muerto el dicho juan de leves murieron las otras quatro yndias en servicio de la dicha maria rrodriguez su muger*"⁶²¹

Ultimately what these deaths explain is why 59% of Diego del Campo's encomienda was made up of Tama Indians who had been "rescatados." Since most of the local women had died and even Pedro Mosco, the fifty-three year-old Otongo cacique had escaped, encomenderos had resorted to buying Tama Indians from traffickers. This, at least, is what the Tamas themselves told Ospina: "*Y los dichos tamas dixeran que un yndio desta tierra que se llamava pedro chiguanca que ya es difunto entrava en la provincia de los tama con rescates y saco a los dichos yndios y los vendia a la dicha maria rrodriguez muger del dicho capitán juan de leves [Captain Diego del Campo's parents] no saven el precio que por ellos pago y que saben que la dicha maria rrodriguez compro de luis de godoy y herrero una partida de yndios tamas mocas y que no saven el precio que pago por ella y que la llevo al hato que tenya en la otra banda del rrio grande y que allí se murieron de biruelas*"⁶²²

The Tamas did not live in the Alto Magdalena región, but in the jungles of the Caquetá province, east of where the Magdalena River separates the Huila province from the Caquetá province. Rodrigo Pérez, a witness later presented by María Rodríguez, told Ospina that Captain Diego del Campo's mother had actually sponsored Pedro Chiguanca's expedition into Tama territory, though he was quick to specify that the Tamas had been "*agregados*" and not "*comprados*," thus presumably hired or "*concertados*" in exchange for axes, knives, and machetes: "*De la tercera pregunta dixo [Rodrigo Pérez] que bio que los yndios tamas que maria rrodriguez muger del dicho juan de leves agrego a la dicha encomienda fueron traydos a ella y sacados con rescate que la dicha maria rrodriguez dava a yndios de esta tierra que entravan en los tamas y llevaban hachas cuchillos machetes y que en tal les dava la dicha maria rrodriguez para hazer los dichos rrescates por lo que sabe que los dichos yndios tamas no fueron comprados sino agregados en la forma dicha*"⁶²³ That María Rodríguez was buying Pedro Chiguanca's Tama captives is almost certain although it is unclear whether she gave the axes, machetes, and knives to Pedro Chiguanca as payment or whether he was to give them to the Tamas in order to lure them into servitude. Whatever the case, what the encomenderos called *rescate* was in reality nothing short of kidnapping: in order to redeem their freedom the Indians who had thus been *rescatados* had to pay back a kind of ransom to the encomenderos who had "rescued" or more exactly purchased them from traficantes the like of Pedro Chiguanca or Luis de Godoy y Herrero. Although in theory the ransom was to be repaid through several years of service, most *rescatados* ended up in bondage their entire lives.

As for the locals Otongos, they told Ospina that they were poor and old: "*[...] dixerón los dichos yndios otongos que ellos son pobres y biejos y que están esperando la muerte y que no tienen de que pagar tributo*"⁶²⁴ However, they seemed to remember better times when they

paid their tribute in gold: “[...] *dixeron que siendo encomendero de los dichos yndios otongos y çuaças el capitán juan de leves le pagaron dos años tributo a dos y tres pesos de oro cada yndio cada año el qual dicho tributo pagavan algunos yndios que no serian pocos que eran muchos de ellos y que luego todos sirbieron y an serbido al dicho encomendero y los demas*”⁶²⁵ But, this was before the Pixaos had forced them out from the rich silver and gold mining valley of La Plata where they lived originally: “[...] *dixeron que estos yndios otongos eran naturales del valle de La Plata del pueblo de guamaco y que los pixaos los fueron rretirando [...] Los dichos Caciques y yndios otongos dixeron que en el dicho valle de la plata los yndios pixaos les quemaron el pueblo que tenyan y que se rretiraron y vinieron a donde agora están.*”⁶²⁶

On Friday, January 5, 1629, Ospina arrived in Bernabé Fernández’ encomienda to visit the Indians of La Cosanza. Although the imbalance between women and men was not as sharp as that of Captain Diego del Campo’s encomienda, adult women in La Cosanza represented only 35.8% of the adult population (females represented 40% of the entire population); 95% of them were married (compared to 53% of the men) while a third of the men remained single. Men almost tripled women in the twenty-five to forty-years of age group and there were absolutely no women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Only one woman — twenty-five year-old Constanza — was described as a Tama woman married to twenty-four year-old Sebastián Caqui. But perhaps, what is most striking about La Cosanza is that out of its eighteen married couples, half were constituted by couples in which the women were on average fifteen years older than the men.

Table 14. La Cosanza marriages in which women were older than men

Marriages	18	Marriages in which women are older 9 or 50%		
Husband		Wife		Age Difference
Andrés Peta	30	Catalina Muya	60	30
Pedro Ymba	30	Catalina Mugue	40	10
Juan Petiguaca	40	Leonor Yaponte	50	10
Sebastián Camono	20	Constanza	30	10
Pedro Yatinco	44	Catalina Piacha	50	6
Sebastián Caqui	24	Constanza	25	1
Pedro Simanca	45	Catalina Mancía	60	15
Francisco Yque	25	Juana Tangui	50	25
Alonso Ziguana	40	Juana Limga	60	20
Average age difference				15

Table 15. Population in La Cosanza's encomienda*

Total population	57	
Adults	53 or 93%	
Children	4 or 7%	
Runaways	0 or 0%	
Locals	56 or 98.2%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	1 or 1.8%	
	Female	Male
Adult	19 or 35.8%	34 or 64.2%
Married	18 or 95%	18 or 53%
Single	0 or 0%	11 or 32 %
Widowers/Widows	1 or 5%	5 or 14.7%
40-60 years-old	8 or 42%	8 or 23.5%
25-40 years-old	8 or 42%	20 or 59%
18-25 years-old	0 or 0%	6 or 17%
Runaways	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
Adult, children & elderly	23 or 40%	34 or 60%
Children	4 or 100%	0 or 0%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

On January 10, when Ospina got to the village of La Culata, he found a much more balanced situation between adult men and women. Yet, although the adult women represented

half of the adult population, only 50% of the men were married (compared to 62% of the women). There were also no women in the eighteen to twenty-five years of age group whereas the men of that age accounted for a quarter of the male population. Furthermore, of the twelve children, nine were boys — an imbalance which becomes even sharper if we take into account the fact that two of the girls ascribed to this encomienda were listed as “*huídas*” along with their mother: “*Magdalena Pandi dyxo el encomendero que sera de treinta años Y que anda huida y que se casso con lazaro yndio de anzerma y que tiene por sus hijos a lucrecia de diez años y ursula de ocho y juan de ocho meses*” (An annotation in the margin lists all four as “*huídos*” or runaways).⁶²⁷ At least one of the men, a twenty-six year-old vaquero by the name of Juan Yce was married to a Tama woman four years older than him, called Lucía. But according to Juan de Aranvilleta the encomendero, Lucía had run away eight years before. Aranvilleta also told Ospina that two other men had also abandoned La Culata: forty-year-old Martín Mayubal “[...] *que está huído en San Agustín [...]*” and forty-year-old Francisco Yemen “[...] *que está huído en Cali [...]*”⁶²⁸ The Indians told Ospina that in the past there were three and even four women working in the encomendero’s house, but that now, only one, Ursula, was working there: “[...] *Y les sirve Una Yndia Llamada Vusula en su cassa Y un muchacho de paje Y que a los Encomenderos pasados Les servían tres y quattro Yndias en sus cassas Y que por todos estos Servicios no Les an pagado Cossa alguna [...]*”⁶²⁹ As for the five married couples of La Culata, two were made up of women who were older than their husbands.

Table 16. La Culata marriages in which women were older than men

Marriages	5	Marriages in which women are older 2 or 40%		
Husband		Wife	Age Difference	
Juan Yce	26	Lucía Tama	30	4
Diego Quichiguen	43	Juana Cagua	50	7
Average age difference				5.5

Table 17. Population in La Culata

Total population	28	
Adults	16 or 57%	
Children	12 or 43%	
Runaways	3 or 10%	
Locals	26 or 92.9%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	2 or 7.1%	
	Female	Male
Adult	8 or 50%	8 or 50%
Married	5 or 62%	4 or 50%
Single	1 or 12.5%	2 or 25%
Widowers/Widows	1 or 12.5%	0 or 0%
40-60 years-old	2 or 25%	2 or 25%
25-40 years-old	6 or 75%	4 or 50%
18-25 years-old	0 or 0%	2 or 25%
Runaways	1 or 12.5%	2 or 25%
Adult, children & elderly	11 or 40%	17 or 60%
Children	3 or 25%	9 or 75%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

The encomienda Captain Diego de Ospina visited the next day on Thursday, January 11 was the smallest encomienda in his tour of duty. There were only ten Indians in it with no children. The men accounted for 60% of the population and a third of them were single. Three of the four women appeared to be Tama women: Pedro Sastre's fifty-year-old wife, Juana, who was described as a "[...] *natural del caguan* [...];"⁶³⁰ fifty-year-old Juana Tama whose last name seems to point to her origin; and María, a Tama woman who told Ospina that she had been

kidnapped by Indians and later brought to this encomienda to work for Diego de Ibarrañez the encomendero and his mother, doña Gabriela de Avilés : “[...] *la dicha Maria tama dixo que unos yndios la sacaron de su tierra con rrescates y la llevaron al caguan a cassa del capitán frnacisco ortiz donde estubo muchos días y de allí la trajeron presentada a la dicha doña Gabriela de aviles y le a servido y sirve en su cassa [...]*”⁶³¹ María who was twenty-five years-old was married to a twenty-year-old Tama man by the name of Ambrossio who was described as “*huído*” in the Caguán region.⁶³² All three Tama women were older than their husbands. The men told Ospina that they served Ibarrañez and his mother by harvesting corn and coca: “[...] *Y sirven a los dichos encomenderos de hazer rrozaz y de sembrar maíz y coger coca y de traer leña a cassa del encomendero cargada a cuesta [...]*”⁶³³ And doña Gabirela de Avilés told him that the Indians were of little use to her “[...] *por ser ynutiles como por ser fugitivos [...]*”⁶³⁴

Table 18. Population in Diego de Ibarrañez’s encomienda

Total population	10	
Adults	10 or 100%	
Children	0 or 0%	
Runaways	1 or 10%	
Locals	6 or 60%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	4 or 40%	
	Female	Male
Adult	4 or 40%	6 or 60%
Married	3 or 75%	3 or 50%
Single	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
Widowers/Widows	1 or 25%	1 or 17%
50-60+ years-old	3 or 75%	0 or 0%
45-50 years-old	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
25-30 years-old	1 or 25%	2 or 33%
18-25 years-old	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
Runaways	0 or 0%	1 or 17%
Adult, children & elderly	4 or 40%	6 or 60%
Children	0 or 0%	0 or 0%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Table 19. Marriages in Diego de Ibarramenez's encomienda in which women were older than men

Marriages	3	Marriages in which women are older 3 or 100%	
Husband	Wife	Age Difference	
Pedro Sastre 45	Juana 50	5	
Pedro Suazo 30	Juana Tama 50	20	
Ambrossio Tama 20	María Tama 25	5	
Average age difference		10	

As Ospina proceeded the next day to Isabel Calderón's encomienda, he found a similar situation and comparable numbers, although the runaway Indians had increased significantly in relation to the number of Indians in the encomienda. Indeed, four of the ten men and two of the seven women were listed as "*huídos*." Isabel Calderón the encomendera appeared, however, to be informed of their whereabouts: Diego Guayaban, for example, was listed as "[...] *huído sirviendo a melchor benytez en chimba [...]*"⁶³⁵ while his wife María Mulaca was described as "[...] *huída en almaguer [...]*."⁶³⁶ Diego Gualcama's mestizo wife, Juana Meztiça was also listed as a runaway living in El Calamo;⁶³⁷ two other men, thirty-year-old Juan Bozo and thirty-five year-old Diego Tamuera were also described as having escaped to Popayán and Pasto, respectively. There was apparently only one Tama woman, Alonso Yaguaga's twenty-five-year-old wife Ysavel "[...] *que se ha criado en esta encomienda [...]*"⁶³⁸ Alonso told Ospina that that morning the encomendera Ysavel Calderón had threatened to hit his wife if she opened her mouth during Ospina's visita: "[...] *dixo el dicho alonsso yaguaga que Ysavel su mujer le dixo que esta mañana le avia dicho la dicha ysavel calderón que si hablaba en la visita que le avia de quebrar los dientes*"⁶³⁹ The other men told Ospina that in the past the previous encomendero

employed many young women, but that they had died in his service: “[...] *el dicho marcos de castuera tenya de ordynario en su casa y servicio diez indias y muchachos de la dicha encomienda que se an muerto en su servicio [...]*”⁶⁴⁰ They also told him that Isabel Calderón had once sent Marcos Birboro with a load of fifty pounds of coca leaves on his back to the mines in the páramo in Almaguer: “[...] *dixeron que la dicha ysavel calderón enbio una vez a marcos birboro cargado con una carga de dos arrobas de pesso de coca a las minas del paramo de almaguer y tardo diez días de camino de yda y buelta y que no les pago cossa alguna por ello [...]*”⁶⁴¹

They further stated that Gabriel Castro’s black slaves were in the habit of robbing them — a complaint that was later confirmed by the priest, father Francisco, who testified “[...] *en su dicho [...que de] los hurtos y rrobos de los dichos negros [...]* *se quexan todos los yndios della dotrina de la chapa diciendo que no ozan yr a missa ny benyr al mercado desta villa [de Timaná] por los dichos hurtos y dize que no tiene rremedio porque el dicho Gabriel de castro no sustenta los dichos negros como debía [...]*”⁶⁴² As we shall see in the subsequent visitas, this would become a general complaint voiced by all the Indians who, as father Francisco explained, attended mass in nearby La Chapa. Finally, the Indians told Ospina that they lived originally in La Plata, but that the Pixaos had burnt the town: “*De la quinta pregunta dixeron que su antigua población fue en los otongos y que quando los yndios pixaos quemaron y despoblaron la ciudad de la plata se binyeron estos yndios rretirando y se poblaron en el sitio donde agora están que se llama chigababon [...]*”⁶⁴³

Table 20. Population in Isabel Calderón's encomienda*

Total population	22	
Adults	17 or 77.3%	
Children	5 or 22.7%	
Runaways	5 or 22%	
Locals	21 or 95.4%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	1 or 4.6%	
	Female	Male
Adult	7 or 41.1%	10 or 58.9%
Married	7 or 100%	6 or 60%
Single	0 or 0%	2 or 20%
Widowers/Widows	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
60 +	1 or 14%	2 or 20%
24-40 years-old	2 or 28.5%	8 or 80%
Runaways	2 or 28.5%	3 or 30%
Adult, children & elderly	9 or 41%	13 or 59%
Children	2 or 40%	3 or 60%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Note: Because age is not specified for four of the women, it is impossible to establish whether they were married to younger men or not (the other three married women were married to men exactly the same age as theirs).

In his next visita to Captain Alonso de Herrera's encomienda, Ospina found an equal number of adult men and women. However, 50% of the men were single (compared to 16% of the women). Of the six married couples, there was only one in which the woman was older than her husband and then only by five years. Likewise, only one of the women was a Tama Indian, twenty-year-old Casilda who was married to twenty-year-old Cristóbal Guacama (listed as "huído" in Popayán). Along with Cristóbal, there were three other runaway men: twenty-year-old Diego, forty year-old Antón Sagueca, and forty-year-old Diego Inti. Although there were Otongo, Mayto, Tama, and Oporapa Indians in this encomienda, they told Ospina "[...que] todos los yndios desta dotrina [de La Chapa] hablan una lengua [la lengua del Ynga] y que algunos

entienden la lengua española aunque no la saben hablar [...]”⁶⁴⁴ They described their chores in the following way: “[...los yndios] *Le an servido [a Alonso Herrera] de hazer las dichas rroças y de sembrar maíz y caña dulce y de beneficialla cortalla y molella en un trapiche de cavallo y las yndias de coger coca y dos yndios le an servido y sirven de vaqueros en el dicho ato [hato] y el dicho andres quinaule de harriero haciendo viajes a santa fee y popayan [...]*”⁶⁴⁵ They added that under the previous encomendero the women did not tend the cocales, but that now they did because Alonso Herrera occasionally gave them a few *anacos* or skirts in compensation for their work: “*Y que las dichas yndias en tiempo de luis nuno no cojian coca y ansi no les pagava y que el dicho alonsso de herrera les suele dar a las dichas indias para que cojan coca algunos anacos [...]*”⁶⁴⁶ Of interest also are some of the women’s last names as they closely evoke La Gaitana’s indigenous name of Guatepán: Francisca Guaman, Magdalena Guanapan, Juana Guaytan, Magdalena Guanevan, and Ana Gualiran, among others.

Table 21. Marriages in Alonso de Herrera’s encomienda in which the women were older

Marriages	6	Marriages in which women are older		1 or 16.6%
Husband		Wife		Age Difference
Francisco Puelse	45	Ana	50	5
Average age difference				5

Table 22. Population in Alonso de Herrera's encomienda*

Total population	27	
Adults	24 or 89%	
Children	3 or 11%	
Runaways	4 or 14.8%	
Locals	26 or 96.2	
Forasteros/Rescatados	1 or 3.8%	
	Female	Male
Adult	12 or 50%	12 or 50%
Married	6 or 50%	6 or 50%
Single	2 or 16%	6 or 50%
Widowers/Widows	2 or 16%	0 or 0%
60 +	3 or 25%	2 or 16%
40-55 years-old	4 or 33%	5 or 42%
20-30 years-old	4 or 33%	4 or 33%
Runaways	0 or 0%	4 or 33%
Adult, children & elderly	14 or 52%	13 or 48%
Children	2 or 66%	1 or 33%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

The Cambi Indians Ospina visited later that same Friday, January 12, 1629 presented him with a desolate scenario. There was only one woman: a very old widow called Esperanza; the other six were all men. Of these two had run away: twenty-year-old Lorenzo Mudo and Esperanza's forty-year-old son, Pedro Piguanza.⁶⁴⁷ The Indians told Ospina flat out that “[...] *los Yndios de esta Encomienda no tienen mujeres [...]*”⁶⁴⁸ And they pointed to some possible causes: “[...] *Ubieron en su cassa [del encomendero] tres Yndias que se murieron en su servicio Y que en tiempos de marcos cruz [su primer encomendero] avía mas de cinquenta Yndios En esta Encomienda Y se murieron de Enfermedades [...]*”⁶⁴⁹ They also confirmed that Quechua was pretty much the lingua franca spoken in the entire region: “[...] *los Yndios de esta dotrina [de La Chapa] hablan diferentes lenguas y se entienden por la lengua del Ynga Y algunos hablan la lengua española [...]*”⁶⁵⁰

Table 23. Cambi Indians in Andrés de Sopena's encomienda

Name	Age	Marital status	
Esperanza	60+	Widow	
Pedro Piguanza	40	?	huído
Lorenzo Mudo	20	?	huído
Calixto Pagan	20	Single	
Martín Yalendo	60	Single	
Andrés Tuques (Tocux)*	40	Single	
Andrés Pune	50	Single	

*Both spellings appear in the document for the same man

Table 24. Population in Andrés de Sopena's encomienda

Total population	7	
Adults	7 or 100%	
Children	0 or 0%	
Runaways	2 or 28.5%	
Locals	7 or 100%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	0 or 0%	
	Female	Male
Adult	1 or 15%	6 or 85%
Married	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
Single	0 or 0%	6 or 100%
Widowers/Widows	1 or 100%	0 or 0%
60 +	1 or 100%	0 or 0%
40-60 years-old	0 or 0%	4 or 66%
20-40 years-old	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
Runaways	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
Adult, children & elderly	1 or 15%	6 or 85%
Children	0 or 0%	0 or 0%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

The situation in Captain Miguel de Losada's encomienda was only slightly better: of the nine adults that served Losada, three were women, although two of them were sixty-years-old. The other, Magdalena Cosagua, was forty. Magdalena was married to forty-year-old Gaspar Utixi, and the two of them had the only children in the encomienda: sixteen-year-old disabled

Felipe Tamba “[...] *que es cojo [y que tiene] travados los pies [...]*”,⁶⁵¹ fifteen year-old María Guato (who served in the encomendero’s house), twelve year-old Diego Yape, seven year-old Lucas Siquio, and four year-old Gaspar Mandecha. The only other married couple was that of sixty year-old Juana Yce and thirty-year-old Juan Guasama. All the other men — sixty year-old Alonso Yecha (who was blind), twenty year-old Francisco Cumbay, twenty-five year-old Andres Guano, and twenty-year-old Francisco Guaca — were single. The Indians told Ospina they were very poor: “[...] *y no tienen caudales para poder pagar demoras ny tributo ny tienen de que tassarlo ny lo podrán pagar ny están enseñados a ello [...]* y que solo quieren que se les de tiempo para hazer sus rrozaz y labranzas.”⁶⁵² Alonso de Torralva, the notary public who accompanied Ospina, testified to the Indians’ destitution: “[...] *como estos yndios están desnudos y sin camysetas y que las que tienen y el demás vestido esta rroto y hecho pedazos y que ssegun Gaspar diego [the overseer] y yo el escribano doy fe que francisco guaca tiene la camiseta sana y los calçones muy rrotos y Alonso chatenya [also spelled yecha at other times] otra camiseta sana y calçones y todos los demás tienen las camisetas y calçones rrotos y hechos pedazos [...]*”⁶⁵³

Table 25. Marriages in Miguel de Losada’s encomienda in which the women were older

Marriages	2	Marriages in which women are older 1 or 50%		
Husband		Wife	Age Difference	
Juan Guasama	30	Juana Yce	60	30
Average age difference				30

Table 26. Population in Miguel de Losada's encomienda

Total population	14	
Adults	9 or 65%	
Children	5 or 35%	
Runaways	0 or 0%	
Locals	14 or 100%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	0 or 0%	
	Female	Male
Adult	3 or 33%	6 or 66%
Married	2 or 65%	2 or 33%
Single	0 or 0%	3 or 50%
Widowers/Widows	1 or 35%	1 or 17%
60+	0 or 0%	1 or 17%
40-60	3 or 100%	1 or 17%
25-40	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
18-25	0 or 0%	2 or 33%
Runaways	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
Adult, children & elderly	3 or 28.5%	10 or 71.4%
Children	1 or 20%	4 or 80%

When Captain Ospina got to Bernardo de Villareal's encomienda on Saturday, January 13, 1629, he found an unusually large and balanced encomienda. In fact, this encomienda was the first in his tour of duty where there were actually more women than men: out of a total population of twenty-seven adults, fifteen were women; but, as we shall see, of these, eleven were forasteras. As for the men, three were locals; the other nine were also forasteros. In fact, the forasteros accounted for 76.4% of the Indians in Villareal's encomienda. Most likely, it was because of this that all three local men were married. At least two of the forastero men and five of the women were Tama Indians "de rescate" and they told so the lengua: "[...] *que los Yndios Y Yndias Tamas que tiene esta encomienda son avidos de rrescate y sacados con ellos de entrellos dichos Yndios tamas Y que a la dicha Magdalena la saco Gaspar gonzalez busco*

rreceptor Y la dexo enferma en poder del dicho estevan de Villareal y ella se casso con un yndio de esta encomienda.”⁶⁵⁴

Twenty-year-old Magdalena was indeed married to a twenty-year-old Tama man called Cristóbal. But what is most interesting here is the use of the word “*rreceptor*” as well as the wording behind the phrase “*sacados con ellos de entrellos*.” To begin, “*rreceptor*” sounds too much like a euphemism for buyer or client. Perhaps the Indians wanted to downplay the fact that Magdalena had not been exactly “received” by Villareal. But why? Perhaps Bernardo Villareal their encomendero had instructed them to word their answers in this way. However, the expression “*sacados con ellos de entrellos*” seems to point in another direction as it clearly indicates that at least some Tama were involved in the very business of taking Tama Indians out of the Caquetá jungles to bring them west into the Magdalena River valley. Since the traffic in Indians had been officially banned by the Crown, perhaps the Indians did not want Ospina to think that they were involved in trafficking. But if the Indians — and more specifically the Tama men themselves — were indeed actively participating in these “rescates,” what were their reasons? Was it just their encomenderos sponsoring such expeditions and forcing the Indians to take part in them? Was it the lure of the money or rewards they could obtain by doing so? Or was it perhaps the possibility of obtaining a wife that led them to participate in this activity along with traffickers like Gaspar González? The fact that Cristóbal had married Magdalena when she was brought to live in Villareal’s encomienda may indicate that obtaining a wife was just as powerful a reason as any of the others.

