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Strategies for Survival:
Indigenous Women in the Conquest of Mexico

by

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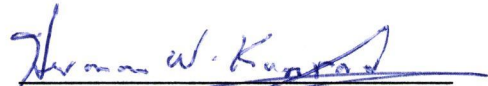
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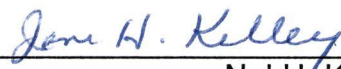
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled, "Strategies for Survival: Indigenous Women in the Conquest of Mexico" submitted by Jennifer Laura Asp in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.


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Abstract

Traditional interpretations of the conquest of Mexico see the intrepid, resourceful Hernán Cortés and his small company of soldiers of fortune defeating the powerful Moctezuma and the Triple Alliance by fire arms, the horse, and a brilliant military strategy. Conspicuously absent from this scenario are the many native peoples who formed alliances with the conquerors and provided invaluable military support in the attempt to conquer the 'Aztec Empire.' In addition to associations of mutual support grounded in military and political aid, however, there were other forms of indigenous-conqueror alliances. One of the most significant were between indigenous women and Spanish men.

Historians have tended to view the Spaniards' relationship with indigenous women primarily in terms of sexual relations. Popular images have romanticized and mythologized indigenous women associated with the conquerors, creating women whose prime motivation is emotion. But Indian women, like other historical figures, were motivated by a variety of factors in their alliances with Spanish males. Moreover, they were also more than objects subject only to the sexual demands of the conquerors. This is indicated by the experiences and circumstances of some women whose strategies for surviving the initial period of contact and conflict included acting as guides, interpreters, and advisors, and forming marital and extra-marital alliances with the conquerors. Two such women were La Malinche, baptized Marina, interpreter and advisor to the Spaniards, Cortés' mistress, and later the wife of a conquistador; and Tecuichpotzin, baptized Isabel, a daughter of Moctezuma who, following the destruction of Tenochtitlan, was married to three Spanish conquerors. As case studies the roles and circumstances of Marina and Isabel illuminate both the salient and more subtle features and consequences of women's strategies for surviving the conquest.

It is possible that because of their gender indigenous women were in a more advantageous position than their male counterparts for developing strategies for survival. For women, the purpose and results of association with the conquerors and adaptation to the Spanish conquest included physical protection and support and, perhaps, a level of political influence.

There were also material benefits which brought a degree of financial security and a level of economic security for mestizo children. Women such as Marina and Isabel were not unique to the Mexican experience. There are numerous examples of similar indigenous women in Mexico and in other areas of the Americas which were conquered and colonized by Europeans. Examinations of individuals such as Isabel and Marina allows for instructive and suggestive comparisons to be made concerning women in contact-conquest situations in other American regions. By associating and allying themselves with European conquerors, and colonizers these indigenous women were adapting to changed and often trying circumstances. Ultimately, this adaptation resulted in their survival.

In the broadest context, the examples of Marina and Isabel reflect on the nature of conquest itself. That such women were able to accommodate to a situation of war reflects on the fluidity and improvised character of the contact-conquest process. While the conquest involved brutality and exploitation of Mexico's indigenous peoples, women's strategies for survival demonstrate that the consequences of conquest were more than the defeat of the Indians and the absolute imposition of Spanish rule. For some indigenous women, the conquest of Mexico was a fluid enough process to allow them to ally themselves with the conquerors, adapt to the demands of the conquest, and ultimately, to survive the conflict and change arising from the European presence in the New World.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Traditional interpretations of the conquest of Mexico see the intrepid Hernán Cortés and his small band of soldiers of fortune defeating the powerful Moctezuma and the Triple Alliance by fire arms, the horse, and a resourceful military strategy. In this scenario, the indigenous peoples are victims of a weak leader, supposed self-fulfilling prophecies and sometimes of their lack of 'civilization.' ¹ Conspicuously absent from this perspective are the many Native peoples who formed alliances with the conquerors, provided invaluable strategic advice and military services and ultimately helped to topple the Aztec Triple Alliance of Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tacuba. All too apparent as well is the fallacious theoretical dichotomy which depicts only victorious Spaniards led by the skillful Cortés and vanquished Indians whose leader was vacillating if not politically incompetent. This frequently moralistic approach generates accounts of the conquest which portray the Indians as the hapless victims of aggressive and brutal conquistadores.² Clearly, however, the conquest should not be examined from such a two-dimensional, either/or viewpoint.

The conquest of Mexico was a multi-faceted process rather than just an event with winners and losers. As such it involved more than the Spanish victory, the defeat of the indigenous peoples and the imposition of foreign rule on Mexico's Native inhabitants. While the conquest resulted in much abusive and brutal treatment of the indigenous peoples, every Indian was not brought to a hasty and violent end at the hands of greedy and rapacious Spaniards. Both Indians and conquerors responded to the demands and tensions arising from conquest in a variety of ways many of

which were non violent. In terms of individuals, the conquest and its aftermath demanded continuous adjustments and compromises in a process of adaptation. Spaniards had to adapt to their physical surroundings and exercise authority and power while, to a certain extent, working within the existing political and social structure. Adaptation is more explicit for the indigenous peoples who, if they hoped to survive, had to adjust to the Spanish presence. This process is readily apparent with those Native peoples who, from the initial contact period, closely allied themselves with the Spaniards. For example, Tlaxcalan alliance, was initially founded on the offer of military aid for the conquerors. In return the Tlaxcalans were promised an end to the threat of tyranny of the Triple Alliance as well as economic and political rewards. In addition to military and political support, however, there were other forms of indigenous-conqueror alliances. One of the most significant were between Native women and Spanish men.

Historians have tended to view the Spaniards' relationship with indigenous women only in terms of sexual relations. In his Race Mixture in Latin America, for example, Magnus Morner states "in a way the Conquest of America was a conquest of women."³ While this conclusion is a valid one to an extent, Morner goes on to generalize that "the seizure of women was simply one element of the general enslavement of the Indians."⁴ He compounds this generalization in the statement "military campaigns have no doubt always been accompanied by rape and other brutalities against the defenseless."⁵ Finally, Morner contradicts his own rather simplistic viewpoint by arguing that violent rape "should not be over-emphasized."⁶ His reasoning is quite prejudicial, however, since he makes the gross-overgeneralization that "probably the Indian woman very often docilely complied with the conquistadores' demands."⁷ While historians such as

Morner seem unable, or perhaps unwilling, to take a more sensitive and realistic response to the issue of sexual relations between indigenous women and European men, there is little doubt that sexual violence and other forms of physical abuse played a role in defining relationships between the sexes. Yet as Asunción Lavrin points out, there are numerous problems with examining women only in the context of sexual violence and other forms of oppression. As an approach to the relations between the sexes, it is "unimaginative . . . (and) could lead to an intellectual cul-de-sac once all forms of oppression are exposed."⁸ As Lavrin concludes, such a perspective incorrectly objectifies women and all women were more than objects.

That indigenous women were more than objects, subject to the sexual demands of the conquerors, is indicated in the roles and circumstances of some women who formed alliances with the conquerors, adapted to the conquest and, ultimately, were able to survive the period of initial contact and conflict. Two such women were doña Marina, La Malinche, the interpreter and advisor to the conquerors, Cortés' mistress, and later, the wife of Juan Jaramillo, conquistador; and doña Isabel, Tecuichpotzin, the daughter of Moctezuma who, following the destruction of Tenochtitlan, was married to three conquerors.⁹ As case studies of the indigenous peoples conquest experience, the roles and circumstances of Marina and Isabel illuminate both the salient and more subtle features and consequences of indigenous women's strategies for accommodation and survival.

Consideration of women in terms of their strategies for survival allows them to be examined in light of individual free will or, choice, while at the same time placing women within their social, political and economic context. This approach facilitates a more holistic approach to male-female

interaction in the conquest and post-conquest periods: to survive, indigenous women had to make adjustments and compromises, but European men did so as well. Through an examination of strategies for survival, consideration can be given to the circumstances of both indigenous women and European men in the contexts of how they seized available socio-economic and political opportunities and how they worked to adapt to the demands and consequences of conquest. For both indigenous women and conquerors there were advantages and benefits to be obtained from crossing the cultural bridge. Finally, this perspective provides a much needed but sensitive response to several questions which exercise students of women's history.

Perhaps the foremost issue in the methodology of women's history is whether women were responsive or passive to their roles and circumstances in the past. Responsiveness suggests that women had a direct and controlling influence on the lives they led. Passivity, in contrast, implies that women were mere objects subject to the whims, ambitions, and sexual demands of domineering men. The important features of this 'power or pawn' paradigm are clearly elucidated by Ann Pescatello. According to her definitions, the power model "conceives of the female as the wellspring of power and wielder of influence in all areas of activity in her society."¹⁰ The pawn theory, on the other hand, "suggests that the female always has been a pawn in a world dominated by men."¹¹ The 'power or pawn' polarization provides the backdrop, intentionally or not, for numerous studies of women in the past. To cite one example, in Daughters of the Conquistadores, Luis Martín states that "in the cloisters of Spanish Peru lived some of the strongest, most liberated, and best educated women of the viceroyalty" but "many women of Spanish Peru led hidden uneventful lives within the home,

constantly watched by jealous husbands or demanding fathers."¹² Martín offers no examples of women in between these two extremes. The most recent tendency, however, is to emphasize women's power. Even Pescatello, who claims to desire an end to the "emotional polemics" fostered by this issue, leans toward the power extreme when she focused her study on the question: "To what extent have women acquired and used power, authority and influence in these many Iberian cultures and societies?"¹³

Students of women's history generally see the family as the basis for and causes of women's power. The family provides the focal point for the study of the women in the past because, as Lavrin notes, it was "the vehicle through which social and economic status was preserved."¹⁴ This approach has merits, not the least of which is that it considers women in their own context. Yet, it can also lead to serious interpretive problems.¹⁵ Arguing that all women wielded power derived from their familial role neglects that some women were passive or equal participants in family matters.

The female power theory is also flawed because it can be taken to extremes. Luis Martín, for example, generalizes that in colonial Peru, "women of character and personality revolted against this intolerable situation [of marriage] and fought for their freedom."¹⁶ Martín's use of "character and personality" suggests that intrinsic Sisyphean characteristics account for women's power and influence. While historians recognize the importance of moving away from biographical recitations of the merits and actions of famous and great women,¹⁷ emphasis on the personal characteristics of 'ordinary women' implies that even the most mundane is extraordinary. In effect descriptions of women's heroic personal attributes

can elevate otherwise ordinary or conventional individuals and their activities to unrealistic levels.

Similar kinds of extremes are also found in the 'women-as-pawns' perspective. In the context of indigenous-European relations in the New World, the passive victim approach is overly simplistic and makes a moral issue of historical processes because it portrays the Indian "as a hapless victim and the white man as merciless aggressor."¹⁸ And, as Sylvia Van Kirk comments, "emphasis on the concept of victimization leads to an oversimplification of the dynamics of social and economic interaction."¹⁹ In terms of European contact with indigenous peoples the pawn theory implies that women were constant victims of sexual abuse. While recognizing that the contact and conquest involved sexual violence, over-emphasis on this aspect of women's lives can lead to generalizations of the type found in Morner's study of race mixture. Even in terms of sexual relations, women in conquest-colonization areas were more than mere objects treated with brute force. As Eleanor Leacock and Mona Etienne point out there are numerous examples of indigenous women, from a variety of geographical areas, who traded on their sexuality to acquire economic and social security. The examples detailed in their collection of essays turn the 'women-as-pawns' thesis on its head.²⁰

The pawn theory is also charged with moralistic undertones. As such it simplifies historical processes and provides the medium for presentism and interpretations grounded in ideological or moral convictions. And, as Bernard Sheehan states, "the issue of right and wrong must give way to an understanding of the process of cultural conflict that characterized the meeting of European and Indian in the New World."²¹ When taken to extremes both the power and the pawn perspectives can lead to a great deal

of moralizing and no small amount of subjective reasoning. Both approaches are perhaps borne of an underlying political or ideological imperative of some women's historians need to demonstrate, that no matter how despicably women have been treated by males, they remain innately superior to the opposite sex.²² A more realistic and less moralistic median between 'power' or 'pawn' is afforded by considering women in the context of their methods for survival. Such an examination allows for the expression of both sides of this paradigm while considering other important factors between the two poles.

To adapt to any situation an individual must, to a certain degree, be a "doer" but women's - or, any individual's - active response to circumstance must be considered in relative terms because such behavior can only occur if the situation allows it. Numbers of indigenous people survived the conquest. This reveals that the conquest was a flexible, often improvised process. For the Spaniards this flexibility was necessary if they hoped to succeed in their endeavour. For the Indians, the flexibility of the conquest aided in adaptation and thus in self-preservation. The nature of conquest, therefore, promoted the existence of a form of exchange in which people had goods, skills and services to offer or, less tangible attributes and features which were desired by those who largely controlled the situation. For both conquerors and the indigenous peoples, the needs of security and preservation fostered a kind of mutual reciprocity and, perhaps, mutual dependency.

In the contact-conquest process, for example, an Indian who adapted to the European presence by becoming a guide was dependent upon the Europeans for his or her necessities of life; for protection, for economic and social security and ultimately for preservation. The Europeans, in such a

scenario, were dependent upon their guide to lead them to the desired location and away from potential enemies. They needed such Native guides in order to survive in a new and often hostile environment, and the Indian acted on their behalf in order to survive the conflicts and chaos generated by the contact situation.

Excepting some cases of men of the native elite,²³ native women were afforded other avenues of survival because of their gender. One factor which helps to explain their adaptive behavior was the absence, or near absence of Spanish women. The presence of Spanish women in the New World began with the third voyage of Columbus (1497-1498) when thirty women accompanied the 1,500 men on the expedition.²⁴ Thereafter Spanish women continued to make the trans-Atlantic crossing. However, as Charles R. Boxer notes, although Spanish women came to the American colonies "in a steady trickle" every year, immigration of women "never amounted to a flood."²⁵ The near absence of Spanish women in the conquest and the early colonial period may have made the adaptive process less difficult for indigenous women. At least in the early period, Indian women could take the place of Spanish women as wives, companions, and domestic servants.

A second factor which added to the probability of survival of indigenous women was the crown, and especially the Church's, initial response to the situation in Hispaniola where Spanish men frequently had Native concubines. To reform such behavior the crown sent instructions to Governor Nicolás Ovando in 1503 urging colonial authorities to encourage Christian marriage among the Arawaks and, significantly, to arrange marriages between Spanish men and their Indian concubines.²⁶

The encouragement of inter-racial marriage was not without problems for the crown, however. The promotion of Christian unions between Spaniards and the daughters of indigenous nobles gave Spanish males the legal means to lay claim to their wives' patrimonial lands. With this realization the crown struggled to retract its earlier instructions. It attempted to dissuade Spanish men from claiming such property rights by replacing the daughters of caciques and principales held in encomienda with other Indians with indigenous women of lesser social and political status.²⁷ Such attempts to legislate against inter-racial marriage were to no avail, however, because race mixture had already gone too far to be stopped.²⁸

In spite of such legislation there are examples in which inter-racial marriage was actively promoted. A case in point is Isabel Moctezuma whose marriages to Spaniards, especially her first, were encouraged by Cortés. The political advantages of unions between Native noble women and conquistadores were certainly not lost on the captain. For Isabel and other women of her status, marriages for political and economic ends were not novel. Thus, in marrying Spaniards, Isabel may have been acting within her own cultural context as a cihuapílli (Native noble woman). However, the benefits of such marriages in the period of conflict engendered by the Spanish presence were likely manifest to her. Of primary importance was that marriage to a conquistador could aid in adapting to circumstance and definite rewards could be obtained as a result.

A third factor which may have facilitated indigenous female adaptive behavior and which is gender-related is concerned with perceptions of women. It is possible that in contrast to Native men, indigenous women were perceived as non-threatening by the conquerors. Since the conquest was a military exploit carried out by male fighters, the conquistadores had

little reason to fear indigenous women who possessed no military power or strength. If women associated with the conquerors were not seen as a threat it is possible that they could have played greater roles in the unfolding of events than is traditionally supposed; their 'weakness' may actually have been their strength.

Gender-related factors such as the Spaniards' perception of Native women, the initial response to inter-racial marriage, and the near absence of Spanish women probably contributed to indigenous women's ability to adapt to the Spanish presence and survive the conquest. Perhaps, as well, these factors placed women in circumstances where they were more likely than their male counterparts to be in positions which facilitated the development of strategies for adaptation and survival.

Although in examining human experience, motivation is rarely explicit, perhaps the benefits of adaptation to conquest help to explain the behavior of indigenous women who associated with the conquerors. At the most fundamental level, the rewards included preservation and the basic necessities of life. A second fundamental requirement in this period conflict was protection provided by those who are most likely to be the victors. In the conquest of Mexico another important advantage gained from strategies such as alliance was political power over Native enemies. This was one of the aims of the Tlaxcalans, for instance, in their decision to ally themselves with the Spaniards.²⁹ Aside from the necessities of life, protection, and preservation, indigenous women associated with the conquerors were offered significant economic and social benefits mainly in the form of much needed security.

Indigenous women survived through a variety of strategies, including acting as interpreters, guides and advisors. Female adaptive behavior is

perhaps most evident in extra-marital liaisons or formal marriage arrangements. For some, such as Isabel Moctezuma, the economic benefits of marital alliance with conquistadores were immense and included an encomienda grant. Encomiendas were largely granted as dowries ("en dote y aras") but their significance in terms of financial advantages should not be ignored. Marriage to a conquistador meant added economic security since most had a means of support through encomiendas granted by the crown for services rendered in the conquest.

Accompanying the economic rewards were also numerous social advantages. The pre-hispanic social status of indigenous noblewomen was quickly recognized by the Spaniards and, in some cases, this recognition took the form of encomienda grants. Such grants were often doubly significant since, in cases such as Isabel Moctezuma's, women had the power to dispose of their own property as they saw fit. Alliance with Spanish males gave her economic standing but also certain property rights under Spanish law. This in effect meant that Isabel, an Indian woman, was treated as a Spaniard; race was blurred by class and social status in terms of the law. Alliance with the conquerors might also change social status as in the case of Marina who moved from the position of slave to that of an encomendero's wife. Marriages or less formal arrangements between indigenous women and Spaniards also had immense consequences for the children borne of these unions. Children, especially the sons and daughters of important conquistadores, were often afforded some level of social and economic mobility, at least in the early colonial period. This is reflected in the status-enhancing marriages arranged for these first mestizos. The 'best' marriages were generally the result of familial connections with conquistadores, who had ties and connections with members of the

Spanish elite, as was the case with Hernán Cortés who arranged advantageous marriages for both his legitimate and illegitimate children.³⁰

If women benefitted from various survival strategies, the men they were allied with did so as well. Cortés, and his Spanish followers benefitted from having Marina as their translator and advisor. From her they learned of the political situation in Aztec Mexico and how to take advantage of the weaknesses in the imperial structure of the Triple Alliance. As an interpreter Marina was 'La voz' of the Spanish conquest. Through her Cortés made promises to allies and 'questioned' and 'persuaded' his enemies. In addition, Marina provided the necessary pipeline for Cortés to sermonize on the Catholic faith, to explain the Indians' new relationship to King Charles I, to demand gold and coerce loyalty for the Spanish cause.

Survival strategies which took the form of marriages or extra-marital liaisons also benefited the Spaniards in other than sexual relations. Liaisons, and more formal arrangements, were particularly beneficial in creating familial bonds between conquerors and Indians. This was especially important, for both Native and Spaniard, since such kin bonds implied obligations of mutual protection and support. Finally, there were also definite social and economic advantages to be obtained from marrying women of the Native elite; Spanish males could trade on the social status of their noble wives or wives ancestors for property and political favour.

To understand women's strategies and methods and how these resulted in survival, it is helpful to examine individual cases. The study of individuals affords a detailed look at women's situation, avoids the pitfalls of generalizations based on sometimes scanty evidence, while allowing instructive and suggestive comparisons to be made. The selection of Marina and Isabel as case studies was prompted by several factors including the

paucity and - especially in the case of Marina - the scholastically mediocre, often distorted, work that has been done on them. Also in terms of methodology, both Marina and Isabel's circumstances demonstrate the importance of moving beyond the rather simplistic 'power' or 'pawn' paradigm. While aspects of their lives may reflect upon either extreme, taken as a whole, the meaning of their roles and circumstances was far more complex. Studying them as individuals allows for an examination of these complexities. It is also important to note that these women have been chosen because they are not unique to the conquest experience, nor are they unique in the history of European contact with the Americas. There are numerous examples, from other areas, including colonial Peru, the Thirteen Colonies and pre-Confederation Canada. These allow comparative conclusions to be drawn concerning the initial interaction of indigenous female and European male in the Americas. Finally, another significant reason for focussing on these particular women is the availability of source material. Both women were relatively prominent figures. This, combined with the availability of documentation, is insightful for views and treatment of women.

Students of women's history frequently point out that there is a lack of evidence for studying women in the past. In her study of English women, for example, Retha M. Warnicke states that there are serious documentary problems in women's history. Of her particular field she claims that "there is every reason to believe that many of their [women's] records have been selectively destroyed because they were deemed of little value."³¹ However, in terms of the conquest of Mexico, a great deal of documentation is available. Moreover, these documents are useful because they were produced from both Native and European perspectives. Indigenous sources

help in comprehending the structure of Native societies and women's roles and place within those societies. Spanish sources indicate their views of the conquest, and give insights into Spanish perceptions of women and their roles.

Despite these positive features of the available documentation, there are limits to these sources in reference to the conquest, women in general, and to Marina and Isabel in particular. Although accounts and chronicles provide many insights into female behavior, it is important to remember that what is known about these women comes entirely from a male perspective. Indian women left no accounts of their own. Moreover, self-interest colours much of the source material. In terms of the Spanish documentation, for example, sources such as Cortés' dispatches to King Charles reflect a great degree of self-interest. Cortés took great pains to demonstrate that his policies and actions were justified because they served both God and the king.³² Another frequently cited source, which was not entirely motivated by altruism or the desire to achieve complete objectivity, is Bernal Díaz del Castillo's True History of the Conquest of New Spain.³³ Díaz wrote his history because he felt that Francisco López de Gómara, in his account, had given Cortés all the glory. Moreover, Díaz' True History was written many years after the actual events and must be examined in light of possible faults in his memory. And Gómara's work should not be employed in isolation either, since he was Cortés' secretary in Europe and therefore generally follows the captain's point of view. Finally, although Díaz and Gómara are useful sources, which complement each other, there are numerous discrepancies as to particular details especially regarding Marina. Neither Díaz' chronicle or Gómara's history can be depended upon as entirely

accurate and objective reportings of events. But used in conjunction with each other, these accounts provide a wealth of information.³⁴

In terms of archival material and published primary documents, which are instructive for an examination of Isabel Moctezuma, it is important to note that these documents were produced for specific ends. Litigation documents regarding Isabel's property, for example, although key sources, were largely the result of the self-interest of her fifth husband, Juan Cano, and of the familial infighting which resulted from the terms of her will.