The Tama “rescatados,” however, were not the only forasteros in Bernardo de Villareal’s encomienda. There were eighteen other non-Tama foreigners, men, women, and children who came not from the jungles east of the Magdalena River valley, but from the south, from places

like Popayán and even Quito. There was fifty-six-year-old “agregado” Sebastián Popayán who told Ospina that he had been living in Villareal’s encomienda for more than thirty years and that even though he was from the same town that his name indicated, he had been born in Quito: “[...] dixo que su padre lo traxo a Popayan siendo muy pequeño y que nació en quito.”⁶⁵⁵ There was also Sebastián’s wife “[...] beatriz [que] dixo que nacio en popayan de cinquenta años [...]”;⁶⁵⁶ and Lorenzo Cuchipa, a local Timana man “de mas de sesenta años,” who was married to a forty-year-old Yanacona woman “*natural de Popayan.*” Another man from Popayán, Juan, told Ospina that he was in reality a Páez Indian. And then there were some other Indians who were described as being from a mysterious (and presumably nearby) “*parcialidad quechana.*” They told Ospina that their cacique was Francisco Ynba: “[...] y los de la parcialidad de quechana dixerón que su cacique se llamava Francisco Ynba [...].”⁶⁵⁷ Torralva, the notary public, listed them as “*naturales quechanos*” which may very well indicate that they were native speakers of Quechua; the fact that he described their place of origin as a “*parcialidad quechana*” may also indicate that there was a settlement of native Quechua-speakers relatively close to Villareal’s encomienda. One of these “quechanos,” thirty-five-year-old Sebastián, was married to sixty-year-old Catalina from Popayán; two others, Alonso and Francisco, who were both fifty-years-old, had escaped to Almaguer along with their wives and children.

Of the ten marriages in this encomienda, three were constituted by women who were older than their husbands: thirty-five-year-old Sebastián was married to sixty-year-old Catalina; twenty-year-old Juan Largo was married to fifty-year-old Leonor, and forty-five-year-old Juan was married to a fifty-year-old woman. Although, it is tempting to speculate that men were probably marrying much older women due to the scarcity of young women in the region, the fact that in this particular encomienda there were more single women than single men and that three

of them — a twenty-year-old local Suaza woman by the name of Leonor and two forty-year-old Tama women — were significantly younger than the women any of these men had married, suggests that perhaps there were other elements influencing men’s and women’s choice of partners. We should also remember that in Diego del Campo’s encomienda there was one man, a twenty-five-year-old Tama called Antonio who was married to a sixty-year-old local woman, Isabel Pataya even though there were six single and presumably “available” Tama women, five of which were between eighteen and twenty-five years of age. We cannot help but wonder at the rationale behind the choices of women and men like Catalina, Ysavel, Juan Largo or Antonio. Perhaps theirs was not just a late and adaptive response to extremely stressful demographics; perhaps it was in part if not entirely a choice rooted in a cultural tradition with a very different idea not just of older women and older women’s status, but of marriage.

This, however, was not the only striking characteristics about the Indians in Villareal’s encomienda. There was also one other surprising feature: of the twenty-seven adult Indians listed in this encomienda, eight (30%) were away working in Villareal’s hatu in Neiva — an indication that perhaps Indian farm laborers were not just hard to come by in the southern part of the Alto Magdalena region, but in the north as well.

Table 27. Marriages in Bernardo de Villareal’s encomienda in which the women were older

Marriages	10	Marriages in which women are older 3 or 30%	
Husband		Wife	Age Difference
Sebastián	35	Catalina 60	25
Juan Largo	20	Leonor 50	30
Juan	45	Wife 50	5
Average age difference			20

Table 28. Population in Bernardo de Villareal's encomienda*

	General		Locals		Forasteros	
Total population	38		9 or 23.6%		29 or 76.4%	
Adults	27 or 71%		7 or 77.7%		20 or 69%	
Children	11 or 29%		2 or 22.3%		9 or 31%	
Runaways	2 or 5.2%		0 or 0%		2 or 6.9%	
Women	15 or 55.5%		4 or 26.7%		11 or 73%	
Men	12 or 44.5%		3 or 25%		9 or 75%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult	15 or 55.5%	12 or 44.5%	4 or 50%	3 or 50%	11 or 55%	9 or 45%
Married	11 or 73%	10 or 83%	2 or 50%	3 or 100%	9 or 82%	7 or 77.7%
Single	4 or 27%	2 or 16.7%	2 or 50%	0 or 0%	2 or 18%	2 or 22.7%
Widowers/Widows	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
60+	0 or 0 %	1 or 8.3%	0 or 0%	1 or 25%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%
40-60 years-old	4 or 27%	5 or 41%	2 or 50%	1 or 25%	2 or 18%	4 or 44.4%
25-40 years-old	5 or 30%	2 or 18%	1 or 25%	1 or 25%	4 or 36.3%	1 or 11%
18-25 years-old	3 or 20%	4 or 36.6%	1 or 25%	0 or 0%	2 or 18%	4 or 44.4%
Runaways	2 or 13%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	0 or 0%	2 or 18%	0 or 0%
Adult, children & elderly	21 or 55.3 %	17 or 44.7%	5 or 55.5%	4 or 45.5%	16 or 55%	13 or 45%
Children	6 or 54.5%	5 or 45.5%	1 or 0%	1 or 100%	5 or 55.6%	4 or 44.4%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Table 29. Forasteros in Bernardo de Villareal's encomienda*

Forasteros	29	Women	11	Men	9	Children	9
Quiteños	1				1		
Quechanos	5		2		3		？**
Yanaconas	3		1				2
Payaneses*	10		3		2		3
Paeces	1				1		
Tamas	11		5		2		4

*Some of the individuals who claimed to come from Popayán also claimed to be Quiteños, Paeces and Yanaconas at the same time. Wherever the children's origin is not specified I have chosen to abide by the law of the land (bilateral descent), giving girls their mother's place of origin, and boys, their father's. **The documents indicates that two of the Quechano couples had children but does not indicate how many.

On Monday, January 15, 1629, the last day of his tour, Captain Diego de Ospina visited two more encomiendas. In Captain Francisco Calderón's encomienda there were no forasteros, but the locals were all elderly Indians; the young people were either working for Calderón in Santafé or had run away. When interrogated, the Indians, for example, told Ospina that the encomendero had taken the young people to Santafé: “[...] *el dicho francisco calderón a llevado en su servicio a la ciudad de santafee en el primer viaje que hizo que a muchos años quatro años los tres yndios y una yndia y [en] el segundo viaje llevo siete muchachos y tres chinas entre los quales llevo al dicho andres candagua y lo tubo en su servicio en la dicha ciudad de santafee tres años y al fin de ellos se bino con licencia que le dio el dicho encomendero y a todos los demás tiene en su servicio y que de la mudanza del temple enfermaron los dichos yndios y estuvieron enfermos aunque no murieron*”⁶⁵⁸ They added that Calderón had taken the young ones to work in his ranch in Fusagasugá as cowboys and farmhands to make soap which was later sold in nearby Bogotá: “*Y que al dicho francisco calderón no le an servido porque no a asistido en esta villa y desde que hera niño se fue a santafee donde bibe con su madre y que alla tiene y a tenydo los yndios y yndias que tienen dicho que ellos sirven de vaqueros y de gañanes y de hazer ceniza y xabon todo lo qual hacen en los sutagaos y lo llevan en mulas a santafee*”⁶⁵⁹ They explained that in the past before Calderón had left, they planted and harvested corn and sugarcane and that “[...] *las indias y chinas [...] servían de coger coca [...]*”⁶⁶⁰ They also made it clear that they all spoke Quechua: “[...] *los yndios que están en la comarca se entienden y tratan por la lengua del Ynga [...]*”⁶⁶¹ Before Ospina left, they complained (like the Indians before them in Isabel Calderón's encomienda) about Gabriel de Castro's black slaves:

[...] *dixeron que los negros esclavos de gabriel de castro vezino desta villa rroban y an rrobado a estos yndios y les rroban sus labranzas sus costales y cassas y los dexan y an dexado muertos de hambre y que por esto no ossan venyr los indios a los mercados desta villa como solian ny tienen que traer porque todo lo rroban los dichos negros que van muchos juntos y el que los guía y es el mayor ladron se llama miguel que*

tiene la cabeza bermeja y quando estos yndios van a missa a la iglesia entran los dichos negros en su cassa y los rroban y hurtan quanto ay en ellas y que todos los yndios della chapa se quexan de los dichos negros por los dichos hurtos y rrobos que les hacen y que al dicho juan guapoquan testigo lo an aporreado los dichos negros dos vezes que los a hallado hurtándoles las rroÇas y platanos y que la una vez le dio el dicho miguel un palo en un brazo que lo lastimo mucho [...] ⁶⁶²

Of the six marriages in this encomienda, there was only one in which the woman was older: that of fifty-year-old Francisca Paquira who was married to forty-year-old Alonso Paco. Francisca, however, had run away leaving behind her husband and their eight-year-old son Alonso Guandicha.

Table 30. Marriages in Francisco Calderón's encomienda in which the women were older

Marriages	6	Marriages in which women are older		1 or 16.6%
Husband		Wife	Age Difference	
Alonso Paco	40	Francisca Paquira	50	5
Average age difference		5		

Table 31. Population in Francisco Calderón's encomienda*

Total population	23	
Adults	20 or 87%	
Children	3 or 13%	
Runaways	4 or 17%	
Locals	23 or 100%	
Forasteros/Rescatados	0 or 0%	
	Female	Male
Adult	7 or 35%	13 or 65%
Married	6 or 85%	6 or 47%
Single	0 or 0%	5 or 38%
Widowers/Widows	0 or 0%	2 or 15%
60+	2 or 28.5%	2 or 15%
40-60 years-old	2 or 28.5%	5 or 38%
20-30 years-old	0 or 0%	5 or 38%
Runaways	1 or 14%	3 or 13%
Adult, children & elderly	8 or 35%	15 or 65%
Children	1 or 33%	2 or 66%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Captain Diego de Ospina's last visita was that of the Otongo Indians in Nicolás Calderón's encomienda. The Otongos presented Ospina with a slightly better scenario although the male population still outnumbered females almost three to one. The greater part of the population was in the forty-to sixty-year-old age group. Single men represented 39% of the male population while there were no single women whatsoever. Of the eleven marriages, almost ten per cent were made up of couples in which the women were older than the men. Ten per cent of the Indians in the entire encomienda (20% of the men) were listed as "*huidos*." And although the Indians told Ospina there were three *agregados forasteros* among them, they were either left out of the *descripción*⁶⁶³ or not listed as such.

Table 32. Population in Nicolás Calderón's encomienda*

Total population	51	
Adults	40 or 78.4%	
Children	11 or 21.5%	
Runaways	5 or 10%	
Locals	?	
Forasteros/Rescatados	?	
	Female	Male
Adult	17 or 42.5%	23 or 57.5%
Married	11 or 65%	11 or 47.8%
Single	0 or 0%	9 or 39.1%
Widowers/Widows	4 or 23.5%	3 or 13%
40-60 years-old	9 or 53%	9 or 39%
25-40 years-old	5 or 29%	9 or 39%
18-25 years-old	2 or 18%	5 or 21.7%
Runaways	0 or 0%	5 or 21.7%
Adult, children & elderly	19 or 37%	32 or 63%
Children	2 or 18%	9 or 82%

*Age and marital status are not always specified

Table 33. Marriages in Nicolás Calderón's encomienda in which the women were older

Marriages	11	Marriages in which the women are older		3 or 27%
Husband		Wife		Age Difference
Martín Canava	35	Francisca Pamulan	40	5
Rodrigo Gualan	40	Catalina Cugui	50	10
Hernando Terava	34	Isabel Cagulan	40	6
Average age difference				7

The Indians told Ospina they were originally from La Plata, but that because the Pixaos had burnt the town, the encomendero Juan Calderón had relocated them to La Chapa where they were now living. They said they spoke Quechua like everybody else in the region: “[...] *los yndios desta comarca se entienden por la lengua general del Ynga y muchos entienden y hablan la lengua española [...]*”⁶⁶⁴ And described their chores in pretty much the same terms as the other Indians Ospina had visited:

[...] de la novena pregunta dixeron que al dicho juan calderón sirvieron los dichos yndios de rrozar y sembrar maíz y caña dulce y de molella en un trapiche de mano y hazer myel y de baqueros en el dicho hato del rrio del oro y que después que murió el dicho juan calderón hizieron estos yndios tres rrozas y labranzas de maíz de una fanega de sembradura cada rroza y an servido de beneficiar y sembrar los cicales que son tres pequeños y de cojer la coca los yndios e yndias e chinas y que en el hato ay de esta encomienda quatro yndios que sirven de vaqueros en el dicho hato y otros tres ay concertados e son yndios forasteros y que el dicho juan calderón dava a estos yndios algunas camisetas y sombreros y hachas y que después de la muerte del dicho juan calderón no les an pagado cossa alguna y solo a los vaqueros a dado doña de billegas algunas camiseta y potros [...]⁶⁶⁵

They complained that Gabriel Castro's black slaves prevented them from going to the market to sell their produce: “[...] *dixeron que los negros esclavos de gabriel de castro que son muchos an hecho y hacen muchos rrobos y hurtos a estos yndios y les talan las comidas frutales*

y labranzas y se las hurtan y han hurtado y ban muchos juntos y unos los detienen y otros los roban Y como son tantos no les saben el nombre mas de saber que son del dicho rancho y que por estos hurtos an dexado y dexan de acudir a los mercados de la plata [...]”⁶⁶⁶ Before he left, Ospina obtained precise information as to the whereabouts of the five runaways. The Indians told him forty-year-old Juan Ligamay was in Popayán (he had apparently left behind his thirty-year-old wife, Catalina Guanán); thirty-five-year-old Francisco Cuyan was working in the mines in La Asunción; forty-year-old Juan Yanalco was in Santafé; and thirty-five-year-old Andrés Ycaguasa and thirty-six year-old Andrés Amonay were “*huídos*” in Guanaca.

Table 34. Comparative table for marriages in all thirteen encomiendas in which women were older than their husbands

Encomiendas	Percentage of total marriages	Age Difference
El Calamo	14.7%	14.8
La Matanca	27%	9
Diego del Campo's	25%	35
La Cosanza	50%	15
La Culata	40%	5.5
Diego de Ibarramenez's	100%	10
Isabel Calderón's	?	?
Alonso de Herrera's	16.6%	5
Cambi Indians	?	?
Miguel de Losada's	50%	30
Bernardo de Villareal's	30%	20
Francisco Calderón's	16.6%	5
Nicolás Calderón's	27%	7
Average	36%	14.2

Table 35. Comparative table for local/forastero/runaway populations in all thirteen encomiendas

Encomiendas	Locals	Forasteros	Runaways
El Calamo	100%	0	7.8%
La Matanca	100%	0	8%
Diego del Campo's	41%	59	6.8%
La Cosanza	98.4%	1.6	0%
La Culata	92.9%	7.1	10%
Diego de Ibarramenez's	60%	40	10%
Isabel Calderón's	95.4	4.6	22%
Alonso de Herrera's	96.2%	3.8	14.8%
Cambi Indians	100%	0	28.5%
Miguel de Losada's	100%	0	0%
Bernardo de Villareal's	23.6%	76.4	5.2%
Francisco Calderón's	100%	0	17%
Nicolás Calderón's	?	?	10%
Average	83.9	16%	11%

Table 36. Comparative table for adult and children's population in all thirteen encomiendas

Encomiendas	Adult	Children
El Calamo	70%	30%
La Matanca	77%	23%
Diego del Campo's	79.3%	20.7%
La Cosanza	93%	7%
La Culata	57%	43%
Diego de Ibarramenez's	100%	0%
Isabel Calderón's	77.3%	23.7%
Alonso de Herrera's	89%	11%
Cambi Indians	100%	0%
Miguel de Losada's	65%	35%
Bernardo de Villareal's	71%	29%
Francisco Calderón's	87%	13%
Nicolás Calderón's	78.4%	21.5%
Average	80.3%	19.7%

Table 37. Gender distribution for all thirteen encomiendas

Encomiendas	Female	Male	Women	Men	Girls	Boys
El Calamo	43%	57%	40%	60%	50%	50%
La Matanca	37.5%	62.5%	32.4%	67.5%	54.4%	45.5%
Diego del Campo's	35%	65%	43.4%	56.6%	0%	100%
La Cosanza	40%	60	35.8%	64.2%	100%	0%
La Culata	40%	60%	50%	50%	25%	75%
Diego de Ibarrañez's	40%	60%	40%	60%	0%	0%
Isabel Calderón's	41%	59%	41.1%	58.9%	40%	60%
Alonso de Herrera's	52%	48%	50%	50%	66%	33%
Cambi Indians	15%	85%	15%	85%	0%	0%
Miguel de Losada's	28.5%	71.4%	33%	66%	20%	80%
Bernardo de Villareal's	55.3%	44.7%	55.3%	55.5%	54.5%	45.5%
Francisco Calderón's	35%	65%	35%	65%	33%	66
Nicolás Calderón's	37%	63%	42.5%	57.5%	18%	82%
Average	41.4%	61.6%	39.5%	59.5%	35.4%	64.6%

Table 38. Approximate values for marital status for all thirteen encomiendas (marital status is not always specified)

Encomiendas	Married Wo.	Single Wo.	Married Men	Single Men	W Wo.	W Men
El Calamo	97.2%	0%	63%	13%	2.7%	15%
La Matanca	92%	0%	44%	40%	8%	16%
Diego del Campo's	40%	60%	60%	40%	0%	0%
La Cosanza	95%	0%	53%	32.3%	5%	14.7%
La Culata	62.5%	12.5%	50%	25%	12.5%	0%
Diego de Ibarrañez's	75%	0%	50%	33%	25%	17%
Isabel Calderón's	100%	0%	60%	20%	0%	0%
Alonso de Herrera's	50%	16%	50%	50%	16%	0%
Cambi Indians	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%
Miguel de Losada's	65%	0%	33%	50%	35%	17%
Bernardo de Villareal's	73%	27%	83%	16.7%	0%	0%
Francisco Calderón's	85%	0%	47%	38%	0%	15%
Nicolás Calderón's	65%	0%	47.8%	39.1%	23.5%	13%
Average	69.2%	8.8%	49.3%	36.3%	17.5%	8.2%

These visitas allow us to see the many ways in which the Indians in the southern Alto Magdalena region were coping with colonial rule by 1629. Almost a hundred years had passed since Sebastián de Belalcázar and his men had first entered the region. The war of resistance that had ensued shortly after the Spaniards' incursion had dwindled away. The fierce Pixaos were only a memory now in old people's hearts and minds. The Indians were still running away from encomiendas, but no longer in order to join the resistance; they were leaving to go to work in Spanish urban centers, in places like Cali, Popayán, and Santa Fé. Many men were also leaving for the mines in Almaguer and Guanacas.⁶⁶⁷ Some, like Baltazar Muelco, "Yndio official carpintero," had even acquired a trade and could strike out on their own in towns throughout New Granada. Those who stayed behind in the encomiendas or hatos became vaqueros and *gañanes* (farm hands); wearing sombreros and *ruanas* (ponchos), they quickly became a ubiquitous sight throughout the countryside. Others worked as *cargueros* and *arrieros* making long trips from one town to another up and down the three cordilleras.

All this mobility was affecting indigenous communities. With their populations already greatly diminished by disease and a protracted and fratricidal war of resistance, the exodus that had begun to take shape towards Spanish cities only aggravated the demographic cataclysm that these communities had already experienced in the sixteenth century. In every encomienda an average of ten per cent of the Indians were listed as "huídos" or runaways. The Spaniards tried to control the flow of Indians by concentrating entire communities around pueblos. But the Indians stubbornly resisted the Crown's efforts to regulate their mobility. When the strategy behind what Spanish authorities called "pueblos de indios" failed, encomenderos tried other stratagems: kidnapping and the trafficking of Indians became a widespread and highly lucrative activity in the seventeenth century throughout the Andes.⁶⁶⁸ The Amazon forest, especially its outer fringes,

became a favorite quarry of the traficantes, one where they were now able to find the fresh new blood that the forest had preserved from Europeans and European diseases during the sixteenth century. The Tamas who lived to the east just beyond the Alto Magdalena River valley, along the border where the forest meets the plains, became their choice target. But it was not just encomenderos like María Rodríguez who organized and sponsored the kidnapping expeditions designed to capture Tamas in order to replenish the depleted labor force of their encomiendas. Oftentimes the Indians themselves actively participated in these expeditions; and not just because of the money or rewards that they could presumably procure through this activity, but because, as discussed earlier, it was also a way for them of obtaining wives (and sometimes young husbands) amidst the population crisis they were faced with.

However, the Tamas were not the only forasteros used to redress the skewed demographics in encomiendas. Indigenous people from the south, from places like Popayán and even farther down south, were being recruited or hired by encomenderos in what appears to be a reversal of the migration trends that had dominated the previous century.⁶⁶⁹ Perhaps because the Pixao resistance had for the most part been defeated and the land was now largely pacified, or perhaps because conditions such as forced labor in the mines, personal service, and Indian slavery had finally subsided in New Granada (no doubt as a result of the vast depopulation that had characterized the sixteenth century), indigenous people in the south were attracted to the new “employment opportunities” that the north now seemed to offer them. In any case, whether they were Tama rescatados or southern Andean agregados, the forasteros now comprised a good 16% of the population in encomiendas. They would play a crucial role not only in the labor force, but also in the survival and successful reproduction of indigenous communities in the region.

The forasteros would also dramatically change the ethnic make-up of local indigenous communities. As forasteros replaced deceased or runaway locals, interethnic mestizaje became a common denominator in most encomiendas. In order to bridge the resultant language barrier, “*la lengua del Ynga*,” Quechua, became the lingua franca spoken throughout the entire region long before Spanish became the language of the land. Indeed, again and again the Indians told Ospina that even though they all spoke different languages, they understood one another in the Inca’s tongue: “[...] *los Yndios de esta dotrina [de la Chapa] hablan diferentes lenguas y se entienden por la lengua del Ynga [...]*”⁶⁷⁰ Whether this mestizaje generated any kind of interethnic tensions is unclear, but what the evidence clearly shows are the rising tensions between African slaves and indigenous people. As father Francisco told Ospina, with little or nothing to eat, the slaves preyed on the next most vulnerable group of people in the region: the Indians in the encomiendas; and among them, they often targeted women: “[...] *a una yndia de la encomienda de mayto de alonso de herrera poblados en la chapa la aporrearon los dichos negros por hurtalle lo que tenya [...]*”⁶⁷¹

But African slaves were far from being the only group in the region to prey on indigenous women. In fact, young Indian women between the ages of eighteen and thirty years of age seem to have been a particularly vulnerable group, representing on average barely 13.4% of the population in encomiendas (compared to 32.5% for men in the same age group). The documents suggest that many died in the service of the encomenderos: overwork combined with poor nutrition and almost certainly deaths in childbirth were no doubt largely to blame. But the evidence also indicates that many were either leaving of their own choice or being taken by the encomenderos themselves to work as domestic servants in their houses or solares in towns like Timaná or Santa Fé. Overall, except for the over-sixty age group, indigenous men by and large

outnumbered women in all other age groups — a situation which prompted indigenous men to take on tasks traditionally reserved for women, such as the tending of the cocaes which had become an important source of income for both encomenderos and Indians who picked the leaves to sell them in the mines in Timaná, La Plata, and Almaguer or in town markets like those of Popayán.

However the imbalance between women and men became especially critical when it came to young people of marriageable age: indeed the number of young single men (36.3%) far exceeded the number of young single women (8.8%). Eventually these circumstances may have prompted the surprising number of marriages (on average 36% of all marriages) between older women and younger men (an average age difference of 14.2 years), although the fact that these marriages occurred even in cases in which much younger single women were presumably “available” seems to indicate that this may not have been the only cause, but that this phenomenon may have also been rooted in specific gender, cultural and economic structures.

These visitas allow us to glimpse at an indigenous population in the full process of becoming the rural proletariat that it would become during the seventeenth century. As such they represent a distinctive break with the preceding one hundred years characterized by the encounter with the Spanish and the armed struggle against them.



Figure 7. Carguero. Eduard Riou (1833-1900)

Conclusion

The Spanish conquest of southern Colombia was not as Spanish as we have been led to believe. It was more of a joint venture between a small band of three-hundred or fewer Spaniards and thousands of yanacunas — both men and women. These yanacuna men and women played a key role in both the conquest and colonization of large parts of sixteenth-century New Granada, particularly in what is known today as the Alto Magdalena region. So big was their part in this enterprise that a hundred years later, in 1629, their language, Quechua — not Spanish — was the lingua franca spoken across the region. Their footprints can be traced through the toponyms that dot the maps of the area.⁶⁷² Colombia's second largest artery, for example, the Cauca River, owes its name to the Quechuan word for warrior — *auca*.⁶⁷³ Other names such as Otongo and Coyaima also speak to what it was about this new land that caught the attention of the first yanacuna conquistadors. Moreover, linguist, Pedro José Ramírez Sendoya has argued that at least a third of the idioms used today in the region are of Quechuan origin.⁶⁷⁴

Ironically, the men and women whose grandparents had made possible the expansion of the Inca kingdom would go on to help build the empire of those very men who a hundred years later destroyed the Tawantinsuyu. War and conquest provided the landless yanacuna men and women with an opportunity to claim land of their own. All along the *camino real* from Quito to Ibagué, they settled outside Spanish towns in communities bearing Quechuan names like Chucuni in Ibagué or Yanacunas in Popayán. As “*yndios amigos*” they were crucial allies to the Spaniards not just during the initial conquest, but also later when the land rose in rebellion. During this time, they fought side by side with the Spaniards to keep the land they had claimed for their own. Yet they also paid a heavy price for this when they became a favorite target of the local natives.

It is possible that the flow of yanacunas from the south into present-day Colombia may at times have dwindled significantly, especially during the resistance years when the stream of migration was reversed from north to south, but by 1629 yanacuna men and women were again heading north to fill the “vacancies” left by disease, Spanish abuse, and most of all a vicious war of rebellion.

The Spaniards and their yanacuna were, however, probably not the first intruders in the lands north of the Charqui River. Spanish viruses most likely had beaten them there. These viruses probably carried out what some people today would call a preemptive attack, one that may very well have unhinged entire communities before the arrival of Belalcázar and his troops. What the Spanish and the yanacunas found was indeed different from anything they were familiar with. The Alto Magdalena region was inhabited by fiercely independent cannibal warriors. Although they favored living in scattered households over large concentrations of population, they sustained vast social networks across the land. These networks were either enatic or woven together and maintained through the presence of multiple wives. In times of peace, obligations, legitimacy, and authority were dictated by these bonds. Vertical authority structures were implemented only in times of war. Even then leaders were generally elected. However, military alliances and political alignment were again determined through matrilineal relationships or marriage alliances. Women, therefore, wielded a considerable amount of political power. Moreover, evidence suggests that at least one of them — the señora de Guatipán — exercised such power in the Timaná area at the time of the Spanish incursion in what some historians have described as a female chieftainship. It is also possible that this political power may have translated into similar female chieftainships farther up north, in the land of *coyas* or queens, near the present-day town of Coyaima. However, more research needs to be carried out

in order to establish this. What is certain is that the political power that women wielded in the region would be seriously eroded by the Spanish conquest.

Of course this did not happen overnight. Initially and for as long as neither side was able to completely defeat the other, ambivalence dominated relationships between Spaniards and Indians. Both sides alternated between short-lived truces and open conflict. However, as the sixteenth century progressed, indigenous resistance — primarily led by the Pixaos — increased. Local indigenous communities began to fracture as some of their members took to the mountains to fight Spanish occupation while others chose to remain in the encomiendas and mines. The Spaniards' indigenous allies or "*yndios amigos*" became a favorite target of the Pixaos. In this way, indigenous people whether "*yndios amigos*" or "*yndios de guerra*" became the principal victims of the war of resistance against the Spanish. Women, in particular, experienced severe precariousness as Pixao rebels began kidnapping girls and young women. Encomiendas in the northern part of the Alto Magdalena region, for example, saw their female population dwindle down to a third with girls representing roughly 15% of all children and barely 4% of the total population. Although evidence suggests that women and girls played a key role among the rebels, providing critical logistical and economic support, it is almost certain that matrilineal and polygynous bonds and structures were seriously undermined by the widespread violence and kidnappings. As communities fractured and disintegrated, indigenous women began losing the social wealth of networks on which much of their political capital rested.

As the seventeenth century dawned, things had escalated to the point where the Spanish feared a general uprising in the region. The Crown decided to take matters into its own hands and launched a total war strategy aimed at destroying the logistical and economic backbone of the Pixao resistance. The Pixaos who had long terrorized the "*yndios amigos*" paid a heavy price as

the Spaniards' indigenous allies — mainly yanacunas, Coyaimas, and Natagaimas — proved decisive in defeating them. At the same time, Spanish authorities targeted indigenous leadership by specifically persecuting traditional political and religious leaders known as mohanes and moaneras (mostly elderly unacculturated women) while promoting a new class of young middlemen known as *capitanes* or sometimes *caciques* who mediated between Spanish authorities and indigenous communities.

By 1629 the Pixaos had been for the most part defeated. In the process, however, the Alto Magdalena region had been ravaged. War, exodus and disease had devastated the indigenous population in the area. Women were again the hardest hit. The initial kidnapping of girls and young women by Pixao rebels had turned into an all-out trafficking industry called *rescates* in which both Spaniards and Indians participated, brokering young indigenous women as domestic servants to Spanish urban centers. Indigenous communities in the region were left without young marriageable women: whereas single men represented a third of the population in encomiendas, single women amounted to only 8.8%. This in turn led to still another venue for the traffic of indigenous lives and labor. In an effort to replace the missing female population encomenderos and traficantes launched an assault on the jungles of the Caquetá province to the east of the Alto Magdalena region. This territory became the new quarry from which the fresh blood or *rescatados* were exacted. Tama women who lived in this area became the main victims of this traffic. They would help increase and stabilize demographics in encomiendas by providing mates for single men. Yet this was not the only recourse that encomenderos relied on in order to replenish indigenous labor. Forasteros or non-local indigenous people, mostly from the south, from places as far as Quito, were also hired to work in encomiendas. In this way, the foreigners and the restacados helped replace the declining indigenous population in the area.

This development marked a new age in Spanish-Indian relationships in the region. Landless Indians were now converging towards Spanish centers, looking for job opportunities and a chance to take part in the new order. They had become the new rural proletariat on which colonial society would rise. In this new order indigenous women found themselves at the bottom. Through the devastation of indigenous communities they had lost a great deal of the social networks on which much of their political power rested. Because the few opportunities the new order offered indigenous people either as *capitanes* or tradesmen were reserved for men only, they would find it extremely difficult to make up for the power, prestige, and influence they had once enjoyed.

Guaricha may have become a curse word among Colombians today, yet as we've seen, it once designated proud and powerful women like the señora Guatipán or Elena from Chucuni, as well as feared moaneras like Constancia, Catalina, and Barbola, or respected and resilient elders like Ysavel Agad. Perhaps then the real curse lies only in our oblivion of the word's original meaning.

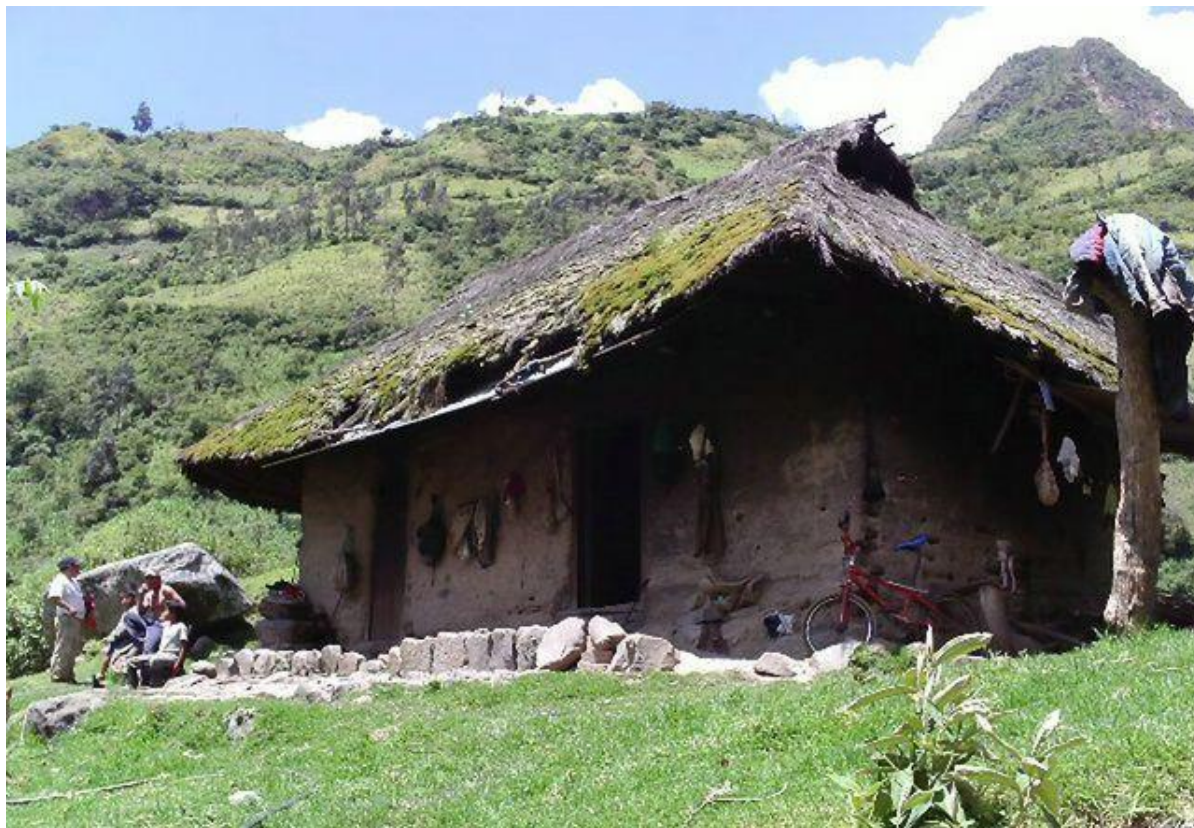
Appendix



Silvio Anacona who was my guide in the San Agustín area during my fieldwork in the summer of 2009.



Statue of La Gaitana holding the head of Añasco in the central plaza of Timaná, Huila. 2009



Traditional Yanacona house. Resguardo de Ríoblanco, Sotar, Cauca.



Yanacona ceremony in the páramo by the Laguna de la Magdalena, Resguardo de Ríoblanco, Sotará, Cauca.



Chirimía Yanacona (group of Yanacona musicians). Resguardo de Río Blanco, Sotará, Cauca.



Tanwantsuyu flags over the Macizo Colombiano.

Notes

Introduction

¹ Located near the present-day town of Pitalito 16 km/10 mi south of Timaná in the Huila province.

² Located in the Huila province, approximately 702 km/436 mi. southwest of Bogotá, this is the heartland of the southern Alto Magdalena region.

³ The *discrepcion de yndios* in the document reads: “*Ysavel agad buida de cien años.*” (“Visita de los Yndios de la matanca Encomienda de Jussepe de Valenzuela llamados coniabongo[s] [December 22, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visistas Venezuela, Tomo 13, ff. 701r-724, f. 703v).

⁴ Today the Alto Magdalena region covers the two provinces of Huila and Tolima which until 1905 constituted one entire province called Tolima Grande. This region is the birthplace of the Magdalena River — Colombia’s main artery — hence the name Alto Magdalena.

⁵ The sources discussed here constitute what is largely available at the National Archive (Archivo General de la Nación/AGN) in Bogotá regarding Indians in the Alto Magdalena region for the sixteenth century. I have also examined the catalogues of the National Library (Biblioteca Nacional) and the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History (Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia/ICANH) in Bogotá as well as that of the Central Archive in Popayán (Archivo Histórico de la Universidad del Cauca) without finding any relevant material. Unfortunately, a large trove of archival material from Timaná was destroyed in a fire in 1983 when it was being transferred to the neighboring town of Garzón.

⁶ Sebastián de Belalcázar is one of the three principal conquistadores to conquer the territory known today as Colombia. Belalcázar made his way into present-day Colombian territory from Quito in the south; the other two conquistadors are Gónzalo Jiménez de Quesada who first landed in Santa Marta on the Caribbean coast, and Nicolás de Federman, a German conquistador who made his way into Colombia from Venezuela.

⁷ *Visitadores* like Captain Diego de Ospina were in charge of carrying out *visitas*, that is, a kind of inspection of *encomiendas* (grants of land and Indians to a Spaniard in recognition for his services to the Crown, but also with the purpose of extracting tribute and labor from the natives) intended to assess how well the Indians were being treated by their *encomenderos*. These *visitas* also allowed the Spanish Crown to keep tabs on the *encomenderos* and their income.

⁸ Due to the fact that there were no major empires in the region, but also to the complexity of the topography which helped maintain the distinctiveness of each community, Colombia is believed to have been very linguistically diverse at the time of the Spanish conquest.

⁹ There is a major debate among Colombian historians over whether Quechua was already spoken in the southern part of the country before the Spanish conquest or whether it was the Spaniards and their yanacona allies who introduced it into the land. Whatever the case, evidence suggests that once the yanaconas settled in the land, it became a kind of lingua franca spoken throughout the southern Alto Magdalena region.

¹⁰ Chibcha was the other indigenous language largely spoken throughout the land as it was the language of the Muisca Indians whose chiefdoms were described as some of the largest in existence at the time by the Spaniards.

¹¹ Tovar Pinzón, Hermes, 1995, *Relaciones y Visitas a los Andes: Siglo XVI, Región del Alto Magdalena, Tomo IV*, Bogotá, Colcultura, 19.

¹² The Pixaos inhabited the central part of the Alto Magdalena region.

¹³ AGN (Bogotá), Tributos, Tomo 16, ff. 878r-986v., transcribed in Tovar 1995, 19-403.

¹⁴ Ortega 1949.

¹⁵ *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias*, 1588 (1944), Madrid, *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, Real Academia Española.

¹⁶ *Noticias Historiales de las Conquistas de Tierra Firme en las Indias Occidentales*, 1981, vols. I-VI, Bogotá, Biblioteca Banco Popular.

¹⁷ This is the name by which the Páez Indians call themselves. The Nasa live in the Cauca province and parts of the southern Huila province.

¹⁸ *Etnohistoria del Alto Magdalena*, 1986, Tesis de grado, Bogotá, Universidad Javeriana.

¹⁹ “La guerra de La Gaitana: historia, leyenda y mito,” *Señales Abiertas*, no. 2, marzo, 1993, Bogotá, Universidad Nacional de Colombia; and “Conquista española y resistencia indígena: las provincias de Timaná, Neiva y La Plata durante el siglo XVI,” 1996, in *Historia general del Huila*, Neiva, Instituto Huilense de Cultura.

²⁰ 2003, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press.

²¹ Harner, Michael J., 1972 (1984), *The Jívaro*, Berkeley, University of California Press. The Jívaro call themselves *Shuars*. According to Michael Harner, *Shuar* means *people*. *Jívaro* is the modern Spanish spelling of the sixteenth-century word *Xivar* or *Xivaro* which — when the *x* is replaced by *sh* (or *ch*) and *v* by *u* (a common substitution in sixteenth-century Spanish writing) — is a close enough transcription, of the word *Shuar*.

²² Meigs, Anna, 1984, *Food, Sex, and Pollution: A New Guinea Religion*, New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press. Meigs’ book deals basically with the Hua people of Papua New Guinea.

²³ These are in fact two chapters in Sanday’s excellent book, *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a Cultural System*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986.

²⁴ Harner worked among the Shuar east of the Cutucú Cordillera — “a portion of the Jívaro still unconquered and still living, with some changes, their traditional lifestyles.” (Op. cit., 1-6)

²⁵ The sixteenth-century Province of Popayán covered a large portion of Colombia’s present-day territory: from today’s Nariño and Putumayo provinces in the south of the country all the way to the central province of Antioquia. Pedro Cieza de León, who travelled extensively throughout the región, described it in these terms: “*Porque los capitanes del Perú poblaron y descubrieron esta provincia de Popayán, la pondré con la misma tierra del Perú, haciéndola toda una; más no la apropiaré a ella, porque es muy diferente la gente, la disposición de la tierra y todo lo demás de ella; por lo cual será necesario que desde el Quito (que es donde verdaderamente comienza lo que llamamos Perú) ponga la traza de todo y el sitio de ella; y desde Pasto, que es también donde por aquella comienza esta provincia y se acaba en Antioquia. Digo, pues, que esta provincia se llamó Popayán por causa de la ciudad de Popayán, que en ella está poblada. Tendrá de longitud doscientas leguas [1100 km/700m], poco más o menos, y de latitud treinta y cuarenta, y a partes más y a cabos menos. Por la una parte tiene la costa del mar del sur y unas montañas altísimas muy ásperas, que van luego de ella al oriente. Por la otra parte corre larga cordillera de los Andes, y de entrambas cordilleras nacen muchos ríos, y algunos muy grandes, de los cuales se hacen anchos valles; por uno de ellos, que es el mayor de todas estas partes del Perú, corre el gran río de Santa Marta [Río Grande de la Magdalena]. Inclúyese en esta*

gobernación la villa de Pasto, la ciudad de Popayán, la villa de Timaná, que esta pasada la cordillera de los Andes, la ciudad de Cali, que está cerca del puerto de la Buenaventura, la villa de Ancerma, la ciudad de Cartago, la villa de Arma, ciudad de Antioquia y otras que se habrán poblado después que yo salí de ella." (Cieza 1984, XIII). The Alto Magdalena región covers today's Huila and Tolima provinces.

²⁶ Harner 1984, 1. According to Juan de Velasco, the Shuar revolt of 1599 against the Spaniards had far-reaching effects: "*A la ruina lastimosa de este gobierno, se siguió por consecuencia la ruina total del confinante de Yaguarzongo por los mismos Jívaros y la casi total de Jaén [...] Aún las provincias altas y más seguras del Reino sintieron notable alteración de las gentes con la noticia de la horrenda catástrofe: llegó ella aún a las naciones bárbaras de Popayán, e hizo que con el mal ejemplo cometiesen las insolencias y destrozos, que referí hablando de sus ciudades.*" (Velasco 1946, 215)

²⁷ Op. cit., 1.

²⁸ These are some of the groups that inhabited the Alto Magdalena region in the sixteenth century.

²⁹ See Reichel-Dolmatoff 1978, 59; and Labbé 1986, 124.

³⁰ Located in the Alto Magdalena region, San Agustín is famous for its more than 300 pre-Hispanic statues, temples and tombs.

³¹ Michael Taussag's well-known works on the Upper-Amazon region, *The Magic of the State* (Routledge 1997) and *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (U. of Chicago Press 1991), deal with spirit possession and shamanism rather than cannibalism properly speaking. Likewise, Neil L. Whitehead's *Dark Shamans: Kanaima and the Poetics of Violent Death* (Duke University Press 2002) deals more with ritual violent death and warfare among the Patamuna and Makushi of Guyana than with cannibalism. Although his more recent book, *In Darkness and Secrecy: The Anthropology of Assault Sorcery and Witchcraft in Amazonia* (Duke University Press 2004) deals with indigenous communities in Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, and Guyana, it also focuses on shamanic warfare rather than cannibalism. Beth A. Conklin's beautiful work on Wari cannibalism in the Amazon, *Consuming Grief: Compassionate Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society* (U. of Texas Press 2001) deals with a very specific form of cannibalism — mortuary cannibalism — which may or may not have been practiced by indigenous communities in Colombia, but which bears little resemblance to the kind of cannibalism that sixteenth-century Spanish accounts from New Granada suggest. Finally, although Joanne Rappaport's book, *The Memory of Politics: Native Historical Interpretation in the Colombian Andes* (Cambridge U. Press 1991) refers accounts of sixteenth-century Nasa cannibalistic practices (which I discuss in chapter two), Rappaport does not discuss cannibalism as such. All in all, I have found Meigs' and Sanday's ethnographies to be not only most illuminating, but also to report cannibalistic practices which bear the closest resemblance to the cases reported by sixteenth-century Spanish sources.

Chapter One

³² Juan de Velasco, *Historia del Reino de Quito en la América Meridional*, 1789 (1946), vol. 2, Quito, Editora El Comercio, 186-188.

³³ “Particularidades del Nuevo Reino por los Oficiales Reales de Santa Fe de Bogotá,” 1572, in *Cespedesía* Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 113.

³⁴ Garcés, Jorge A., ed., 1936, *Colección de Documentos Inéditos Relativos al Adelantado Capitán Don Sebastián de Benalcázar 1535-1565*, Vol. X, Quito, Publicaciones del Archivo Municipal de Quito.

³⁵ *Probanzas de méritos y servicios*: Spanish legal documents attesting to the services rendered by Spanish soldiers to the Spanish Crown.

³⁶ *Juicios de residencia*: official investigation into the administration of a royal official upon leaving office.

³⁷ Calero 1991, 38.

³⁸ 82 km. (51 mi.) south of Popayán, the Patía Valley extends over 723 square kilometers (450 square miles). The average temperature is 24C (75F).

³⁹ In the last five hundred years, the name *yanacona* has gone from designating a caste of servants within the Inca and Spanish empires to being an ethnic denominator for the descendants of the indigenous men and women who accompanied the Spaniards in their conquest and colonization of New Granada. In this work I have chosen to capitalize the word only when it is understood as an ethnic denominator for the members of the Yanacona nation living at present in Colombia.

⁴⁰ The fact that the royal officers’ report was drafted thirty-seven years after Belalcázar’s initial incursion does not make such an estimate any less probable. On the contrary, in 1572, with the conquest of Nueva Granada technically over, what this report seems to suggest is that this practice was by then most likely an entrenched pattern which probably originated early on in the conquest.

⁴¹ D’Altroy 2002, 216.

⁴² Wightman 1990, 2.

⁴³ *Kamayuk* means *officer* in Quechua; *Chunka*, *Piccka Chunka*, *Pachac* and *Huaranka* designated different military ranks in the Inca army. This reconstruction is based on the classic and frequent parallel between the Inca and the Roman armies. Although both Noble David Cook (“Migration in Colonial Peru: An Overview,” in Robinson, David J., ed., 1990, *Migration in Colonial Spanish America*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press) and Sabine MacCormack (*On the Wings of Time: Rome, the Incas, Spain and Peru*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007) have rightly argued that the association between the Inca Empire and the Roman Empire stems more from a predominantly sixteenth-century frame of mind that was obsessed with Rome as a cultural and intellectual ideal than from any historical reality, there was one important sense in which the Incas were similar to the Romans: they were conquerors. And as such, and because the Incas had gone from being a small group to a formidable military power in just over a hundred years, it is almost certain that they had to incorporate large numbers of foreign troops into the army just as the Romans had done earlier. Given the chance, these troops probably seized the opportunity to ally themselves with the Spanish against their former masters like many of the Germanic warriors who were once a part of the Roman army had done by aligning themselves with the last wave of Germanic invaders who delivered the death blow to the Roman Empire.

⁴⁴ *Boleadoras* or *liwis* (in Quechua) tied together two or three heavy stones which were made to turn in the air and then thrown at the enemy. They were also used for hunting.

⁴⁵ The *macana* was the most popular weapon in the Inca army. It was a kind of club with a star-shaped knob at the end; *chambis* were spiked maces; and *cunka chukunas* or *throat-cutters* (as they were called in Quechua) were hatchets made of stone or copper.

⁴⁶ Ampudia followed the course of the Cauca River into present-day Colombian territory. Along with the Magdalena River, the Cauca is one of the two main arteries of Colombia.

⁴⁷ The Inca, Huayna Capac, conquered half the Pastos who inhabited Ecuador's northernmost province of Carchi in 1495. The other half, which remained unconquered, inhabited the present-day Colombian province of Nariño.

⁴⁸ The province of Guailas — headed by the Coya Hatun Hauja — had sided with the Spaniards. In an attempt to seal an alliance with Francisco Pizarro, the Coya had offered the fifty-four year-old bachelor her sixteen year-old daughter, Quispe Sisa. Pizarro took her with him to the recently founded Lima. When Quiso Yupanki, the general who commanded Manco Inca II's troops, laid siege to the town on August 15, 1536, Quispe Sisa sent word to her mother asking for help. Hatun Hauja sent reinforcements which were decisive in breaking the siege. Peruvian archaeologists, Guillermo Cock and Elena Goycochea have exhumed seventy skeletons at Puruchuco, outside Lima. Only three show signs of having been killed by Spanish weapons and several of the indigenous skeletons belonged to women. Likewise, Peruvian historian, Efraín Trelles, says that in a court case that took place many years after the siege, Pizarro's heirs claimed that the defense of Lima had exacted a heavy burden on the Pizarro estate and that the Crown had to reimburse them. But the Crown summoned Indian witnesses who testified that most of the fighting had taken place between Indians and that the Spaniards who had fought had done so while being surrounded by large groups of Indian fighters who protected them (*The Great Inca Rebellion*, 2007, National Geographic Society) See also Rostworowski, 1986, 15.

⁴⁹ Ruiz-Esquide Figueroa, Andrea, 1993, *Los indios amigos en la frontera araucana*, Santiago de Chile, DIBAM, Centro de Investigaciones Diego Barros Arana.

⁵⁰ Castellanos, Juan de, 1588 (1944), *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias*, Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Real Academia Española, Parte III, Elegía a Benalcázar, Canto IV.

⁵¹ Simón, Pedro fray, 1981, *Noticias Historiales de las Conquistas de Tierra Firme en las Indias Occidentales*, Bogotá, Biblioteca Banco Popular, Tomo III, Tercera Noticia Historial, IV.

⁵² In general, Indian women very literally did not count — as in this telling example in which Pedro Ordoñez de Ceballos (1547-1635) wrote that he made his way from the Urabá region in northern Colombia to Santafé along with a Spanish companion and *two* Indian servants: “*Fuéme forzoso tomar la derrota por la travesía de aquellas sierras al río grande de la Magdalena, guiándome por un agujón, que es como aguja con que se navega, llevando en mi compañía un camarada y dos indios, Baltasar Colima y Diego Tolú y su mujer María.*” (Ordoñez de Ceballos 1616, XXIII)

⁵³ According to the myth, the God Ticci Viracocha had four daughters and four sons who married each other: Mama Guaco married Ayar Cache; Mama Cura married Ayar Oche; Ragua Ocllo married Ayar Auca; and, Mama Ocllo married Manco Capac. Once married, they left the cave of Pacariqtambo — *the cave of plenty* — and went forth into the world to create an empire.