The primary source material available from the indigenous point of view was written after the conquest. In accounts such as that of Sahagún's Tlatelolcan informants (The Florentine Codex), definite interests were at work. Firstly, indigenous accounts reflect a desire to rationalize the defeat. Secondly, sources such as The Florentine Codex should be considered in light of the fact that Native groups had reasons for recounting and giving certain meanings to events such as Moctezuma's death. Recognition must be given to these ethnic differences in order to avoid generalizing from the incorrect viewpoint of indigenous cultural unity in Central Mexico.

Other indigenous sources must also be examined sensitively and with an eye to their original purpose. Ixtlilxochitl's Obras, for instance, must be seen in view of his desire to place his Texcocan ancestors - who were allies of the Spaniards - in a favorable light and demonstrate that they were wronged because they never received what Cortés had promised them.³⁵ It is important to note the limitations of the documents because taking source material at face value results in myths and extremely distorted images. Working within these documentary limitations, however, is a very fruitful exercise. The evidence demonstrates that indigenous women who allied themselves with the conquerors and adapted to the Spanish presence were

not just doers, and agents or pawns and objects. They existed as persons in between these two theoretical poles.

Under certain conditions women were able to adapt to the conquest. This was achieved through various forms of alliances based upon skills, services, goods, and also the less tangible such as Native socio-economic and political status. The consequences of these arrangements and compromises were mutual reciprocity and interdependence. Their strategies for survival offered indigenous women a variety of rewards and advantages. Ultimately, these strategies held the promise and the reality of preservation. In order to gain a clearer picture of this process, and its consequences, myths and distortions concerning indigenous women - most especially Marina from whom historians have derived their views of Native Mexican women in general - need to be examined. It is necessary to peel away the layers of popular imagery to get closer to the realities of indigenous women's strategies for surviving the conquest.

Notes to Chapter One

¹ The modern historiographical foundation of the traditional interpretation was laid by William Hickling Prescott in his History of the Conquest of Mexico, first published in 1843. Prescott discussed the Indians' lack of "civilization" in reference to the effects of human sacrifice and cannibalism on the Mexican people. "Cannibalism," he wrote, "under any form or whatever sanction, cannot but have a fatal influence on the nation addicted to it.," History of the Conquest of Mexico 3 vols. Wilfred Harold Munro (ed.) (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1968), vol. I, p. 99. Furthermore, he noted, cannibalism "suggests ideas so loathsome, so degrading to man, to his spiritual and immortal nature, that it is impossible the people who practice it should make any great progress in moral or intellectual culture. The Mexicans furnish no exception to this remark.," vol. I, p. 100.

Prescott also set the stage for the negative views of Moctezuma and his leadership abilities. He commented that the "superstition" of the emperor "proved a principal cause of his calamities," vol. 2, p. 9. Moreover, Prescott argued, Moctezuma tended to vacillate upon important matters. For example, when the Spaniards arrived at Tabasco,

Moctezuma, taking council of his own ill-defined apprehensions, preferred a half-way course, as usual, the most impolitic. He resolved to send an embassy, with such a magnificent present to the strangers as should impress with high ideas of his grandeur and resources; while at the same time he would forbid their approach to the capital. This was to reveal both his wealth and his weakness," vol. 2, p. 14.

According to David Levin, Prescott was interested in proving the inevitability of the Indians' defeat by referring to their moral faults. Levin also notes that Prescott used contrasting traits or characteristics in the attempt to substantiate this viewpoint. Thus the "civilization" of the Spaniards is contrasted with the "semi-civilization" of the Aztecs and the Spanish victory represents "the triumph of Cortés' 'genius,' 'constancy,' and resourceful leadership over Montezuma's (Moctezuma) 'pusillanimity,' and 'vacillation.'" Cited in Benjamin Keen, The Aztec Image in Western Thought (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1971), p. 355.

Prescott's perspective has had a great impact upon the historiography of the conquest. Many have followed the fundamentals of his approach. See for example, Hubert Howe Bancroft whose anti-Spanish sentiment did not prevent him from stating that "Montezuma (Moctezuma) and his people were inhuman monsters," History of Mexico, 1516-1521 in The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft 39 vols. (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft Publishers, 1883), p. 693.

The traditional view of the conquest inherited by modern historians from nineteenth-century moralistic versions of events such as Prescott is all

too apparent. In Fire and Blood (New York: Macmillan, 1973), for instance, T.R. Fehrenbach states that a "handful of Spanish adventurers destroyed Tenochtitlan," p. 181. A similar view is expressed by J.H. Plumb, "Introduction" to William Weber Johnson's Cortés (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1975) Plumb states that "unbelievable success came to Cortés; with a handful of men and a few horses he toppled the greatest, the most warlike of all American empires," p. xii. Johnson himself carries on the Prescott tradition with references to Moctezuma's vacillation and superstition, pp. 71-73. For other expressions of this traditional perspective see Charles E. Dibble, The Conquest Through Aztec Eyes (University of Utah Press, 1978); and David Carrasco, Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire: Myths and Prophecies in the Aztec Tradition (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

² See Bancroft, for example, where he contrasts the "wolves of Spain" with the "naked and defenseless of America," p. 54.

³ Race Mixture in Latin America (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1967), p. 22. A similar view of indigenous female and European male sexual relations is expressed by Iris Blanco who writes "without any attention to the requirements of etiquette or of protocol, they [the Spaniards] appropriated women in an indiscriminate and brutal manner," "La Mujer en los Albores de la Conquista de Mexico," Aztlán 11 (1980) 2: 263. She also mistakenly argues that the Spaniards had no concern for the status or rank of indigenous women, p. 263.

⁴ Morner, p. 22.

⁵ Morner, p. 23.

⁶ Morner, p. 23.

⁷ Morner, p. 23; emphasis added.

⁸ Asunción Lavrin (ed.), Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 5.

⁹ Native adaptation as means of surviving the European presence in the New World is a fairly recent approach in the historiography of culture contact in the Americas. Several historians have applied this theme to different native peoples of the Americas including Donald Chipman, "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of Mestizaje" David G. Sweet and Gary B. Nash (eds.), Struggle and Survival in Colonial America (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981). See also Susan Kellog, "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts: Structure and Strategy in a Legal Context," Ronald Spores and Ross Hassig (eds.) Five Centuries of Law and Politics in Central Mexico (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Publications in Anthropology, no. 30, 1980), pp. 25-39. In Maya Society Under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise

of Survival (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), Nancy Farriss examines this perspective in the context of the colonial Maya and argues that they adapted to conquest through various collective strategies which helped them preserve their "cultural bond," pp. 4-5.

¹⁰ Power and Pawn: The Female in Iberian Families, Societies, and Cultures (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), p. xiii.

¹¹ Pescatello, Power and Pawn, p. xiii.

¹² Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), pp. 279-280; See also June E. Hahner, Women in Latin American History: Their Lives and Views. (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Studies, vol. 51) who states that some women were "exploited and oppressed" while others were the "exploiters and the oppressors," p. 2.

¹³ Ann Pescatello, Power and Pawn, p. xiii.

¹⁴ Lavrin, p. 6; Pescatello takes the same viewpoint in Power and Pawn, p. 231, and in Female and Male in Latin America: Essays (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973), p. xiv.

¹⁵ The idea that female power rests in the familial context is taken to extremes by feminists such as Elizabeth Gould Davis who goes back to the Morgan thesis and argues that "The First Family" was a family of women and children who banded together to protect themselves from marauding males. Basing her conclusions on the historical existence of the matriarchy on rather superficial linguistic "evidence" derived from the Encyclopedia Britannica (1964 edition), Gould concludes "It seems obvious that fatherhood was unknown even as recently as five thousand years ago," The First Sex (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1971), pp. 86-87.

¹⁶ Daughters of the Conquistadores, p. 140. Martín is adamant about the intrinsic power of women since he also states that women of colonial Peru "enjoyed an inner freedom," p. 315.

¹⁷ Hahner, p. 6

¹⁸ Bernard W. Sheehan, "Indian-White Relations in Early America: A Review Essay," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd. ser. 26 (1969): p. 267.

¹⁹ Sylvia Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870 (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer Publishing, Ltd., 1980), p. 7.

20 Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock (eds.), Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives (New York: Praeger, J.F. Bergin Publishers, 1980), p.21.

21 Bernard Sheehan, "Review Essay," p. 270.

22 The London Feminist History Group states, for example, "Women have not just been hidden from history, they have been oppressed," The Sexual Dynamics of History: Men's Power, Women's Resistance (London: Pluto Press, 1983), p. 2. Despite this the LFHG assumes "that at least some women have always been active, strong and enterprising. Women have been 'actors' as well as 'victims' in history - taking action against men's power as well as suffering under it," p. 5. This ideological assumption guides, and indeed, pervades their work as historians.

23 For example, Isabel's brother, don Pedro Tlacahuepan de Moctezuma was granted Tula in encomienda and later received a coat of arms from the crown See Ann Prather Hollingsworth, "Pedro de Moctezuma and his Descendents, 1521-1718," (Ph.D. Dissertation, North Texas State University, 1980), p. 20. Charles Gibson discusses how some males of the cacique and principal classes received honours and privileges as rewards for cooperating with the Spaniards, but significantly points out that indigenous men of the elite "continued to marry within their own upper class thus preserving the purity of rank," The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico. 1519-1810 (Stanford: Stanford: University Press, 1964), pp. 155-156.

24 Charles R. Boxer, Mary and Mysogyny: Women in Iberian Expansion Overseas. 1415-1815. Some Facts, Fancies and Personalities (London: Gerald Duckworth and Company Limited, 1975), p. 35.

25 Boxer, p. 35. See also James Lockhart, Spanish Peru. 1532-1560: A Colonial Society (Madison, Milwaukee, London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), pp. 150-152.

26 Boxer, p. 36. Boxer notes that these instructions were restated in 1514, p. 36. This suggests that the initial ordinance was largely ignored.

27 Silvio A. Zavala, Las Instituciones Jurídicas en la Conquista de América 2nd. ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1971), p. 425.

28 Boxer, p. 36. According to figures cited by Boxer, in 1514 in Hispaniola, one in three Spaniards had Native wives, p. 36.

29 Charles Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 26-27.

³⁰ Little scholarly work has been done in this particular field but as the examples of Cortés' children and the offspring of Marina, Isabel, and Luisa (Xicoténcatl) demonstrate that advantageous marriages for children borne of parents of some measure of socio-economic position occurred with relative frequency. Lockhart discusses early mestizo marriages and their social and economic significance in the context of early Peru, pp. 166-169.

³¹ Women of the English Renaissance and Reformation (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983), p. 211. This view is taken to extremes by Davis who writes of "Gynikomnemonikothanasia." "The zeal of the masculine historians and encyclopedists," she caustically remarks, "in destroying even the memory of great women (which is the intended meaning of the above word) has rendered the pursuit of feminine historical research extremely difficult," p. 270. Later she argues that "the malicious erasure of women's names from the historical record began two or three thousand years ago and continues to our own day," p. 272.

³² Copies of the dispatches are found in Hernán Cortés, Cartas y Documentos Mario Hernández Sanchez-Barba (ed.) (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1963), pp. 3-322.

³³ Ramón Iglesia remarks on the significance of Díaz' account. Díaz "is the author to whom specialists, and even laymen, interested in the conquest of New Spain first turn." In fact, states Iglesia, "Díaz is the center of a genuine cult," "Introduction to the Study of Bernal Díaz del Castillo and his True History," Columbus, Cortés, and Other Essays Lesley Byrd Simpson (trans.) (University of California Press, 1969), p. 69.

³⁴ In his essay "Two Studies of Bernal Díaz," Columbus, Cortés, and Other Essays Ramón Iglesia provides a much needed corrective to historians' face value acceptance of the veracity of Díaz' History and their dismissal of Gómara's account. Writing in 1941, Iglesia commented that "today, generally speaking, Bernal Díaz' opinion is accepted. His History of the Conquest is the "true" one, as he entitled it - which seems to imply that Gómara's is not," p. 50. Iglesia shows that Bernal was motivated by greed and self-interest in many of his unwarranted criticisms of Gómara, in his contradictory reporting, and in his sometimes outright fabrications of events. One important point regarding the merits of these two sources which Iglesia fails to mention, however, is that Gómara never journeyed to the Americas and his sources of information, such as Hernán Cortés, were all secondhand.

³⁵ Ally of Cortés. Account Thirteen: Of the Coming of the Spaniards and the Beginning of Evangelical Law Douglas K. Ballantine (trans.) (El Paso: Texas Western Press), p. 124.

Chapter Two: Myths and Images of Indigenous Women

Myths and stereotypical images abound in literature concerned with the conquest of Mexico. This is not surprising since, like other 'great' events in history such as the French Revolution, the conquest has immense appeal as a heroic drama. It has all the ingredients of an epic: valiant conquerors in confrontation with an exotic people in a supposed semi-tropical environment; blood, gore, and destruction; romance, sexual violence, and tragedy; and brutality, ruthless cruelty, and courage. Moreover, 'great' individuals are easily identified and they can be placed at the forefront of events. In this context the conquest becomes a contest of wills between Hernán Cortés and the 'Aztec Emperor' Moctezuma with their communication link provided by doña Marina. Yet, history which is based on the motivations and actions of 'great' individuals is the most simplified version of the past. Such reduction does not reveal the complexities involved in explaining why individuals acted in the way they did. These interpretive difficulties are especially apparent in the presentation of indigenous women in the conquest, particularly doña Marina. Indeed popular perceptions and presentations of women such as Marina are frequently simplistic, moralistic, and prejudicial, if not discriminatory. These popular images and stereotypes tend to explain women's action by emphasizing the sexual relations between men and women, and most significantly, with reference only to women's emotional considerations of events and circumstances.

In attempting to shed light upon a women's actions, such as Marina's, many historians have allowed romanticism to cloud their judgement. This is

evident in the notion that Marina was inspired to act on the Spaniards' behalf because of her love for Cortés. Federico Gómez de Orozco states, for example, that Marina was "enslaved" by her love for Cortés. She was, he writes, a "passionate woman fascinated and controlled by an *idée fixe*."¹ He concludes that her motives can be "defined with four letters: love."² Such simplistic causal arguments are also found in other biographies of the conquerors' interpreter. Mariano García Somonte claims that one can observe in all the acts of Marina's life, her love for Cortés.³ In his Mujeres Celébres de México, Carlos Hernández also subscribes to the same simplistic explanation. He states that "the affable and affectionate princess remained fascinated by the dazzling prestige of the most notable man of her time."⁴ Yet, as in a tragic and grim fairy-tale, the 'prince' made a victim of the 'princess': "Cortés, like Goethe, like Byron, and like most famous men committed great injustices in love."⁵ Her victimization is self-evident to Hernández because "Doña Marina had no ambition to titles or riches, but aspired to love: love can only be repaid with love."⁶

This tendency to depict Marina as motivated entirely by emotion finds one of its most pronounced expressions in the often romanticized nineteenth-century accounts of the conquest. William Hickling Prescott, for example, concludes that Marina learned Castilian more readily because "it was to her the language of love."⁷ Forty years later, Hubert Howe Bancroft, the encyclopedic popular historian, likened her to Helen of Troy and stated that she loved Cortés "with her whole soul."⁸ This naive over-simplification has found its way into little known works as well. In Mexico (published in 1898) Susan Hale claimed that Marina - "the little duchess" - was guided entirely by her emotional attachment to Cortés who "became the object of

her intense admiration."⁹ Hale's account is also noteworthy for other reasons especially its highly romanticized description of Marina's physical attributes:

Marina was very beautiful . . . her black hair was braided in two long tresses interwoven with pearls and coral. Her slightly copper-colored tint was clear enough for a soft play of rose in her cheeks; her large soft eyes beamed, and her white teeth flashed as she smiled; while, for the most part, her oval face remained grave, almost sad, in its expression. She was slight, graceful, with small hands and feet.¹⁰

Such depictions of physical attributes go hand in hand with the idea that women act only in response to their emotions. Linked to this approach are various stereotypes and misrepresentations of sexuality and sexual relations among the indigenous peoples, especially women. González Ruíz, for example, explains Marina's sexual relationship with the statement: "Morality did not exist among the Aztecs as it did not exist among any uncivilized people." The Indians, he states, regarded infidelity with complete indifference.¹¹ As the available evidence demonstrates, this explanation is invalid. Among the Aztecs, punishments for infidelity and what might be termed 'loose' morals, such as promiscuous sexual behavior, were severe by any standards.¹² In addition to such erroneous comments, emphasis on the sexual context has resulted in descriptions which are biased and discriminatory. William Weber Johnson, for example, describes Marina as "an alluring Native girl."¹³ He contrasts her with the other women given as gifts at Tabasco "who were short and plump, seemingly boneless."¹⁴ Johnson explains Cortés' reluctance to accept for himself gifts of women from Native leaders with the statement that Cortés was married and,

besides, he was already "enjoying all the various talents" of his "cooperative" interpreter.¹⁵

In addition to the emphasis placed upon emotional responses and sexual relations, a third feature of popular imagery is the 'Indian Princess' idea. Historians have described Marina as a "princess," "the Aztec princess" or, "la joven princesa."¹⁶ If not termed a princess outright, her supposed elite birthright is nevertheless alluded to. Johnson claims that she "had a regal bearing" and thus "it was clear that she was a person of some importance."¹⁷ Some supposed proofs of Marina's noble status are rather difficult to believe. In González Ruíz' account when Cortés asks Marina about her background, she replies, "Princess I was born, señor Capitan." She goes on to point out that as she is pretty, she might well have ended her days on the sacrificial stone in honour of Huizilopochtli. Such statements satisfy Cortés that she is of "noble blood."¹⁸ González Ruíz' characterization of "la bella princesa"¹⁹ (the pretty princess) Tecuichpo, or Isabel Moctezuma is equally biased and lacks foundation. In describing Cortés' relationship with Isabel, whom he terms "the terrible vampire," González Ruíz states that the captain fell prey to an "absorbent and destructive sensuality."²⁰ González Ruíz claims that explanations for Cortés' relationship with Isabel can be found in "some of the faults in his [Cortés'] prodigious mental capacity. In the city of the lakes, the genius Cortés had one moment of decadence."²¹

Such negative characterizations of 'Indian princesses' such as Isabel are hardly objective and realistic. In the case of Marina, moreover, the use of the term 'princess' is incorrect. Among the Aztecs, for instance, there were two noble ranks. As Charles Gibson points out these were the tlatoque, or

caciques, and the pipiltín, or principales.²² Female members of the pipiltín, or Native elite were termed cihuapiltín. Gibson defines tlatoque as "Indian ruler(s) of a community," and pipiltín as "member[s] of the Indian upper class."²³ This definition demonstrates that supposed similarities between the ranks in the indigenous nobility and those of the European model were, and are, more perceived than real.

Taking the case of Marina, for example, if she was a cacique's daughter, as most historians believe, then her rank would have been a tlatoani (singular of tlatoque). Thus she might deserve to have the 'tzin' honorific attached to the end of her name as in Malintzin or she might deserve to be called doña. But the translation of either status is not that of princess. The term princess implies regal status which is inherited. To be a true princess, Marina had to have been the daughter of a king. One woman who could be classified as such is Moctezuma's daughter Isabel.²⁴ Yet, it must be noted that while he inherited a noble status, Moctezuma did not inherit his position of Uey-Tlatoani. Revered Speaker or, ruler of Tenochtitlan. Rather he was elected to it by a council of his political 'peers.' Thus, although Isabel could be termed a princess, the term is not an entirely accurate definition of her Native status and relates more to the European dynastic model than to the Native Mexican system of achieved and elected ranks. Considered in this light Marina cannot be termed a princess; her Native status was definitely not equal to that of Isabel Moctezuma who, as Moctezuma's daughter, would have been termed a cihuapilli.

Furthermore, if the definition of Native status is related to the status of the parent, one could conclude that there is little to suggest that Marina's

father was anything more than a calpullec or calpulli headman. Frances Berdan's explanation, that this position had to be held by a principal "who was also an 'elder,' but not necessarily of noble descent," perhaps best fits the Spaniard's contradictory reports that Marina's father was a local lord.²⁵ Berdan further notes that there was a preference for retaining the position of calpullec within one family over generations despite the fact that it was an elected office. The capullec had important functions including protecting the calpulli, or clan, and most important, he had to meet with the chief tribute collector every day to receive any orders.²⁶

There are also significant problems in labelling Marina an 'Aztec Princess.' Geoffrey W. Conrad and Arthur A. Demarest point out the confusion arising from the term Aztec,

In current usage, 'Aztecs' sometimes specifically designates the ruling people of the empire, the inhabitants of the dual island capital of Tenochtitlan-Tlatelolco. However, much more commonly, 'Aztecs' is a generic label for any or all the Nahuatl-speaking peoples of the fourteenth- to sixteenth-century Central Mexico.²⁷

From this definition, one must conclude that term 'Aztec' is more or less limited to language groupings. Thus, only by virtue of her ability to speak Nahuatl can Marina be termed an Aztec. Conrad and Demarest's definition also suggests that the term Aztec does not imply an ethnic or even a kin relationship among those who spoke Nahuatl. In addition, as Gibson has shown, the Aztecs must be separated into their ethnic categories such as the Mexica and the Culhua if historians are to achieve any kind of refinement in their analyses.²⁸ This is especially important in the context of Marina, who

is frequently labelled an Aztec and who has been accused of betraying 'her people.'