⁵⁴ Sarmiento de Gamboa, Pedro 1572 (1942), 130.

⁵⁵ Rostworowski 1986, 6.

⁵⁶ *The Great Inca Rebellion*, 2007, National Geographic Society.

⁵⁷ Alconini 2003, 156.

⁵⁸ See Deprez, P., ed., 1970, *Population and Economics*, Winnipeg, Manitoba Press, 303-314.

⁵⁹ Northernmost province of the Tawantinsuyu or “Four Provinces,” as the Inca Empire was known to the Incas.

⁶⁰ Famous pioneers of the Inca empire; their name comes from the Quechan verb *mitmac* which means to spread, to scatter.

⁶¹ Not long after that, she bore him a son — Atahualpa.

⁶² Calero 1991, 35.

⁶³ The Rumichaca Bridge (“stone bridge”) over the Carchi or Angasmayo River is still today a landmark on the border between Colombia and Ecuador.

⁶⁴ Calero 1991, 38.

⁶⁵ Simón 1981, Tomo V, Segunda Noticia Historial, XXV. The emphasis on *orejones* is mine.

⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, Part III, Elegía a Benalcázar, Canto VIII. The emphasis on *orejones* is mine. This is an episode of what is known as the “wars of La Gaitana” which I discuss in chapter two.

⁶⁷ The Muisca inhabited the present-day Colombian provinces of Cundinamarca and Boyacá, located some 730 km. (455 mi.) north of Quito.

⁶⁸ Muequetá was the former name of the present-day town of Funza, just 15 km. (9 mi.) to the west of Bogotá. The Spaniards might have mistaken the foreigner’s name for his place of origin.

⁶⁹ *Op. cit.*, vol. III, Tercera Noticia Historial, I. Castellanos, who also mentions this episode in his *Elegies*, may have provided Simón with one of the first versions of this story. However, he never says what the Indian guide’s name was; he just calls him “el indio de Bogotá” (*Elegías...*, Part 3, Elegía a Benalcázar, Canto II).

⁷⁰ Powers 1995, 13.

⁷¹ Only at the end of the sixteenth century were Indians in *encomiendas* required by law to follow their *encomenderos* into war and assist them in their fight against rebels.

⁷² According to Chilean historian, Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, the Spaniards implemented such measures in an effort to recruit Indian troops in their fight against the Mapuches in Chile. There is no reason to think that these were not part of a more general policy and practice implemented throughout the continent.

⁷³ Cieza 1985, CXVI.

⁷⁴ Powers 1995, 13-14.

⁷⁵ Throughout the Andean world, the basic plot of land for subsistence farming is called a *chagra* or *chacra*. The priest González Holguín defined the word in his sixteenth-century Quechua-Spanish dictionary as a “heredad de laour [labor] tierras o huertas.” (González Holguín 1608, 90) The esteem in which *chagras* are held by Indian men and women throughout the Andes cannot be overemphasized: the *chagra* often marks the difference between a life of self-sufficiency and relative independence and a life of total subservience as a sharecropper and a tenant.

⁷⁶ See Romoli 1962, 258; and Calero 1991, 55-59. The Sindaguas inhabited the region between the Patía River valley and the Pacific coast in the present-day Colombian province of Nariño. According to Calero, except for a few short-lived incursions into Sindagua territory, the Spaniards were unable to penetrate the area in any significant way before the end of the sixteenth century.

⁷⁷ Also known as Nudo Andino, Nudo de Almaguer or Estrella Fluvial, the Macizo Colombiano constitutes a mountainous cluster in southwestern Colombia from which the Andes branch out into the three cordilleras that crisscross the country. It is also the birthplace of Colombia’s most important rivers: the Cauca and the Magdalena Rivers, both of which flow north in the Caribbean

Sea; the Putumayo and the Caquetá Rivers, both of which flow into the Amazon; and the Patía River which flows into the Pacific.

⁷⁸ Campo Chicangana 2003, 31. As a member of the Colombian Yanacona community, professor Campo Chicangana has access to several of the Yanacona resguardos' colonial archives.

⁷⁹ *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Benalcázar, Canto III.

⁸⁰ Among their neighbors — the Muzos and Colimas — Muiscas were famous as merchants: “[...] los cuales [indios Muzos] hicieron guerra a los dichos indios moscas, que ellos en su lengua llaman *nipas*, que quiere decir ‘mercaderes’” (“Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas Ordenada Hacer por el Gobernador Juan Suárez de Cepeda 1582” in *Cespedesia* Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 224)

⁸¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. III, Tercera Noticia Historial, IV.

⁸² All four cities — Quito, Pasto, Popayán, and Cali — were part of what later became known as “el camino real de Quito.” The distance between Cali and Quito is 461 km (286 mi.).

⁸³ *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Benalcázar, Canto III.

⁸⁴ Historian Karen Vieira-Powers argues that after 1560, this migration flow was reversed: Indians in southern Colombia and the Alto Magdalena region began to migrate en masse towards present-day Ecuador (Powers, 1995, 19).

⁸⁵ Tunja is located 300 km. (186 mi.) northeast of Bogotá.

⁸⁶ Gónzalo Jiménez de Quesada conquered this region in 1539.

⁸⁷ “Autos y probe: Yndios de Tunja, por el señor licenciado Cepeda, en raÇon de los santuarios [1569],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 70, ff. 613r-621v. *Areyto* [areito]: dance; *zaque*: Muisca dignitary; *chontal*: heathen, savage Indian; *ladino*: Christian, acculturated Indian; *grangerías*: transactions; *contrataciones*: trade; *mohanes*: shamans; *santeros*: priests.

⁸⁸ *Idem*

⁸⁹ “*pregon [Tunja, mayo 16, 1569] En la ciudad de tunja deste nuevo rreyno de granada de las indias a diez y seis días del mes de mayo de myll y quinientos y sesenta e nueve años se pregono el auto e mando estas otras presente en la plaza publica desta dicha ciudad de tunja mucha gente vecinos y encomenderos y otras personas por voz del licenciado de corte rriberos pregonero publico della en estas yntelegibles voces - y luego subsecuente en el mercado juntos rreunidos en concierto de naturales se les dio a entender por un yndio lengua anacona de quito cristiano e ladino que fuera del servicio de francisco de carvajal muy diestro en la lengua de los dichos naturales describiéndoles lo ynterpretose con cuidado porque diego de rrobles secretario de su magestad tenya delante a sebastian RRopero y Hernando de abendaño mezticōs hijos de los que entienden su lengua destes yndios como nacidos en esta dicha ciudad siendo testigo de todo [...]*” (“Autos y probe: Yndios de Tunja, por el señor licenciado Cepeda, en raÇon de los santuarios [1569],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 70, f. 614v)

⁹⁰ “Autos y probe: Yndios de Tunja, por el señor licenciado Cepeda, en raÇon de los santuarios [1569],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 70, ff. 613r-621v.

⁹¹ The rituals described here probably involved *toé* (*brugmansia sanguinea*) or *yagé* (*banisteriopsis caapi*) as well as *chicha* (corn beer) drinking. *Borrachera* is usually translated as drunkenness, and it is well-known that the Muiscas were heavy drinkers of *chicha*. Yet the same word — *borrachera* — is still used today by *taitas* or shamans throughout Colombia to describe the effects experienced by participants in *toé* and *yagé* ceremonies.

⁹² Spanish official's letter reporting to the king on the war against the Mapuches in Chile, cited in Ruiz-Esquide 1993, 22.

⁹³ The Quimbayas inhabited the present-day Colombian provinces of Quindío, Risaralda, and Caldas in the basin of the Cauca River.

⁹⁴ Founded in 1539 with the name of Santa Ana de los Caballeros, Anserma was part of the Governorship of Popayán.

⁹⁵ Cited in Friede 1963, 76.

⁹⁶ The Pixaos inhabited the Alto Magdalena region along the Magdalena River basin in the present-day Colombian provinces of Huila and Tolima.

⁹⁷ Capital city of the Tolima province.

⁹⁸ “Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte 1949, 61.

⁹⁹ For example, in a 1542 report on a Quimbaya rebellion, a young Indian man by the name of Apaca testified that: “*Yamba dio muerte a la india Isabel y a las yanacunas que la acompañaban, y después de muertas se las comió.*” (cited in Friede 1963, 25)

¹⁰⁰ A *legua* or league is more or less equivalent to 5.5727 km (3.36 mi); therefore a quarter of a league is more or less equivalent to 1.393 km. or 0.865 mi.

¹⁰¹ Capital city of the Huila province.

¹⁰² “Indios Anaconas de la Jurisdicción de Neiva: Su Solicitud de Cambio de Residencia [1696],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 62, ff. 95r-105v. *Piezas*: slaves; *grueça* [gruesa]: return; *resguardo*: land grant made by Spanish authorities to indigenous communities; *bacas* [vacas]: vacant; *requintos*: one fifth of the Indians’ tax contributions.

¹⁰³ Population transfers.

¹⁰⁴ “Indios Anaconas de la Jurisdicción de Neiva: Su Solicitud de Cambio de Residencia [1696],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 62, ff. 103r-103v.

¹⁰⁵ *Idem*, ff. 100r-100v

¹⁰⁶ *Id.*, f. 97r

¹⁰⁷ (1566-1640) Author of the sixteenth-century New Granada novel, *El Carnero* (1639).

¹⁰⁸ The Spanish word for this practice was *rescate*. The Duhos were either claimed by force or bartered for by the Spaniards from other Indians. In both cases, in exchange for their “rescue” the Duhos became indentured servants for a certain number of years, although in most cases they remained in bondage for the rest of their lives. Fray Pedro Simón writes that the “*duhos [...] eran cautivos de los natagaimas, y no sé si les llamaban así por ser cautivos o por ser provincia y nación particular.*” (Simón 1981, vol. VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XLIX); in his novel, Freyle Rodriguez claims that “[...] *los duhos y bahaduhos [...] eran la carne de monte de los pijaos, que salían a caza de ellos como acá [en Santafé] se sale a caza de venados; y vez nos sucedió que habiendo dado un albazo sobre el cercado del cacique Dura, a donde hallamos retirada la gente, porque nos sintió la espía y les dio aviso, halláronse solas dos indias viejas que no pudieron huir, y un chiquero de indios duhos, que los tenían allí engordando para comérselos en las borracheras.*” (Freyle Rodriguez 1639, XIX). According to the *Diccionario Indio del Gran Tolima*, *Dujo* was (at least at the time of the book’s publication — 1952) the name of a small *vereda* or hamlet outside Neiva (Ramirez Sendoya 1952, 84). The word is also listed as denoting a small bench which the Indians used to sit on. This concurs with a sixteenth-century description by Spanish cronista Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés: “*Quando algun señor dessos venía a ver al mariscal traíanle en hombros sus indios por auctoridad; e traénle un duho, en que se assiente, e a par de si siete u ocho mugeres a do quiera quel tal príncipe va, e quando le falta el duho e no se le traen, asiéntase en las rodillas de una de aquellas sus mugeres.*”

Hablan muy despacio, representando una gravedad de señores.” (Fernández de Oviedo 1851, IV, 142) However, Ramirez Sendoya also includes a map in which *Dujos* and *Babadujos* are shown as distinct groups living on the eastern margins of the Magdalena River which constituted the eastern frontier of the Pixao territory.

¹⁰⁹ Resident of a town. *Vecinos* did not have land grants nor any Indians under their charge, therefore they had a lower status than *encomenderos*.

¹¹⁰ Indians serving compulsory labor turns.

¹¹¹ *Forasteros* were usually exempt from tribute and forced labor turns or *mita* because they did not have formal access to communal lands or *resguardos*.

¹¹² Powers 1995, 45.

¹¹³ Relocation program implemented in the second half of the sixteenth century. Modelled on the Inca resettlement system of *mitmakunas*, Indians were concentrated in small towns intended to facilitate tax collection, labor levies and Christianization.

¹¹⁴ *Idem*, 46.

¹¹⁵ *Indios rescatados o de rescate*: Indians who were either rescued from other Indians or obtained from traffickers. They were usually sold as indentured servants, although they were as good as slaves because for the most part they remained in bondage for their entire lives.

¹¹⁶ The *resguardo* in modern-day Colombia constitutes a territorial entity granting indigenous communities collective property over land as well as legal, sociopolitical, and cultural autonomy. The Río Blanco Resguardo is a Yanacona resguardo located in the town of Sotará in the Cauca province.

¹¹⁷ Cited in Campo Chicangana 2003, 31.

¹¹⁸ All five *resguardos* — Río Blanco (Sotará, Cauca), Guachicono (La Vega, Cauca), Pancitará (La Vega, Cauca), Caquiona (Almaguer, Cauca), San Sebastián (San Sebastián, Cauca) — are located in the Cauca province. All five hold colonial land titles and are headed by an indigenous council or *cabildo*. All four civil communities — Frontino, El Moral, El Oso, and La Sierra — are also located in the Cauca province. As “*comunidades civiles*” they have either lost their colonial land titles or are the descendants of *resguardos* that were dissolved.

¹¹⁹ Judicial procedures in which royal officials’ performances were reviewed. This included careful consideration of all the charges brought against them.

¹²⁰ n.d., in Garcés, Jorge A., ed. 1936, 586

¹²¹ Colombia’s major seaport on the Pacific Ocean

¹²² Ordoñez de Ceballos 1616, XXV

Chapter Two

¹²³ According to Spanish historian, Carlos Estepa Díez (*Las behetrías castellanas*, 2003, Valladolid, Junta de Castilla y León) the term *behetría* comes from the Latin *benefactoria*, *benefetria* or *benfectria* (39) and was used in the Middle Ages to designate communities that had the right to elect their own feudal lord. Apparently, the Spaniards were familiar with this type of organization because the *behetrías* were especially common in Castilla. The members of a *behetría* had the right to choose their lord and to negotiate the terms of the contract (the lord most often offered protection in return for varied services). There were two kinds of *behetrías*: “*de mar a mar*” which allowed peasants to freely pick their lord among any group of men; and

“*de linaje*” in which they had to select a lord from a group of noblemen. *Behetrías* began disappearing in the twelve century when they became hereditary and the peasants first lost the right to elect their lord, and then later, when they lost the right to negotiate the terms of their contracts. *Guaricha*: Cumanagoto for *woman*. (Ramírez Sendoya 1952, 97) The word *guaricha* originally described Indian women of stature; it was later extended to denote any and every Indian woman. Today, the word is widely used to refer to loose women and prostitutes.

¹²⁴ “*Dos Cartas a Su Magestad, del Adelantado Benalcázar,*” December 20, 1544, in Garcés, Jorge A., ed. 1936, xviii

¹²⁵ n.d., in Juan Friede, 1976, 110

¹²⁶ Sung by men when they believe their houses are going to be attacked (cited in Harner, Michael J. 1972, 41)

¹²⁷ “*Carta de Sebastián de Magaña, Visitador de la Real Caja de Popayán: Describe su Llegada y Estado de la Provincia,*” December 12, 1547, in Garcés, Jorge A., ed. 1936, 269

¹²⁸ I am quite aware that sixteenth-century Spanish Christianity deserves a far more complex treatment, but my point here is that while both Christian and indigenous worldviews were dominated by the supernatural, the Indians most probably conceived of this realm as one which they could readily access and interact with. For a more comprehensive view of sixteenth-century Spanish Christianity, see William A. Christian’s *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton University Press 1989).

¹²⁹ Although this belief is still held by most indigenous communities in the Andes and the Amazonian Basin, nowadays white man’s diseases are no longer considered as being caused by witchcraft. For example, anthropologist Michael Harner tells us that among the Shuar, “[...] the only diseases not attributed to witchcraft are ‘white man’s diseases’ (sunjura), normally of an epidemic nature, such as whooping coughs, measles, colds, and some mild diarrheas.” (Op. cit., 152-153). We can reasonably surmise however that at the time of the conquest, before Indians became familiar with these diseases, they would have traced them back to preexistent enmities and the concurrent practice of magical warfare.

¹³⁰ Powers 1995, 13-14.

¹³¹ Cieza 1985, CXVI

¹³² Brandao, Jose Antonio, ed., 2003, *Nation Iroquoise: A Seventeenth-Century Ethnography of the Iroquois*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 93-95.

¹³³ Harner 1984, 170-171.

¹³⁴ Velasco 1946, vol. 3, 37-38.

¹³⁵ “*Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino 1559-1560,*” Anonymous in *Cespedesia*, Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 37. Founded in 1551, San Sebastián de la Plata is at the heart of the Alto Magdalena region, in the present-day Huila province. At the time of its foundation, it was inhabited by the Yalcones. *Buhío*: hut.

¹³⁶ *Idem*, 65

¹³⁷ *Id.*, 60. Founded in 1551, Mariquita is located in the present-day Tolima province. At the time of its foundation, it was inhabited by the Panches.

¹³⁸ “*Relación de La Palma de los Colimas 1581*” by Gutierrez de Ovalle et al. in *Cespedesia*, Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 252-56. Founded in 1561, La Villa de Nuestra Señora de la Palma is located in the present-day province of Cundinamarca. At the time of its foundation, it was inhabited by the Colimas.

¹³⁹ According to Michael Harner, at the time of the first Spanish penetration of Shuar land in 1549 under the command of Hernando de Benavente, the Shuar dwelt in houses scattered, much like today, more than a league apart. (Harner 1984, 17).

¹⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, 41, 78

¹⁴¹ *Espeletia* is a genus of perennial subshrubs in the Asteraceae family. The genus, which is endemic mainly to Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador, was first formally described by botanist Alexander Von Humboldt in 1801. The genus was named after the New Granada viceroy José Manuel de Ezpeleta.

¹⁴² Also (and more generally) Colombian for — father

¹⁴³ Zambrano, Carlos Vladimir, 1996, “Los Yanaconas,” in Correa Rubio, Francois, ed., 1996, *Geografía Humana de Colombia: Región Andina Central*, Tomo IV, Vol. I, Bogotá, Instituto Colombiano de Cultura Hispánica, 121-178. Although the Andes occupy less than a third of the country’s territory, 77% of Colombia’s present-day population lives along the cordillera. Most people in Colombia, regardless of class will, if they can afford it, keep a house in tierra caliente and another in tierra fría. In places like Bogotá (2600 m.a.s.l./8500 f.a.s.l.), this highland to lowland pilgrimage is truly a weekend and holiday ritual.

¹⁴⁴ Quattrin, Dale, 2000, *Cacicazgos prehispánicos en el Valle de la Plata: economía vertical, intercambio y cambio social en el período formativo*, Pittsburgh/Bogotá, University of Pittsburgh/Universidad de los Andes.

¹⁴⁵ Velasco 1946, vol. 3, 37.

¹⁴⁶ Friede 1953, 11.

¹⁴⁷ “Frgamentos de una probanza,” Guacacallo, 1544 (Friede 1955, 258) The Indians who inhabited the area in and around Guacacallo were the Yalcones, also known as Timanaes.

¹⁴⁸ “Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas Ordenada Hacer por el Gobernador Juan Suárez de Cepeda por los Capitanes Alonso Ruiz Lancho, Juan Patiño de Haro and Juan Delgado ‘Mataindios,’” 1582, in *Cespedesia*, Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 225. The Muzos (and the Colimas) inhabited parts of the Cundinamarca and Boyacá provinces.

¹⁴⁹ “Relación de la Palma de los Colimas por Gutiérrez de Ovalle,” 1581, in *Cespedesia*, Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 256. According to Nicolás del Castillo Mathieu, *abacho* was among the Colimas a “chicha de maíz o vino de yuca” (“El vocabulario Muzo-Colima de la relación de Juan Suárez de Cepeda de 1582,” in *Thesaurus*, Boletín del Instituto Caro y Cuervo, vol. XXVII, September-December 1972, n. 3, 427).

¹⁵⁰ Cieza 1985, XIX

¹⁵¹ *Idem*, XIII

¹⁵² According to Harner, among the Shuar, reaching old age, having grey hair and grandchildren is regarded as an achievement in itself: “Such an achievement receives respect as a sign of supernatural power, and an elderly *unta* [warrior] of this sort is believed to have the ability to curse to death anyone who incurs his anger.” (Harner 1984, 111)

¹⁵³ “La chicha es una bebida de maíz fermentado, utilizada desde tiempos inmemoriales con fines rituales y, también, como alimento cotidiano por las comunidades indígenas agrícolas del centro y el sur de América [...] En la época prehispánica, la chicha era elaborada de manera tal que tuviera un importante contenido alcohólico y, por ende, produjera una embriaguez considerable; se empleaba de manera ritual para acompañar diversas ceremonias religiosas, festivas o agrarias de los indígenas. Asimismo, fue usada con índices de fermentación

más bajos, como una bebida cotidiana para acompañar los alimentos o tomarse sola, pues era considerada nutritiva. Generalmente la chicha era preparada por las mujeres. Ellas ‘ensalivaban’ y masticaban el maíz para darle cualidades específicas, mediante un principio activo presente en la saliva llamado ptialina, sustancia que tiene la propiedad de transformar el almidón en azúcar, paso sin el cual la fermentación no se produce.” (Alzate Echeverri, Adriana María, “La chicha entre bálsamo y veneno: Contribución al estudio del vino amarillo en la región central del Nuevo Reino de Granada, Siglo XVIII” in *Historia y Sociedad*, n. 12, FCHE-UN, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y Económicas, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín, 1).

¹⁵⁴ “Probanza de lo que solían pagar y tributar los indios Muzos en tiempos de su infidelidad,” AGI (Seville), Patronato, Legajo 196, Ramo 15, published by Juan Friede in *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico*, vol. IX, n.4, 1968, Bogotá, Banco de la República.

¹⁵⁵ “Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas...” 230.

¹⁵⁶ Among the Shuar, for example, “Whether the garden area is in a single clearing or several, its total size is heavily influenced by the number of wives a man has to cultivate the fields [...] A man who wishes to gain prestige may clear garden areas of larger size for each of his wives.” (Harner 1984, 49)

¹⁵⁷ Planting was probably a shared activity between men and women. The macana was used both as a planting tool and as a weapon: ““Con la macana [los Muzos] abrían, a lo largo y ancho de la sementera, pequeños hoyos equidistantes, en los cuales, una india, que venía detrás, depositaba tres o cuatro granos y luego tapaba el hueco.” (AGN, Bogotá, *Visitas Boyacá* 8, f. 202r, cited in Rodríguez Baquero 1995, 91) And Cieza claims that the Pozos Indians (present-day Quindío province) were “[...] grandes labradores; cuando están sembrando o cavando la tierra, en la una mano tienen la macana para rozar y en la otra la lanza para pelear.” (Cieza 1984, XXI)

¹⁵⁸ Cieza, 1985, XIX

¹⁵⁹ *Idem*, XVI

¹⁶⁰ “Relación anónima de la Provincia de Popayán,” n.d., in Juan Friede 1976, 109

¹⁶¹ Harner 1984, 96.

¹⁶² “Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas...” 235; *yerba*: poisoned darts. Whether the Indians used blowguns or bows, they usually dabbed the darts and the arrows they used with lethal venom. This practice was usually described as *usar* or *dar yerba*. *Yerba* was traditionally prepared by elderly women.

¹⁶³ Harner 1984, 96.

¹⁶⁴ “Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas ...” 225

¹⁶⁵ For a more complete discussion of this aspect among the Muzos, see Luis Enrique Rodríguez Baquero, *Encomienda y Vida Diaria entre los Indios de Muzo (1550-1620)*, Bogotá, Instituto Colombiano de Cultura Hispánica, 1995.

¹⁶⁶ Competition over women among the Shuar is so fierce that Harner claims it is the men who adorn themselves in an effort to make themselves more attractive to women: “Young men frequently play love songs softly on musical bows at sunset and hope, thereby, magically to cause their sweethearts to think of them, no matter how distant they may be. Love potions are also used, and much of the featherwork, adornment and face painting worn by men is recognized to be designed, in part, to make them attractive to females. Girls and women typically exert less effort to glamorize their appearance, but do frequently wear ‘perfume bundles’ of sweet-smelling seeds against their breasts.” (Op. cit., 107) José María Vergara y Vergara, who travelled throughout Colombia in the first half of the nineteenth century, described a similar practice

among the Andaquies: “They tie strings very tightly around their arms and legs, from which they suspend odorous leaves, to improve their appearance.” (Vergara y Vergara, José María, (1855) 1861, “The Indians of Andaqui, New Granada,” *Bulletin of The American Ethnological Society*, Vol. 1, translated by J.S. Thrasher, Esq., 55) It should be remembered that Juan Friede has argued that the Andaquies were perhaps the same Yalcones of the Alto Magdalena region or at least a very closely related group who took refuge in the jungle after the Spanish conquest (Friede 1922, 102). Should this be the case, we would be able to infer a similar set of practices among the Indians in the sixteenth-century Alto Magdalena region.

¹⁶⁷ Among the Shuar for example, stealing a man’s potential mate is enough to set off long-lasting hostilities and wife-stealing is one of the most serious offenses a person can commit. (Harner 1984, 107)

¹⁶⁸ Harner lists several reasons for conflict among the Shuar: the “pervasive belief in shamanistically induced illness and death, the conflict over women, and the emphasis on retaliatory sanctions and feuding” (Op. cit., 111)

¹⁶⁹ “Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas ...” 233

¹⁷⁰ AGN (Bogotá), *Visitas Boyacá 3*, 246v, cited in Rodríguez Baquero 1995, 123.

¹⁷¹ AGN (Bogotá), *Visitas Boyacá 16*, f. 137r, cited in Rodríguez Baquero 1995, 123.

¹⁷² AGN (Bogotá), *Visitas Boyacá 16*, f. 555v, cited in Rodríguez Baquero 1995, 124.

¹⁷³ *Rutas de Cartagena de Indias a Buenos Aires: sublevaciones de Pizarro, Castilla y Hernández Girón 1540-1570*, 1970, Madrid, Ediciones Atlas, pp. 58-59. Interestingly enough, Juan de Velasco claims that the last Governor of Macas at Logroño (one of the two cities the Spanish founded in Jívaro territory in 1551 at the junction of the Río Paute/Upano with the Río Zamora) experienced a similar death to that of Añasco in the revolt that ousted the Spaniards in 1599 for the next 130 years from the region: “*Lo desnudaron enteramente, y lo ataron de pies y manos y mientras unos se entretenían con él haciéndole mil escarnios y burlas, plantaron los demás en el patio una gran fragua, donde fundieron el oro. Estando ya prevenido en los crisoles, le abrieron la boca con un hueso, diciendo que querían ver si alguna vez se saciaba de oro. Se lo fueron echando poco a poco, hasta que lo hicieron pasar con otro hueso y reventando con el martirio las entrañas, levantaron todos la risa y algaraza.*” (Velasco 1946, 212)

¹⁷⁴ Cieza 1985, XIII.

¹⁷⁵ Cited in Friede 1963, 25.

¹⁷⁶ “Relación del Nuevo Reino 1571” del padre fray Gaspar de Puerto Alegre in *Cespedesia* Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 111-12. The Panches inhabited the present-day provinces of Tolima and Cundinamarca.

¹⁷⁷ Ordoñez de Ceballos 1993, 136.

¹⁷⁸ Correal, Gonzalo, 1990, *Aguazuque: evidencias de cazadores, recolectores y plantadores en la altiplanicie de la Cordillera Oriental*, Bogotá, Fundación de Investigaciones Arqueológicas Nacionales (Banco de la República), 177.

¹⁷⁹ Rodríguez, José V., Sonia Blanco y Alexander Clavijo, “Rituales funerarios y chamanismo en el cementerio de Coronado” in Rodríguez, José V., ed., 2007, *Territorio ancestral, rituales funerarios y chamanismo en Palmira prehispánica, Valle del Cauca*, Bogotá, Universidad Nacional, 81-138, 96. *Ajuar*: offerings.

¹⁸⁰ Bernal 1993, 93.

¹⁸¹ Cieza 1985, XX. Cieza is describing here the Paucura Indians who inhabited the present-day province of Caldas.

¹⁸² Idem, XXVIII. The Lilis inhabited the present-day Valle del Lili to the south of Cali, Valle del Cauca.

¹⁸³ Meigs 1984, 121.

¹⁸⁴ Sanday 1986, 64.

¹⁸⁵ Id., 65.

¹⁸⁶ Meigs 1984, 124.

¹⁸⁷ Idem, 135.

¹⁸⁸ Sanday 1986, 95.

¹⁸⁹ Idem, 94.

¹⁹⁰ Harner 1984, 112.

¹⁹¹ According to Harner, inter-tribal assassination expeditions usually only go after single victims but inter-tribal raids are attacks on entire households (*Op. cit.*, 116)

¹⁹² Idem, 112-13.

¹⁹³ Harner claims that “the personal security which the Jívaro believe comes from killing has some social reality. A man who has killed repeatedly, called a *kakaram*, or “powerful one,” is rarely attacked, because his enemies feel that the protection provided him by his constantly replaced souls would make any assassination attempt against him fruitless.” (*Op. cit.*, 142)

¹⁹⁴ Idem, 131.

¹⁹⁵ Harner says that in order to consolidate family cohesion and unity, a Shuar man will often seek to become trading partners with his father and/or brothers.

¹⁹⁶ According to Harner, the system stretches “from the foot of the Andes in the west to near Iquitos on the Amazon in the east, and from the Río Napo in the north to the Río Marañon in the south.” (*Op. cit.*, 127)

¹⁹⁷ Idem, 126.

¹⁹⁸ Id., 33.

¹⁹⁹ Castellanos 1944, Parte III, Historia de Antioquia, Introducción.

²⁰⁰ “Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas ...” 235

²⁰¹ Harner 1984, 136, 172. Harner makes it clear that although the Shuar will go to great pains to make sure that they kill only one person in retaliation for one murder when they go on an intra-tribal assassination mission, the goal on inter-tribal raids is to kill as many of the “aliens” as possible, regardless of age or gender.

²⁰² “Sieur Brignac, however, was burned throughout the whole night, from his feet up to his waist, and on the next day these Barbarians still continued to burn him; but, after they had broken his fingers, and had grown weary of burning him, one of their number stabbed him with a knife, tore out his heart, and ate it. They cut off his nose first, then his eyebrows, lips, and cheeks [...] Finally these Barbarians cut open his body and drank his blood – afterward cutting the body in pieces, putting these into a kettle, and eating them.” (Brandao 2003, 114)

²⁰³ Brandao 2003, 85-87.

²⁰⁴ Clastres 1987, 67. Most of Clastres’ research and fieldwork was done among the Guayaki of Paraguay.

²⁰⁵ Idem, 73.

²⁰⁶ Id., 64.

²⁰⁷ Id., 66-67.

²⁰⁸ Andagoya’s expedition was the first to attempt to explore western South America.

²⁰⁹ Calero 1991, 58.

²¹⁰ Founded on November 1, 1535 and located in the heart of the Cauca province, this is perhaps the oldest (still standing) Spanish settlement in the region.

²¹¹ Capital city of the Nariño province.

²¹² Capital city of the Cauca province.

²¹³ Pero, López. *Rutas de Cartagena de Indias a Buenos Aires y Sublevaciones de Pizarro, Castilla y Hernandez Girón 1540-1570*, Transcribed and annotated by Juan Friede, Madrid, Ediciones Atlas, 1970, 61. Pigoanza was an important chieftain of the Yalcones in the Alto Magdalena region.

²¹⁴ For a discussion of the role played by women in similar interactions between Spaniards and Indians in New Mexico and Texas see Gutiérrez 1991 and Barr 2007.

²¹⁵ “*Los territorios del Macizo Colombiano, hábitat de los yalcones, conservaron su autonomía, como lo ratificó la excavación del poblado principal de Morelia, localizado en el valle del río Granates, que mostró actividad indígena cotidiana, en el año 1700, sin elementos hispánicos.*” (Jorge Orlando Melo et al., 1988, *Caminos Reales de Colombia*, Bogotá, Fondo FEN, 50)

²¹⁶ According to Juan Friede (“Nuevos documentos sobre la fundación de la Villa de Timaná y del pueblo de San Agustín,” *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, Vol. 34, No. 387-389, enero-marzo 1947, 59-65.) present-day Timaná is a different town from the original town of Timaná. Present-day Timaná is located in a small valley surrounded by mountains — an unlikely location for any Spanish town in the sixteenth century, especially in a region inhabited by hostile Indians like the Andaki (59). Friede argues that the original Timaná corresponds to the Indian town of Guacacallo, located some ten kilometers (6.2 mi.) to the south of present-day Timaná. This is the only town mentioned as having been founded by Sebastián de Belalcázar in the Alto Magdalena region. According to a royal charter (Madrid, March 10, 1540) in which Belalcázar was made governor of the province of Popayán, it was founded in 1538 (60). In documents dating from the year 1551 and even as late as 1557, it is still called “la Villa de Guacacallo.” It was destroyed in 1553 by Alvaro de Oyón. According to Friede, “la Villa de Guacacallo” is never mentioned again after 1558 (61). In 1558, it was moved to its present-day location along the borders of the Timaná river. The original Timaná or “Villa de Guacacallo” was strategically located on the eastern flanks of the central cordillera, overlooking the left bank of the Magdalena river (where the Yalcón, Pijao, and Páez lived) and the eastern cordillera, which separates the Alto Magdalena region from the jungles of Putumayo and Caquetá. It is now a small *vereda* or hamlet south of present-day Timaná where the ruins of an old colonial Spanish town can still be seen. There are many petroglyphs in the surroundings. It is believed to have been an important rallying point in prehispanic times and possibly the seat of government for the legendary chieftain la Gaitana (60).

²¹⁷ “Carta de Pascual de Andagoya a su Majestad,” (Cali, February 15, 1540) AGI (Seville), Patronato, 192, N. 1, R. 26.

²¹⁸ “*Tenencia de dos fortalezas en la provincia de Popayán para el Capitán Benalcázar,*” March 10, 1540, in Garcés, Jorge A., ed., 1936, *Colección de Documentos Inéditos Relativos al Adelantado Capitán Don Sebastián de Benalcázar 1535-1565*, Vol. X, Quito, Publicaciones del Archivo Municipal de Quito, 71.

²¹⁹ “*Instrucción sobre lo que debe averiguar el Licenciado Briseño Oidor de la Real Audiencia del Nuevo Reino de Granada y Juez de Residencia, que va a la provincia de Popayán, a tomarla al Adelantado Benalcázar,*” n.d., in Garcés, Jorge A., ed., 1936, *Colección de Documentos*

Inéditos Relativos al Adelantado Capitán Don Sebastián de Benalcázar 1535-1565, Vol. X, Quito, Publicaciones del Archivo Municipal de Quito, 586.

²²⁰ Velasco, 1789 (1946), 268-269.

²²¹ Cieza

²²² “*Dos Cartas a Su Magestad, del Adelantado Benalcázar*,” (December 20, 1544), in Garcés, Jorge A., ed., 1936, *Colección de Documentos Inéditos Relativos al Adelantado Capitán Don Sebastián de Benalcázar 1535-1565*, Vol. X, Quito, Publicaciones del Archivo Municipal de Quito, xviii.

²²³ Martínez González, 2006, 25. *Patasola* literally translates *lonely leg or limb*.

²²⁴ *Los heroícos pijaos y el chaparral de los reyes*, 1993, Bogotá, Litho-Imagen, 93. As we shall see later on, the *Pijaos* may have originally been a group of especially fierce warriors inhabiting the northern present-day Huila province, but in time all Indians in arms came to be known as *pixaos*.

²²⁵ “Documento No. 1751 [Guacacallo, November 13, 1544]” in Juan Friede, 1955, *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de Colombia*, Tomo VII (1543-1544), Bogotá, Academia de Historia, 255.

²²⁶ The Paeces or Nasa occupied the western slopes of the Central Cordillera while the Yalcones inhabited its eastern slopes in what is the south of the present-day Huila province in the Alto Magdalena region.

²²⁷ *Idem*.

²²⁸ *Id.*

²²⁹ *Id.*

²³⁰ The legend of La Gaitana is perhaps one of the best known historical legends in Colombia. Ever since the war for independence (1810-1822), the image of La Gaitana has been hailed as a symbol of sovereignty, whether factional or national. But even though Colombia has claimed La Gaitana as a symbol of national identity and sovereignty, there is much disagreement among historians regarding the facticity of La Gaitana’s story or even of her existence. Besides Juan de Castellanos’ *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias*, no other Spanish chronicler makes any mention of her. Yet Castellanos dedicates five *cantos* or songs to the entire episode and he gives La Gaitana a preeminent role in which she delivers three long speeches or harangues to her people. It is worth mentioning that although Castellanos did not participate in any of the expeditions that were organized against La Gaitana’s people — the Yalcones — he did take part in the conquest of New Granada as a cavalry soldier, and as such, personally knew not only many of the men who took part in the conquest of New Granada, but also some of the men who fought against the Indians in the Alto Magdalena region. However, noted Colombian historians like Juan Friede have argued emphatically that La Gaitana never existed, attributing her so-called existence to the Spaniards’ feverish imagination. Friede bases his argument on the fact that neither one of the three principal *cronistas* of the conquest of New Granada, Fray Pedro Aguado, Antonio de Herrera and Juan de Velasco, make any reference to the famous *cacica*. He also contends that neither the *probanza de servicios y méritos* drafted by Añasco’s grandson, nor any of the proceedings of the town hall of Timaná, or any of the countless sixteenth-century Spanish accounts documenting the natives’ atrocities make any mention whatsoever of La Gaitana (Friede 1953, 128).

²³¹ Located some 202 km. (125 mi.) south of the town of Timaná.

²³² This later became known as the Pixao Confederacy (See Bernal Andrade 1993).

- ²³³ Located some 92 km (57 mi.) north of Timaná
- ²³⁴ “Documento No. 1751,” (Guacacallo, November 13, 1544), in Juan Friede, 1955, *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de Colombia*, Tomo VII (1543-1544), Bogotá, Academia de Historia, 263-64. *Naboría*: Taíno for commoner or servant.
- ²³⁵ *Idem*, 270-71.
- ²³⁶ *Id.*, 271-72. *Guazábara*: Taíno for battle, war (Ramírez Sendoya, Pedro Jose, 1952, *Diccionario Indio del Gran Tolima: estudio lingüístico y etnográfico sobre dos mil palabras indígenas del Huila y del Tolima*. Editorial Minerva, 100)
- ²³⁷ *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias* (Madrid, 1588). A four-part historical poem written in verse. The 113,609-verse-long poem recounts the deeds of the principal Spanish conquistadors beginning with Columbus. The poem includes valuable ethnographical and ethnological information on the indigenous peoples of northern South America.
- ²³⁸ Neither Juan de Orozco nor Arias Maldonado appears in the 1544 Guacacallo probanza.
- ²³⁹ *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, Canto VI*.
- ²⁴⁰ Tovar Zambrano 1996, 237-238.
- ²⁴¹ “*De pareja manera tuvo ocasión también Juan de Castellanos, el cura poeta de Tunja, de recoger relatos directos de testigos presenciales [...] También dispuso de escritos de Sebastián de Benalcázar.*” (Trimborn, Hermann 1949, 46)
- ²⁴² *Etnohistoria del Alto Magdalena*, 1986, Bogotá, Universidad Javeriana.
- ²⁴³ “La guerra de La Gaitana: historia, leyenda y mito,” 1993, *Señales Abiertas*, no. 2, marzo, Bogotá, Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- ²⁴⁴ The word *otongo* (*otorongo*, *otoronco*) used in the deed to designate the people of the *señora de Guatepán* itself is found in three different entries in González Holguín’s 1608 Quechua-Spanish dictionary denoting either “a tiger”, “a strong man” or “a fast runner *running like a tiger*.” (González Holguín, 1608 (1993), 265) Did Otongo warriors wear jaguar skins in their battles against the Spaniards’ yanacona allies? It is not unlikely. Anthropomorphic statues of jaguars abound in the San Agustín area of the Alto Magdalena region (located 135 km /85mi. to the south of Timaná) and experts agree that there was a widespread jaguar cult in the region (Gómez Cubides, 1986, 61-62).
- ²⁴⁵ “Encomendero Pedro de Molina, vecino de Timaná, en pleito con Alvaro Botello por la encomienda de los indios de Caluana, 1550-1564,” *Encomiendas de La Plata*, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Historia Civil, Tomo 18, Rollo 19, ff. 569-590, ff. 575r-575v.
- ²⁴⁶ Ceremonies performed to enact the Spanish take-over of a certain territory or group of Indians.
- ²⁴⁷ “Encomendero Pedro de Molina, vecino de Timaná, en pleito con Alvaro Botello por la encomienda de los indios de Caluana, 1550-1564,” *Encomiendas de La Plata*, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Historia Civil, Tomo 18, Rollo 19, ff. 569-590, ff. 575v-576r.
- ²⁴⁸ *Idem*, 589r. Both Antón Vasquez and García de Baeza appear as witnesses in the 1544 Guacacallo probanza.
- ²⁴⁹ *Idem*.
- ²⁵⁰ Gómez Cubides 1986, 111.
- ²⁵¹ González Holguín, 1608 (1993), 172.
- ²⁵² *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, canto V
- ²⁵³ González Holguín, 1608 (1993), 172.
- ²⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, canto V

²⁵⁵ “E luego por el dicho señor gobernador visto lo pedido por el dicho albaro botello y el dicho yndio al que dijo ser de los caciques en el encomendados para saber como se llamaba e de donde hera natural e de que cacique por no ser ladino en nuestra lengua española mando a geronimo de torres que en lengua de quito le pregunte de donde es y quien es su cacique el qual le hablo y dixo llamarse alonso y que fue de balerio e que hera de la plata del cacique caluana que estaba encomendado en nombre de Balerio y por el señor gobernador visto lo susodicho tomo por la mano al dicho albaro botello el qual dixo que lo entregava y entrego por si y en nombre del dicho Caluana cacique y de su hijo Cubila y de todos los indios a ellos sujetos y del y en el por los demás le daba e dio la dicha posesión y el dicho albaro botello tomo por la mano al dicho yndio Alonso e le quito la camyseta y le hizo pasear por la posada del señor gobernador y le torno a dar la manta que le quito todo lo qual dixo que hazia e hizo en señal de posesion y que el la tomava y tomo en el dicho yndio por si y por los dichos caciques e yndios a ellos sujetos e tierras y estancias según y como los dichos yndios las tienen y les son sujetas y del como tomava y tomo la dicha posesion pacifica e quietamente [...]” (“Encomendero Pedro de Molina, vecino de Timaná, en pleito con Alvaro Botello por la encomienda de los indios de Caluana, 1550-1564,” *Encomiendas de La Plata*, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Historia Civil, Tomo 18, Rollo 19, ff. 569-590, 572v-573r). This ceremony took place on August 11, 1563 in Popayán. The Indian envoy was from the town of La Plata (147 km/91 mi. east of Popayán) in the heart of the Otongo Valley (La Plata is 40 km/25 mi. north of the town of Timaná).

²⁵⁶ Official inspections of encomiendas designed to assess the “wellbeing” of the Indians and whether or not the encomendero was meeting the New Laws (1542) passed to protect Indians against “excessive abuse.”

²⁵⁷ “Visita a los Otongos [1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 834r-854v, 838r; Other visitas: “Visita a los Otongos de la Encomienda de Isabel Calderón [1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 904r-918r; “Visita de los Yndios Otongos, Çuazas y Tamas de la Encomienda del Capitán Diego del Campo [1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, Folios 807r-823v; “Visita de los Yndios Maitos, Otongos y Oporapas de la Encomienda del Capitán Alonso de Herrera [1629]” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 882r-894v.

²⁵⁸ Calero 1991, 49. The Quillacingas inhabited the western part of the Nariño province.

²⁵⁹ “En la Jagua también se conserva esta tradición y se considera a la Gaitana como a la primitiva dueña de todas las tierras del valle del Alto Magdalena [...]” (Friede 1953, 129). La Jagua is a town some 22 km (13 mi.) north of Timaná. See also Tovar Zambrano, 1993, “La guerra de La Gaitana: historia, leyenda y mito,” in *Señales Abiertas*, no. 2, marzo, Bogotá, Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

²⁶⁰ Quechua for *principal* (González Holguín, 1608, 55).

²⁶¹ See Joaquín Acosta, *Historia de la Nueva Granada*, 1848 (1971), Medellín, Editorial Bedout; Also, Jaime Arroyo, *Historia de la Gobernación de Popayán*, 1907 (1955), Tomo 1, Bogotá, Biblioteca de Autores Colombianos; and, Herminia Gómez Jaime de Abadía, *Leyendas y Notas Históricas*, 1907, Bogotá, Imprenta Nacional.

²⁶² The Páez are also known as the Nasa people.

²⁶³ Fundación Colombia Nuestra, Archivo, Víctor Daniel Bonilla, “Entrevista con Julio Niquinás, 8/13/1972, Mosoco, Tierradentro, XII H 2 (2), 8/72. In speaking of “*la Primera Independencia*,” don Julio Niquinás seems to be referring to the fact that the Páeces were able to

repel Belalcázar's attack, and thus managed to preserve their autonomy up until the 18th century before the republican era.

²⁶⁴ It is unlikely that don Julio Niquinás could have read Juan de Castellanos' *Elegías*: the book is expensive and hard to access in Colombia. According to Joanne Rappaport (1990), Don Julio was literate; although mostly self-taught (he was forced to leave school before second grade). It is possible that he may have read Colombian textbook versions of the story of La Gaitana, but he probably did not get his own version of the story from these books since these versions have been purged of any reference to the Indians' cannibalism.

²⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, Canto V

²⁶⁶ *Idem*

²⁶⁷ *Id.*

²⁶⁸ Joanne Rappaport, *The Politics of Memory*, 1990, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 50, 53, 55, 62, 68.

²⁶⁹ *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, Canto VI

²⁷⁰ The Muzos and Colimas inhabited the present-day provinces of Cundinamarca and Boyacá.

²⁷¹ “[...] *Y si matan a algún indio, por sus costumbres no están obligados a la venganza y satisfacción de este agravio los parientes del padre sino los de la madre, con todos los indios de su apellido.*” (“Relación de la Región de los Indios Muzos y Colimas...” 225).

²⁷² Note that the Spanish word used here by Castellanos — *deudo* — conveys the idea of a relative who is somehow indebted to the person who is calling upon him.

²⁷³ *Op. cit.*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, Canto VI

²⁷⁴ *Idem*, Canto IV

²⁷⁵ “*No heredan los hijos que ellos tienen los señoríos y estados, sino los hermanos o hijos de hermanas.*” (“Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino 1559-1560,” 66)

²⁷⁶ Simón 1981, Tomo V, Segunda Noticia Historial, XXIV.

²⁷⁷ *Los quimbayas bajo la dominación española 1539-1810*, 1963, Bogotá, Banco de la República. The Quimbaya region is located some 290 km. (180 mi.) to the northwest of the Alto Magdalena region; the two regions are separated by the Central Cordillera and the Magdalena River. Most accounts date the beginning of the insurrection sparked by La Gaitana to the year 1539. Friede dates the beginning of the Quimbaya rebellion to 1542.

²⁷⁸ Friede 1963, 16, 77.

²⁷⁹ *Idem*, 54.

²⁸⁰ “Carta de instalación de la cacica Micaela García Tulcanaza de Guachucal, 1676,” (Archivo Nacional de Quito, Popayán 13), cited in Calero, 1991, 44.

²⁸¹ Rappaport 1990, 50-56.

²⁸² Ramírez Sendoya 1952, xvii-xxxix.

²⁸³ In reality, the Coyaimas were a subgroup of the Pixaos. While the Pixaos inhabited the eastern slope of the Central Cordillera, the Coyaimas had settled along the Magdalena River basin in the Huila and Tolima provinces.

²⁸⁴ Countless places throughout the region bear names with this suffix. The former name of the region itself — Tolima (Grande) — according to local tradition means place of snow-capped mountains; and indeed the Alto Magdalena region is located between two ranges of snow-capped volcanoes: *el Parque Natural del Nevado del Huila* to the south, and *el Parque Natural de los Nevados* to the north.

Chapter Three

²⁸⁵ *China*: Quechua for *servant girl* (Ramírez Sendoya 1952, 72); “*si tiene hijos pequeños el dicho Vezino con cada Uno anda por la calle Una china que llaman que son indiecitas de hasta diez años*” (*Relación de fray Jerónimo de Escobar de la Orden de San Agustín sobre el estado de la provincia de Popayán 1586* – AGI, Patronato 27, f. 15r) Nowadays the word is commonly used in Bogotá and throughout Cundinamarca to refer to children (*china, chino, chinos*).

²⁸⁶ “Indios de la Encomienda de Melchor de Sotomayor,” AGN (Bogotá), Tributos 16, ff.912v-928v, f. 928r, in “Visita a la Provincia de Mariquita [1559],” AGN (Bogotá), Tributos 16, ff. 878r-986v, in Tovar Pinzón, Hermes, 1995, *Relaciones y Visitas a los Andes: Siglo XVI, Región del Alto Magdalena, Tomo IV*, Bogotá, Colcultura, 161-210.

²⁸⁷ Allotment of Indians made to an encomendero.

²⁸⁸ Located in the northernmost tip of the Tolima province, near the town of Mariquita.

²⁸⁹ “Discrepción de los yndios naturales que ay en la provincia de la ciudad de San Sebastián [del Oro] de Mariquita en conformidad de lo mandado por su Magestad con comisión desta Real Audiencia por Francisco Hernández escribano real,” in *Relaciones y Visitas a los Andes: Siglo XVI, Región del Alto Magdalena, Tomo IV*, 1995, Bogotá, Colcultura, 71-388. Tovar’s work covers a total of nine visitas.