The betrayer, or traitress, image is the most negative image of the Spaniards' interpreter and advisor. As one historian remarks, "if there is one villainess in Mexican history, she is Malintzin. She was to become the ethnic traitress supreme."²⁹ Susan Hale, for example, stands in judgment of Marina and accuses her of bringing ruin upon 'her people':

She witnessed the slaughter of her countrymen with grief, and interceded always in favor of the conquered; but no thought of patriotism troubled her mind as she deliberately surrendered the land to the hands of its enemies.³⁰

The traitress image is based on the notion that Marina willfully and deliberately handed over 'her people,' the Indians, to the conquerors. This is apparently derived from the Cholulan massacre where Marina is meant to have provoked Cortés to call for the mass slaughter of the population. Perhaps the most important historical event, however, which provides the basis for traitress label is Marina's role in the execution of the much mythologized last 'Aztec emperor,' Cuauhtemoc, or Falling Eagle. According to some accounts, Cuauhtemoc is supposed to have accused Marina of betraying her people. Yet, there is no entirely reliable record of such a bitter exchange which appears to originate in Bernal Díaz' record of some of Cuauhtemoc's last words. According to Díaz, Falling Eagle did accuse an individual of betrayal but he was not speaking to Marina. Rather he was addressing Cortés whom many of the Indians called "Malinche":

Oh! Malinche I have long known that you meant to kill me and I have understood your false speeches for

you kill me unjustly, and God will call you to account for it.³¹

Since many popular accounts of the conquest show a close reading of, if not a dependence on, The True History of the Conquest of New Spain it seems that in having Cuauhtemoc accuse Marina of betrayal, writers have misinterpreted what they have read. Perhaps, though, some have deliberately made Marina the receptor of Cuauhtemoc's accusation to add credence to the betrayal theme and to enhance the melodramatic.

The traitress image is a relatively recent phenomenon in popular perceptions of Marina's role in the conquest. It emerged with the development of the indigenismo movement.³² As Justo Sierra noted in 1910, Marina was labelled a traitress "by the retrospective adulators of the Aztecs."³³ Eric R. Wolf reflects upon the effect of indigenismo on Native historical figures:

Heroes of the Indian past became national archetypes . . . collective scorn was heaped upon La Malinche, the Indian concubine of Cortés, for the betrayal into Spanish hands of her fellow Indians."³⁴

In response to the 'Aztec adulation' of indigenismo Marina became a negative symbol. Indeed, her Indian name "Malintzin" or Malinche has become part of the language. Used as a perjorative term malinchismo means "selling out to an alien nation."³⁵ The Mexican poet, Octavio Paz, discusses the meaning of malinchismo in the context of the phrase "hijos de la chingada!" According to him, the historical chingada is La Malinche. "As a small boy will not forgive his mother if she abandons him to search for his father," Paz writes, "the Mexican people have not forgiven La Malinche for

her betrayal." According to Paz, malinchista is used to denounce those who have yielded to the corrupting influences of things foreign.³⁶

The image of Marina as the betrayer of 'her people' is historically inaccurate for numerous reasons. Marina was not an Aztec, especially when the term is applied to mean the people of Tenochtitlan-Tlatelolco. The accusation of treason against Marina is even more incorrect in the context of the Mexica or the Cholulans who cannot be defined as 'her people' either. As T.R. Fehrenbach points out, Marina "was not Mexica; there was no reason at all why she should have felt loyalty to the overlords at Tenochtitlan."³⁷ Describing the Aztecs as Marina's 'people' suggests a failure to recognize the plurality of Native cultures.³⁸ In addition, the terms treason and traitor imply the existence of a recognized patria and a sense of patriotism encompassing the indigenous groups, homogenizing them into a whole nation. The Indians of Mexico did not comprise a sovereign nation at this time.³⁹

The traitress image reveals that many cannot explain women's action in the past without reference to their emotional responses. 'Betrayal' implies willful treachery and, in Marina's case, it is linked to her supposed attempt at avenging herself upon those who had sold her into slavery. As such, her treason is an entirely emotional response to her circumstance as a slave. Yet, if Marina had truly wanted revenge for being enslaved she would never have treated her mother and brother so kindly when they met years later during the Honduras expedition. Ultimately, these types of popular images have little basis in fact. However, they pervade historical accounts of the conquest and when they find their way into popular literature,

especially the anomaly of the historical novel, the effects in terms of sound historical narrative and interpretation are disastrous.

A case in point is Rider Haggard's novel Montezuma's Daughter published in 1898. Haggard's hero is Thomas Wingfield, the son of an English woman and Spanish father. During the Conquest, Wingfield lived for twenty years among the Indians. The year of the Spanish Armada inspires him to begin writing a narrative of his experiences in the New World. The novel is full of scenes of Wingfield's courage and bravery when confronted with bloodthirsty Aztecs, or ruthless Spaniards, who except for the chivalric Bernal Díaz, all live up to the Black Legend tradition.⁴⁰ As for the Indian women portrayed in this novel, Haggard produces many stereotypical images.

Like other novelists who followed him, Rider Haggard holds that Marina betrayed her people. He accounts for her treason through her emotional attachment to Cortés. As a consequence of her all-consuming love, Haggard writes:

she brought an evil on her Native land; for without her aid Tenochtitlan, or Mexico, as they call it now, had never bowed beneath the yoke of Spain - yes, she forgot her honour in her passion.⁴¹

Using Díaz' account to his own melodramatic ends, Haggard has Cuauhtemoc accuse Marina of treason:

You have betrayed your country and you have brought me to shame and torment. Yes, had it not been for you, these things had never been . . . may your name be shameful for ever in the ears of honest men and your soul be everlastingly accursed and may you yourself, even before you die know the bitterness of dishonour and betrayal! ⁴²

While Marina is portrayed as a traitor in Montezuma's Daughter, she is also depicted as the self-sacrificing Indian maiden of the North American Pocahontas tradition.⁴³ One year before Cortés arrives in Mexico, Wingfield is shipwrecked off the coast of Tabasco while on his way to Hispaniola. In the manner of Pocahontas' famed rescue of Captain John Smith, Marina intervenes to save Wingfield from being sacrificed by the Tabascans. She entreats her master to spare his life just as the flint knife is being raised.⁴⁴

The true heroine of Haggard's story is the 'emperor's' daughter, Otomie, who "seemed such a woman as men dream of but very rarely win."⁴⁵ Otomie has the physical attributes of the exotic Indian Princess and more besides: "at once pure and passionate, of royal blood and heart, nice natured and most womanly, yet brave as a man and beautiful as the night." ⁴⁶

The hero, of course, falls in love with Otomie and both are rescued from the sacrificial stone by none other than Bernal Díaz. Despite his love for Montezuma's daughter Wingfield, nevertheless, has some doubts about her true nature. "At heart" he states "she was still a savage, and strive as she would to hide it, at times her blood would master her."⁴⁷ Not wanting to cross the racial barrier, Haggard has his hero return to England where he not surprisingly marries his childhood sweetheart who had patiently awaited his return.

Other novelists followed Haggard in their portrayal of Marina as a traitress. In his Conqueror. The Story of Cortés. Montezuma and the Slave Girl. Malinal, published in 1933, Arthur Douglas Howden Smith picked up on

this theme and portrayed Marina as a woman directed entirely by an all-consuming love which motivated her actions against 'her people':

Her satisfaction came from service rendered. If Cortés wanted a city, she would help him build a city. If he wanted an empire, she would help him wade through blood and agony - the blood and agony of her own people, if necessary - to conquer it. She would nourish his ambition, find joy in its exciting demands, even as she would suckle a hungry child. ⁴⁸

When Marina's mind is filled with such thoughts "a thrill of ecstasy"⁴⁹ courses through her veins. Not to be out done, Cortés loves his mistress interpreter in Smith's novel. In fact his love for her develops into an extreme form of dependence which is portrayed in a rather pathetic light. He tells her that she is his luck. "With you," he states, "I shall conquer. Without you - But you will never leave me! Promise me - swear by the virgin!"⁵⁰

Yet if in Howden Smith's novel luck is the euphemism for the sexual theme, some later novelists focus almost entirely upon Cortés and Marina's sexual relationship. For Margaret Shedd, this relationship provides the most significant bond between Cortés and Marina and directs all of her actions. Shedd opens her novel Malinche and Cortés with the statement, "Malinche was a whore, but since everything this woman did was on a grand scale, so too was her whoring."⁵¹ Shedd goes on to argue that Marina knew exactly what she wanted and, from the beginning, she desires Cortés to be her 'lord and master.' Consummation of this desire brings her to life. "I was alive," Marina says "as I had so certainly known I would be as soon as this man touched me."⁵² According to Shedd, Marina and Cortés use each other sexually, they "invigorate" each other. Any shred of validity to this theory is completely lost in Shedd's descriptions of the pairs' antics. Given the

sensationalist presentation of Malinche's sexual appetite (at fifteen no less) it is apparent that Shedd believes all 'whores' have 'grand' sex.⁵³

That Marina betrayed her own people is obvious to Shedd since "she could not have had so important a role in the conquest had she not betrayed them."⁵⁴ Like Rider Haggard and Howden Smith, Shedd sees the cause of this betrayal in Marina's love. Desperate to maintain her relationship with Cortés - who from the beginning treats her with equal measures of contempt and kindness - Marina takes out her fear of being denied upon 'her people.' No traitor to individuals, she delivers up entire pueblos to her lord and master for entirely personal reasons. In Cholula, she believes Cortés wants the Cholulans to conspire against him and she is afraid of being cast aside by her lover. Not surprisingly therefore, Shedd has Marina fabricate the entire Cholulan plot. Ultimately, one is left with the impression that Marina, much like a bored teenager, lied in order to make her life more 'exciting.'

Perhaps the major problem with novels such as Shedd's is that they assume all Indians to be the same. This ethnocentrism does not allow for the differences among indigenous groups existent in Mexico at the time of the Conquest. Cultural plurality is recognized and the traitress image is discarded by Jane Lewis Brandt in her otherwise pretentious and superficial novel, La Chingada, where Malinche states:

There are those who call me traitress. Liars . . . The Aztecs were never my people but their oppressors, and it was the Aztecs Cortés set himself against and fought and conquered. And so I betrayed no one.⁵⁵

While historians might applaud this apparent lack of ethnocentrism on Brandt's part, few will praise her attempt to make Marina a self-sacrificing deeply Catholic woman.

According to Brandt's novel, after the conquest and the death of Juan Jaramillo, Marina takes up residence in Paynala, her ancestral home. Just before she comes to a rather violent end in a lightning storm, Marina states that "there is a power greater than Cortés. And so I believe that wrongs done by him will be made right at last. This I must believe. I must trust in God, walk humbly, and do whatever good I can."⁵⁶ In Paynala, Marina is hated by many and "la Chingada" is scrawled across the door of her house. She tells of how Jaramillo died in a duel in a cantina in Madrid while attempting to avenge her honour upon a man who had openly cursed her with the same epithet. Yet Marina courageously vows to remain in Paynala. She tells Arturo Mondragon, a prospective suitor, that she cannot marry him because she "will not desert the faithful Christians here" and that she will remain to help them "no matter how they hate me!"⁵⁷

Marina is supposed to help the Paynallans through her faith in Christianity; God will direct her. As fray Jeronimo Aguilar tells Mondragon, Marina feels extreme guilt at times "as though she had indeed betrayed her own kind instead of having helped Christians to overthrow the cruel Aztecs and so bring Christ to pagans."⁵⁸ Aguilar explains that Marina is only held together by her faith in God and the knowledge that she had "been God's servant when she aided Cortés." Despite her faith though, "she suffers dark hours because of much cruelty the people of this land have suffered at the hands of the Spaniards."⁵⁹

Guilt derived from treason is a major theme of other novels and is part of the 'La Llorona' tradition in Mexico.⁶⁰ In Mistress of the Morning Star, the Llorona image is all too apparent. The author, Elizabeth Lane, has Father Olmedo comfort Marina during the bloody siege of the beleaguered Tenochtitlan. "That's my own blood flowing in the streets out there," she cries to the padre.⁶¹ She tells him that she needs forgiveness because her actions helped destroy Mexico. In effect, Lane has Marina admit to treason. The padre consoles Marina by saying that she requires forgiveness only for herself. "This day will end child," he states, "The black vultures of death will fly away. Then your people will need you more than ever, and you'll find your forgiveness." ⁶²

Confessions of guilt aside, a word must be said about this novel and its characters. Like several other fictional accounts of the conquest, this novel is narrated by Marina who, informed that she may die from giving birth, decides to write her story for the benefit of her unborn child. Readers are forewarned about the quality of this book when, at the beginning of the novel, Marina's rebellious father tells a blood encrusted Aztec priest "your gods turn my stomach,"⁶³ and is then sacrificed for this blasphemy. After her father's death, Marina is sold into slavery and is raped by the "sleek, pumalike" Quauhtlatoa, the evil son of her pochteca master.⁶⁴ Purchased by Chilam, a Tabascan Maya, she gives birth to a son who is sacrificed by drowning because of the jealousy of Chilam's principle wife, who is barren. The story goes from bad to worse at this point

There are gossip sessions between Marina and the nineteen other women given as gifts at Tabasco, where they discuss the physical and sexual merits of their Spanish mates. In fact this is all important to these

women and throughout the novel many of them think of little else. Moreover, Lane's descriptions of the women's physical attributes are equally superficial. She describes Tecuichpo (Isabel Moctezuma), for example, as "a butterfly in human form."⁶⁵ Her portrait of Isabel echos Susan Hale's romanticized description of Marina:

She [Isabel] was small for her age, and from the crown of her head to the soles of her little gold sandals she was exquisite. Beauty we had seen in abundance, but her, in the features of this little princess, was perfection.⁶⁶

The characterizations of the principle male characters are as superficial as those of the women. There is the gentle, noble Juan Jaramillo who, as the dustjacket proclaims, "bore a burden of forbidden love for the beauty possessed by Cortés."⁶⁷ Bernal Díaz is portrayed as a gallant but clownish figure who plays matchmaker between Jaramillo and Marina even offering his 'hunting lodge' for a weekend tryst.

Similar to the superficial Mistress of the Morning Star is Phyllis Leornard's Warrior's Woman.⁶⁸ Not much need be said about this romance novel which centers upon a blond, forever thinly clad Irishwoman who comes to Hispaniola to sell horses to the conquerors. She is shipwrecked off the coast, however, and is forced to prostitute herself for protection to the insanely jealous Count of Altamira. The heroine, Alana Mackenna, with her wolfhound "Finn," and her black stallion "Conn" arrives at the center of events at Tenochtitlan after various misfortunes. She is raped, molested, beaten and leered at by Aztecs and Spaniards alike but finds 'true love' in the arms of the dashing Brian Phelps who is, of course, an Englishman.

The Indian women in this novel are exotic beauties with liquid eyes who bear names like Blue Butterfly and Yellow Plume. Marina appears briefly in the story as a sort of Hollywood Cleopatra who lazily reclines upon jewelled silk pillows or "snuggl[es] up" to Cortés with the thought "What a man this was! Life would be nothing without him."⁶⁹ The novel is full of Irish curses passionately muttered by the heroine who, spared the sacrificial stone, is nearly burnt at the stake by an evil Inquisitor. He lusts after her and plays the stereotypical malevolent figure in black who continually and furtively rubs his hands together in revengeful glee. In the scene where she is questioned by the Holy Tribunal, the book descends into vaudevillian burlesque and one is reminded of the Monty Python sketch where characters are forever jumping up with 'No one expects the Spanish Inquisition!'

A more recent and better crafted novel is Gary Jennings' Aztec. While Jennings' historical sense is above that of Leonard's, his novel is as sensationalist. Perhaps too, the implications of Jennings' ability to be relatively historically realistic are worse than Leonard's attempt to portray the Spanish victory over the Aztecs as the result of British intervention. The primary reason for this is that Jennings juxtaposes comparatively realistic versions of Aztec life and society with sensationalist, frequently pornographic, descriptions of relationships between men and women.

Marina appears several times in the story which is narrated by Mixtli. He is an aged Aztec pressed into service by Bishop Zumárraga on orders from the king, who wishes to learn all he can about his newly conquered subjects. Jennings' portrayal of Marina does not entirely follow the traditional images. In Aztec Marina is not the daughter of a rich and powerful

cacique. Rather she is the child of a prostitute and an unknown father and is sold into slavery by her starving mother. When Mixtli first encounters her, Marina expresses a willingness to prostitute herself to achieve the lofty ambitions of freedom and residence in Tēnochtitlan. But Jennings reverts to the traitress image when Mixtli calls Marina "venal and deceitful and perfidious"⁷⁰ He also foresees the future meaning which will be attached to her name: "You will make that name vile and filthy and contemptible," he shouts, "and people will spit when they speak it!"⁷¹ Mixtli blames Marina for the Cholulan massacre and Jennings, like other novelists, reveals his ethnocentrism in describing the Cholulans as members of Marina's "own race."⁷² Jennings does emphasize, however, Marina's role as interpreter and strategic advisor to Cortés, an important role which is hardly discussed in many other novels.⁷³

Determined to rid the Spaniards of their most important agent in the conquest, Mixtli - who is close to Moctezuma - is assigned to poison Marina's food. The plot backfires when a slave dies from a taste test. Marina gets her revenge by seducing the inebriated, but otherwise chaste, Mixtli who has achieved the prestigious rank of Eagle knight. Such scenes add little to the plot of this overly long and sometimes tedious book. Moreover, Jennings' sensationalist representations of sexual relationships combined with descriptions of bloody violence make this novel an exercise in pornography. This is particularly apparent in his portrayal of Marina but also in his depiction of other indigenous women.

As Marina is not the 'Indian Princess' she claims to be Jennings provides readers with several examples of women of the Native nobility. The First Lady of Texcoco, wife of Nezahualpilli, is a kind, generous and

intelligent woman of middle age with an "unlined and lovely" face.⁷⁴ In stark contrast to her is Nezahualpilli's second wife, the young and breathtaking Jadestone Doll, who is the 'Indian princess' gone wrong. She turns out to be a sadist and an especially gruesome serial killer. She involves Mixtli in a scheme whereby he provides her with handsome sleeping partners, whom she dispatches, although we are never told exactly how. Their corpses are sent to the palace kitchen where they are rendered down by slaves too terrified to disobey royal orders. The skeletal remains are then taken to the palace artists who fashion sculptures around the bones. Jadestone Doll tells her husband that they are representations of regional gods. But the evil 'Indian Princess' comes to a similarly gruesome end. Found out, she is sentenced to spend her final hours, nude and under the influence of hallucinogens and lost in a maze with the decomposing corpse of her last unfortunate lover.⁷⁵

Women of lesser social status and from various indigenous groups appear frequently throughout Aztec, but they are included only as Mixtli's sexual partners. His first sexual relationship is with his own sister. Later he becomes involved with a Mixteca family. He sleeps with the mother, then marries her beautiful daughter, 'Always.' After she is killed by a longstanding enemy, he marries her sister. Throughout his married life, he has numerous companions who apparently delight in sexual experimentation. Jennings' use such scenes is entirely gratuitous and has little to do with either historical realities, or even the plot of the novel. At one point, for instance, Mixtli and his wife travel to Michoacan where they stay with the tlatoani of a village. Having drunk a good deal of potent chápuri the couple decides to retire. Once in bed, they discover two children under the

blankets who perform various sexual favours for them. The children are Purémpechas who, according to Jennings, have a "predilection for inventive, voluptuous, and even perverse sexual practices."⁷⁶ Such descriptions are less related to the author's understanding of Mixtli's historical context and more to the desire to reap the profits of a bestseller.

The depiction of indigenous women in Aztec is narrow-minded, if not prejudicial. Like several other authors Jennings has foregone historical realities in favour of trying to titillate his readers. This is not a flaw in itself since a novel is fiction. Yet Jennings' style and methods of presenting the story show that he has pretensions to offering a historically accurate account.

One final work which needs to be considered is the most recent attempt to write a novel of the conquest. Published in 1987, Robert Somerlott's Death of the Fifth Son follows the sensationalism of Jennings' Aztec yet differs most significantly in Somerlott's choice of narrators. Like Shedd and Brandt, Somerlott's tale of gore and violence is told by Marina. The story returns once again to the traditional images of Marina-as-whore, and the love-struck Marina and the theme of betrayal. Somerlott goes to the opposite extreme of Jane Brandt and presents Marina as a young woman drawn to Cortés because she sincerely believes him to be the returning Quetzalcoatl, or Feathered Serpent:

There seemed something familiar about [Cortés] . . . Perhaps the long dark coat he wore? As I was wondering about this, he put on the cloth hat he was holding. Then I knew. The hat, the coat, the beard, the grave yet kindly face: Plumed Serpent. I recognized him from a hundred paintings, from statues, from carvings and reliefs on temple walls.

This was Plumed Serpent down to the very twist of the feather in his hat.⁷⁷

Upon this realization, Marina declares "I felt a stirring I had never felt before in the presence of a male being, and I thought: The god has become a man. Both as man and as god, he shall have me. I swear it."⁷⁸

Somerlott portrays Cortés as a god and he turns Cortés' interpreter into a goddess possessed of incredible powers. It is Marina who convinces the Cempoallans to join the Spanish cause. While speaking to them "some unknown power" takes possession of her and, says Marina, "the voice that rang so strong in my ears was mine, yet not mine." At the end of the speech, she says, "I felt the power ebb from me and I shrank again into my own body, exhausted . . . I sensed the power of a goddess, hovering near me, and I knew I had stood for those moments in her radiant shadow."⁷⁹ While this mystical atmosphere adds little to a rather exaggerated account of Marina's role in the conquest, Somerlott does well in emphasizing the strategic and tactical advice she gave to the Spanish cause.

In a very real sense myths and stereotypical images of women such as Marina have gone beyond merely literary representations. Novelists and historians are not entirely to blame for the perpetuation of such imagery. A recent article in Caminos del Aire, a Mexicana Airlines publication, is a case in point. According to Rodrigo Onarres, Coyoacan is alive with ghosts from the past. Walking along cobbled streets visitors "can still hear the echoing footsteps of the conquistadores." One ghost, in particular, makes a daily appearance:

People in the vicinity swear that a woman dressed in white appears on the Panzacola bridge when the clock on St. John the Baptist's tower strikes twelve;

and in La Malinche's house opposite the La Conchita church, it is said that certain weird noises allow its present occupants no peace.⁸⁰

Such appeals to romantics and mystery buffs can be dismissed as melodrama designed to entice the tourist dollar. Yet, Onarres has cleverly captured the image of Marina as La Llorona, or the Weeping Woman. Since romantics cannot believe that she was bereft of a compassionate conscience, Marina "does not rest in peace."⁸¹ Rather she wanders the streets as the Weeping Woman in a purgatory of her own design.