²⁹⁰ According to fray Pedro Simón the town took its name from the principal cacique in the area: “*Pero como el sitio donde se pobló era provincia y tierra del mayor cacique de aquella comarca y distrito que la habitaba, llamado Marquetá, el acento en la última, de donde tomaba nombre la provincia y el llamarse los naturales de ella Mariquitanes [also Marquetones]; tomó la misma denominación el asiento y loma donde estaba el pueblo, llamándole la loma de Mariquita [...]*” (Simón 1981, Tomo IV, Sexta Noticia Historial, XL). Mariquita quickly became a thriving city due to its silver and gold mines.

²⁹¹ “Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino 1559-1560...,” 57

²⁹² Carib word: from *pan* = mountain, and *ches* = men, people (Ramírez Sendoya 1952, 207). Fray Pedro Simón claims the Panches was an umbrella name for several smaller groups: “[...] comúnmente se llaman panches, alargando el nombre, con todo eso tiene sus diferentes provincias, como son los marquitanes que es donde está la ciudad, panches, panchiguas, lumbies, chapaimas, calamoimas, ondas, bocamenes, oritaes, guataquies, pántagoras y gualíes [...]” (Simón 1981, Tomo IV, Sexta Noticia Historial, XL)

²⁹³ “Relación del Nuevo Reino 1571...,” 111-12; *bazo*: de color moreno amarillo (DRAE 2001)

²⁹⁴ “[...] aunque la dicha provincia [del Nuevo Reyno de Granada] avia tenydo por esp(eci)al merced avernos mandado Revocar la ley que habla en lo de los yndios [...]” in “Visita a la Provincia de Mariquita [1559]...,” 75 (f.880r)

²⁹⁵ “Visita a la Provincia de Mariquita [1559]...,” 77 (f.880v)

²⁹⁶ Issued on November 27, 1548, this royal bill or *cédula real* mandated that a general “descripción” or description of all the Indians in New Granada be carried out in order to distribute them as “justly as possible” among the King and his encomenderos. For more on this topic, see Tovar Pinzón 1996, 7-9.

²⁹⁷ Idem, 75-76 (f. 880v)

²⁹⁸ Idem, 78 (f. 881r)

²⁹⁹ The land of the Panches properly constituted what was once known as “La Provincia de Tierra Caliente” (Simón 1981, Tomo IV, Sexta Noticia Historial, XL); and it is still called “Tierra Caliente” by people from Bogotá.

³⁰⁰ *Op. cit.*, 86 (f.885r).

³⁰¹ Of the eighteen missing encomenderos, only el Licenciado Venero would present himself a month later, on April 27, when Hernández visited his encomienda in Calamoina

³⁰² El Licenciado Venero, whose wife and children lived in Bogotá was absent, but two of his friends, Francisco de Medina and García Muñoz, testified on his behalf on April 4, 1559.

³⁰³ Pedroso is remembered as the conqueror of the Panches. He was part of Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada’s troops (Jiménez defeated the Muisca and founded Bogotá).

³⁰⁴ Honda is about 20 km (12 m.) away from Mariquita. It is Colombia’s most important inland port on the Magdalena River. Until the 1950s, people travelled from Cartagena to Honda by boat, and then made their way up the Andes from Honda to Bogotá on foot, mules, horses, and in the twentieth century, by train. At the time of the conquest, Honda was inhabited by the Ondaimas.

³⁰⁵ *Op. cit.*, 100, (f.891r). The document includes a summary of two posesión ceremonies in which López participated.

³⁰⁶ Written between 1559 and 1560, an anonymous report on the Kingdom of New Granada puts the number of Indians in the province of Mariquita at five or six per house: “[...] *La poblazón de los naturales es casas grandes de paja y en cada una viven cinco o seis indios, cada casa por sí muy apartada una de otra [...]*” (“Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino 1559-1560,” Anonymous in *Cespedesia* Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963,60)

³⁰⁷ *Op. cit.*, 119, (f.901r).

³⁰⁸ *Idem.*

³⁰⁹ *Id.*

³¹⁰ *Id.*, 128 (f. 903v).

³¹¹ This is now the word used in Colombia for T-shirts.

³¹² *Op. cit.*, 122, (f.902r)

³¹³ *Op. cit.*, 124, (f.902v)

³¹⁴ 1 arroba = 11.5 kg or 25.3 lbs.

³¹⁵ 1 peso = 8 tomines

³¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, 126, (f.903r)

³¹⁷ Located between Honda and Mariquita.

³¹⁸ Stage within visitas in which an encomendero was required to present before the visitador witnesses attesting to the services he had provided to the Crown. See more on this, 101-102.

³¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, 218, (f.932v)

³²⁰ Visitas in Honda: Juan López’s encomienda, April 19; Melchor de Sotomayor’s, April 20; Bachiller Venero’s encomienda, April 22; Alonso de Vera’s encomienda, April 24; Visitas in Calamoina: Antonio de Toledo’s encomienda, April 26; Bachiller Venero’s encomienda, April 27; Blas Martínez’s encomienda, April 28; Diego de Posadas’ encomienda, April 29; Juan López’s encomienda, May 5; Melchor de Sotomayor’s encomienda, May 24; Visitas in Chapaima: Melchor de Sotomayor’s encomienda, June 23; Juan López’s encomienda, June 24.

³²¹ *Op. cit.*, 308, (f.964r)

³²² *Op. cit.*, 129, (f.904r).

³²³ *Op. cit.*, 130, (f.904r)

³²⁴ *Op. cit.*, 136, (f.905v)

³²⁵ *Op. cit.*, 381, (f.985r)

³²⁶ *Op. cit.*, 382, (f.985r)

³²⁷ *Op. cit.*, 321, (f.967r) The summaries of the posesión ceremonies included in the deeds for these encomiendas show that six years earlier (when most of these ceremonies had taken place), the majority of the principales who presented themselves claimed to have two caciques each: “[...] Respondió que se llamava Morgua y q(ue) su caçique se llamava uno Sarramyta y otro Yvio e q(ue) heran según señalaba de la dicha p(r)ovi(nci)a [...]” (*Op. cit.*, 286/f.955v); “[...] dixo llamarse Tebi y q(ue)s su caziq(ue) Moriatep y otro Comyaca [...]” (*Op. cit.*, 290/f.957r). This is intriguing, especially in light of the fact that most of the statuary representing caciques in the Museo del Oro in Bogotá are portrayed as having two heads, suggesting perhaps social structures which involved two lines of command or authority.

³²⁸ *Op. cit.*, 269, (f.949r)

³²⁹ *Op. cit.*, 380 (f.985r)

³³⁰ *Op. cit.*, 202 (f.926v)

³³¹ Cieza 1984, XXIV.

³³² “Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino 1559-1560...” 101

³³³ “Relación del Nuevo Reino 1571...” 111

³³⁴ *Op. cit.*, 63.

³³⁵ *Op. cit.*, 177 (f.919r)

³³⁶ *Op. cit.*, 209 (f.928v) 1 peso = 450 maravedís; 1 ducado = 375 maravedís

³³⁷ *Op. cit.*, 149 (f.909r)

³³⁸ Groot 2008, 25, 77, 129.

³³⁹ *Op. cit.*, 63.

³⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, 300 (f.959v) This same *ordenanza* banned encomenderos from using Indians as *cargueros* to carry goods on their backs over the mountains.

³⁴¹ Ardila 2005, 193.

³⁴² *Op. cit.*, 136 (f.905v) The *fanega* or *fanegada* was originally a unit of dry capacity for grain and also the amount of land that could be sown with that unit. It amounted to 55.5 l. or 1.57 US bushels.

³⁴³ *Op. cit.*, 143 (f.907v)

³⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, 63.

³⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, 327 (f.969r)

³⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, 188 (f.923r)

³⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, 255 (f.945r)

³⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, 276 (f.951v)

³⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*, 124 (f.902v)

³⁵⁰ *Op. cit.*, 383-84 (f.985r)

³⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, 363 (f.978v)

³⁵² *Op. cit.*, 275 (f.951r)

³⁵³ *Op. cit.*, 196 (f.925r)

³⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, 188 (f.923r)

³⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, 203 (f.927r)

³⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, 222 (f.933v)

³⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, 223 (f.934r) Tamalameque is a town located on the banks of the Magdalena River in the northern coastal province of César, several days' journey downriver from Honda.

³⁵⁸ *Op. cit.*, 227 (f.935r) Mompo is an island on the Magdalena River in the northern coastal province of Bolívar, some 250 km (155 m.) from Cartagena.

³⁵⁹ *Op. cit.*, 356 (f.977r); *Bozal*: not domesticated; just out of their country of origin (DRAE 2001)

³⁶⁰ Clothes made in the land by the Indians for the Indians.

³⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, 273 (f.950v)

³⁶² *Op. cit.*, 139 (f.906r)

³⁶³ *Op. cit.*, 205 (f.927v)

³⁶⁴ Vast plain on the Eastern Cordillera where Bogotá and Tunja (an important town during colonial times) are located.

³⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, 220 (f.933r)

³⁶⁶ Fray Pedro Simón claims the Indians in and around Santa Marta obtained arms from French pirate ships: "*La mucha de oleaje y de alteraciones de mar que le sobrevino al francés, le obligó a arribar y a arrojar anclas en el puerto de Chengue a donde, sabiéndolo Xebo, llegó con algunos de sus indios a rescatar con buenas piezas de oro que llevaba. Salióle a hablar un soldado vascongado navarrisco que venía con los franceses, a quien le dixo Xebo sólo venía a rescatar arcabuces, pólvora y municiones para sí, en que no dudaron luego ser aquello lo que pedía viendo a Xebo vestido a la española y ceñida espada y daga. Y así le dieron de todo esto que pedía, a trueco de buenas joyas, de que se pagarían a precios más largos que ajustados. De estas compras y de los pillajes que hemos dicho, vinieron a tener arcabuces los bondas [...] Y aún a las veces salían a las guazábaras llevando además de arcos y flechas algunos arcabuces, y hechas las cargas, frascos de pólvora en el cuello, y a los brazos rollos de mechas, celadas en las cabezas y espadas en cinto.*" Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Quinta Noticia Historial, XXII; *celada* = helmet. As we shall see, there is evidence that by 1610, the Pixaos were using harquebuses, canons, and gun powder, although it is not clear whether these were obtained through trade or simply captured from the Spanish.

³⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, 322 (f.967v)

³⁶⁸ Natagaima is approximately 230 km. (140 m.) south of Mariquita; it was originally inhabited by a subgroup of the Pixaos — the Natagaimas.

³⁶⁹ "Visita de Thomas López a Natagaima [1562]," AGN (Bogotá), Visitas del Tolima, ff. 925r-930v, in Tovar Pinzón, Hermes, 1995, *Relaciones y Visitas a los Andes: Siglo XVI, Región del Alto Magdalena, Tomo IV*, Bogotá, Colcultura, 407-418.

³⁷⁰ *Idem*, 410 (f.926r) *Lego*: lay.

³⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, 304 (f.961r) Located 118 km. (75 m.) south of Mariquita, Ibagué (or San Bonifacio de Ibagué del Valle de las Lanzas) is the capital of the Tolima province. It was first founded on October 14, 1550 by captain Andrés López de Galarza where the town of Cajamarca lies today (42 km./ 26 m. west) but later moved to its current location due to the continued harassment of the Pixaos. The Pixaos who inhabited at large portion of the present-day Huila and Tolima provinces were neighbors with the Panches who lived in the northernmost tip of the Tolima province. The Pixao attacks against Ibagué continued well into the seventeenth century. We know, for example, that in 1557 they again laid siege to the city because in a 1559 encomienda dispute, we learn that one "[...] *Martyn Uchoa tenya abra año y m(edi)o poco más o menos un rrepartim(enti)no de yndios que llaman la Culata con el caçique llamado Mapayn y otros y abrá*

el dicho tiempo que salió de la dicha villa y vino a Ybagué e yendo a la pasificación de los yndios de Ybagué murió [...]” “Sobre los Yndios de la Culata en la Provincia de Neiva [1559],” AGN (Bogotá), Historia Civil 16, ff. 896r-911r, in Tovar Pinzón, Hermes, 1995, *Relaciones y Visitas a los Andes: Siglo XVI, Región del Alto Magdalena, Tomo IV*, Bogotá, Colcultura, 391-402.

³⁷² The Colimas inhabited the present-day province of Cundinamarca and their territory bordered on that of the Panches.

³⁷³ *Op. cit.*, 241 (f.938v)

³⁷⁴ *Op. cit.*, 164 (f.914v)

³⁷⁵ *Op. cit.*, 136 (f.905v)

³⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, 140 (f.906v)

³⁷⁷ The information regarding Diego de Posadas’ encomienda in Calamoina is incomplete. This is why I have not included a population table for his encomienda.

³⁷⁸ *Elegías de Varones Ilustres*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, Canto VII; fray Pedro Simón also holds the same claim: “*Con lo cual contenta la vieja [La Gaitana] y atribuyéndose a sí ambas estas dos cosas [verdad y justicia], volvió a dar vuelta por las provincias convecinas una y muchas veces, y manifestándoles el oráculo, les volvió a irritar para de nuevo tomar las armas y venir contra nosotros. Alargóse en estas diligencias a más provincias que las pasadas, pues llegó hasta la de los panaes o pamaos que están cerca de donde hoy llaman los nuestros los Organos, por unas encumbradas puntas de peña tajada que hay allí puestas en forma de órganos, unas más y otras menos levantadas, y a la provincia de los pinaos que confina con ésta a la parte del occidente, que es la de los indios que hoy llaman pijaos [...]*” (Simón 1981, Tomo V, Segunda Noticia Historial, XXIV). The *Serranía de los Órganos* is part of the Central Cordillera in the Tolima province.

³⁷⁹ Rodríguez Freyle 1639, 347-48.

³⁸⁰ In a 1547 report on the province of Popayán, the visitador, Sebastián de Magaña, described the situation in the region in the following words: “*Los naturales de ella [de la provincia de Popayán] son pocos, y más en algunos pueblos que en otros; son de poca razón, no hay señores entre ellos que los manden, comen carne humana generalmente en toda esta Gobernación y en unos pueblos más que en otros [...] ha un poco más de dos años que se hizo toda la tierra a una para matar a los españoles; y así se están todavía de guerra, que no han venido al servicio de Dios Nuestro Señor ni de Vuestra Majestad [...] Los diezmos de toda esta Gobernación, salvo Arma y Antioquia, que cómo está toda la tierra de guerra no se contratan [...] la villa de Guacacallo en doscientos y cincuenta pesos [...] el año pasado no valieron tanto por las alteraciones que hubo; asentada la tierra y puesta en toda paz y quietud, créese que valdrán algo más los diezmos cada año.*” (“*Carta de Sebastián de Magaña, Visitador de la Real Caja de Popayán: Describe su Llegada y Estado de la Provincia*,” December 12, 1547, in Garcés 1936, 269)

³⁸¹ Ordoñez de Ceballos 1616, 136.

³⁸² “*Pues estas gentes [los pijaos], por más tiempo de cuarenta y cinco años, infestaban, robaban y salteaban estos dos caminos [Valle del Río Cauca and Valle del Río Grande de la Magdalena], matando a los pasajeros, hombres, mujeres, niños, sacerdotes, con todos los criados y gentes que los acompañaba [...]* Por la muerte del licenciado Salierna de Mariaca, visitador, y gente que los acompañaban, muchas veces subieron capitanes a guerrearlos, entrándoseles en sus propias tierras, pero como tenían las dos fuertes guaridas del Río Grande

[de la Magdalena] y de montañas, hacía poco efecto. Pues llegó a tanta desvergüenza el atrevimiento de esta gente, que quemaron y robaron tres ciudades: la de Neiva, el año de 1570; la ciudad de Páez, el año de 1572; la ciudad de San Sebastián de la Plata, el de 1577; y últimamente acometieron a la ciudad de Ibagué como diré en su lugar.” (Rodríguez Freyle 1639, 348-49).

³⁸³ Bernal Andrade, Leovigildo, 1993, *Los heroicos pijaos y el chaparral de los reyes*, Bogotá, Litho-Imagen.

³⁸⁴ “Este fue el nombre [‘Otro Mundo’] que recibió una de las zonas de refugio a las que solían ir los indios que, por su voluntad o por huir del castigo de alguna infracción cometida necesitaban ponerse fuera del alcance de la mano española. Los Ibéricos las llamaban ‘ladroneras.’ De estas se ha podido establecer que existían dos [en territorio Muzo], una ubicada hacia el norte por la margen del río minero y otra entre Muzo y Ubaté en la zona de Turtur.” (Rodríguez Baquero 1995, 86)

³⁸⁵ “Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino [1559-1560] ...,” 37. Tomás López’s 1557 visita of the province of Popayán was the first visita to take place in the Kingdom of New Granada.

³⁸⁶ “Particularidades del Nuevo Reino [1572] por los Oficiales Reales de Santa Fe de Bogotá” in *Cespedesía Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca*, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 123

³⁸⁷ Gutiérrez 1991, 336.

³⁸⁸ “De la ciudad de Popayán a la ciudad de San Sebastián de la Plata hay veinte leguas, todo de camino muy doblado de montañas, que no se puede andar recua. Reedificó esta ciudad el capitán Quintero por comisión del licenciado Briceño, siendo gobernador. Los naturales de ella son de mala desición y cáusalo que dos provincias a ellos comarcanos están alzados muchos días hay y fuera de servidumbre, que son la provincia de Páez y la de los Pijaos. Entreambas a dos son caribes y que continuamente vienen a comer a los indios a ellos comarcanos, que son a los de esta ciudad y Neiva y Timaná y Popayán, como más claro parece en la pintura. Hay minas de oro generalmente en estos términos de esta ciudad; y de plata están descubiertas muy ricas, y por el poco posible de los españoles no se labran. Hanse ensayado muchas veces el metal y acude a sesenta marcos por quintal. Si se diese orden como se labrasen, bastarían a enriquecer todo este distrito, porque se sacaría gran suma de plata. No la tasó el licenciado Tomás López en forma, por no estar los naturales de buena paz, más de dejarles una moderación de los aprovechamientos que habían de llevar a los indios [...] De la ciudad de Timaná a la villa de Neiva hay 20 leguas. Poblóla el adelantado Benalcázar. Tiene su asiento en principio del valle de Neiva, como parece en la pintura. El temple es calisísimo y malsano. Los naturales della son muy pocos y de mala servidumbre. Su poblazón es de tierra fría y en venir a servir a lo caliente recibe gran daño, y es a esta causa son menos cada día, porque confinan con ellos los páez y pijaos, que también comen su parte. No hay sitio donde puedan mudarse el pueblo de los españoles en la sierra y poblazón de los indios, por estar tan cercanos a ellos los dichos pijaos y páez y el valle de Saldaña y los Manipos, que no serían parte los españoles para se defender de ninguna provincia de estas, porque hay en ellas — a lo que se tiene visto y entendido — más de 30. 000 indios, la mejor tierra y más rica de oro que hay en la gobernación de Popayán.” (“Relación de Popayán y del Nuevo Reino 1559-1560...,” 37-39).

³⁸⁹ “El trágico suceso de la tenencia de la Plata [...] el cual se quedó sin castigo alguno de los agresores, porque no lo pudo tener, insolentó a todos estos bárbaros con el mal ejemplo y ese mismo trágico suceso puso en consternación a todas las colonias españolas, temiendo alguna

sublevación general. Aquellos que estaban más expuestos y amenazadas, procuraron estar siempre sobre las armas y en vela. Vivían los hombres como refugiados dentro de las ciudades, sin atreverse ninguno a dormir fuera de ellas ni menos a viajar recelándose aún de los indios fieles.” (Velasco 1789, 24-25). Although Juan Rodríguez Freyle claims San Sebastián de La Plata was destroyed in 1577, Juan de Velasco claims the town was destroyed in 1564.

³⁹⁰ Velasco 1789, 42.

³⁹¹ Friede 1947, 59-65. Ten per cent tax destined for the Church, charities, or the King in times of war.

³⁹² “[...] *por no haberles quedado mujeres que les beneficiasen la comida, [los Pijaos] andaban aperreados, flacos y macilentos, hasta acabar la vida, como encontraban a cada paso los soldados cuerpos muertos de hambre o cámaras, que les daban de beber agua por no tener mujeres que les hiciesen chicha o masato, que era lo que siempre bebían sin probar agua, y así ahora los corrompía y acababa.*” Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XLIX; *cámaras*: diarrhea

³⁹³ “Relación de la Palma de los Colimas [1581]” by Gutierre de Ovalle et al. in *Cespedesia* Boletín Científico del Departamento del Valle del Cauca, n. 45-46, Cali, June 1963, 256.

³⁹⁴ Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XXX

³⁹⁵ “Declaración de Juan de Mosquera [Agosto 7, 1603]” in “Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron; en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” (Ortega Ricaurte 1949, 265-267) See also “Declaración de una india que trajo Mosquera, de la salida [Agosto 11, 1603]” (Idem, 281-283).

³⁹⁶ “To these Indians [Karankawa or Caoques] we said that we wanted to go to where the sun set. And they replied to us that in that direction the people were far away. And we ordered them to send people to inform them that we were going there, and from this they excused themselves as best they could, because they were their enemies and they did not want us to go to them, but they did not dare to do anything else. And thus they sent two women, one of their own and another who was a captive of theirs. And they sent them out because women can mediate even when there is war.” (Núñez, Álvaro Cabeza de Vaca, 2003, *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 145)

³⁹⁷ The present-day province of Tolima takes its name from the *cacica*’s. Until 1905 the Huila and Tolima provinces formed one province known as Tolima Grande. Tolima or Tulima means *nevado* or snow-capped mountain and it is also the name of Colombia’s third tallest volcano — el Nevado del Tolima — at 5200 m (17601 f.). The Cerro Machín which according to legend the *cacica* Tulima guarded is also a volcano at 2650 m (8694 f.).

Chapter Four

³⁹⁸ “Elena India residente en Esta Ibague El Amparo de su libertad [1590-1612]” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 66, ff. 619r-624v.

³⁹⁹ “Testigo, Alonso Vicario [August 18, 1603]” in “Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron; en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 294-297.

⁴⁰⁰ From the Basque word *moxtil* for boy, errand boy, letter carrier or messenger (DRAE 2001). By extension, the Spanish applied the word *mochila* to the traditional hand-woven bags widely used by Indians in the Americas.

⁴⁰¹ *Op. Cit.*, f. 622v.

⁴⁰² Tocaima is located 110 km/68 mi. north-east of Ibagué in the province of Cundinamarca.

⁴⁰³ *Op. Cit.*, f. 622r.

⁴⁰⁴ According to popular legend, the Pixaos struggle against the Spaniards was led by one outstanding war-chief called Calarcá. Fray Pedro Simón, who chronicled the Spanish campaign against the Pixaos claims Calarcá was elected as “*capitán general*” to lead the July 19, 1606 attack on Ibagué (Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XXXIII) He also claims Calarcá was regularly elected as the Pixaos’ captain general (“[...] *el cacique Calarcá que de ordinario lo elegían por su capitán general*”) and describes him as a “*gran mohán, hechicero y adivino*” (Idem, XLI). Simón, however, mentions many other “*principales*” who played an important role in the Pixaos fight against the Spanish like Tocuavi, Matora, Chequera, Beco, Tala, Plátano, Pucharma, Chanama, Paluma, Tuquimba, Belara, Cocurga, and Coyara. Although he does describe Calarcá as “*uno de los principales y más importantes nervios de esta guerra*” (Idem, XXXVIII).

⁴⁰⁵ Idem.

⁴⁰⁶ Ramírez Sendoya 1952, 236

⁴⁰⁷ Ibagué or Yavague was founded on October 14, 1550 by captain Andrés López de Galarza. The city was named San Bonifacio de Ibagué del Valle de las Lanzas. It was located where the town of Cajamarca lies today. A year later, on February 7, 1551, due to the continuous attacks of the Indians in the area, the town was relocated to its present site on the Combeima River.

⁴⁰⁸ *Op. Cit.*, f. 620r.

⁴⁰⁹ Ramírez Sendoya 1952, 248. Alvarado is located 27 km/17 mi. northwest of Ibagué.

⁴¹⁰ *Op. Cit.*, f. 622r.

⁴¹¹ Idem.

⁴¹² According to Friede, in a seventeenth-century court case, the cacica Doña Alegría of the Chinchiná (Caldas province) encomienda which belonged to one Juan Bautista Vélez declared: “*Que fue casada con el cacique de Roldanillo y tuvo cuatro hijos [...] Que por pertenecer las hijas a la madre y los hijos al padre, conforme la costumbre de aquella tierra, se han puesto en esta descripción.*” Friede added that the girls were listed as part of the encomienda, but not the boys. (Friede 1963, 190-191) “

⁴¹³ *Op. Cit.*, f. 622r.