Images of indigenous women and most especially of Marina are numerous and varied. To some historians and novelists she is the beautiful exotic princess who was cruelly bound over to slavery by politically ambitious parents. To others she is the Noble Savage who, converted to Christianity, serves the will of God in helping to bring Aztec tyranny to an end. Consumed by an overwhelming love for and fascination with the virile man-god, Hernán Cortés, she will do anything for her lord and master. Others have created extremely negative images of Marina, the traitor and whore, whose thirst for power and fulfillment drives her to betray her own people and prostitute body and soul to the conquerors. As the traitor, she is also La Chingada, the woman who betrays but is then betrayed herself. Finally, Marina is fashioned after La Llorona, the woman who wanders the night in search of forgiveness. For the rest, other indigenous women are fashioned according to the noble and ignoble savage conventions. They are either good, kind, intelligent, submissive and monogamous, and willing converts to the true faith, or, they are malevolent, intransigent nymphomaniacs who persist in believing in primitive gods nourished only by human blood.

All images of indigenous women share two interconnected features. Firstly, women are depicted primarily in the sexual context and usually they are defined only in terms of their sexual relationships with men. Secondly, and without exception, these women are presented as being motivated strictly by emotion. They take action because they are "in love," jealous, or blinded by revenge. They possess little or no reasoning ability, no sense of pragmatism, and have nary a clue about the realities of life; they are emotional reactionaries. Such grossly over-simplified perspectives on motivation are historically fallacious since they explain everything and nothing. In such one-dimensional presentation of individuals, women are portrayed as being less than human.

Such images do not enhance understanding of the significance and implications of relationships between indigenous women and the conquerors. Nor do they aid in the comprehension of women's' actions in such contexts. Many factors are involved in any individual's motives. The backgrounds of indigenous women as well as their life experiences must have played a part in motivating them. Like other historical groups, these women should not be divorced from their social, economic, political and personal contexts to suit the demands of romanticism and melodrama. Even a small measure of sensibility dictates that a more realistic approach to male-female cross-cultural associations in the conquest of Mexico is necessary.

One such perspective is that indigenous women were able to recognize the benefits accruing from alliance with the Spaniards. Once in a situation where they were closely associated with the Spaniards (as in being given as 'gifts' to the conquerors) some, such as Marina and Isabel

Moctezuma, were able to take advantage of opportunities made available by the conquest process, and to benefit both socially and economically from association with the conquerors.

Notes to Chapter Two

¹ Doña Marina. La Dama de la Conquista (México: Ediciones Xochitl, 1942), p. 60.

² Gómez de Orozco, p. 60.

³ Mariano García Somonte, Doña Marina. "La Malinche" (México: Tall. de Edimex, 1969), p. 155.

⁴ Carlos Hernández, Mujeres Célebres de Mexico (San Antonio Texas: Lozano, 1918), p. 27.

⁵ Hernández, p. 32.

⁶ Hernández, p. 32.

⁷ William Hickling Prescott, History of the Conquest of Mexico 3 vols., Wilfred Harold Munro (ed.) (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1968), Vol. I, p. 362.

⁸ Hubert Howe Bancroft, The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft 39 vols., (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft Publishers, 1883), Vol 9: History of Mexico. 1516-1521, p. 117-119.

⁹ Susan Hale, Mexico (London: T. Fisher Unwin and New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1898), p. 149.

¹⁰ Hale, p. 149.

¹¹ Felipe González Ruíz, Doña Marina. La India Que Amó Hernán Cortés (México: Col. Lyke, 1944), pp. 20-21.

¹² Frances Berdan, The Aztecs of Central Mexico: An Imperial Society (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1982), p. 49.

¹³ William Weber Johnson, Cortés (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1975), p. 45.

¹⁴ Johnson, pp. 42-3.

¹⁵ Johnson, p. 87 and p. 179.

¹⁶ González Ruíz, p. 36; Adelaida del Castillo, "Malintzin Tenépal: A Preliminary Look into a New Perspective," Rosaura Sánchez and Rosa

Martinez Cruz (eds.), Essays on La Mujer (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Center Publications, 1977), p. 127; and Hernández, p. 25.

17 Johnson, pp. 42-43.

18 González Ruíz, pp. 36-37.

19 González Ruíz, p. 119.

20 González Ruíz, p. 119.

21 González Ruíz, p. 119.

22 The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), pp. 154-5.

23 Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, pp. 603-605. Not all historians follow Gibson's definitions. Frances Berdan defines pipiltín as "sons of nobility" or "children of the rulers and chiefs" and states that a pilli had to achieve the rank of tlatoque, p. 54.

24 Pedro Carrasco terms daughters of Native nobles "princesses," "Royal Marriages in Ancient Mexico," H. R. Harvey and Hans J. Prem (eds.), Explorations in Ethnohistory: Indians of Central Mexico in the Sixteenth Century (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), p. 48.

25 Berdan, p. 58. The Spaniards' use of the terms cacique and principal reflect their inability to understand the Native political structure in any refined sense. A similar inability is evident on their label of 'emperor' for the position held by Moctezuma.

26 Berdan, p. 58.

27 Geoffrey W. Conrad and Arthur A. Demerest, Religion and Empire: The Dynamics of Aztec and Inca Expansionism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 71.

28 Chapter One of Gibson's The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule is concerned with detailing the various ethnic groups in the Valley of Mexico and who as a whole may be termed "Aztecs."

29 T.R. Fehrenbach, Fire and Blood: A History of Mexico (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p. 131.

30 Hale, p. 149.

31 Bernal Díaz del Castillo, The True History of the Conquest of New Spain 5 vols. Genaro García (ed.) and Alfred P. Maudsley (trans.) (Hakluyt Society, 1908-1916), vol. 5, p. 27.

32 Indigenismo, or Indianism, was an intellectual movement which began in the late nineteenth century "as a rather self-conscious attempt on the part of a few individuals to draw moral inspiration . . . from the legacy of the Indian past," Eric R. Wolf, Sons of the Shaking Earth (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 248.

33 The Political Evolution of the Mexican People Edmundo O'Gorman (ed.) and Charles Ramsdell (trans.) (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1969), p. 55.

34 Wolf, p. 249.

35 Henry C. Schmidt, The Roots of 'lo mexicano': Self and Society in Mexican Thought, 1900-1934 (College Station: Texas A & M University, 1978), p. 85.

36 "The malinchistas are those who want Mexico to open itself to the outside world: the true sons of La Malinche," The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico Lysander Kemp (trans.) (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 86.

37 Fehrenbach, p. 131.

38 Robert Berkhofer provides an insightful examination of this issue in the context of North American Indians in his White Man's Indian: Images of the Indian From Columbus to the Present (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978).

39 One view of the development of a national consciousness in Mexico is presented by Jacques Lafaye in Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe: The Formation of Mexican National Consciousness Benjamin Keen (trans.) (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

40 For an indepth discussion of the Black Legend, see Charles Gibson (ed.), The Black Legend: Anti-Spanish Attitudes in the Old World and the New (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).

41 Henry Rider Haggard, Montezuma's Daughter (London and New York: Longmans Green, 1893), p. 3.

42 Haggard p. 233.

43 Haggard, pp. 104-105.

44 Haggard, pp. 104-105.

45 Haggard, p. 121.

46 Haggard, p. 121.

47 Haggard, p. 121. The name Otomie is derived from a Nahuatl-speaking group who immigrated to the Valley of Mexico during the Post-Classic period (ca. 900-1519 A.D.), Charles Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 4.

48 Arthur Douglas Howden Smith, Conqueror. The Story of Cortes and Montezuma and the Slave Girl, Malinal (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott, 1933), p. 119.

49 Howden Smith, p. 119.

50 Howden Smith, p. 127.

51 Margaret Shedd, Malinche and Cortés (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1971), p.i.

52 Shedd, p. 30.

53 Shedd, p. xii. Adelaida del Castillo correctly points out that Shedd's perspective is not in any way substantiated by the available evidence. According to Shedd, Castillo notes, "Marina is so phallically fixated that if it weren't for Cortés' own overpowering size, Marina would certainly have settled for his horse!" "Malinztin Tenépal: A Preliminary Look into a New Perspective," p. 140.

54 Shedd, p. xii.

55 Jane Lewis Brandt, La Chingada (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979), p. 422.

56 Brandt, p.422.

57 Brandt, p. 449.

58 Brandt, p. 443.

59 Brandt, p. 443. It is interesting to note that Brandt chose a lightning storm - 'an act of God' - as the vehicle for Marina's death. Brandt seems to have taken Octavio Paz' definition of the chingada to an extreme in portraying a deeply religious Marina being 'betrayed' by God Himself.

60 The Llorona, or Weeping Woman wanders the streets at night crying out for her lost children and lamenting her sins.

61 Elizabeth Lane, Mistress of the Morning Star (New York: Jove Publications, Inc., 1980), p. 354.

62 Lane, p. 354.

63 Lane, p. 10.

64 Lane, pp. 33-38.

65 Lane, p. 185.

66 Lane, p. 234.

67 Lane, dustjacket.

68 Phylliss Leonard, Warrior's Woman (New York: Jove Publications, Inc., 1978).

69 Leonard, p. 234.

70 Gary Jennings, Aztec (New York: Avon Books, 1980), p. 802.

71 Jennings, p. 802.

72 Jennings p. 905.

73 Cortés, according to Jennings, relied on Marina as the interpreter but "he valued her even more as his chief strategic advisor, his most trusted under-officer, his most staunchest of all allies," p. 906.

74 Jennings, p. 140.

75 Jennings, pp. 246-247.

76 Robert Somerlott, Death of the Fifth Son (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, Inc., 1984), pp. 538-541.

77 Somerlott, p. 189.

78 Somerlott, p. 189-190.

79 Somerlott p. 259.

⁸⁰ Rodrigo Onarres, "Coyoacan," Caminos del Aire 50 (1988): 84; In La Vida Amorosa de México (México: Editorial Diana, 1979) Mariana Hidalgo comments: "For some time there has been the belief that the spirit of La Malinche guards the capital that she helped to conquer and many aldeanos say they may have been visited in their sleep by an Indian princess who passes by the forests of Chapultepec," p. 56.

⁸¹ Onarres, p. 84.

Chapter Three : La Malinche, or Doña Marina, "La Voz"

The Spaniards' success in the conquest of Mexico depended to a great degree on numerous native allies. Without the military support of the Tlaxcalans, for example, the relatively small Spanish company might well have been defeated in the attempt to take Tenochtitlan.¹ Beyond such military supporters, one of the most important Spanish allies was La Malinche, or doña Marina, who acted as an interpreter and helped Cortés learn of the discord among native groups and the possibilities of Spanish-Indian alliances. She was invaluable in the Spanish cause and was equally as important as the Spaniards' military allies. Marina provided the crucial communication link between conquerors and Nahuatl-speaking people. Through her linguistic abilities, Cortés learned of the volatile political situation between Tenochtitlan and its tributaries and of the immense power of Moctezuma. Diplomatic overtures made by the captain to the Aztecs were translated and voiced by Marina. Through her, Cortés sermonized about his Holy Faith, made promises to allies and interrogated enemies, demanded fealty to his king, and, of course, asked where gold was to be found. As interpreter, ally, and advisor she formed a solid bridge between two cultures. For Marina, adaptation to the roles chosen for her was necessary for survival but such an adaptation strategy also had other advantages. Her relationship with the Spaniards was reciprocal; they needed her and she benefitted from association with them.

Marina first encountered the Spaniards in Tabasco when she and nineteen women were presented as gifts to Cortés and his companion adventurers by the local cacique.² Information about Marina's background is inadequate if not contradictory. According to Bernal Díaz' account, she

was the daughter of the powerful cacique of Painalla near Coatzacoalcos.³ As Díaz tells it, when Marina's father died, her mother remarried and had a son whom the parents wanted as their only successor. Consequently, Marina's mother gave her to certain Indians of Xicalango and spread a rumor that the girl had died. The Xicalangans, in turn, "gave" her as a slave to the Tabascans.⁴ Gómara's account differs significantly. According to him, Marina told Cortés she was from a village called "Viluta" [Oluta] near Jalisco [Coatzacoalcos] and that she was the daughter of wealthy parents who were only related to the ruling cacique. Unlike Díaz, Gómara does not give Marina's parents an active, conspiratorial role in her enslavement. During a war she had been "stolen" by merchants and "sold" in the marketplace of Xicalango. Then she had "fallen into the hands" of Potonchán's lord and, finally, was given to the Spaniards after the battle and capture of the town in 1519.⁵

As gifts, the women presented in Tabasco were meant to grind maize and make tortillas for the Spaniards according to Gómara.⁶ While this may have been the case, it is also more than likely that the Potonchanecos saw various advantages in offering their women to the conquerors. As Ann Pescatello remarks, "presentation of women as gifts or tokens was considered an important part of Indian foreign relations."⁷ The most fundamental advantage, from the Indians' point of view, was alliance formation since the women created strong kinship ties and a system of mutual protection.⁸ The Indians must have realized the women were destined to be more than domestic servants while amongst the conquerors. Cortés openly distributed these particular women among his captains as 'companions' and Marina was first assigned to Hernando Puerto Carrero. Not surprisingly, in the Spanish accounts, there is little evidence which

suggests that at this stage of Spanish-Indian contact, the Indians objected to the use of their women as sexual rewards for the conquerors.⁹ That indigenous women presented as gifts became concubines and, sometimes, the wives of the conquistadores is probably what the Indians had intended. Relationships between Indian women and the conquerors would strengthen political obligations and affiliations between the Indians and the Europeans.

The manner in which Marina came to be associated with the Spaniards was certainly not exceptional. Cortés and his companions-at-arms were offered other women, by Cuitlahuac, lord of Ixtapalapa and most notably by the Tlaxcalans. According to Gómara, after treating for peace, the Tlaxcalans presented several of their daughters "as a token of true friendship, so they might bear children by such valorous men and bring into the world a new warrior caste" but he concludes, "perhaps they gave their daughters because it was the custom, or merely to please the Spaniards."¹⁰ Cross cultural alliance formation through indigenous women was a relatively common feature of European contact with Native Americans. There are numerous examples from various areas including pre-confederation Canada where early fur traders sometimes expressed moral objections about the Chipewyan custom of "wife lending."¹¹ The lending of wives, even to strangers, had social and economic advantages especially the formation of strong alliances whose purpose was mutual protection.¹²

While the other women given by the Potonchanecos may have become servants and concubines, Marina was both, and more, as a result of her language proficiency. Her knowledge of both Mayan and Nahuatl were likely first discovered at San Juan de Ulúa [Veracruz] where Cortés was greeted by messengers sent from Tenochtitlan. Geronimo Aguilar, the Castilian who survived a ship wreck and lived with the Maya for some time,

was Cortés interpreter, rendering the coastal Mayan into Castilian for the Captain. At San Juan de Ulúa, however, Aguilar did not understand the Indians very well, or at all. This is understandable given that they were subject to Tenochtitlan and spoke Nahuatl.¹³ Nor did Aguilar understand the ambassadors sent by Moctezuma. The communication problem was solved when, according to Gómara, Marina was overheard talking to the Tenocha emissaries.¹⁴ Such a fortuitous occurrence furthered the Spanish cause significantly.

Through Marina the Spaniards gained extremely advantageous insights into the nature of the Triple Alliance and the power of Moctezuma. The Spaniards asked Marina innumerable questions:

about the king and his people and power and about the riches of the land . . . the Indian woman responded to all . . . she said the king was powerful, and it was unknown in the world if there was one more powerful than him, that he was very rich and had much gold and silver treasure.¹⁵

Indeed Marina's presence as an interpreter was so politically beneficial and economically profitable that it might be wondered what the conquerors would have done without her.

Marina remained faithful to the Spaniards perhaps even to the point of 'rescuing' them on several occasions. This loyalty has been the subject of intense debate amongst students of conquest history. Accounting for Marina's fidelity is difficult and depends upon a realistic but sensitive appraisal of her personal motivations. Perhaps the most debatable response to this problem is the notion that undying love for Cortés decided her allegiance to the Spaniards. This is not to suggest that Marina had no

personal or emotional attachment to the captain but the existing evidence is hardly conclusive and can easily be employed in creative mythologizing about her character and personality. Moreover while historians should not be overly cynical when discussing the motives of women or their relationships with men in the past, neither should they allow romanticism to seriously cloud their judgment. As discussed in Chapter Two some historians seem only able to explain women's actions by reference to emotions. In the case of Marina, relying on her love for Cortés to explain her fidelity to the Spanish cause is overly simplistic if not naive.

Discussion of the connection between motivation and action involve notions about causation. Just as past events should not be interpreted as having a single cause or origin, so an individual rarely has a single motive. For an Indian woman in the relatively singular situation of Marina, a variety of factors help to explain her close association with the Spaniards. If she hoped to survive, she had to accommodate herself rather novel circumstances.

A degree of fear may have prompted her alliance. Aside from the strangeness of the light-skinned bearded men, their horses and artillery, the actions of Cortés on several occasions would have (and did) inspire fear in even the most courageous. Cortés and his men were ruthless and sometimes unnecessarily brutal. One example of such excess occurred when Cortés was attempting to secure the allegiance of the apparently intransigent Tlaxcalans. Fifty of them entered the Spanish camp and Cortés was informed that they were spies. One was arrested and Cortés interrogated one of the spies through Marina and Aguilar. The Indian confessed that he spied for Xicoténcatl, leader of the Tlaxcalan army. Cortés

responded by having the other Indians seized and commanding their hands be cut off. The Tlaxcalans were "exceedingly frightened" when they saw their handless comrades because such punishment was "a novel thing for them."¹⁶ Intentional mutilation as a form of diplomacy was more than likely 'novel' to Marina as well. This violence terrified the Tlaxcalans; it probably frightened her also, and provided a grim incentive to act on behalf of the Spaniards.

Other inducements motivating Marina's accommodation to, and alliance with, the Spaniards were certainly less gruesome. While she might have been partially prompted by fear, she also likely saw benefits in her association and in her role as interpreter. Any suggestion that there were advantages for Marina if she supported the Spanish cause must begin with the established fact that Marina came to the conquerors as a slave of the Tabascans. Gómara's account might shed some light on the link between her enslavement and her allegiance to the conquerors. He states that she became the Spaniards' interpreter only after Cortés persuaded her with promises. Informed that Marina had been conversing with the Nahuatl-speaking emissaries from Tenochtitlan, Cortés took her aside. Through Aguilar, he "promised her more than her liberty if she would establish friendship between him and the men of her country."¹⁷

As interpreter, Marina was providing an invaluable service for the conquerors much like the services furnished by their well-known allies, the Tlaxcalans. As Charles Gibson suggests, Tlaxcalan alliance with the Spaniards was not absolute but "partial, provisional, or related to special interests."¹⁸ This can be applied to Marina who, as the communication link between Spaniards and Aztecs, could use her ability to speak Nahuatl to her

own advantage. On this level, the relationship between Marina and Cortés was an alliance based on exchange and interdependence. She could exchange her precious translating talents for the bare necessities of life such as food and shelter but also for protection and security. She could also use her role as the only bridge between two cultures to change her status from slave to a position of high regard amongst the Spaniards. Evidence of heightened status is revealed in the Spaniards' use of *doña* in reference to her. She was also more than a commoner to the Aztecs who addressed her with the honorific 'tzin.' Finally Marina could and did benefit economically from her alliance and loyalty by her later marriage to a conquistador-encomendero.

Marina must have realized how invaluable she was to the conquerors. They questioned her about the regions they passed through and the people they encountered en route to Tenochtitlan. Contact and diplomatic manoeuvres with Nahuatl-speaking people were provided through Marina. As a source of information and the only communication link, the Spaniards needed her and, in fact, depended on her.

Through Marina, Cortés heard the Lord of Cempoala describe Moctezuma's reign as a tyranny. He also learned that some of the principales opposed the power of the Triple Alliance, certainly music to the captain's ears. Cortés was asked if he would confederate against Moctezuma's empire. According to one account, Cortés understood the intent of this request and offered his help, saying through Marina and Aguilar that the principle reason for his coming to Mexico was to castigate tyranny.¹⁹ Cortés encountered similar anti-Aztec sentiment in Zacatlan and, of course, in Tlaxcala.

The ongoing feud between the Tlaxcalans and the Aztecs of the Triple Alliance originated in regional economic rivalry. This conflict eventually escalated into a war of attrition which was also designed to secure candidates for religious rituals such as human sacrifice.²⁰ The military and economic power of the Alliance did not destroy the Tlaxcalans but it did reduce them to an economically impoverished people who were "resentful of the Aztecs and eager for material gain."²¹ Consequently, they had good reason for allying themselves with the Spaniards although, as Charles Gibson points out, Tlaxcalan support evolved only after their efforts at subterfuge and military engagement with the conquerors had failed.²² Upon the formation of the alliance the Tlaxcalans provided immense, perhaps unequalled, military support for the conquerors' campaigns.²³ In an effort to record their participation in the conquest of Mexico and with a view to obtaining royal favour and rewards for services rendered the Tlaxcalans presented a rather singular record in the form of the Lienzo de Tlaxcala.²⁴

Composed in the mid-sixteenth century the Lienzo is a detailed pictorial history of Tlaxcalan efforts in the conquest. This primary source is of immense general importance to the history of the conquest and, in reference to Marina, it is particularly significant. While Spanish sources fail to mention Marina in great detail during important events, such as the meeting between Hernán Cortés and Moctezuma, the Lienzo contains innumerable representations of the interpreter.²⁵ What is unique about this document is not the number of portraits of Marina but the manner in which she is portrayed. The Tlaxcalans emphasized her linguistic abilities since in many panels she gestures between a relatively small Cortés and larger than life

Indians.²⁶ Also significant are the pictographs showing Marina carrying a shield in the midst of battles. Most intriguing, however, is that the Lienzo leaves the impression of Marina as a very important source of strategic advice for the conquerors. Perhaps Marina had far greater control over the unfolding of events than traditional interpretations suppose.

Indeed there are examples documented by other sources which reflect upon the degree to which Marina took the initiative in directly influencing the course of events. When she did so she became more than a mere instrument upon which the Spaniards depended. At Cholula where she displayed her fidelity to the Spanish cause, she also furthered her own position by strengthening her alliance with them. According to the traditionally held view of the Cholulan massacre, the conquerors were initially welcomed in Cholula, but under pressure from Moctezuma the Cholulans later plotted to kill every member of the Spanish company. Marina discovered the conspiracy when a cacique's wife took pity on her and hoped to find a wife for her son.²⁷ Having learned of the plot, Marina informed Cortés. He ordered that the Cholulans should be punished and a veritable blood bath ensued.²⁸ While Marina played a significant role in uncovering the plot, both Díaz and Sahagún's Tlatelolcan informants blamed the carnage on the Tlaxcalans. Gómara states, in contrast, that the Spaniards and their allies played equal roles in the slaughter of some 6,000 Cholulans.²⁹ Significantly, the ingenuous Cortés took the Tenocha emissaries aside at Cholula and explained that he knew Moctezuma had played no part in orchestrating the conspiracy.

For Marina, Cholula ensured her close association with the Spaniards. By informing Cortés she was now completely within the

conquistadores' camp. She made a decision to reveal the plot but her motivation is not entirely self-evident despite historians remarks on the matter.³⁰ While Marina may have wished to save the Spaniards, it is likely that she was induced by other, perhaps more important, factors such as fear. In telling Cortés of the conspiracy she was not acting on self-sacrifice and altruism alone. No doubt she had little desire to be killed along with the Spaniards. Moreover, she must have realized that to survive amongst the conquerors, she had to prove and ingratiate herself in order to gain their trust. If they needed her but did not trust her, in the last resort she was expendable. But if they depended on her, trusted and respected her, they would do their utmost to protect her.

After leaving Cholula, the Spaniards and their allies continued the march to Tenochtitlan, spending the night before they arrived in the house of Moctezuma's brother, Cuitlahuac, in Ixtapalapa. The next day Cortés and his companions travelled the causeway which connected Ixtapalapa with Tenochtitlan to be personally greeted at Xoloco by the great Moctezuma and his innumerable retainers.³¹ After being welcomed the conquerors were lodged in the house of Moctezuma's father. Later that evening Moctezuma addressed the Spaniards, telling them about the legend of Quetzalcoatl's return and, in one account, offering them all the riches of his empire.³² At the conclusion of the speech, Marina translated it for Cortés who hypocritically directed her to reply that Moctezuma should not be frightened because the Spaniards' loved him.³³ According to Gómara, Moctezuma was also told that the King of Spain was the lord whose return the Mexicans had anticipated and that the Spaniards would gladly accept Moctezuma's offer of treasure on his behalf.³⁴

It was not long before Cortés determined that he and his soldiers were at the mercy of the Moctezuma and the large number of Aztec warriors in Tenochtitlan. Cortés decided to take Moctezuma prisoner and hold him as protection for the Spaniards. According to Gómara, Cortés deliberated with the Aztec emperor over this action for four hours, with Marina translating Moctezuma's Nahuatl for the captain.³⁵ After Moctezuma was arrested, the pace of events quickened considerably. The Indians, especially Moctezuma's relatives and the two other kings of Triple Alliance, became more and more rebellious. While a native rebellion threatened the Spaniards in Tenochtitlan, Cortés received word from the coast, via Indian messengers carrying news to Moctezuma, that Pánfilo de Nárvaez, supported by the Cuban governor Velazquez, had landed with a company of conquistadores. Cortés determined that a journey to the coast was necessary in order to deal with his rival.

Leaving Pedro de Alvarado in charge of affairs in Tenochtitlan, Cortés and a small Spanish force marched to meet the Narvaéz company. Narvaéz and his men were defeated and, through Cortés' powers of persuasion, many of Narvaéz' men joined the men of Cortés' company and returned to Tenochtitlan with them.

The political situation in Tenochtitlan had worsened considerably during Cortés' absence. Immediately following Cortés' departure, the Mexicans requested permission from Alvarado to hold a festival in the main plaza. Once a large number had assembled Alvarado, perhaps acting on a warning that the Indians planned an attack on the Spaniards, had the four entrances blocked. Then an armed group of Spaniards went into the plaza "and cruelly and pitilessly stabbed and killed the Indians."³⁶ Consequently,

when Cortés and his men returned from the coast, open rebellion against the Spaniards was imminent. Finally, in an effort to prevent revolt and calm popular unrest, Cortés ordered Moctezuma to address the people of Tenochtitlan. During this speech, according to Spanish accounts, Moctezuma was hit by a stone and later he died from the wound.³⁷ According to the Indian account of Sahagún, however, Itzquauhtzin, tlatoani of Tacuba, addressed the people. He shouted from a roof terrace that Moctezuma thought his people inferior to the Spaniards and that the battle should be abandoned. Whereupon the Mexicans "flew into a great fury."³⁸ Following Moctezuma's death the Spaniards determined to retreat from the city under cover of darkness, but while crossing the causeway to Tacuba they were attacked and many were killed or wounded. This was the infamous Noche Triste or, Night of Sorrow. Marina and several other Indian women, notably doña Luisa, daughter of Xicoténcatl and mistress of Pedro de Alvarado, managed to escape.³⁹

After Moctezuma's death his half brother, Cuitlahuac, lord of Ixtapalapa, was chosen to succeed him. To preserve continuity in the line of succession, he was married to his niece, Tecuichpo or, doña Isabel Moctezuma. But Cuitlahuac died only eighty days after attaining power and was, in turn, succeeded by Moctezuma's nephew Cuauhtemoc. Like his predecessor, Cuauhtemoc also married Tecuichpo. During this time the Spaniards were re-grouping at Tlaxcala and Cortés planned to bring Tenochtitlan to its knees by blockade. The conquerors returned to the outskirts of Tenochtitlan on New Year's day, 1520 whereupon Cuauhtemoc and his allies retreated to Ixtapalapa. There were numerous battles and skirmishes between the Spaniards and Cuauhtemoc's forces during the next

few months. Marina remained with the Spaniards through the siege of the city. According to some sources, she never left the side of Cortés.⁴⁰ Cortés began the blockade of Tenochtitlan in May 1521 but the Mexicans persevered for some two months, despite the extreme hardships they suffered because of the food scarcity and the water shortage and the European diseases which flourished among the population. Tenochtitlan finally fell to Captain Malinche in August, 1521.

Cuauhtemoc surrendered to the Spaniards and was imprisoned with several tlatoque and the men who guarded the city's store of gold. They were taken to Cortés who demanded to know where the gold was. Marina translated Cuauhtemoc's response. He asked if the Spaniards had not indeed taken all the gold in Axayacatl's palace. Cortés replied that the gold had been gathered and marked but that on the Noche Triste the Spaniards had been forced to abandon it in the Tolteca Canal. Through Marina Cortés reiterated his demand that the gold be produced.⁴¹

After the fall of Tenochtitlan Cortés ordered the rebuilding of the city, but all was not peaceful amongst the conquerors. Cortés had to reward his supporters and to do this he chose to grant encomiendas. Internal squabbling regarding prime encomiendas, and the desire for political and economic favour created grave problems for Cortés in his attempt to maintain even a semblance of Spanish unity.⁴² There were other difficulties as well. The granting of encomiendas had displeased the crown which, under pressure from humanist theologians and jurists, disapproved of the virtual enslavement of the Indians required by the granting of encomiendas. Cortés was ordered to cease making encomienda grants in 1523 but he did not comply with these royal orders.⁴³ Rather, he attempted to show the

crown that continuation of the conquest depended on the granting of encomiendas as rewards for conquistadores. In response, the crown sent Luis Ponce de Leon, a juéz de residencia, in 1525 to discern the extent of Cortés' insubordination. The appearance of such dreaded officers of the crown may have "convinced him that he had gone to far."⁴⁴ In addition, Cortés had yet to deal with Cuauhtemoc who, although a prisoner, remained as a symbol of what the discontented and ill-treated Indians had lost in their defeat.

In the midst of these difficulties, Cortés heard rumors of the defection of Cristóbal de Olid, whom he had sent to conquer Honduras. He responded by dispatching Francisco de Las Casas to put down the rebellion and unbeknownst to Cortés, Las Casas and Captain Gil González de Avila had de Olid executed. Not having received word from Las Casas for some months Cortés decided to undertake an expedition to Honduras to personally examine the state of affairs there and to search for gold.⁴⁵ Cortés departure for Honduras in 1524 may also have been motivated by his desire to escape officers of the crown like Ponce de Leon who had been sent to check up on his doings in New Spain.⁴⁶ Cortés' appointment of the four treasurers as governors in his absence was, as Lesley Byrd Simpson notes, an "odd arrangement" which reveals that Cortés was in a "most pressing hurry to get away".⁴⁷ Perhaps in Cortés' mind, Honduras might provide an opportunity to win back royal favour if it proved as rich an area as Mexico. Marina accompanied him and, as he feared a reoccurrence of rebellion in Tenochtitlan, Cortés also took several tlatoque with him, including Cuauhtemoc, tlatoani of Tenochtitlan, Tettlepanquetzatzin of Tacuba, and Coanacochtzin of Texcoco.⁴⁸

The Honduras expedition was hardly successful. Instead of sailing from Veracruz, Cortés lead the group on a march of more than one thousand miles. Bridges had to be built continually and the physical hardships were extreme.⁴⁹ When they reached de Olid's base, El Triunfo de la Cruz, the Spaniards found that he had been dead for some months and his executioners, Las Casas and de Avila, had marched back to Mexico City via Guatemala. Thus in terms of the original intent of the expedition, the long demanding march had proved quite pointless.

The expedition was the end for the tlatoque who accompanied the Spaniards. Accused of conspiring against the Spaniards, Cuauhtemoc, Tetlepanquetzatzin and Coanacochtzin were hanged on Cortés' orders. Marina is often blamed for the death of these last of the Mexica lords and especially of the legendary Cuauhtemoc,⁵⁰ as if she had been told of the plot by Cuauhtemoc himself and then betrayed his trust by informing her 'beloved' Cortés. As far as can be discerned, however, Marina was in this instance merely acting the messenger. According to one source she was told of Cuauhtemoc's plans by an unnamed Mexican. He told her that he had overheard the three tlatoque discussing their plans at night and he feared for the Marqués and Marina.⁵¹ When Cortés was informed of the conspiracy, he determined that the conspirators should be punished; they were hung from a tree in Ueymollan, without trial.⁵²

Although sources disagree somewhat on particulars, the Honduras expedition marks the end of Marina's intimate relationship with Cortés. After five years as the captain's interpreter and mistress, Cortés arranged for her to marry Juan Jaramillo in either 1524 or the spring of 1525.

Juan Jaramillo was born in Spain in Villanueva de Balcarrota. He came to New Spain with Cortés, held the rank of captain among the conquistadores and commanded a brigantine during the siege of Tenochtitlan.⁵³ In March 1524, he was appointed regidor de ayuntamiento of Mexico City and in 1526 he was made alcalde ordinario. Jaramillo enjoyed other political honours as well, including Alférez de la ciudad de Mexico (7 February 1528), and alcalde de mesta (1 Jan 1538).⁵⁴ In addition, he received pecuniary rewards, including a grant of solar in Mexico City (14 March 1528) and the encomienda of Xilotepec. Despite the fact that the text of the New Laws, promulgated in 1542, stated that Juan Jaramillo held an "excessive quantity of Indians" in encomienda,⁵⁵ in November 1543 he received one and a half "caballerías de tierra" in Tasco. Three years later he was granted a second estancia and three "sitios de ventas" in Zacatecas. The encomienda in Xilotepec was considered a profitable property to hold ("encomienda muy buena").⁵⁶

The marriage of Jaramillo to Marina and Cortés' role in arranging the match has been much discussed by historians. Frequently, Cortés is roundly criticized for victimizing Marina and then disposing of her to the nearest available man when her usefulness had run its course. Some historians see only ruthless ambition for power and social status in Cortés and they see his arrangement of the marriage as cruel and heartless.⁵⁷ Others, who follow the sources more carefully, take sides on the issue depending upon whether they agree with Bernal Díaz' or Gómara's perspective. Gómara states that Cortés was criticized for allowing the marriage because Jaramillo was drunk at the time and because Cortés and Marina had a son.⁵⁸ Díaz does not deny Gómara's description of the

circumstances of the marriage and, in fact, remains basically mute on the entire subject.⁵⁹

Those who do not criticize Cortés give Marina a much greater role in the arrangement of her own marriage. According to this view, Cortés thought marriage to a conquistador and encomendero was a sufficient reward to bestow on his faithful Indian interpreter. For her part, Marina is supposed to have refused to go on the expedition unless Cortés promised to find her a suitable husband. One historian even suggests that Marina entered into an such agreement with Cortés before beginning the march to Honduras. She would interpret for him on the expedition only if he would promise her security in the form of a marriage.⁶⁰ This view of the marriage perhaps gives Marina far too much power in decisions about her fate. Yet it remains a much more sensitive perspective than one-sided interpretations based either on her victimization, Cortés' unbounded ego, or Jaramillo's inebriation.

By the time of her marriage, Marina had been with Cortés for five years. She had survived the siege of Tenochtitlan and had accompanied the captain on other conquests. She had also given birth to their son, Martín. Cortés was married when Marina first encountered the Spaniards. However by 1522 his Spanish wife, doña Catalina Suárez de Marcaida, was dead. This presumably freed him to remarry. If he had not married Marina by 1524, the year in which the Spaniards set off for Honduras, he probably never would. She must have realized this and there is no reason to doubt that she wanted some sense of security.⁶¹ Moreover, even if he had married her, expectations that the match might provide anything more than basic economic necessities might have been unfulfilled.

Judging from the accusations levelled at Cortés during his residencia, his relationships with women were numerous. According to witnesses, Cortés was excessive and indiscriminate in his sexual alliances. His house was described as nothing less than a harem populated by numbers of Indian and Castilian women, many of whom, it was charged, were relatives of each other. Aside from Marina, there were at least two of Moctezuma's daughters, other daughters of Mexico's principales, and two sisters from Castile. One witness stated that the servants said Cortés had sexual access to all without respect as to whether they were mother and daughter or sisters.⁶² Since the residencia was conducted under the auspices of Cortés' arch-rival, Nuño de Guzmán, witnesses may have twisted the truth somewhat. In his will, however, Cortés acknowledged several illegitimate, mestizo and Spanish children.⁶³

Moreover, if Cortés' alliances with women were numerous, his relationship with his Spanish wife Catalina was, according to witnesses at the time and modern historians, anything but tranquil. Catalina arrived unexpectedly from Cuba, in 1522, but her sojourn in New Spain was cut short by her untimely death. Cortés was blamed by some for her demise and he was suspected of strangling her. In fact, Catalina's mother and brother filed suit against him for her murder in 1529.⁶⁴ Cortés was not convicted and it is still unclear whether Catalina died by the hand of another or as a result of natural causes. The lapse of seven years in the filing of the suit, and the fact that Cortés was unable to defend himself in person since he had left for Spain in 1528, suggests that the charges may have emanated from the captain's enemies such as Guzmán. During the trial, several of Catalina's servants described the scene when they discovered

the body. To Ana Rodriguez and other servants Catalina looked as though she had either been strangled or suffocated since her face and neck were swollen and discoloured.⁶⁵ However, Catalina's brother, Juan Suárez de Peralta, later claimed that Cortés was innocent and stated that his sister had died of mal de madre a terminal illness which affected the nervous system of women.⁶⁶

What Marina herself thought of all these goings on - the women and Catalina's death - is unknown. Perhaps, by the time of her marriage to Jaramillo, she realized that Cortés would never give her security by consenting to marry her. In addition, it should be noted that the question of why Cortés never married his loyal translator is answered by historians on the implicit assumption that Marina strongly desired the marriage. This idea, in turn, is based on the dubious conclusion that Marina was, in fact, in love with Cortés and motivated only by feelings of emotional attachment to the conqueror. For the sentimentally inclined it is frustrating to discover that the 'hero' never 'got the girl,' but perhaps, after seeing Cortés in action in battle and in personal affairs, Marina had no desire to marry him. Moreover, she had been allied with the Spaniards for some years by the time of her marriage to Jaramillo. She must have had some understanding of their view of marriage. As a result she could not have been altogether surprised or devastated that Cortés did not wish to marry her.

Association with the Spaniards must have taught Marina a great deal about their perception of the meaning and use of marriage. As James Lockhart comments, "practically all marriages were strategic alliances arranged with a view to improving the partner's wealth or social standing."⁶⁷ In the Indies, Lockhart notes, the 'classic' type of marriage was one in which

the man had obtained wealth and power through an encomienda grant but did not possess the corresponding social status. He therefore attempted to marry a woman of high birth even though she might be poor and by doing so he elevated both his own and his childrens' status.⁶⁸ Cortés' ambitions in terms of marriage follow this classic model.

Possessing an immense encomienda and holding the position of de facto ruler, and later Captain General of New Spain, Cortés certainly had wealth and power. He did not, however, have the corresponding high social status derived from noble ancestry. Although he was considered an hidalgo, his father had been a soldier and the little wealth that the Cortés family possessed accrued from his mother, doña Catalina Pizarro Altamirano, who was the daughter of the Countess of Medellín's mayordomo.⁶⁹ That Cortés desired to improve his social status with a Spanish wife of high social standing is revealed in his marriage to doña Juana de Zuñiga, the niece of the Duke of Béjar. Through this marriage he raised his own and his descendents' status and he was able to marry his children well.⁷⁰

While Marina was (supposedly) the daughter of a cacique and was addressed with the honorific, 'doña,' denoting respect by both Spaniards and Indians, she was an Indian. As a wife she carried less prestige than a woman who was linked in some, even remote, way to the Spanish nobility in the eyes of Cortés and his fellow countrymen. The same could be said of Jaramillo, but he did not have Cortés' contacts in Spain, via great wealth and power in the New World, to secure a more socially advantageous marriage. Moreover, in terms of Jaramillo's reasons for the marriage, he must have realized that as her husband he would have some social

standing, since Marina was esteemed amongst the Spaniards and held a respected position in the early colony.

For Marina, marriage to Jaramillo would provide financial security since he held an encomienda. In addition, although sources are not conclusive, Cortés may have granted Marina an encomienda "en dote" on the occasion of her marriage. This could only have enhanced the prospect of becoming Jaramillo's wife. It is unclear whether Marina was granted an encomienda but perhaps, as one historian suggests, Cortés granted her the pueblos of Oluta and Jaltipa in Coatzacoalcos.⁷¹ This is possible given Marina's services to the Spaniards during the conquest and in light of Cortés' awards of encomienda to Indian women such as Moctezuma's daughters. For an Indian woman, marriage to a conquistador enhanced her status in the developing Spanish-ruled colonial society. For these reasons Marina should not necessarily be seen as a victim in the arrangement of her marriage. Having been associated with the Spaniards for a number of years, she must have been aware of her position as an Indian woman in terms of alliances and marriage. There is some reason to suggest that she, like the conquistadores, sought to use the Christian sacrament to gain some benefit for herself.

After her marriage, Marina and her husband lived in Mexico City. They had one child, a daughter, María who was born in 1526.⁷² With Marina's death in 1531⁷³ Juan Jaramillo, not surprisingly, married a Spanish woman of some social standing, doña Beatriz de Andrada. Doña Beatriz, not averse to politically inspired marriages herself, later married Francisco de Velasco, brother of the viceroy.⁷⁴

After her father died, María Jaramillo and her husband, don Luis de Quesada, petitioned the king against against doña Beatriz regarding the encomienda of Xilotepec, which Juan Jaramillo had left in its entirety to his Spanish wife. In their petition Quesada and María emphasized Marina's services in the conquest and her fidelity to her fidelity to the Spanish cause. They argued that if it had not been for doña Marina's "very great and very notable services to God and to Your Highness,"⁷⁵ the success of the conquest would have been in jeopardy. After Marina's death, they stated, Jaramillo had remarried but in the twenty years of his marriage to doña Beatriz, he had not produced any children. Therefore, María Jaramillo was his one and only heir and the true successor of Marina and, consequently, she should inherit Xilotepec in its entirety.⁷⁶ The audiencia, perhaps bending to pressures exerted by the politically powerful Andrada-Velasco faction, compromised and, by the 1550s, the encomienda had been divided.⁷⁷ Half of Xilotepec was held by doña Beatriz and Velasco, with doña María and Quesada holding the remainder.⁷⁸ At this time, the Andrada-Velasco mitad (half) contained some 9,067 tributaries, but the encomienda's prodigious annual tribute worth 17,000 pesos was shared by both parties in the 1560s.⁷⁹

Marina's other child, Martín Cortés, apparently spent little of his youth with his natural mother. As a young child his father placed him under the guardianship of Juan Altamirano, the lawyer who was a loyal supporter of Cortés and related to him by marriage.⁸⁰ Cortés then took his mestizo son with him on his first return to Castile and Martín spent most of his life in Europe. Cortés had his son legitimated by way of a papal bull and also helped him join the Order of Santiago. Martín married Bernaldina de Porras

in Spain and distinguished himself in several European conflicts. He did return to New Spain, long after his mother's death, and became caught in the web of conspiracy surrounding prominent encomenderos in the 1560s.

When the second Marqués del Valle - also called Martín Cortés but son of doña Juana de Zuñiga - returned to Mexico in the late 1550s, his half brothers, Martín and Luís (Cortés Hermosilla) accompanied him. In the infamous encomendero conspiracy of the 1560s, all three were suspected.⁸¹ The second Marqués managed to escape relatively unscathed, but his half brother Martín, was subjected to water torture to reveal details of the plot. Upon learning that his client was to be tortured, Martín's lawyer submitted that he was too physically weak to endure, but officials refused to grant dispensation. Martín denied involvement in the conspiracy and the torture only ceased after the inquisitors realized his extreme physical weakness. It is unclear if Martín was in fact deeply involved in the plot but several of those executed stated that he played no role in the prosecution of the conspiracy. Nevertheless on January 10, 1568 he was ordered to pay a fine of 1000 ducats and sentenced to perpetual exile from the Indies.⁸²

Marina did not live to see her son tortured and exiled. Although she died at the relatively young age of twenty-five, or perhaps twenty six⁸³ her life had been anything but dull and mundane. As Cortés' interpreter and advisor, she had been involved in the major historic events of her time. A certain degree of luck and good fortune helped her to survive the conquest but her strategies for survival were more important. Perhaps the most significant was her use of her linguistic talents which enable her to adapt quickly to the new and difficult situation which developed because of the

Spanish presence. Her talent for translation and her offerings of strategic advice made her extremely useful to the conquerors. The Spaniards protected her as she was an advantageous weapon and one of their most valuable allies. Marina perceived her usefulness and what it signified to the conquerors. She adjusted herself accordingly and therefore ensured her own preservation.

Notes to Chapter Three

¹ Gibson discusses the importance of Tlaxcalan aid in Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), pp. 15-27.