⁴¹⁴ This reconstruction is largely based on Governor Juan de Borja’s 1608 report to the king on the war against the Pixaos: “*Guerra de los pijaos. Relación y discurso de la guerra, que por especial cédula y horden de Sus Magestades cometida a don Joan de Borja Presidente Governador y Capitán General del Nuevo Reyno de Granada se hacen contra los Indios Rebeldes de la Provincia de los Pijaos con apuntamiento breve de la discrepción dellas conforme, a la demarcación de la ciudad de Santa Fé [June 20, 1608]*” (*Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, No. 159, August, Bogotá, Academia Nacional de Historia, 129-164) Borja’s report as well as the other documents examined in this chapter list nine different rebel provinces in what was Panche territory: Metayma, Cacatayma, Bulira, Otayma, Mayto, Beuni, Tetuán, Ambeyma, and Amoya. The Spanish settlement of Ibagué (formally Yavague) was located in the valley of Metayma. The province of Mayto was apparently far enough away from Ibagué for Bilapue and Gualara — two of the mohanes cited by captured Indian prisoners as heads of the Pixaos resistance — to feel it was safe enough to take refuge there. According to the Indian prisoners’ testimonies, both Bilapue and Gualara were from the province of Cacatayma, which was inhabited by a subgroup

of the Pixaos known as the Putimaes. Because Cacatayma was located some 163 km. (100 m) south of Ibagué, it was subject to constant Spanish *salidas* (de castigo) or reprisal expeditions. The fact that the Indians in these documents are described by Spaniards as *pixaos* suggests that the word had come to denote rebel Indians, regardless of whether they were in fact Pixaos or Panches, as was most certainly the case here.

⁴¹⁵ As with the Native North American vision quest, the mohanes' vision-seeking techniques described in Borja's report suggests that they too endeavored, through sleep deprivation, to reach a point in consciousness where the distinction between sleep and wakefulness became blurred.

⁴¹⁶ Taíno equivalent of the nahuatl chilli or chili (RAE 2001)

⁴¹⁷ In Governor Borja's report, the Pixaos' most important god is described as Locombo, the god of time, eternal and infinite. Fray Pedro Simón claims that during a salida in the Serranía de los Orgános (Central Cordillera, Tolima province), Spanish soldiers found a statue of a Pixao god "*que llamaban Lulumoy, que quiere decir dios grande, con tres cabezas, seis brazos y seis piernas.*" (Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, L)

⁴¹⁸ The word appears in the documents examined in this section, but is also used by Fray Pedro Simón in his *Noticias Historiales* to refer to Pixao warriors. According to the RAE, the word used to denote certain members of the Moors' army in Granada, Spain; it was later applied to scoundrels, truants, and savage Indians as well.

⁴¹⁹ "Declaración de Pedro Chalema, indio cacique [November 3, 1602]" ("Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno," in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 8)

⁴²⁰ "Declaración de don Juan, indio [November 3, 1602]" ("Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno," in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 8)

⁴²¹ "Declaración de Pedro, indio [November 3, 1602]" ("Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno," in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 7)

⁴²² "Auto de la Audiencia Real de Santafé por medio de la cual, a petición del cabildo de Ibagué declara por esclavos por tiempo de diez años continuos a los pijaos [November 22, 1602]" in Bernal Andrade 1993, 255-258.

⁴²³ The cities of Tocaima, Ibagué, Cartago, Buga and Timaná roughly encircled the rebel provinces of Metayma, Cacatayma, Bulira, Otayma, Mayto, Beuni, Tetuán, Ambeyma, and Amoya located in the heartland of the present-day Tolima and Huila provinces.

⁴²⁴ Idem

⁴²⁵ Located 68 km or 42 mi. southeast of Ibagué.

⁴²⁶ "Testigo Gaspar Rodríguez del Olmo [December 27, 1602]" ("Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno," in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 36-37)

⁴²⁷ "Testigo Alonso Cobo, el mozo [December 27, 1602]" ("Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno," in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 35)

⁴²⁸ Cacatayma was located approximately 163 km (100 m.) south of Ibagué. Nestled between the present-day provinces of Tolima and Valle del Cauca, it became a favorite point for the Pixaos from which to launch attacks on the towns of Ibagué (Tolima), Buga and Cartago (Valle del Cauca) located 195 km (120 m.) and 173 km (107 m) southeast of Ibagué respectively.

⁴²⁹ "Carta del Cabildo de Cartago a la Audiencia Real de Santafé [Cartago, December 27, 1602]" in Bernal Andrade 1993, 248-249. Cartago's houses and other buildings were roofed with palm leaves; nestled in the mountains where the city of Pereira (Risaralda province) lies today, it

would have been very easy for the wind to pick up and burn the entire town. Due to the constant attacks of the Chocoos and the Pixaos the city was relocated to its present-day location in 1691.

⁴³⁰ The first letter was sent on December 27, 1602.

⁴³¹ Name given by the Spaniards to the Emberás and Uananas who inhabited the present-day coastal province of Chocó located between Panamá to the north and the province of Valle del Cauca to the south.

⁴³² “Carta del Cabildo de Cartago a la Audiencia Real de Santafé, en la cual avisa cómo los tienen cercados los pijaos y piden socorro [Cartago, January 24, 1603]” in Bernal Andrade, 1993, 249-251.

⁴³³ Juan de Velasco claims few people were left in Cartago: “[...] *pocos españoles, negros y mulatos, que tal vez no llegan a 400 personas.*” (Velasco 1789 (1946), 268).

⁴³⁴ The Coyaimas were another subgroup of the Pixaos, living primarily along the Magdalena River basin. The Coyaimas sided with the Spaniards and were instrumental in defeating the Pixaos from the sierra.

⁴³⁵ 103 km/64 mi. south of Ibagué.

⁴³⁶ “Testigo, Alonso Vicario [August 18, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron; en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 294-297) See also “Contradican el castigo que va a hacer Jaramillo [August 18, 1603]” in Bernal Andrade, 1993, 272-274.

⁴³⁷ “Testigo Alonso indio [July 2, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 66)

⁴³⁸ “Testimonio del rebato que dieron los indios pijaos” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 126-129) *Rebato*: sudden enemy attack

⁴³⁹ *Idem*. *Mazato*: corn/rice drink; *envueltos*: corn tamales called so because they are wrapped in leaves. Both *masato* and *envueltos* are widely consumed in Colombia even today; *yesca*: tinder; *arroba*: Spanish weight of 11 kg or 25 lbs.; *bija* (*bixa orellana*): plant used by the Pixaos to paint their bodies red. Fray Pedro Simón claims the Pixaos painted their bodies with red and yellow stripes: “[...] *llegando a una cumbre, hallaron talado y limpio de arcabuco un buen pedazo, y en dos varas gruesas atravesadas de un árbol a otro [...] puestos en hilera, doce idolillos de madera, embijados y pintados con unas listas de amarillo y colorado, al modo que suelen salir los indios a la guerra.*” (Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XL) *Bija* naturally gives off a red yellowish taint. Interestingly, red and yellow are the official colors of El Deportes Tolima, Tolima’s soccer team, known to fans as “Los Pijaos.”

⁴⁴⁰ “Testimonio del rebato que dieron los indios pijaos [July 23, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 126-129) *Lid*: battle.

⁴⁴¹ *Idem*

⁴⁴² *Idem*

⁴⁴³ “Declaración de Miguel de la Peña [July 26, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 254-256)

⁴⁴⁴ “Dicho de la india Yachimba [August 1, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 258)

⁴⁴⁵ *“Halláronse en el rancheo cosas españolas que las habían habido en despojos de los nuestros [...] como fueron, de más de otras cosas, la llave del arcabuz del sargento Arguinichea y la mitad del cañón que tenían dividido por medio, aplicado para punta de lanza, que lo disponen para esto con una destreza maravillosa, pues cortan el hierro y el acero y un cañón de arcabuz, a lo largo o en los trozos que quieren, con una delgada hebra de algodón torcido con arena y agua, que es a todo lo que puede llegar el arte, pues parece imposible.”* (Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XLIII).

⁴⁴⁶ Idem

⁴⁴⁷ Id.

⁴⁴⁸ “Declaración de Vivi, indio [August 1, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 259)

⁴⁴⁹ Idem

⁴⁵⁰ Id.

⁴⁵¹ “Declaración de Juan de Mosquera [August 7, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron; en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 265-267)

⁴⁵² Idem

⁴⁵³ Id.

⁴⁵⁴ Id.

⁴⁵⁵ “Declaración de una india que trajo Mosquera, de la salida [August 11, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron; en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 281-283)

⁴⁵⁶ Located at the heart of the Tolima province some 103 km/65mi. south of Ibagué near the town of Ortega.

⁴⁵⁷ “Testigo, Alonso Vicario [August 18, 1603]” (“Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron; en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte, ed., 1949, 294-297)

⁴⁵⁸ “Contradican el castigo que va a hacer Jaramillo [August 18, 1603]” in Bernal Andrade, 1993, 272-274.

⁴⁵⁹ Idem

⁴⁶⁰ Tocaima is located 102 km/65 mi. northeast of Ibagué and 62 km/38 mi. southwest of Bogotá.

⁴⁶¹ “Aviso del capitán Pedro Jaramillo de Andrade [Tocaima, August 31, 1603]” in Bernal Andrade, 1993, 276-278.

⁴⁶² “Relación que hace el capitán Diego de Bocanegra a la Audiencia, por orden del Gobernador de Popayán, de la cantidad de indios pijaos que hay y disposición de la tierra y cómo se podrá hacer la guerra [June 5, 1603]” in “Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte 1949, 129-64.

⁴⁶³ Velasco 1789 (1946), 24-25.

⁴⁶⁴ Idem. Velasco went on to write that: “Upon the pitiful fall of this government [Macas], the total ruin of the territory of Yaguarzongo followed as a consequence, and the almost total ruin of Jaén [...] and that of Loja and Quijos [...] Even the highest and most secure provinces of the Kingdom [of Quito] experienced notable unrest on the part of the peoples upon notification of the horrendous catastrophe: it reached even the barbaric nations of Popayán, and caused them, by its bad example, to commit the insolences and destructions to which I referred in speaking of its cities.” (cited in Harner 1984, 25)

⁴⁶⁵ “Relación que hace el capitán Diego de Bocanegra a la Audiencia, por orden del Gobernador de Popayán, de la cantidad de indios pijaos que hay y disposición de la tierra y cómo se podrá hacer la guerra [June 5, 1603]” in “Autos en razón de los daños que los indios pijaos hicieron en la ciudad de Ybague y su contorno,” in Ortega Ricaurte 1949, 107.

⁴⁶⁶ San Sebastián de Mariquita was a very important town during colonial times. Located 100 km (62 m.) north of Ibagué, at the foot of the Eastern Cordillera, it was the last town on the Magdalena River basin before ascending to the altiplano and from there to Santa Fé de Bogotá. Conversely, it was the entry point to the Magdalena River basin region. Economically speaking, it was chosen due to its geographical location but also to its rich silver and gold mines. The town was also a storing center for the gold and silver mined throughout the region.

⁴⁶⁷ So critical was the situation that the Spanish had to work the mines in and around Mariquitá with conducciones of Indians from the Altiplano. A 1601 document from a royal silver mine — the Real de minas de Nuestra Señora del Rosario — in the vicinity of Mariquitá listing the wages paid to indigenous miners indicates that there were few Panche men among the miners. Indeed, most of the names are Muisca names: juan yndio de sogamosso; pedro ladino de hubate; andres tabio; pedro bogota; francisco suba; alonso teusaca; andres guatavita; miguel choconta; alonso tocansipa; francisco chia; pedro boxaca; diego hontibon; francisco cota; alonso cajica; joanico de ubaque; juan choachi; miguel de guasca; alonso lache; perequito de uvate; francisco tenjo; agustin fusaquen; and luis tunja (“La Plata: Pago de Jornales a Indios [1601]” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Tolima, Tomo 2, ff. 936r-974v)

⁴⁶⁸ Cédula Real, Ventocilla, April 25, 1605, cited in Bernal Andrade 1993, 279

⁴⁶⁹ “Guerra de los pijaos. Relación y discurso de la guerra, que por especial cédula y horden de Sus Magestades cometida a don Joan de Borja Presidente Governador y Capitán General del Nuevo Reyno de Granada se hacen contra los Indios Rebeldes de la Provincia de los Pijaos con apuntamiento breve de la discrepción dellas conforme, a la demarcación de la ciudad de Santa Fé [June 20, 1608]” in *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, No. 159, August, Bogotá, Academia Nacional de Historia, 129-164.

⁴⁷⁰ Cited in Bernal Andrade 1993, 102.

⁴⁷¹ Idem

⁴⁷² Id.

⁴⁷³ Id.

⁴⁷⁴ Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, L.

⁴⁷⁵ Idem. In popular lore it is reported that the cacica Tulima nearly escaped from her Spanish captors: this is what Simón seems to imply by sarcastically saying that the devil almost rode away (“*se la arrebató de las manos a las postas*”) with her.

⁴⁷⁶ “Coyaimas y Natagaimas” by Diana E. Oliveros in Correa 1996, 157-158. The town of Coyaima is located 114 km/70 mi. southwest of Ibagué. The resguardo’s original demarcation was “*desde la iglesia de los Coyaima que llaman Saldaña hasta llegar al río de Saldaña y por él abajo hasta llegar a la quebrada que llaman Doyare y por la otra banda del mismo río de Saldaña abajo hasta el desemboque del río Cucuana en él; y de allí por la quebrada de Aico arriba hasta su nacimiento y del Saldaña arriba hasta donde entra el río Amoyá por una y otra banda del río Saldaña.*” (Idem)

⁴⁷⁷ Idem. The town of Natagaima is located 118 km/73 mi. southwest of Ibagué. According to historian Adolfo Triana Antoverza this was the resguardo’s original demarcation: “*desde la iglesia de Natagaima hasta el río Magdalena y por él arriba de esta banda del pueblo hasta la*

quebrada que llaman Paba, y por la otra banda del dicho río, desde la dicha iglesia, corriendo por el mismo río arriba, hasta donde desemboca el río Cabrera y desde la dicha banda donde desemboca el Magdalena abajo hasta donde desemboca la quebrada de Hilarco y hasta la isla que está enfrente de dicha quebrada.” (Triana 1992, 57)

⁴⁷⁸ Friede, 1963, 165

⁴⁷⁹ “Guerra de los pijaos. Relación y discurso de la guerra, que por especial cédula y horden de Sus Magestades cometida a don Joan de Borja Presidente Governador y Capitán General del Nuevo Reyno de Granada se hacen contra los Indios Rebeldes de la Provincia de los Pijaos con apuntamiento breve de la discreción dellas conforme, a la demarcación de la ciudad de Santa Fé [June 20, 1608]” in *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, No. 159, August, Bogotá, Academia Nacional de Historia, 129-64.

⁴⁸⁰ “Venta de piezas [1610]” AGN (Bogotá), Notaría 2, Tomo 13, f. 186r.

⁴⁸¹ Triana 1992, 291.

⁴⁸² Idem, 164. Popular legend holds don Baltázar killed the famous Pixao leader Calarcá. The legend holds that through his marriage to a Spanish woman, don Baltázar hoped to secure an alliance with the Spaniards. Because of this — legend holds — Calarcá despised him. The legend also claims Calarcá kidnapped and killed don Baltázar’s child by his Spanish wife. As a result, there ensued a terrible enmity between the Pixao factions led by Calarcá on the one hand, and don Baltázar on the other hand. In the end, according to the legend, don Baltázar killed Calarcá with a spear. However, according to fray Pedro Simón, Calarcá was killed by captain Diego de Ospina y Maldonado (Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XLII). And indeed, in a *probanza de méritos y servicios* dating from 1650, captain Diego de Ospina y Maldonado claims he shot Calarcá “[...] con una pistola mató al dicho cacique y él y sus soldados a otros muchos indios y prendieron vivos a otros y de los que murieron se pusieron sus cabezas en la cerca de dicho fuerte, con que los demás se redujeron a todo punto [...]” (AGN, Bogotá, Colonia, Miscelánea, Tomo 73, ff. 190r-191v). Don Baltázar was later immortalized for his prowess with the *lanza* — the thirty-long-palmas (approximately 7.5 m/24’) spear of the Pijaos. In 1610, the president of the Audiencia Real, don Juan de Borja deposited such a spear (allegedly don Baltázar’s spear) at the Santo Domingo convent in Ibagué (San Bonifacio de Ibagué del Valle de las Lanzas). The spear was later transferred to the city’s cathedral where it remained until the earthquake that destroyed the cathedral in 1827. According to historian Enrique Ortega Ricaurte, in 1813, a man named José Francisco Pereira published a book called *Devocionario de Ibagué* in which he included a poem entitled “Novena de Ibagué” which he claimed was a copy of the words that were engraved in Ibagué’s cathedral: “*Esta es la lanza que fue del señor don Baltasar, lque por ser tan singular, lla adora todo Ibagué [...] ¡Oh Lanza a quien Baltasar/manejó con gran destreza,ly se puso por grandezalen la iglesia del lugar,lpara así recompensarltus méritos señalados!¡Lanza no caigas al suelo porque vuelven los pijaos!*” In 1817, the Spanish general Ramón Sicilia ordered all copies of this book to be burned because it was being used to stoke the fires of the war for independence. However, during the first decades of the republican period, the celebration of the heroic role of the Pixaos during colonial times decreased significantly. The following words, written in *Geografía Física y Política de las Provincias de la Nueva Granada* (1850) by Agustín Codazzi, the Italian leader of the geographical expedition organized at the time to map Colombia’s natural and human resources, in his travels through the Quimbaya-Pixao region of Quindío, are a stark contrast to the Indian-eulogizing-spirit that prevailed during the era of the war for independence: “[...] encastillado

Calarcá en las ásperas montañas de Barragán los españoles, siendo terror en todas sus correrías, saqueando los poblados y causando no pocas muertes y destrozos. Él, Calarcá, nunca intentó dar ni recibir batalla, sino vivir seguro en su impenetrable refugio, saliendo solamente al descuido a hacer todo el daño posible. Muerto este intrépido cacique, de pura vejez, emprendió la conquista el capitán Domingo Lozano, a cuyo arrojo no pudieron hacer ya frente los pijaos, faltándoles Calarcá que era el alma de la tribu.” (Codazzi 1958, 60-61)

⁴⁸³ “Guerra de los pijaos. Relación y discurso de la guerra, que por especial cédula y horden de Sus Magestades cometida a don Joan de Borja Presidente Governador y Capitán General del Nuevo Reyno de Granada se hacen contra los Indios Rebeldes de la Provincia de los Pijaos con apuntamiento breve de la discrepción dellas conforme, a la demarcación de la ciudad de Santa Fé [June 20, 1608]” in *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, No. 159, August, Bogotá, Academia Nacional de Historia, 129-64.

⁴⁸⁴ Triana 1992, 256.

⁴⁸⁵ “Guerra de los pijaos. Relación y discurso de la guerra, que por especial cédula y horden de Sus Magestades cometida a don Joan de Borja Presidente Governador y Capitán General del Nuevo Reyno de Granada se hacen contra los Indios Rebeldes de la Provincia de los Pijaos con apuntamiento breve de la discrepción dellas conforme, a la demarcación de la ciudad de Santa Fé [June 20, 1608]” in *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, No. 159, August, Bogotá, Academia Nacional de Historia, 129-164.

⁴⁸⁶ Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XXIV.

⁴⁸⁷ AGN (Bogotá), Notaría 2, Tomo 13, f. 186r. The Pixaos flattened their foreheads much in the same way that the Mayans did.

⁴⁸⁸ “Carta del fuerte de San Joan del Chaparral [1608]” AGN (Bogotá), Historia Civil, Tomo 17, f. 261r y 261v.

⁴⁸⁹ Cited in Triana 1992, 267. See also Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, L.

⁴⁹⁰ “Elena India residente en Esta Ibagüe El Amparo de su libertad [1590-1612]” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 66, ff. 619r-624v, f. 620r.

⁴⁹¹ Juan Friede refers how in an anonymous account of the conquest of New Granada, the cutting of someone’s hair among the Muiscas was depicted as a particular form of humiliation reserved for the nobility: “*También cortan manos, narices y orejas por delitos no tan grandes, y penas de vergüenza hay para las personas principales, como es rasgarles los vestidos y cortarles los cabellos, que entre ellos es gran ignominia.*” (Cited in Friede 1960, pp. 261-273).

⁴⁹² “Elena India residente en Esta Ibagüe El Amparo de su libertad [1590-1612]” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 66, ff. 619r-624v, f. 620r.

⁴⁹³ Idem

⁴⁹⁴ Id., f. 623r

⁴⁹⁵ Id., f. 623v

⁴⁹⁶ Id., f. 620v

⁴⁹⁷ Id., f. 623v. See also ff. 619r and 620r.

⁴⁹⁸ Friede 1943, 8

⁴⁹⁹ Triana 1992, 256.

⁵⁰⁰ “Elena India residente en Esta Ibagüe El Amparo de su libertad [1590-1612]” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 66, ff. 619r-624v, f. 620r.

⁵⁰¹ Idem, f. 619r

⁵⁰² This is a transcription of a slave sales receipt issued by Captain Juan de Ortega Carrillo to Diego Barrera on Thursday, May 13, 1610, at the fort of San Juan del Chaparral (“Venta de piezas [1610]” AGN (Bogotá), Notaría 2, Tomo 13, f. 186r). *Espigada*: tall and slender; *agestado/a*: good-looking. Because the Pixaos flattened their heads (Maya-style) they were often called “*cabezas chatas*” or “flat-heads.” They also often sharpened their teeth — this is probably why seventeen-year-old Anamba is described as having “*los dientes mal puestos*.”

Chapter Five

⁵⁰³ There is a play on words here as the Spanish verb *cantar* is commonly understood in Colombian jargon to mean both singing and confessing.

⁵⁰⁴ “De officis de la Real Justicia contra Don Martín Indio del pueblo de Cayma y otros Indios E indias por herbolarios [1601],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 43, ff. 399r-483v, f. 447v.

⁵⁰⁵ “De officis de la Real Justicia contra Don Martín Indio del pueblo de Cayma y otros Indios E indias por herbolarios [1601],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 43, ff. 399r-483v, 436r

⁵⁰⁶ “De officis...,” f. 437v

⁵⁰⁷ The previous passage is a recreation based on the well-researched idea that extreme pain induces altered states of consciousness. For more on this, see for example, Ariel Glucklich’s book, *Sacred Pain: Hurting the Body for the Sake of the Soul* (Oxford 2003).

⁵⁰⁸ *Idem*, f. 447v.

⁵⁰⁹ In the “*Questión de Tormento*” or interrogation under torture, this was called the *protestación* and in it the accused was admonished “[...] *de que si en el dicho tormento mueriere o fuere lisiado o se siguiere efusión de sangre o mutilación de miembros, sea a su culpa, y no a la nuestra, por no haber querido decir la verdad.*” In this case, Catalina was specifically told “[...] *por el dicho corregidor [...] diga verdad y que si no la dixere y por el tormento algún brazo o piernas se le quebrare que sea a su culpa y cargo y no a su culpa del dicho corregidor y la dicha lengua se lo dio a entender [...]*” (“De officis...,” f. 446r)

⁵¹⁰ Probably gentian violet. The tincture is widely used in Colombia as a mouth and skin antiseptic.

⁵¹¹ “De officis...,” f. 447r

⁵¹² *Idem*, f. 417v.

⁵¹³ *Idem*

⁵¹⁴ This is the same man who in chapter four is mentioned acting as Mariquita’s corregidor.

⁵¹⁵ *Id.*, f. 401r

⁵¹⁶ Same as *bozal*, unacculturated Indian.

⁵¹⁷ “De officis...,” f. 401v

⁵¹⁸ *Idem*. According to Lucía, Constanza had lived at one point — without ever getting married — with her father.

⁵¹⁹ *Id.*, ff. 403r-403v.

⁵²⁰ Cayma probably referred to the River Caima located between the present-day Tolima towns of Alvarado and Venadillo, 53 km. (33 mi.) north of Ibagué.

⁵²¹ “De officis...,” f. 404r

⁵²² Idem, f. 404v

⁵²³ Id., f. 405v.

⁵²⁴ Id., f. 406v. A *cataure* is a basket which Indians carried on their backs fixed to their foreheads by a strap; an *almud* is a measure of dry grain which makes approximately half an acre.

⁵²⁵ Being from Tunja, Juan was probably either a Muisca or a Muzo, but not a Panche.

⁵²⁶ “De officis...,” f. 408r

⁵²⁷ Idem, f. 408v.

⁵²⁸ Id., f. 409r

⁵²⁹ Id., f. 410r

⁵³⁰ Id., f. 410v

⁵³¹ Id., f. 411r

⁵³² Small town in the Tolima province between Ibagué and Alvarado.

⁵³³ “De officis...,” f. 412v

⁵³⁴ Idem, f. 413r-413v

⁵³⁵ Id., f. 414v

⁵³⁶ Id., f. 414r

⁵³⁷ Id., f. 414v. The first written record we have of a smallpox epidemic in the region is that of Pedro Cieza de León’s which dates the outbreak back to the year of 1546 (Cieza 1984, XXIV). If Constanza was born in the 1540s she would have been around sixty years of age (as Valserra noted down in his report) at the time of this trial.

⁵³⁸ “De officis...,” f. 414v-415r

⁵³⁹ Idem, f. 416r

⁵⁴⁰ Id.