² Hernán Cortés, "Quinta Carta," Cartas y Documentos Mario Hernández Sanchez-Barbá (ed.) (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1963), p. 269; Bernal Díaz del Castillo, The True History of the Conquest of New Spain 5 vols. Genaro García (ed.) Alfred P. Maudsley (trans.) (Hakluyt Society, 1908-1916), vol. 1, p. 132; Francisco López de Gómara, Cortés. The Life of the Conqueror by his Secretary Lesley Byrd Simpson (trans.) (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), p. 48. Gómara states that the twenty women were given to the Spaniards at the Tabascan town of Potonchán, p. 56.

³ Díaz, vol. 1, p. 132. Bernardino de Sahagún, General History of the Things of New Spain 13 vols. Charles E. Dibble and J.O. Anderson (trans.) (Santa Fe, New Mexico: The School of American Research and the University of Utah, 1969), p. 25. This account states that Marina was from Teticpac but Dibble and Anderson note that this is incorrect; Marina was from Painalla, "a town now disappeared which was south of Coatzaco," p. 25.

⁴ Díaz, vol. 1, p. 132.

⁵ Gómara, pp. 56-57. Ixtlilxochitl follows Gómara's account, Obras Históricas 2 vols. Alfredo Chavero (ed.) (México: Oficina Tipográfica de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1892), vol. 2, p. 345 as does her grandson, Don Hernando Cortés who stated in 1605 that his grandmother was from Oluta. But Don Hernando concurs with Díaz' statement that Marina was the daughter of a cacique, "Enumeración de Don Hernando Cortés," Cartas y Otros Documentos de Hernán Cortés Mariano Cuevas (ed.) (Sevilla: Tipografía de F. Díaz y Comp., 1915), p. 88. This is not surprising given that the purpose of the "Enumeración" was to petition the crown for mercedes and the response might be more favorable if Don Hernando could show he was a descendent of the native elite.

⁶ As Gómara states it was "a necessary occupation that keeps the women busy a good part of their time," p. 47

⁷ Ann M. Pescatello, Power and Pawn: The Female in Iberian Families, Societies, and Cultures (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), p. 134.

⁸ Pescatello, Power and Pawn, p. 134.

⁹ Gómara, p. 48.

¹⁰ Gómara, p. 118. Ixtlilxochitl also notes this practice, Obras, vol. 2 , p. 369-70.

¹¹ Sylvia Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties"; Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada. 1670-1870 (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer Publishing Ltd., 1980), p. 25.

¹² Van Kirk, p. 25.

¹³ Gómara, p. 54. Ixtlilxochitl, Obras vol. 2, p. 345. Peter Gerhard explains indigenous linguistic divisions of New Spain in A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 6 and specifically about Veracruz, p. 360.

¹³ Gómara, p. 54.

¹⁴ Gómara, p. 56.

¹⁵ Juan Suárez de Peralta, Tratado del Descubrimiento de las Indias [Noticias Historicas de Nueva España] (1589) (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1949), p. 39.

¹⁶ Gómara, pp. 106-7.

¹⁷ Gómara, p. 56. Emphasis added.

¹⁸ Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century, p. 191.

¹⁹ Ixtlilxochitl, Obras, vol. 2 , p. 354.

²⁰ Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century, p. 14.

²¹ Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century, p. 15.

²² Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 17-21.

²³ Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 22-23.

²⁴ Gibson, Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century, pp. 247-53; Gibson discusses the Lienzo and the veracity of the numerous versions that have been produced since the sixteenth century.

²⁵ Jorge Gurría Lacroix (ed.), Codice de la Entrada de los Españoles a Tlaxcala (México: Instituto de Investigaciones Historicas, UNAM, 1966).

²⁶ Lacroix, passim.

27 Díaz, vol. 2, p. 11. Gómara reveals his Eurocentrism when he states that while the cacique's wife took pity on Marina and wished to save her from certain death, she also "liked the looks of the bearded men," p. 127. Such Euro- and ethnocentrism is also found in Kruger who bases her remarks about Marina's motives on the hardly reliable Amerigo Vespucci who claimed "the Indian women showed a great desire to be with us Christians," Malinche: Or, Farewell to Myths (New York: Storm Books, 1948), p. 68.

28 Díaz, vol. 2, p. 15.

29 Díaz, vol. 2, p. 15.; Sahagún's informants stated that the Tlaxcalans had "incited" the Spaniards against the Cholulans, General History, vol. 13, p. 29-30; Gómara, p. 129. Adelaida del Castillo puts the number at 60,000, "Malintzin Tenépal: A Preliminary Look into a New Perspective," Rosaura Sánchez and Rosa Martínez Cruz (eds.), Essays on La Mujer (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Center Publications, 1977), p. 136.

30 del Castillo comments that Marina only told Cortés because "she sought to save his life, for he was in danger," p. 136.

31 Sahagún, vol. 13, p. 43; Gómara, pp. 138-9.

32 Sahagún, vol. 13, p. 43; Gómara, pp. 138-9.

33 Sahagún, vol. 13, p. 44-5.

34 Gómara, p. 142.

35 Gómara, p. 170.

36 Gómara, p. 208.

37 According to Gómara, Cortés believed the Indians could not see Moctezuma, p. 212. The crown supported Cortés' version of Moctezuma's death in the coat of arms grant to Cortés which maintains that the Indians killed Moctezuma, Cartas y Documentos, p. 43.

38 Sahagún, vol. 13, p. 57.

39 Díaz, vol. 2, p. 251.

40 To the Indians she and Cortés were inseparable which is why the Indians addressed either or both of them as 'Malinche' and often referred to Cortés as Malinche, or Captain Malinche. Hilde Kruger asserts that Indians

saw Marina and Cortés as one being. "Without Marina," she notes, "Cortés was not Cortés; without Cortés, Marina was merely an Indian slave like any other," p. 85.

39 Sahagún, vol. 13, pp. 122-125.

40 Manuel Orozco y Berra states that the conquistadores were rewarded on Cortés "own discretion and generally with partiality," "Introduction," Ally of Cortés. Account Thirteen: The Coming of the Spaniards and the Beginning of Evangelical Law Douglas K. Ballantine (trans.) (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1969), p. xxiv.

41 Lesley Byrd Simpson, The Encomienda in New Spain: Forced Native Labor in the Spanish Colonies, 1492-1550 (Berkeley: University of California, 1950) rev. ed., p. 64.

42 Díaz, vol. 5, p. 27.

43 Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), p. 59.

44 Simpson, p. 65.

45 Simpson, p. 65.

46 Gibson, Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 155. About Coanacochtzin see Rafael García Granados, Diccionario Biográfico de Historia Antigua de Méjico 3 vols. (México: Instituto de Historia, 1952), vol. 2, pp. 134-139. Gómara states that Cortés took Cuauhtemoc, Coanacochtzin (lord of Texcoco), Tetlepanquetzal (Tacuba), Ocutzin (Atzcapotzalco) and Xihuacoa, Tlcatlec, and Mexicalcincó "very powerful men who, if left behind, would have been capable of staging a rebellion," p. 339.

47 Simpson, p. 65.

48 Gómara describes the hardships of the expedition which required the crossing of numerous swamps and flooded areas. At one point, some of the horses were threatened when they "sank up their ears" in a "frightful morass." They were saved, says Gómara, only by the fortuitous opening of a channel and the mercy of God, p. 352.

49 See the description of the larger than life Cuauhtemoc in Manuel Orozco y Berra's "Introduction" to Ally of Cortés, p. xxvi.

50 R.H. Barlow and Heinrich Berlin (eds.), Anales de Tlatelolco (México: Antigua Librería Robredo de José Porrúa y Hijos, 1939), p. 9.

51 Anales de Tlatelolco, p. 9-10.

52 Gómara described Cuauhtemoc as "a valiant man" who "in every adversity proved his royal heart." Cuauhtemoc should not have been executed, Gómara explains, but his death was necessary given that Cortés "did not wish to keep him alive in a such a troubled time," p.356. Gibson states that the hangings reveal that "resistance by the Indian ruling class would not be tolerated," The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 155. Ixtlilxochitl makes similar comment: "Cortés killed them without their being guilty, in order that the land might be without native lords," Ally of Cortes, p. 99.

53 Baltasar Dorantes de Carranza, Sumaria Relación de las Cosas de la Nueva España (México: Imprenta del Museo Nacional, 1902), p. 31.

54 Edmundo O'Gorman (ed.), Guía de las Actas de Cabildo de la Ciudad de México (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1970), p. 39. Victor M. Alvarez, Diccionario de Conquistadores 2 vols. (México: Cuadernos de Trabajo del Departamento de Investigaciones Historicas, INAH, Oct. 1975), vol. 1, pp. 278-279.

55 The New Laws of the Indies for the Good Treatment and Preservation of the Indians. 1542-43 [facsimile] (London: Chiswick Press, 1893), p. 15.

56 Francisco A. de Icaza (ed.), Conquistadores y Pobladores de Nueva España: Diccionario Autobiográfico Sacado de los Textos Originales [Madrid, 1923] (reprint) (Guadalajara: Biblioteca Facsimiles Mexicanos, no. 3, 1969), p. 4.

57 Carlos Hernández, Mujeres Celébres de Mexico (San Antonio, Texas: Lozano, 1918), p. 32.

58 Gómara, p. 346.

59 Díaz mentions the marriage but gives no particulars, vol. 5, p. 5.

60 Felipe González Ruíz, Doña Marina: La India que Amó Cortés. (Madrid: Col LYKE, 1944), p. 176. Kruger also discusses this possibility, p. 44.

61 González Ruíz states that there was never any suggestion that Cortés would marry her, p. 107.

62 Archivo Mexicanos: Documentos para la Historia de México: Sumario de la Residencia a Don Hernando Cortés 2 vols (México: Tipografía de Vicente García Torres, 1852-1853), vol. 2, pp. 98-99; Similar charges were made by others.

63 "Testamento de Hernando Cortés" in Cartas y Documentos, pp. 554-577 and G.R.G. Conway (ed.), The Last Will and Testament of Hernando Cortés (Mexico: The Gante Press, 1939), pp. 10-12. In his will Cortés listed his illegitimate children: Martín (son of Marina); Luis Cortés de Hermosilla; Catalina Cortés Pizarro (daughter of a Cuban Indian); Leonor Cortés Moctezuma (daughter of Isabel Moctezuma); and doña María (possibly the daughter of Francisca Moctezuma), pp. 563-565. Gómara mentions three daughters "each by a different mother, all Indians," Cortés, p. 408.

64 Suárez de Peralta, p. 192.

65 Suárez de Peralta, p. 192-204.

66 Suárez de Peralta, p. 206, n. 26.

67 James Lockhart, Spanish Peru, 1532-1650: A Colonial Society (Madison, Milwaukee, London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), p. 155. See also C.R. Boxer, Mary and Mysogyny: Women in Iberian Expansion Overseas, 1415-1815. Some Facts, Fancies and Personalities (London: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p.38.

68 Lockhart, pp. 155-56.

69 Gómara, p. 7.

70 Gómara, p. 379.

71 Mariano García Somonte, Doña Marina: "La Malinche" (México: Tall. de Edimex, 1969), p. 79. González Ruíz states, in contrast, that Marina and Juan Jaramillo were given Ostaditepec (in Orizaba) in encomienda, p. 177. Gómez de Orozco states that mercedes for Marina's services to the Spanish cause were "made to Jaramillo," Doña Marina. La Dama de la Conquista (México: Ediciones: Xochitl, 1942), p. 174. However, Marina's grandson claimed that Marina was not compensated for her services in the conquest. See "Enumeración," Cartas y Otros Documentos, p. 291.

72 Gómez de Orozco, p. 190, n. 9.

73 Gómez de Orozco, p. 190.

74 Francisco Paso y Troncoso (ed.), Epistolario de Nueva España, 1505 - 1815 16 vols. (México: Antigua Librería Robredo de José Porrúa y Sus Hijos, 1939), vol. 15, p. 224. Hereafter cited as ENE. ; Peter Gerhard, Historical Geography of New Spain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 383.

75 Archivo General de Indias, Seville [AGI], Patronato 56, legato 4; Colección de Documentos Inéditos Relativos al Descubrimiento, Conquista y Organización de las Antiguas Posesiones Españolas de América y Oceanía, Sacados del los Archivos del Reino, y muy Especialmente del de Indias 42 vols. (Madrid, 1864-1884), vol. 41, p. 188. Hereafter cited as DII.

76 AGI, Patronato 56, legato 4; DII, vol. 41, p. 188.

77 ENE, vol. 9, p. 30; ENE, vol. 15, p. 224; Gerhard, p. 383.

78 ENE, vol. 9, p. 30; ENE, vol. 15, p. 224; Gerhard, p. 383.

79 ENE, vol. 9, p. 30; ENE, vol. 15, p. 224; ; Gerhard, p. 383.

80 Gómez de Orozco, pp. 189-190, n. 7; Donald Eugene Chipman, "The Oñate-Moctezuma-Zaldívar Families of North New Spain," New Mexico Historical Review 52 (1977) : 298. Altamirano came from Paradina to New Spain in 1527. He married in Mexico City and was granted an encomienda. See de Icaza, Diccionario Autobiográfico, vol. 1, p. 186. He figures prominently in the early years of the colony as Cortés' lawyer. Martín was not Cortés' only illegitimate to be child placed in the care of Altamirano, AGI, Justicia 181.

81 Most of the encomenderos were the sons of conquistadores who had obtained wealth and power through their encomienda holdings. After the promulgation of the New Laws in 1542, which placed severe limitations on their powers and privileges, the encomendero class became concerned with losing economic and political power to the crown which seemed intent upon intervening in American affairs. As Mary Ellis Kahler points out, "It was in this context of wavering allegiances in Spain as well as New Spain, that informers came forth to report plans for a conspiracy to the members of the audiencia." The informers were paid and the property of the criminals was used to pay legal fees and enrich the royal exchequer. They named as conspirators several politically important encomenderos including Cortés' son, don Martín, the Second Marqués del Valle. Whether a conspiracy was actually planned is difficult to substantiate since as Kahler explains "Fear, malice, or a desire to curry favour could have motivated the informers and the odores in their accusations that treason against the king was contemplated," "Introduction," The Harkness Collection in the Library of Congress: Manuscripts Concerning Mexico Mary Ellis Kahler (ed.) J. Benedict Warren (trans.) (Washington: Library of Congress, 1974), pp. ix-x.

82 The Harkness Collection, pp. 11-12. Martín was more fortunate than other suspects. Cristóbal de Oñate was subject to water torture. He revealed several conversations he had with other alleged conspirators but denied his own involvement. The inquisitors judged him guilty, however. He was "sentenced to be carried though the streets on a beast of burden with his hands and feet tied and a town crier proclaiming his crime and the

justice of his sentence and then to be hanged and quartered." All appeals were subsequently denied and he was executed on January 8, 1568, p. 16.

83 Gómez de Orozco states that it is difficult to determine Marina's exact age at the time of her death. He argues that she was born in 1505, or perhaps earlier, and cites 1531 as the year of her death, p. 190.

Chapter Four: Tecuichpotzin, or doña Isabel Moctezuma, "La Princesa India"

Tecuichpotzin, or doña Isabel Moctezuma, first comes to light in the Spanish documentation as the ward given to Cortés by Moctezuma just prior to his death.¹ She did not remain with the conquerors at this time but was separated from them on the disastrous Noche Triste.² Following the retreat she embarked upon a singular matrimonial odyssey, becoming the wife of at least two tlatoque. When Cuauhtemoc was captured in 1521, she was returned to the conquerors and her marriages continued with three Spanish husbands and a brief relationship with Cortés. Although somewhat unique because of her numerous marriages, Isabel's life elucidates the major factors involved in the alliances between indigenous women and conquistadores.

Isabel, like Marina, was in a position to adjust to the Spanish presence. Although Isabel did not possess a skill, such as Marina's linguistic talent, which she could use to her own advantage, she did have social and economic standing as Moctezuma's eldest legitimate daughter. These were desired by the conquistadores for various reasons, including the political necessity of preserving even a vestige of the Native elite, and to gain wealth and power in early colonial society. As Moctezuma's daughter, Isabel provided the conquerors an opportunity to show her father's willingness to become a loyal vassal of the crown and a true convert to Catholicism. Isabel could be, and was, depicted in a similar light for reasons of political expediency and pecuniary reward. For Isabel, even grudging alliance with the conquerors through marriage offered significant advantages.

As the wife of a Spaniard, she was given protection and security. She also had the opportunity to preserve her side of the noble family lineage and a semblance of her native status as a cihuapílli (female member of the native nobility). Recognized as a noblewoman, Isabel gained economically through her Spanish marriages by an encomienda which was granted in perpetuity. Isabel may have suffered as a consequence of her numerous relationships since one cannot avoid the impression that she was 'passed around' so to speak. However, it was certainly to her advantage to adapt to contact and conquest.

For Isabel the leap from one culture to another must have been traumatic. Raised as the daughter of Mexico's most politically and culturally important noble, baptized by strangers as a child, and then married to both Native and Spanish men, she may have suffered under such extreme changes in her life and worldview. Moreover, although Isabel benefitted through her numerous marriages, her husbands also gained significantly by trading on her coveted elite Native status for profit and royal favour. Cortés used her and her father to demonstrate his political acumen and benevolence to the crown. Like Marina, Isabel had some power because she possessed something the conquerors desired. But more so than Marina, she was also used for strictly political and economic ends. Isabel's life, especially in light of her numerous marriages, reveals that for some Indian women the conquest process fostered a kind of interdependence. The Spaniards needed her for numerous reasons but in the violence and chaos of conquest, she needed them for security, protection, and survival. As a consequence of circumstance, such women were sometimes victimized by the greedy and politically ambitious, but they were also in a position to benefit from adjustment to the novel situation of conquest.

Born in 1509 or 1510, Tecuichpo was only a child when Tenochtitlán fell to the Spaniards in 1521.³ While it might be argued that she was completely unprepared for the life she was to lead, as a noble's daughter she was probably given an education which may have helped her adjust to her changed situation. Education of cihuapiltín was strict and intended to mold an obedient and submissive but honourable wife.

As Moctezuma's daughter, Isabel, like other cihuapílli, was taught modes of behavior which were considered acceptable to daughters of native nobles. As Sahagún recorded from his native informants, first and foremost for cihuapílli was being taught never to dishonour the noble lineage. "Do not do something to cause embarrassment to our lords," pilpiltín (noblemen) would warn their daughters, "Do not become a commoner; do not lower thyself."⁴ In the view of Sahagún's informants, a nobleman's tone toward his daughter was double edged, sensitive yet oppressive:

Especially note what I say to thee, that which I cry out to thee. Thou art my creation, thou art my child. Take special care that thou not dishonor our lords from whom thou are descended. Cast not dust, filth upon their memory. May thou not dishonor the nobility with something.⁵

In terms of moral behavior, cihuapiltín were taught by their mothers not to engage in casual sexual experiences. "Do not give thyself wantonly to another . . . Never at any time abuse thy helpmate, thy husband."⁶ This statement was in reference to adultery which was considered dishonourable to the noble lineage and was therefore severely punished.

A second important feature of noble daughters' education was the teaching of submission and obedience, especially in relationships with men. "If someone so demand, will speak for thee . . . thou are not to

resist."⁷ This admonition was doubly significant for female members of the native elite such as Isabel since unswerving submission and obedience were demanded of cihuapiltín even if the prospective husband "be a poor person . . . even though he be a poor warrior, or a poor son, or one who struggleth for existence."⁸ Such lessons in obedience were accompanied by education in the proper wifely duties.

According to the father, the noble's wife should perform her 'womanly labors' with efficiency and skill. Women's tasks included the preparation of food and drink. They also had to learn various creative arts including weaving, featherwork and embroidery. Efficiency was emphasized and the wife should "take care not to fail" in what was expected of her.⁹

From the mother's point of view, noble daughters were expected to carry themselves in a certain way. Daughters were, above all, to be moderate in carriage, speech and dress. Cosmetics were forbidden as befitting only prostitutes and speech and language were to be straightforward but gentle. Finally, moderation meant never being hypocritical and openly revealing personal dislikes or hatred felt toward others.¹⁰ The meaning of moderation in this context is best expressed by the mother's metaphor which presents life as a razorback mountain. On either side there is an abyss and the honourable, moderate life is found by carefully walking down the narrow path between the two.¹¹

Such a strict, moralistic education was severely limiting for the cihuapílli. She was bound by ancestral honour and was commanded to be obedient to others, especially her husband. Yet in the case of Isabel,

an education which stressed moderation, submission and cooperation probably helped in the otherwise difficult adaptation to the trying circumstances and demands arising from the conquest.

As a female member of the native nobility the greatest demand placed on Isabel was marriage. Among Aztec and Spanish elites, marriage bonds were formed for political and economic ends. In pre-hispanic Mexico, regional ties and political alliances were frequently constructed through marriages between members of the native elite. The political links which tied the Triple Alliance of Tenochtitlan, Texcoco and Tlacopan were, for example, cemented by the relative frequency of marriage between consanguineous relatives.¹² Like European inter-dynastic marital arrangements, noble marriages in pre-hispanic Mexico created alliances which prompted mutual protection and military support. Most importantly, such marriages secured continuity in lineage and therefore in political power.¹³

The early marital life of Isabel Moctezuma epitomizes how such marriages worked and what they signified in terms of the native political structure. Her native husbands were close blood relatives. The purpose of such bonds was the preservation of the elite, and the basis of its power. Sources are rather unclear as to whether Isabel had two or, in fact, three native husbands. It is possible that she was first married to Atlixcatzin, the brother of Isabel's mother Tecalco.¹⁴ Very little is known about Atlixcatzin, but given his familial affinity with the rulers of Tenochtitlan and his status within the native elite there is a great possibility that he was indeed Isabel's first husband.

Atlixcatzin was the son of Ahuitzotl, the eighth ruler of Tenochtitlan and the brother of Cuauhtemoc. When Moctezuma married Atlixcatzin's sister, Tecalco, he married his first cousin, since Ahuitzotl was his uncle. A similar arrangement is discernable in Isabel's possible first marriage since Atlixcatzin was her uncle.¹⁵ Atlixcatzin was a captain in Moctezuma's army and held the position of tlacatecatl within the elite.¹⁶ According to Sahagún, when the Spaniards first arrived in Tenochtitlan, Atlixcatzin was among the group of nobles who ventured forth to greet them.¹⁷ Sahagún's Tlatelolcans also state that, like some other Aztec nobles, Atlixcatzin deserted Moctezuma after he was imprisoned by Cortés. These nobles "not only hid themselves, took refuge, [but] they abandoned him in anger."¹⁸

Given that Isabel would have been only nine or perhaps ten years old at the time of this marriage, it is doubtful that the marriage was ever consummated. Although one source mentions the children of Atlixcatzin, these were not necessarily Isabel's because of the frequency of polygyny.¹⁹ Even without children the match between Isabel and her uncle would have had significant advantages. The marriage of the children of Tenochtitlan's eighth and ninth rulers preserved familial lineage. More importantly, at a time when the elite was being seriously challenged by an external force the marriage could have been a political manoeuvre to secure and maintain the power structure of the native nobility.

Isabel's second marriage had a similar purpose. While her marriage to Atlixcatzin remains in doubt, it is certain that she was the wife of another uncle, Cuitlahuac, tlatoque of Ixtapalapa. Continuity in lineage

and succession was preserved through this match since Cuitlahuac was Moctezuma's younger brother and was elected tenth ruler of Tenochtitlan following Moctezuma's death.²⁰ The marriage and Cuitlahuac's reign were short-lived, however. He apparently succumbed to small pox after serving only eighty days in office.²¹ As with Isabel's possible first marriage, most historians would agree that this marriage was never consummated because of her young age.²² By the time that Tenochtitlan fell to the Spaniards, Isabel was married yet again, this time to her ill-fated uncle, Cuauhtemoc.

Brother of Atlixcatzin, Cuauhtemoc was elected eleventh ruler of Tenochtitlan when he was eighteen.²³ Cuauhtemoc has become a legendary figure in Mexican history for his leadership during the blockade of the city. He is even credited with being Mexico's first nationalist.²⁴ As noted in Chapter III, Cuauhtemoc was tortured by the Spaniards to reveal the whereabouts of Axacayatl's gold and was then executed for conspiracy during the Honduras expedition. After Cuauhtemoc was made a captive and tortured, Isabel was returned to the conquerors.

In 1526 Isabel was married to her first Spanish husband, Alonso de Grado. A native of Alcantara-Cáceres, Grado came to New Spain with Cortés in 1519.²⁵ He was treasurer in 1521 and was later named the royal representative of the Casa de Fundación in Bernardino Vázquez de Tapia's regiment.²⁶ For both Grado and Isabel the marriage had several important rewards. Grado enhanced his social standing by marrying into the native elite while Isabel secured a respected position in early colonial society. The most important benefit, however, was material.²⁷ On the occasion of her marriage, June 26 1526, Isabel was granted "en dote y

arras" (in dowry) the encomienda of Tacuba. Made by Cortés, the grant acknowledged Isabel's status as Moctezuma eldest daughter and legitimate heir and recognized her father's generosity and service to the Spanish cause. For Isabel the grant was doubly significant since it was made "en perpetuo" (in perpetuity) and passed with her into each of her marriages.

The document which awarded Tacuba to Isabel, and Ecatepec to her sister Leonor, is also important as an example of an implicitly self-serving device for Cortés. In granting these encomiendas to Moctezuma's children Cortés went to great lengths to express his own interpretation of the conquest and of Moctezuma's death. He used Moctezuma to demonstrate his own political skill and to depict himself as a humanitarian diplomat. A case of telling the crown exactly what it wanted to hear, the document served to cast a benevolent light on the captain.

In Cortés' view, when the Spaniards first arrived in Tenochtitlan they were well received by Moctezuma. The strife which followed was not caused by the emperor but rather by his brother "Avitlavaci" (Cuitlahuac), tlatoani of Ixtapalapa. Cortés glossed over Moctezuma's imprisonment but discussed at some length how he met his end. Attempting to calm the people in a public speech where he admonished them to cease the war against the Spaniards, Moctezuma was felled in a hail of stones. One hit him in the head, Cortés claimed, making a great wound ("herida muy grande"). Fatally wounded, Moctezuma professed "the profound love" he had for His Majesty, for Cortés, and for all the Spaniards.²⁸ The tone of the document fashioned Moctezuma into a true and loyal vassal of the crown.

If Cortés portrayed Moctezuma in such a politically self-serving light, his depiction of the daughters is no less biased. According to Cortés, Moctezuma loved him so much that on his deathbed, he prayed that if he died Cortés would look to his daughters who were "the greatest jewels he could give."²⁹ Taking pains to demonstrate his positive influence on Moctezuma's children, Cortés remarked that through his ministrations the daughters had been brought to the faith. They were baptized, educated in Catholic doctrine, and taught "other good Christian customs." They became true Christians, faithful to God and loyal to His Majesty.

Yet, if the granting of these encomiendas served the captain's own political ends, they were also extremely beneficial to Isabel and sister Leonor. Made in perpetuity the grants definitely secured at least a portion of the patrimony of Moctezuma's legitimate heirs. Through Cortés' grant, the crown implicitly recognized the social and political status of two female members of the native elite. For Isabel as well as for her husbands the encomienda of Tacuba certainly had profitable potential.³⁰

The size of the encomienda, although not as large as Cortés' Oaxaca estates, was relatively extensive. The privilegio included Tacuba proper which contained 120 houses, Chimalpan (San Francisco Chimalpan del Monte) with forty houses, Aescapulualtongo, or Azcapotzaltongo, (Azcapotzalco) with twenty houses, Jilotingo (Santa Ana Xilotingo) with forty houses and the estancias of Caltepec (Yetepec), Telasco (Atarasquillo), Guatuzco, and Tasula (Tlaxcala).³¹ Through a perpetual grant the crown preserved Isabel's status as a cihuapílli and clarified her privileges and rights as the oldest daughter of Moctezuma.³²

For Grado, Tacuba certainly saved him from near poverty. For his services as a conquistador he had received the encomienda of Chiautla but, according to one source, this property was of little value.³³ Although Isabel benefitted from holding an encomienda, she did not officially control it. While she was married her husband was considered the encomendero.³⁴ For Grado and later husbands, especially Juan Cano de Saavedra who held a profitable encomienda in his own right, this arrangement had financial advantages.

Isabel and Grado had no children and he died in 1526 or 1527.³⁵ Following Grado's death Isabel joined the number of female 'companions' who resided with Cortés. Shortly after her second marriage to a Spaniard, Pedro Gallego de Andrade, Isabel gave birth to Cortés' daughter doña Leonor Cortés Moctezuma.

Like her half brother Martín Cortés, Leonor did not live with her mother but was placed by Cortés under the guardianship of his trusted licenciado, Juan Altamirano.³⁶ Leonor was not named as an heir by her mother. Altamirano rectified this neglect by adding a codicil to the will which bequeathed Leonor one fifth of her mother's property.³⁷ In this way he secured a dowry for his ward and she married well, in 1550, when he arranged a match between Leonor and Juan de Tolosa, the discoverer of a vast silver deposit in Zacatecas. Leonor had several children by Tolosa including a son, who became the vicar of Zacatecas. Like their mother, both of Leonor's daughters married into 'silver' families.³⁸

The marriage between Isabel and Pedro Gallego was arranged during the time Isabel lived in Cortés' house.³⁹ Following the wedding,

Isabel and Gallego moved to Tacuba where their son Juan de Andrade Moctezuma was born. Andrade was baptized in Tacuba by none other than Juan de Zumárraga, first bishop of Mexico, with Altamirano officiating as his godfather.⁴⁰

Upon Isabel's marriage to Pedro Gallego in 1526, the encomienda of Tacuba passed to the control of her husband. Gallego was a native of Burquillos and served under Cortés in the conquests of Mexico, Colima and Michoacan. He also accompanied Cortés on the Honduras expedition.⁴¹ As a reward he was granted the "muy buen encomienda" of Izcuyuquitlapilco (Izquincuitlapilco). Like Grado, Gallego benefitted from being named encomendero of Tacuba. His own encomienda was apparently of dubious status since it reverted to the crown at the time of his death.⁴²

Gallego probably died in 1531⁴³ and Isabel was then married for the last time. Her third and final Spanish husband was Juan Cano de Saavedra, who was born in 1502 in Cáceres.⁴⁴ At eighteen he had come to New Spain with Pánfilo de Nárvaez, but later joined Cortés' company and served in the conquest of Tenochtitlan.⁴⁵ In recognition of his services, he was granted the encomienda of Macuilsuchilco, later called Chapulguacan, located twenty-four leagues from Mexico City in what is now in Northern Hidalgo state.⁴⁶ A great deal is known about Cano because he spent so much of his time petitioning the audiencia against Juan de Andrade Moctezuma and entreating the crown to return what he perceived as his wife's legitimate property.

In 1551, Juan de Andrade's representative claimed that Juan Cano was "one of the richest men in all of New Spain," who had a "muy grande hazienda y muy grandes rentas." (very large hazienda and very high income)⁴⁷ Andrade had a vested interest in claiming that Cano was extremely wealthy. Yet, Cano was certainly not poor. He received valuable tribute from his Indians including silver, dry goods, blankets, shirts, honey, maize, firewood, fruit and poultry.⁴⁸ According to the Andrade faction, Cano's annual income was more than 7,000 pesos.⁴⁹ The Indians held in encomienda by Cano constantly complained of the heavy burden of taxation which they were forced to shoulder.⁵⁰

The Andrade figure of 7,000 pesos was inflated, but a document dating from 1560 places Cano's annual income at 5,260 pesos.⁵¹ The average annual income listed in this document which is a record of one hundred and twenty nine encomiendas in the Archbishopric of Mexico was 1,553 pesos.⁵² There was a great discrepancy in the values of annual tribute. The largest encomienda listed was Juan Jaramillo's Xilotepec which was valued at 17,000 pesos. This was closely followed by Cortés' encomienda of Cuernavaca which was valued at 11,840 pesos. Other encomiendas were extremely poor, the smallest being Guazcaltepec which brought a mere ten pesos a year.⁵³ Cano's encomienda value falls between these two extremes and was considerably more than the average.

With Tacuba in his control through marriage, Juan Cano was more than financially comfortable. Apparently unsatisfied with the extent of his and Isabel's property, however, Cano frequently requested the restoration of his wife's entire patrimony. During the 1530s and 1540s he petitioned

the crown on several occasions, stating that Tacuba was hardly compensation for the loss of her inheritance. Cano argued that as the legitimate heir of Moctezuma, Isabel was the true owner of Cuyxingo, Malinalco, Tutupec, Maguacua, Asacheaca, Avacantepeq, Exestepeque, Vellotepeque, Xiquipe, Coyuqualaco, Coyelexulca and "many pueblos of New Spain and many lands and houses."⁵⁴ As Tecalco's heir, Isabel was also the rightful owner of numerous pueblos and lands, including Xieutepeque and Chiapa.⁵⁵ The intent of Cano's petitions was to prove conclusively that Isabel was Moctezuma's only surviving legitimate heir. To achieve this and to portray his wife in a deserving light Cano, like Cortés, strove to show that Moctezuma had been a loyal vassal of the crown.

In Cano's petitions Moctezuma is portrayed as a most conciliatory and generous individual. He was the "lord of Mexico and all its provinces" who accepted the Spaniards without resistance. Indeed, he gave them "much gold, silver and jewels of great value." Aside from such amazing generosity, Moctezuma was "above all . . . the loyal vassal of His Majesty."⁵⁶ To serve his purpose, Cano engaged in exaggerations if not outright fabrications. In one petition he claimed that Moctezuma "delighted" in the Christians and "wished to learn of our Blessed Catholic Faith."⁵⁷ According to Cano, Moctezuma sent Cortés "much gold and great riches . . . to beg him to come to Mexico City."⁵⁸ Cano even claimed that Moctezuma converted to Catholicism "without any resistance." Of his death, Cano stated, Moctezuma was always the servant of the Spaniards and "for this the Indians killed him."⁵⁹

Entreating the crown, Cano claimed that his wife was "a very good Christian" and that she was a legitimate daughter because her parents had been properly married.⁶⁰ He listed all of Moctezuma's wealth and property and argued that his wife was poor and had been unjustly disinherited.⁶¹ Cano attempted to support Isabel's claim to Moctezuma's property with extensive genealogical data which purported to show Isabel's legitimacy.⁶² Of course he did not undertake the Herculean task of the restoration of his wife's patrimony altruistically. Based on the extent of Moctezuma's property, Cano had a great deal to gain. Marriage to a native woman of such status provided him with the opportunity to hope for vast wealth, a hope not even entertained by other conquistadores. Without a Spanish husband, Isabel would probably not have entertained similar hopes either. With Cano, she had a way to petition for her patrimony. Judging from the petitions, Cano was well-versed in contemporary legal practice or he was given excellent advice on how to approach the audiencia and attempt to obtain Moctezuma's property. During his lifetime, however, Cano's entreaties fell on deaf ears. Although he was unsuccessful, it is possible that both Cano and his wife believed the crown would respond with either grants of land or annuities or both. The rather incredible terms of Isabel's will reflect this belief.⁶³

Isabel had her will drawn up in 1550.⁶⁴ Witnesses to the will included Fray Juan de Cruzate, Prior of the Saint Augustine Monastery, Fray Gregorio de Salazar, Fray Luís de Escobeleza, and Fray Luís de Aranza, all of whom were Augustinian brothers. The two other witnesses were Hernando Mateo Carrillo and the guardian of Isabel's daughter Leonor, Juan Altamirano.⁶⁵ Isabel requested that her body be interred in

the Church of Saint Augustine in Mexico City. The Augustinians had been the recipient of significant donations from Isabel during her lifetime.⁶⁶ In her will Isabel also requested that some 600 gold pesos be deducted for burial expenses and "masses, gifts, obsequies, and candles."⁶⁷ She named as executors, Juan Altamirano, and two other Cortés supporters, Andrés de Tapia and Alonso de Bazan.

To her husband, Isabel left nothing. She probably did this because she knew Cano was relatively secure by virtue of his encomienda holdings.⁶⁸ To her two daughters, doñas Catalina and Isabel, she left her tapestries, carpets, cushions and pillows, clothing and linen.⁶⁹ The most significant clause in the will concerned Tacuba. Following Isabel's death, this clause generated a series of bitter suits and counterclaims which lasted for years. These were prompted by her desire to leave the encomienda to her eldest child, Juan de Andrade Moctezuma, the son of her second husband, Pedro Gallego de Andrade.

The specifics of this bequest were that Juan de Andrade would possess Tacuba and bequeath it to his "heirs and successors" in perpetuity ("para siempre jamás")⁷⁰ Excluded from the bequest were the four pueblos of Ouyacaque, Capuluaque, Coapanoaya, and Tepexoyuca. These were left in perpetuo to Gonzalo, her eldest son by Juan Cano. If either Juan de Andrade or Gonzalo Cano died without heirs their combined inheritance would pass to her third eldest son, Pedro Cano. The remainder of Isabel's property was to be divided between her six legitimate children but only after burial expense had been subtracted from the whole. Given these terms, the amount of litigation which resulted is not surprising.

The suits arising from Isabel's will were largely between Juan de Andrade, her eldest son from her marriage to Pedro Gallego de Andrade and Juan Cano, her third Spanish husband. In 1551, only a year after Isabel's death, Andrade was already being pressured by Cano. Andrade appeared before the audiencia claiming the encomienda was justly his by virtue of being Isabel's eldest son and because it had originally been held by his father Pedro Gallego.⁷¹ Andrade won the case but Cano soon laid a counter claim arguing that Andrade was but one of seven heirs.⁷² When it became evident that the property would be divided between the two opposing factions, both sued making claims to the entire property.⁷³

In 1553, Isabel's two daughters renounced their shares when they became founding sisters of La Concepción established in Mexico City in 1541 by Bishop Zumárraga.⁷⁴ Their part of the property went to their father and their brothers.⁷⁵ The conditions of entrance to La Concepción were rather strict. Aspirants had to be Spaniards or Creoles, in good health, not younger than thirteen, and legitimate children. They had to possess the ability to read and write and to perform the 'feminine' labours. Finally, and most importantly, they had to bring a dowry of 4,000 pesos.⁷⁶ Isabel's daughters were accepted probably because in certain circumstances, exceptions could be made and the entrance stipulations interpreted to accommodate mestizas of relatively high social standing.⁷⁷

While Catalina and Isabel renounced their shares, disputes continued into the 1560s and 1570s. The property was finally divided between Juan de Andrade, Juan Cano and Cano's two eldest sons.⁷⁸ Neither faction was entirely satisfied with this compromise. Stripped of the majority of his property, Andrade and his wife María de Casteñeda

travelled to Spain in 1573 in the hopes that petitioning the Council of the Indies in person would result in the restoration of his inheritance. As a result of a failed business venture, Andrade contracted a series of large debts. He spent several years in the mid-1570s as a debtor in the prison in Seville. His attempts to have his property restored were unsuccessful and he died in Seville in 1576 or 1577.⁷⁹

The bitter property dispute concerning Tacuba was finally settled. In the 1590s the crown made several monetary grants to the Andrade family. The crown awarded the lucrative rents of Isabel's encomienda to the Cano family. Both families along with other claimants who were also descendents of Moctezuma were awarded various mercedes in the late seventeenth century in return for an agreement not to lay claim to any more Mexican territory.⁸⁰

The fact that Isabel was able to bequeath her property to whom she chose is of immense significance for a variety of reasons. Firstly, while her husband was considered the encomendero, she held ultimate title to the encomienda.⁸¹ This suggests that Isabel had much more power in terms of her marriage contract than might be supposed.⁸² Finally, under Spanish law as it was practised in the New World, although Isabel was an Indian she was considered much like a Spanish doña. This concurs with Susan Kellogg's assertion that in the legal context "Aztec women won somewhat greater power in the early colonial period."⁸³ The reason for this, Kellogg argues, is that the Spanish legal system exhibited some flexibility in the New World. Spanish justice might be influenced by local customs derived from pre-hispanic period as long as decisions did not interfere with the letter of the law. In her study of Tierras Kellogg found

that "there was a period of adjustment and compromise in which Spanish law and Indian law and practice accommodated each other." ⁸⁴

According to Susan Kellogg, the basic assumptions of Spanish law regarding women included the notion that women were dependent members of domestic groups. As far as the law was concerned women also lived under the authority of males (husbands and fathers) but they could be appointed guardians if widowed. Finally, and most pertinent to Isabel's case, a woman's dowry remained legally hers.⁸⁵ Kellogg concludes that the law was limiting for Spanish and Indian women but not absolutely restrictive; there were strategies that could be adopted in order to obtain the most benefits while working within the legal system.⁸⁶ One of these strategies included the drawing up of wills. Testaments gave women power over their property, no matter how meagre.

Isabel's legal status is reflected in her ability to dispose of her own property. This status provides much insight into her social position and her circumstances in early colonial society. Charles Gibson has pointed out that the conquest entailed a homogenizing of the native elite,⁸⁷ but the example of Isabel shows that to a certain extent some members of the native nobility held relatively high social positions within colonial society. Moreover, Isabel's legal status suggests that her class was a more important social status determinant than her race. In effect her elite status as Moctezuma's daughter combined with marriage[s] to conquistadores resulted in a blurring between race and class, with class ultimately proving the more important. Other factors support this conclusion, including the fact that she was addressed as doña, certainly a sign of her high status in colonial society.⁸⁸ Moreover, her will differs from those

studied by Susan Kellogg and S.L. Cline which were composed in Nahuatl while Isabel's was drawn up in Spanish. This implies that her incorporation within the colonial society was all but complete. Several of her bequests demonstrate this assimilation as well especially, the donations she left the Church. That her daughters were able to enter La Concepción also adds further weight to this view of Isabel, as acculturated to the extent that, although an Indian, she was considered a Spanish woman. Isabel's successful incorporation within the early colonial society was the most significant consequence of her association with the Spaniards.

Her adaptation to conquest was achieved through marriage to Spaniards. It was probably made less difficult by an education which encouraged submission and obedience and by her early politically-inspired marriages to three members of the Native ruling class. Thus, the extent to which Isabel was acculturated should be considered in light of the idea that in contracting politically and economically advantageous marriages with conquistadores, Isabel may have been acting from her own cultural context. If the conquest allowed women such as Isabel to act from their own cultural context, then perhaps indigenous women were much better able to improvise and create strategies for survival than their male counterparts.

The benefits of Isabel's ability to adapt and of her incorporation within the early colonial society of Mexico were significant. Economic reward in the form of an encomienda helped to guarantee her and most of her children some level of financial security. Her native status as Moctezuma's eldest daughter, and her marriages to conquistadores,

added considerably to her social position within the early colony. In effect, Isabel was incorporated as a Spaniard in the relatively fluid colonial society of the first post-conquest generation. Financial security, social incorporation, and acceptance were direct results of her alliance to the Spaniards. These were greatest benefits a daughter of the former 'Aztec emperor' could have obtained during the period of conflict and change arising from the conquest of Mexico.

Notes to Chapter Four

¹ Archivo General de Indias [AGI], Patronato 245.

² Diccionario Porrúa de Historia, Biografía y Geografía de México 2 vols. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1986), vol 2, p. 1922. Hereafter referred to as DPH; Donald Chipman maintains Isabel was captured by the Aztecs from the Spaniards as they retreated from the city, "The Oñate-Moctezuma-Zaldivar Families of Northern New Spain," New Mexico Historical Review, 54 (1977) 4: 297. According to Gómara, Cortés ordered some men to "take charge of a son and two daughters of Moctezuma" on the Noche Triste, Cortés. The Life of the Conqueror by his Secretary Lesley Byrd Simpson (trans.) (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), p. 220. One of these daughters may have been Isabel.

³ Amada López de Meneses, "Tecuichpotzin." Hija de Moctezuma," Revista de Indias, 9 (1948): 471; DPH, vol. 2, p. 1922.

⁴ Bernaldino de Sahagún, General History of the Things of New Spain (Florentine Codex) 13 vols. Charles E. Dibble and Arthur J.O. Anderson (trans.) (Santa Fe, New Mexico: The School of American Research and the University of Utah, 1969), vol. 6, p. 95.

⁵ Sahagún, Vol. 6, p. 97.

⁶ Sahagún, Vol. 6, p. 102.

⁷ Sahagún, Vol. 6, p. 97.

⁸ Sahagún, Vol. 6, p. 98.

⁹ Sahagún, Vol. 6, p. 96.

¹⁰ Sahagún, Vol. 6, pp. 100 - 101.

¹¹ Sahagún, Vol. 6, p. 101.

¹² Pedro Carrasco, "Royal Marriages in Ancient Mexico," H.R. Harvey and Hans J. Prem (eds.), Explorations in Ethnohistory: Indians of Central Mexico in the Sixteenth Century (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), p. 42.