⁵⁴¹ Id., f. 416v-417r

⁵⁴² This is probably *barbasco* (*lonchocarpus urucu*). Barbasco is commonly used in Colombia (Ecuador, Peru, and Brasil as well) to fish: the roots are beaten into a pulp with a stick and then placed in shallow waters (sometimes a shallow part of a river is artificially dammed with rocks) where the soaked pulp releases a white substance (rotenone) that momentarily stuns the fish. It is then very easy to spear the fish or catch them with a net or even with your bare hands. Michael Harner reports similar fishing practices among the Shuar: “Fish poisoning is undertaken perhaps every few weeks to secure a large catch. Men, women, and children from several neighboring houses usually participate. They select a section of river where it is bisected by an island or sandbar, to which the men and boys construct a low dam of river boulders from one bank. This stone dam is constructed to form a lagoon where the poison can sufficiently take effect in the slowed current [...] Large quantities [of poison] are required, and the fishermen often prepare six to eight bushel-sized baskets. They pound the plants to a pulp between river boulders and dump them into the water upstream. If all goes well, within twenty to thirty minutes stunned fish begin rising to the surface and float toward the dam. The men who constructed the traps seize the fish as they are washed onto the bamboo gratings. Everyone else, regardless of age or sex, wades into the lagoon and grabs for fish. Each person owns whatever he catches [...] Fish poisoning is sometimes pursued at night because the fish tend to be nearer the surface and therefore more susceptible to the poison. Both poisoning and netting are most effectively conducted during the dry periods, when the rivers and streams are low and the current slow.” (Harner 1984, 61)

⁵⁴³ I have been unable to locate Cuyamayma. The word, however, seems to be a Panche word. Earlier, Catalina had said that Constanza had brought with her a rattle from Tolima (f. 413r). This suggests that Constanza probably came from a region south of Cayma or even of Ibagué.

⁵⁴⁴ “De officis...,” f. 418v

⁵⁴⁵ Applied topically *verdolaga* or purslane (*portulaca oleracea*) is commonly used to relieve sores.

⁵⁴⁶ “De officis...,” f. 420r

⁵⁴⁷ *Idem*, f. 439r

⁵⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁴⁹ Ericaceae, also known as *pullunrosa*, *purenrosa*, *cadillo*, *payama*, and *hierba de la postema*. Its flowers, leaves, and stem, whether fresh or dried are used for diabetes, liver, prostrate, blood-related illnesses, inflammation of the uterus, kidneys, liver, bladder, cysts, ovaries, womb, and uterus (Bussman et al. 2010, 746)

⁵⁵⁰ I have been unable to locate Natayma, although the University of Tolima has an agro-science lab called Nataima near the town of Espinal (48 km. or 30 mi. southeast of Ibagué).

⁵⁵¹ “De officis...,” f. 424v

⁵⁵² *Idem*

⁵⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁵⁴ *Id.*, f. 425r

⁵⁵⁵ *Id.*, f. 426r-426v

⁵⁵⁶ *Id.*, f. 428r

⁵⁵⁷ *Id.*, f.431r

⁵⁵⁸ *Id.*, f. 436r-436v. As discussed earlier, Pedro Cieza de León claims one of the first epidemics in New Granada took place around the year 1546 in the Quimbaya region (Cieza 1984, XXIV). Although he describes this epidemic as what was most likely a mumps epidemics while Barbola speaks of “*viruelas*,” it is quite possible that they may have been describing the same event since the Quimbayas were the Panches’ neighbors to the west. If such were the case, then it would mean Barbola was in her early fifties when Valserra interrogated her, some ten years older than what he made her out to be.

⁵⁵⁹ *Id.*, f. 441r

⁵⁶⁰ *Id.*, f. 443r. Constanza had testified earlier that this woman was an Indian woman by the name of Catalina.

⁵⁶¹ *Id.*, f. 443v

⁵⁶² Interestingly, Elena’s husband also goes by the Spanish name of Juan Natayma: almost certainly the two men belonged to the same community.

⁵⁶³ *Id.*, f. 449r

⁵⁶⁴ *Id.*, f. 449v

⁵⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶⁶ *Id.*, 449r

⁵⁶⁷ *Id.*, 458v

⁵⁶⁸ This was called the “*acareación*” (or *careo* in modern Spanish), a procedure by which two or more witnesses or offenders were brought face to face.

⁵⁶⁹ “De officis...,” f. 444v

⁵⁷⁰ *Idem*, f. 445r

⁵⁷¹ *Id.*, f. 445v

⁵⁷² Id.

⁵⁷³ Id.

⁵⁷⁴ Id.

⁵⁷⁵ Id., 462r

⁵⁷⁶ This was a mayor act of humiliation among Indians.

⁵⁷⁷ Id., 465r

⁵⁷⁸ Id., 474r

⁵⁷⁹ According to the document, Madelena's Indian name was Ama.

⁵⁸⁰ "De officis..." f. 482r

⁵⁸¹ Id., 480v-482r

⁵⁸² Simón 1981, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, XXXIV-L.

⁵⁸³ Located 132 km. (82 mi.) west of Ibagué.

⁵⁸⁴ Simón 1981, Tomo V, Tercera Noticia Historial, IV.

⁵⁸⁵ Idem, Tomo VI, Séptima Noticia Historial, L.

⁵⁸⁶ I am not convinced that Juan was a curandero himself; the practices he describes engaging in seem to be related with hunting and fishing more than anything else.

⁵⁸⁷ In their four-volume study *Cinquenta Años de Inquisición en el Tribunal de Cartagena de Indias 1610-1610* (1997, Bogotá, Universidad Javeriana), historians Ana-María Splendiani, Jorge Enrique Sánchez Bohórquez and Emma Cecilia Luque de Salazar argue that the Indians in New Granada were specially protected from the Inquisition: "*La población sujeta a la vigilancia del Santo Oficio de Cartagena estaba compuesta por blancos, mestizos, negros, mulatos, zambos, etc. En contraste a lo que comúnmente se ha supuesto hasta hoy día y para sorpresa de muchos, el indígena no aparece incluido dentro de la citada población puesto que el mismo estuvo por fuera de la jurisdicción del Santo Oficio desde el mismo momento en que se promulgaron los edictos de la fundación de los tribunales americanos.*" (*Op. cit.*, 209) According to them, in a royal edict (February 25, 1610) Phillip III specifically ordered all inquisitors to refrain from accusing or dealing with Indians: "[...] *no procediesen contra los indios, sino contra los cristianos viejos y sus descendientes y las otras personas contra quien en estos reinos de España se suele proceder [...]*" (Idem, vol. I, 86). Whether or not the Inquisition indicted any Indians in New Granada before 1610 remains to be ascertained, but at least between 1610 and 1660, no Indians were tried for witchcraft, neither in Cartagena nor in Lima: "*Los casos procedentes del Nuevo Reino de Granada juzgados en Lima fueron en su mayoría contra blancos. De los 44 casos tan solo dos fueron contra mestizos, ninguna contra negros o mulatos y, desde luego, ninguno contra indios, ya que estaba prohibido por la Corona.*" (Id., 109) Splendiani even adds that because the Indians were protected from the Inquisition, many people accused of witchcraft attempted to pass off as Indians: "*Considerando el privilegio que tenía la población indígena frente a la Inquisición, algunos mulatos y mestizos, e incluso españoles, se hicieron pasar por indios cuando sus rasgos lo permitieron y se refugiaron en comunidades indígenas para evitar ser perseguidos por el Tribunal.*" (Id., 86).

⁵⁸⁸ Harner 1984, 118.

Chapter Six

⁵⁸⁹ “Visita de los Yndios Cambis de andres de sopuerta que se doctrinan en la Chapa [January 12, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 919r-929v, f.923v.

⁵⁹⁰ “Visita de los Yndios Otongos, Çuazas y Tamas de la Encomienda del Capitán Diego del Campo [January 1, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 807r-823v, f.812r.

⁵⁹¹ The village of Calamo was located near the present-day town of Pitalito 16 km/10 m south of Timaná. The document says Captain Diego de Ospina arrived “[...] *el dicho dia [December 19, 1628] antes de la oración [...]*” — presumably before evening prayers or 6 o’ clock in the evening (“Visita del pueblo del Calamo Encomienda del capitán andres del campo salazar [December 19, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo13, ff. 659-700v, f. 659r)

⁵⁹² Timaná is located in the southern part of the Alto Magdalena region some 330 km/200 m. south of the Province of Mariquita.

⁵⁹³ There is another extant set of visitas — “Visitas de Lesmes de Espinosa [1627],” AGN (Bogotá), Fondo Archivo Bernardo J. Caicedo, Visitas, Vol. 3, Caja 44, ff. 218-510 — dealing with the northern part of the Alto Magdalena region. Unfortunately, it came to my attention too late for the document to be included in this study. Research continues, however, and the document will certainly be included in the next phase of my work.

⁵⁹⁴ “Visita del pueblo del Calamo Encomienda del capitán andres del campo salazar [December 19, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo13, ff. 659-700v, ff.659r-659v.

⁵⁹⁵ Idem, ff. 667v-668r.

⁵⁹⁶ Id., f. 669v.

⁵⁹⁷ In Ospina’s December 22 visita to the Indians of La Matanca, there is a reference to another (presumably nearby) encomienda belonging to a Juana de Ortega (“*difunta*”) which either Ospina did not visit or is missing from this group of encomiendas. See “Visita de los Yndios de la matanca Encomienda de Jussepe de Valenzuela llamados coniabongo[s] [December 22, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo 13, ff. 701r-724r, f.702v.

⁵⁹⁸ “Visita del pueblo del Calamo Encomienda del capitán andres del campo salazar [December 19, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo13, ff. 659-700v, f. 663v. The Guanacas are considered to have been closely related to the Nasa or Paeces as well as the Yalcones. Castellanos, for example, lists them together: “[...] *Timaná, provincia populosa [...] de gente valiente y orgullosa [...] Siendo los indios [...] Paeces, Yalcones y Pirama/Y Guanaca, provincias de gran fama.*” (*Elegías de Varones Ilustres*, Parte III, Elegía a Belálcazar, Canto IV). Their descendants today live in the Tierradentro area (Cauca province). The Tamas were originally from the Caquetá province.

⁵⁹⁹ Idem, f. 664v.

⁶⁰⁰ Id., f. 665v.

⁶⁰¹ Popayán is located 172 km/107 m southwest of Timaná.

⁶⁰² According to the *Diccionario Geográfico Universal* (Barcelona 1831) Iscanze was a town located to the southeast of Popayán, on the border between the Cauca and Caquetá provinces (839).

⁶⁰³ Founded in 1551, Almaguer is located in the Cauca province approximately 25 km/15m southeast of Timaná. It was famous for its gold mines.

⁶⁰⁴ Quito is approximately 660 km/410 m south of Timaná.

⁶⁰⁵ Bogotá is approximately 357 km/220 m north of Timaná.

⁶⁰⁶ “Visita del pueblo del Calamo Encomienda del capitán andres del campo salazar [December 19, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo13, ff. 659-700v, f. 682v.

⁶⁰⁷ Idem, f. 678r.

⁶⁰⁸ Interestingly enough, these same trapiches with little or no alterations since colonial times can still be found throughout this region as I had the chance to see several of them in the Timaná and San Agustín area during my field trip to the region in the summer of 2009.

⁶⁰⁹ According to the Peruvian Institute of Nutrition, coca is one of the most nutritious foods there is — especially suited for people living at high altitudes: “*La Hoja de Coca tiene grandes cualidades nutritivas y contiene casi tres veces más fibra que las legumbres, 14 veces más que las frutas y 15 más que los vegetales. Es un alimento riquísimo en vitaminas A [8.15 mg or 14000 IU] y C [10.50 mg], y rico en hierro [9.8 mg], calcio [2097 mg], fósforo [363 mg], fibras, proteínas [19.9 gr.] y calorías [304].*” According to this institute, the globulin and inulin contained in coca leaves optimize cardiac function at high altitudes. (Escobar, M., 1993, “Harina de coca: el mejor alimento y medicina de la tierra,” Lima, Instituto de Nutrición)

⁶¹⁰ Because of the very abrupt terrain oftentimes not even mules could be used, so that *cargueros* and *arrieros* actually carried their loads on their backs.

⁶¹¹ “Visita del pueblo del Calamo Encomienda del capitán andres del campo salazar [December 19, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo13, ff. 659-700v, f. 685v.

⁶¹² Idem, f. 683r; 1 *arroba* is equivalent to approximately 25 lbs.; *matalotaje*: provisions.

⁶¹³ Id., f. 684v.

⁶¹⁴ As discussed in previous chapters, La Plata was an important mining center for both gold and silver. The present-day town of La Plata is 47 km/29 m northwest of Timaná. Likewise the town of Almaguer (25 km/15m southeast of Timaná) had been an important gold mining center since its founding in 1551.

⁶¹⁵ “Visita del pueblo del Calamo Encomienda del capitán andres del campo salazar [December 19, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Venezuela, Tomo13, ff. 659-700v, f. 684v.

⁶¹⁶ “Visita de los Yndios de la matanca Encomienda de Jussepe de Valenzuela llamados coniabongo[s] [December 22, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visistas Venezuela, Tomo 13, ff. 701r-724r, f. 701v.

⁶¹⁷ Idem, 702v. The fact that Catalina’s oldest son Francisco’s surname is *Payanés* almost certainly indicates that he was probably born in Popayán.

⁶¹⁸ “Visita de los Yndios de la matanca Encomienda de Jussepe de Valenzuela llamados coniabongo[s] [December 22, 1628]”, AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visistas Venezuela, Tomo 13, ff. 701r-724r, f. 715r. According to the document the mine was four days away from the village of La Matanca.

⁶¹⁹ Id., f. 702r.

⁶²⁰ “Visita de los Yndios Otongos, Çuazas y Tamas de la Encomienda del Capitán Diego del Campo [January 1, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 807r-823v, f.809v.

⁶²¹ Idem, f. 811v-812r

⁶²² Id., f. 810r-810v

⁶²³ Id., f. 820r

⁶²⁴ Id., f. 812r

⁶²⁵ Id., f. 811v-812r

⁶²⁶ Id., ff. 809v-810r

⁶²⁷ “Visita de los Yndios de la Culata encomienda de Juan de aranvilleta que se doctrian en quinche [January 10, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 943r-951v, f. 944r. The town of Ancerma is located in the Caldas province, more than 350km/220 m north of Timaná.

⁶²⁸ *Idem*, f. 944r. San Agustín is located 32km/20m south of Timana; Cali is 174km/108m north of Timaná.

⁶²⁹ *Idem*, f.946v.

⁶³⁰ “Visita de los Yndios Timanaes Encomienda de Diego de Ybarramenez [January 11, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 863r-871v, f. 863v. The Caguán is located in the Caquetá province, the original land of the Tama Indians.

⁶³¹ *Idem*, f. 865v-866r.

⁶³² The Caguán is located in the Caquetá province some 277km/170 m to the northeast of Timaná. Because it is crisscrossed by the Cordillera de los Picachos it has been traditionally a stronghold for all kinds of rebel fighters.

⁶³³ “Visita de los Yndios Timanaes Encomienda de Diego de Ybarramenez [January 11, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 863r-871v, f. 866r.

⁶³⁴ *Idem*.

⁶³⁵ “Visita a los Otongos de la Encomienda de Isabel Calderón [January 12, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 904-918, f.904v.

⁶³⁶ *Idem*.

⁶³⁷ No woman by the name of Juana Meztiça appears among the women listed in El Cálamo’s encomienda. Although there are three women whose first name is Juana: eighteen to twenty-year-old Juana Yalcaman (described as cacique Alonso Soverzilloman’s daughter), Juana Tiona (age not specified), and thirty-year-old Juana Celoya married to an Alonso Yasicane. Celoya sounds sufficiently Spanish — especially in its more usual Spanish form of Celaya. Although at the time indigenous women in this region usually took on the names of their mothers, it could be that because Juana Meztiça (as she was known in Isabel Calderón’s encomienda) was a mestizo woman and as such almost certainly the daughter of a Spanish man, that she may have adopted her father’s last name, at least while she lived in El Cálamo.

⁶³⁸ “Visita a los Otongos de la Encomienda de Isabel Calderón [January 12, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 904-918, f.904v.

⁶³⁹ *Idem.*, f.906r

⁶⁴⁰ *Id.*, f. 907v

⁶⁴¹ *Id.*

⁶⁴² *Id.*, f. 910v

⁶⁴³ *Id.*, f. 906v

⁶⁴⁴ “Visita de los Yndios Maitos, Otongos y Oporapas de la Encomienda del Capitán Alonso de Herrera [January 12, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 882r-894v, ff. 885v-886r

⁶⁴⁵ *Idem*, f. 888v.

⁶⁴⁶ *Id.*, f. 887r

⁶⁴⁷ Interestingly enough, this man bears the same name as La Gaitana’s famous relative, cacique Pigoanza.

⁶⁴⁸ “Visita de los Yndios Cambis de andres de sopuerta que se doctrian en la Chapa [January 12, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 919r-929v, f. 923v.

⁶⁴⁹ Idem, f. 922r.

⁶⁵⁰ Id., f. 921v

⁶⁵¹ “Visita de los Yndios timanaes de la encomienda del capitán miguel de lossada dotrina de la chapa [January 13, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 855r-862v, 855v.

⁶⁵² Idem, f.859v.

⁶⁵³ Id.

⁶⁵⁴ “Visita de los Yndios Timanaes, Cuaças y otros de la encomienda de Bernardo de Villareal dotrina de la chapa [January 13, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima 1, ff. 930r-942v, f. 934r

⁶⁵⁵ Idem, f. 930v.

⁶⁵⁶ Id.

⁶⁵⁷ Id., f. 933r.

⁶⁵⁸ “Visita de los Yndios ÇuaÇas y Timanaes de la Encomienda del Capitán Francisco Calderón de la Dotrina de la Chapa [January 15, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 733r-761v, f. 737v

⁶⁵⁹ Idem, f. 739r

⁶⁶⁰ Id. The Sutagao Indians lived in and around present-day Fusagasugá, approximately 65 km/40m south of Bogotá. Francisco Calderón apparently owned this encomienda in the Timaná area, a ranch near La Jagua (50 km/31m north of Timaná), another ranch in Fusagasugá, and a house in Bogotá.

⁶⁶¹ “Visita de los Yndios ÇuaÇas y Timanaes de la Encomienda del Capitán Francisco Calderón de la Dotrina de la Chapa [January 15, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 733r-761v, ff. 736v-737v

⁶⁶² Idem, f.738.

⁶⁶³ This was really an inventory of the Indians where they were listed along with their age, marital status, origin, spouse, children, occupation, as well as remarks regarding health, whether they were runaways, forasteros, etc. It was a common practice for encomenderos to hide agregados and forasteros from visitadores or to present them as though they were locals or native to the land.

⁶⁶⁴ “Visita a los Otongos de la encomienda de nicolás calderón [January 15, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 834-854, f. 841v

⁶⁶⁵ Idem, ff-842r-842v.

⁶⁶⁶ Id., ff. 838r-838v

⁶⁶⁷ Located near present-day Inzá, in the Cauca province.

⁶⁶⁸ See, for example, Nancy van Deusen’s article, “Diasporas, Bondage, and Intimacy in Lima 1535-1555,” in *Colonial Latin American Review*, vol. 19, No. 2, August 2010, 247-277.

⁶⁶⁹ According to Karen Vieira Powers, massive migrations from the north to the south had prevailed during the sixteenth century: “Throughout the colonial period, but most especially during the early years of Spanish rule, a substantial migration occurred from the Gobernación of Popayán in the north to points south [...] Sixteenth-century sources for Popayán are characterized by a constant barrage of official complaints about vast depopulation.” Powers attributes these migrations to conditions such as forced labor in the mines, personal slavery, Indian slavery, and “battle deaths in the persistent warfare between resistant Andean groups and

the colonial administration” which continued to exist in New Granada well after they had disappeared in most other parts of the viceroyalty. (Powers 1995, 34-35)

⁶⁷⁰ “Visita de los Yndios Cambis de andres de sopuerta que se doctrinan en la Chapa [January 12, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, Tomo 1, ff. 919r-929v, f. 921v.

⁶⁷¹ “Visita a los Otongos de la encomienda de nicolás calderón [January 15, 1629],” AGN (Bogotá), Colonia, Visitas del Tolima, Tomo 1, ff. 834-854, f. 842r

Conclusion

⁶⁷² For more on this, see Ramírez Sendoya 1952, xxxii

⁶⁷³ *Idem*, 231.

⁶⁷⁴ *Id.*, xxiii

Glossary

Agregado: an Indian hired to work in an *encomienda*.

Alfolí: salt store or magazine

Amparo: safe haven

Anaco: Quechua for women's skirt

Arcabuco: forest

Arriero: muleteer

Arroba: Spanish weight equivalent to 11.5 kg or 25 lbs.

Arutam: *visión* or spirit in a vision granting power to whoever has the vision.

Aucaruna: Inca soldier

Ayllu: Quechua for community.

Axi: (also spelled *ají*) chili

Batidor: scout

Behetría: self-governing community

Boga: rower

Boleador: weapon used by Indians in which two or three stones are tied together, made to turn in the air, and then thrown at the enemy.

Bozal: unacculturated Indian

Concertado: Indian hired laborer.

Cocal: coca plantation

Camiseta: sleeveless shirts worn by Indians.

Carguero: porter

Cataure: basket

Cataurillo: small basket

Chagra: Quechua for farm

Chambis: spiked mace

Chicha: fermented corn beverage

China: Quechua for Indian girl

Chinchasuyu: northern region of the Inca empire

Chontal: unacculturated Indian

Chunka-Kamayuk: Inca army officer in command of units of ten men.

Comisión: official mission

Coroza: conical hat used to shame people publicly.

Coya: Quechua for queen

Cronista: Spanish colonial historian

Cunka-Chukunas: hatchet

Cura: avocado

Curaca: Quechua for chieftain

Demora: taxes

Descripción: list of Indian men (along with their wives and children, age, and occupations) included in a *visita*.

Encomienda: award of Indians and land to a Spaniard in compensation for services rendered to the Crown and also in order to exact labor and tribute.

Encomendero: Spaniard who was granted an encomienda.

Envuelto: corn tamal or dumpling.

Escopeta: gun

Fanega: grain measure equivalent to a bushel.

Forastero: non-local Indian

Fotuto: sea-shell used by Indians in war as a kind of trumpet.

Gandul: Pixao warrior

Gañan: farmhand

Guaca: sacred place

Guaricha: Indian woman

Hato: ranch

Huaranka-Kamayuk: Inca commanding officer.

Huído: runaway

Juicio de residencia: oficial investigation into the administration of a royal official upon leaving office.

Kakaram: among the Shuar of Ecuador, a man who has accumulated (spiritual) power.

Kakarma: spiritual power obtained either through visions or by capturing an enemy's soul.

Ladino: acculturated Indian

Lengua: interpreter

Macana: club

Mandamiento: written order

Manta: blanket (used as currency)

Maíz: corn

Mazato: corn drink

Mestizo: person of mixed race (usually of Spanish and Indian descent)

Mestizaje: racial mix

Mita: forced labor draft

Mitayo: drafted Indian worker

Mitmakuna: Inca colonists

Mochila: woven hand-bags used by Indians

Mohán: shaman

Moanero/a: shaman

Múcura: clay pot

Naboría: Indian servant

Nipa: Muisca merchant

Oídor: Spanish judge

Orejones: Inca noblemen called so because of their large earlobes.

Pachac-Kamayuk: Inca army officer in command of units of one-hundred men.

Parcialidad: Spanish administrative unit usually designating previously established ayllus.

Platica: initial address given by *visitadores* to the Indians during *visitas*.

Picca-Chunka-Kamayuk: Inca army officer in command of units of fifty men.

Pieza: Indian slave

Pixao: member of the Pixao (Pijao) group which inhabited the present-day Tolima province and was immortalized for its fierceness; by extension, enemy.

Posesión: ceremony in which encomenderos took officially over their encomiendas or Indian charges.

Potro: rack

Principal: indigenous dignitary

Probanzas de méritos y servicios: Spanish legal documents attesting to the services rendered by Spanish soldiers to the Spanish Crown.

Reducciones: towns in which Indians were aggregated for administrative and religious purposes.

Repartimiento: large administrative unit of Indians paying tribute to an encomendero or the Spanish Crown and performing the mita.

Rescate: kidnaping of Indians in order to sell them as slaves, indentured servants or laborers.

Rescatado: an Indian who had been kidnapped in order to be sold as an indentured servant or laborer.

Resguardo: Indian reservation

Roza: planted field

Rozar: to plant

Ruana: a kind of poncho used in Colombia.

Sobrelengua: interpreter translating from another interpreter into a third language.

Solar: Spaniard's house in towns.

Subienda: fishing season (usually December through Abril)

Tawantinsuyu: Inca empire

Traficante: trafficker

Trapiche: sugar mill

Terrajero: sharecropper

Totuma: gourd

Vaquero: cowboy

Vecino: Spaniard living in a town, but having no encomienda.

Visita: inspection of an encomienda in order to establish whether or not the Indians in it were being well treated.

Visitador: Spanish official carrying out a visita.

Yanacona: initially Inca subjects servants to the Inca nobility; after the Spanish conquest of Peru, any former Inca subject (whether commoners or *orejones*) in the service of Spaniards.

Yerba: poison

Yuca: cassava

Zaque: Musica priest

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