¹³ Carrasco, p. 42.

¹⁴ AGI, Patronato 181; Carrasco, p. 76, n. 1.

¹⁵ Rafael García Granados, Diccionario Biográfico de Historia

Antigua de Méjico 3 vols. (México: Instituto de Historia, 1952-1953), vol. 1, p. 63; Carrasco, p. 58.

16 García Granados, vol. 1, p. 63; Sahagún, vol. 12, p. 45. Carrasco explains that tlacatecatl was the political title which was a step towards the important position of tlatoani, p. 70.

17 Sahagún, vol 12, p. 45. This is also noted in García Granados, vol. 1, p.63.

18 Sahagún, vol 12, p. 45.

19 Children are noted in García Granados, vol. 1, p. 63.

20 García Granados, vol. 1, 226-230.

21 García Granados, vol. 1, pp. 226-30. "Relación de Genealogías," Joaquín García Icazbalceta (ed.), Nueva Colección de Documentos Para la Historia de México (México: Andrade y Morales, Sucesores, 1886-1892), p. 305.

22 Francisco de Icaza, "Miscelánea Historia," Revista Mexicanos de Estudios Historicos, 2 (1928) : 76.

23 García Granados, vol. 1, pp. 187-202.

24 Héctor Pérez Martínez, Cuauhtemoc: Vida y Muerte de Una Cultura (México: Populibros, "La Prensa," 1957), p. 135.

25 Amada López de Meneses, "Los Extremeños en América: Alonso de Grado," Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Excursiones, 1932: 65.

26 Victor M. Alvarez, Diccionario de Conquistadores 2 vols. (México: Cuadernos de Trabajo del Departamento de Investigaciones Historicas, INAH, October 1975), vol. 1, pp. 227-8; López de Meneses, "Tecuichpotzin. Hija de Moctezuma," p. 473.

27 López de Meneses, "Alonso de Grado," p. 80.

28 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9; Hernán Cortés, Cartas y Documentos Mario Hernández Sanchez-Barba (ed.) (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1963), pp. 359.

29 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9; Cortés, pp. 359.

30 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9; Cortés, pp. 358-62.

31 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9. Modern geographical locations are found in Charles Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), p. 426.

32 Emma Pérez-Rocha, La Tierra y el Hombre en la Villa de Tacuba Durante la Epoca Colonial (México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Departamento de Etnohistoria, 1982), p. 45; The privilegio recognized Isabel as "La mayor y heredera del dicho señor Moctezuma," (the eldest daughter and heir of the said lord Moctezuma) AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9.

33 Alvarez, vol 1. p. 228. In disputes between Isabel's heirs it was charged that Grado held a "muy buen repartimiento de indios" in Chiautla, López de Meneses, "Los Extremeños de América: Alonso de Grado," p. 80. This is not surprising given the nature of the litigation. In fact the same charge was made by various factions against Isabel's other husbands.

34 Charles Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 423.

35 Alvarez, vol. I, p. 228. Amada López de Meneses puts the death of Grado between 27 August 1526 and 1 March 1527, "Un Nieto de Moctezuma en la Carcel de Sevilla," Erudición Ibero-Ultramarina (1932): 562.

36 Chipman, "The Oñate-Zaldívar-Moctezuma Families of Northern New Spain," p. 298; López de Meneses, "Dos Nietos de Moctezuma. Monjas de La Concepción de México," Revista de Indias, 12 (1952): 86.

37 Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, Historia Genealogía de las Familias más Antigua de México 3 vols. (México: A Carranza y Comp., 1908), vol. 3, pp. 48-50.

38 Chipman, "The Oñate-Zaldívar-Moctezuma Families of Northern New Spain," p. 299.

39 Altamirano stated this in 1551, AGI, Justicia 181.

40 AGI, Justicia 181.

41 Francisco de Icaza (ed.), Diccionario Autobiográfico de Conquistadores y Pobladores de Nueva España 2 vols. (Guadalajara: Biblioteca de Facsimiles Mexicana, 1969), (reprint), p. 311; AGI, Justicia 181.

42 AGI, Justicia 181. Gibson locates Izquincuitlapilco in the Valley of Mexico in the Tepeneca area and north of Tenochtitlan. See The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, map 2, p. 14.

- 43 Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 423.
- 44 López de Meneses, "Dos Nietos de Moctezuma," p. 82.
- 45 López de Meneses, "Dos Nietos de Moctezuma," p. 82.
- 46 Peter Gerhard, A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 184.
- 47 AGI, Justicia 181.
- 48 AGI, Patronato 181, Justicia 181; Silvio A. Zavala, Encomienda Indiana (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1973), pp. 474-5, n.
- 49 AGI, Justicia 181.
- 50 "Carta del Cacique" in Emma Pérez-Rocha, pp. 151-3; Zavala, Encomienda Indiana, p. 465. Chipman states that Cano's encomienda was "rather poor," "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of Mestizaje" in David G. Sweet and Gary B. Nash (eds.), Struggle and Survival in Colonial America (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), p. 222.
- 51 Tacuba tribute was worth an annual 2,700 pesos and Macuilsuchilco was worth 1,560 pesos annually. Cano also held Ocuya, Caquete, Vejoca and Capuluaque in encomienda and these were worth a combined 1,000 pesos annually. See Francisco Paso y Troncoso (ed.), Epistolario de Nueva España 16 vols. (México: Antigua Librería Robredo de José Porrúa y Sus Hijos, 1939), vol.9, p. 11. Hereafter referred to as ENE.
- 52 ENE, Vol. 9, pp. 1-37. These figures were arrived at by totalling the annual worth of the encomiendas listed and then dividing by 129.
- 53 ENE, vol. 9, pp. 30, 5, 39.
- 54 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 5. For geographical locations see Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, map 2, p. 14.
- 55 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 5.
- 56 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 2.
- 57 ENE, vol 15, p. 137.
- 58 ENE, vol 15, p. 137.
- 59 ENE, vol. 15, p. 137.

60 ENE, vol. 15, p. 137.

61 ENE, vol. 15, p. 137.

62 Kellogg states that for both native men and women in the colonial period, claimants' rights of ownership rested upon establishing a genealogically valid claim especially dating from the pre-hispanic period. This practice was a form of arguing within the Spanish legal system for rights which were actually based in the indigenous kinship and inheritance system. See "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts: Structure and Strategy in a Legal Context" in Ronald Spores and Ross Hassig (eds.), Five Centuries of Law and Politics in Central Mexico (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Publications in Anthropology, No. 30, 1984), p. 34.

63 Chipman, "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of Mestizaje," p. 224.

64 A complete copy can be found in Ricardo Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, Historia Genealógica de las Familias más Antiguas de México 3 vols. (México: A. Carranza y Comp., 1908-1910), vol. 3, pp. 39-50; partial copies and excerpts are also in AGI Justicia 181 and López de Meneses "Tecuichpotzin. Hija de Moctezuma." That Isabel made her own will is not unique. See Susan Kellogg, "Aztec Inheritance in Sixteenth-Century Mexico City, Colonial Patterns, Prehispanic Influences," Ethnohistory 33 (1986) 3: 313-330 and S.L. Cline "A Legal Process at the Local Level: Estate Division in Late Sixteenth-Century Culhuacan" in Spores and Hassig for numerous examples of indigenous women who had wills and testaments drawn up.

65 Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, p. 44; Spanish wills had to have three adult male witnesses who affirmed that the testator wanted to have their will drawn up, Cline, "A Legal Process at the Local Level," p. 46.

66 Chipman, "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of 'Mestizaje,'" p. 223 and Ann P. Hollingsworth, "Pedro de Moctezuma and His Descendents, 1521-1718." (Ph.D. Dissertation, North Texas State University, 1980), p. 18. Gibson notes that Isabel's donations were entirely voluntary but that she "gave so prodigally in the post-conquest period that the Augustinians felt obliged to ask her to desist," The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, pp. 124-5.

67 Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, p. 48.

68 There are several other possible reasons for why Isabel did not leave her husband a bequest in her will. She may have been concerned about maintaining the line of descent. Cline notes that in the wills she examined from the Libros de Testamentos de Culhuacan there was a tendency to bequeath patrimonial land to lineal descendants rather than to the spouse. This was done in order to ensure that land be kept in the family,

"Land Tenure and Land Inheritance in Late Sixteenth-Century Culhuacan" in Harvey and Prem, p. 295. Cline also notes that some women felt threatened by idea that their land would become the property of Spaniards. She cites the example of doña María Juárez who ordered that her land sold not to Spaniards but only to the natives of Culhuacan, "Land Tenure and Land Inheritance," p. 293. In addition, as Kellogg remarks, some women felt the need to prevent fragmentation of their property and so bequeathed most of it to one descendent, often the eldest male child, "Aztec Inheritance in Sixteenth-Century Mexico City," p. 321.

69 Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, p. 42.

70 Ortega y Pérez Gallardo, p. 42.

71 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 5; Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 423.

72 AGI, Justicia 181.

73 AGI, Patronato 245, legato 5; Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 424.

74 Francisco Paso y Troncoso (ed.), Papeles de Nueva España. Geografía y Estadística [Segunda Serie]. 9 vols. (Madrid: Tipográfico "Sucesores de Rivadeneyra," 1905), vol. 3, p. 19.

75 Justicia 181; López de Meneses, "Dos Nietos de Moctezuma," pp. 94-96 ; Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 424.

76 López de Meneses "Dos Nietos de Moctezuma," p. 87.

77 Chipman, "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of 'Mestizaje'," p. 225.

78 Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 424.

79 López de Meneses, "Un Nieto de Moteczuma en la Carcel de Sevilla," Erudición Ibero-Ultramarina, (1932): 566; Chipman, "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of Mestizaje," p. 224.

80 Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 425; Chipman, "Isabel Moctezuma: Pioneer of Mestizaje," p. 225.

81 This fulfilled Spanish legal requirements. As Cline states, women's "rights to own property and bequeath it through the legal instrument of a testament were never questioned," "Land Tenure and Land Inheritance," p. 303. Luis Martín notes that after marriage the administration of the dowry was in hands of the husband but "if the marital bond was dissolved either by

death, or divorce annulment, the dowry and the income produced by it had to be returned to the wife and her legal heirs.," Daughters of the Conquistadores: Women of the Viceroyalty of Peru (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), p. 119.

82 Kellogg states that Aztec women had legal standing before the audiencia and that although marriage modified their legal rights, in practice women retained most of their rights and were not reduced to a childlike or minor status before the courts, "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts," p. 36.

83 Kellogg, "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts," p. 26. Eleanor Burkett argues that women possessed a similar power in colonial Peru. See "Indian Women and White Society: The Case of Sixteenth-Century Peru" in Asunción Lavrin Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 101-128

84 This explains why Kellogg found a number of Aztec women litigants in the Tierras documents, "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts," p. 29.

85 Kellogg, "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts," pp. 26-27.

86 Kellogg, "Aztec Women in Early Colonial Courts," p. 27.

87 Charles Gibson, "The Aztec Aristocracy in Colonial Mexico," Comparative Studies in Society and History 21 (1960) 2: 169-196.

88 Lockhart, pp. 35-39.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

As a cultural confrontation and readjustment process, the conquest of Mexico placed indigenous women in trying circumstances. Numerous women were consigned as 'gifts' to the Spaniards with the understanding that they were to provide sexual companionship to those who received them. Many were victims of abuse and brutality at the hands of the conquerors. Outside of their relationships with men, indigenous women, along with all the Native peoples, suffered the hardships arising from the conflicts and from the introduction of European diseases. Others, like doña Marina and Isabel Moctezuma were, however, more fortunate. There are two primary reasons which help to explain their survival and success in a time of chaos and conflict. Firstly, both had something the Spaniards wanted: Marina possessed an extremely useful linguistic talent and Isabel was of the Native nobility, a status that could be used to individual advantage or to further the Spanish cause. Secondly, both women worked within the new system. They readjusted themselves according to the demands arising from the contact - conquest process.

Women such as Marina and Isabel are not unique in the history of European contact with the New World. As Francisco Terán notes, one of the first Indian women associated with Europeans was "la india Isabel," who acted as an interpreter for Columbus on his second voyage (1493-1496). Companion of Alonso Ojeda, one of Columbus' captains, Isabel also travelled with Vespucci and Juan de la Cosa in the explorations of the coast of Venezuela and the discovery of Curacao in 1499.¹

In the Mexican context, there were other indigenous women, aside from Marina and Isabel Moctezuma, whose association with the Spaniards further supports the idea that women had strategies for surviving the conquest and for benefitting from their association with the conquerors. One example is doña Luisa, daughter of Xicoténcatl the Elder, ruler of Tlaxcala. Assigned as a gift to the Spaniards, by her father, Luisa was given by Cortés to Pedro de Alvarado, who later married her.² Through her marriage to an important conquistador such as Alvarado, Luisa benefitted by maintaining some semblance of her elite Native status. As the wife of a Spaniard she was also protected and preserved. Heroic efforts were made by the conquerors and their allies, especially Luisa's brother Xicoténcatl the Younger, to preserve her during the disastrous retreat from Tenochtitlan on the Noche Triste.³ Moreover, as Alvarado's wife, Luisa also benefitted materially from her alliance with him. After the fall of Tenochtitlan, she accompanied her husband to Guatemala where he had been appointed as captain general.⁴ Luisa's children by Alvarado, Pedro and Leonor, benefitted from having such an illustrious father. Her daughter married Don Francisco de la Cueva and was therefore related to Cortés through his own marriage to Juana de Zuñiga.⁵ Unlike Cortés, who preferred to marry a Spanish woman, "Alvarado appears to have been happy with his Indian bride and not until after her death and when the need for powerful connections arose did he seek her Spanish successor."⁶

Another example of an indigenous woman whose life and actions demonstrates the use of strategies for survival is Isabel's sister, Leonor Moctezuma. Sometimes referred to in the documentation as doña Marina, Leonor was given as a ward to Cortés by Moctezuma as was a third daughter, María.⁷ María Moctezuma likely perished on the Noche Triste

since it is more than probable that had she survived Cortés would have granted her an encomienda as he did her two sisters and her brothers.⁸ Like her sister Isabel, Leonor received an encomienda on the occasion of her marriage to a Spaniard.

As the wife of the conquistador Juan Paz, Leonor was granted Ecatepec "en dote y arras" by Cortés in 1526, at the same time that he granted Tacuba to Isabel.⁹ In granting Ecatepec to Leonor, Cortés - in the name of the king - recognized the elite social and economic status of Moctezuma's daughter. Also similar to Isabel's privilegio, the encomienda of Ecatepec was granted in perpetuity and for Leonor this signified a degree of economic security.

When Paz died Leonor married another Spaniard, Cristóbal de Valderrama. Until his death, in 1537, he was considered the encomendero of Ecatepec.¹⁰ Valderrama served in Michoacan, Colima, and Cacatula. In compensation for his services to the crown he received the encomienda of Tarimbaro also known as Istapan (Ixtapan).¹¹ Coming to the marriage with property, both Leonor and her husband gained certain benefits from the match.

Although the combined incomes of the two encomiendas was not vast, both husband and wife achieved a level of financial well-being. There were other benefits as well. Leonor, for example, retained some semblance of her noble status through the encomienda grant. She also obtained a portion, albeit a small one, of her rightful patrimony. For Valderrama, marriage to Moctezuma's daughter guaranteed that he would be one of the more financially comfortable encomenderos of New Spain since Ecatepec passed into each of Leonor's marriages. Valderrama would also achieve social standing by virtue of being an encomendero. Most important in terms

of the advantages of the match was that their children would be provided for because Ecatepec was granted in perpetuity and would be passed on to their 'heirs and successors.'

Leonor's daughter, Leonor Valderrama y Moctezuma, also married a Spaniard, Diego Arias de Sotelo. In terms of economic benefits this too was an advantageous match for both husband and wife. In 1560, Arias de Sotelo held the Coatitlan, Aculuacan and Ecatepec encomiendas as a result of marrying Moctezuma's granddaughter. He also inherited Cristóbal de Valderrama's encomienda, Tarimbaro. While the income accruing from these properties was not immense, Arias de Sotelo and his wife must have lived in relative comfort. In tribute payments they received cash, maize and poultry worth an annual 3,390 pesos.¹² Apparently, Arias de Sotelo was dissatisfied with his income. Like his wife's uncle, he petitioned the crown for the restoration of what he perceived as his wife's patrimony. Similar to the case of Juan Cano, Arias de Sotelo would likely never have been in the position to hope for more property had he not married a woman of the native nobility.

It is not surprising that Juan Cano frequently stressed that his wife was the only true and legitimate heir of Moctezuma. While Cano and Juan de Andrade were involved in litigation for control over Tacuba, Arias de Sotelo made a counter suit claiming that he should rightfully have control over Moctezuma's property since the true heir of Moctezuma's property was his mother-in-law, Leonor.¹³ In 1562 he petitioned the crown stating that Leonor Moctezuma had the just right to Moctezuma's property which included "many and vast lands, pueblos and provinces."¹⁴ Similar to Cano's claims concerning his wife's legitimacy as Moctezuma and Tecalco's daughter, Arias de Sotelo stressed that his mother-in-law was also

legitimate being the daughter of Moctezuma, the Uey-Tlatoani, or Revered Speaker of Tenochtitlan, and Accaflau, a principal wife. In the 1560s, Arias de Sotelo claimed that Moctezuma and Accaflau were legitimately married in conformity with their religion. Thus Leonor was a legitimate daughter and the legitimate heir and successor. As a consequence, he argued, his own wife Leonor was entitled to Moctezuma's property as a legitimate descendent.¹⁵ Arias de Sotelo's claim to Moctezuma's property included a suit for Isabel's encomienda of Tacuba. This greatly confuses the litigation arising from the many disputes between Isabel's husband and children. The situation was only resolved when the audiencia rejected Arias de Sotelo's claim.¹⁶ Matters were later simplified when Arias de Sotelo was charged in the encomendero conspiracy. Acquitted of the charge that he played a role in the plot he was nevertheless exiled from the Indies in 1568.¹⁷

If two of Moctezuma's daughters married Spaniards, it is not surprising to find examples of women of the Native nobility, in other areas in Spanish America, entering into similar kinds of cross-cultural alliances. Garcilaso de la Vega, el Inca, notes the existence of such marriages during and after the conquest of Peru. In one revealing example he relates how a daughter of Huaina Cápac was married for the second time to a Spaniard. According to Garcilaso, she was an encomendero in her own right. For her second marriage she was to wed a soldier, Diego Hernández, but when she learned that he had been a tailor in his youth she refused the match. She argued that "it was unjust to wed the daughter of Huaina Cápac with a circacamayo, meaning tailor."¹⁸ Several attendants at the wedding, including the bishop of Cuzco, entreated her to accept. She steadfastly refused until her brother convinced her:

that it was impolitic to refuse the match, for by doing so she would render the whole of the royal line odious in the eyes of the Spaniards, who would consider them mortal enemies and never accept their friendship again.¹⁹

Her brother's comments reveal the significance of such marriages. He was no doubt intent upon ensuring his family's social and economic security by forging a marriage alliance based upon mutual support. That his sister agreed to the marriage for strictly political and economic ends, is evidenced by her response to the Christian marriage vows. Asked if she wanted to be the man's wife, she replied in her own language "Maybe I will, maybe I won't." In this statement she made a show of her independence and voiced her strong reluctance but it was to no avail and, concludes Garcilaso, the ceremony continued.²⁰

Garcilaso was himself the illegitimate son of the Spanish Captain Sebastián Garcilaso de la Vega and Ñusta Chimpa Oollo, granddaughter of the Inca Túpac Inca Yupanqui, and second cousin to Húascar and Atahualpa.²¹ Garcilaso's mother contracted a regular marriage with a Spaniard, Juan del Pedroche, bringing a dowry of 1,500 silver pesos and a herd of llamas, perhaps contributed by Captain Sebastián.²²

Cross-cultural alliances through extra-marital and regular marital relationships were not unique to Spanish America. The situations of women such as Luisa Xicoténcatl, Leonor Moctezuma and Huaina Cápac's daughter can be compared to the circumstances of native women in other regions of the Americas. One well-known if not legendary individual, whose life mirrors her Mexican and Peruvian counterparts, is Pocahontas. Daughter of the 'emperor' Powhatan, Pocahontas became closely

associated with the English during their attempts to establish a viable colony at Jamestown in the early 1600s.

Like Marina, a great deal of mythology surrounds the figure of Pocahontas, especially in terms of the 'Indian Princess' theme.²³ Many elements of Pocahontas' story are well-known. Encountering the English colonists as a child, she is supposed to have developed a strong preference for them. According to the arrogant and controversial adventurer, John Smith, this preference was demonstrated in her famed rescue of the Captain in 1608.²⁴ Smith also claimed that Pocahontas had warned him of future plots against his life devised by her father. A marked similarity is found between the popular image of Marina as traitress to her people and Smith's decidedly romanticized picture of Pocahontas coming to him in the dead of night to warn him against her father. "With tears running down her cheeks" Smith wrote, Pocahontas described how she would be killed if her father discovered her betrayal.²⁵

Several years after the rescue of Smith, Pocahontas was married to John Rolfe, one of Virginia's first Tobacco planters. She is said to have renounced her heritage and to have accepted English civility and become a devout Christian. She was renamed Rebecca, following this conversion, and in 1617 she and her son travelled with Rolfe to England. She died there soon after her arrival.²⁶ The extent to which Pocahontas voluntarily renounced her heritage is certainly debatable.²⁷ As Bernard Sheehan points out, Pocahontas only joined the English camp after she had been abducted in 1613.²⁸

The abduction carried out by Captain Samuel Argall, in April 1613, was an attempt to force Powhatan to concede to English demands. Governor Thomas Dale concluded that with Pocahontas a prisoner they could "redeeme some of our English men and armes, now in the possession of her father."²⁹ Dale's true purpose however was to force Powhatan to give the English "a full ship of corne."³⁰ No adherents to any form of gentle persuasion, Dale and Argall explained to the Indians that if they did not comply with their demands:

we would thither returne againe and destroy and take away all their corne, burne all the houses vpon that riuer [sic.], leaue not a fishing Weere standing nor a Canoa in any creeke thereabout, and destroy and kill as many of them as we could.³¹

Pocahontas remained with the English for much longer than they probably intended. Despite the implication that the abduction represented the colonists' power and determination, Powhatan took his time complying with their demands. Shortly after Pocahontas was taken he did return the Englishmen. However, he kept all the weapons and sent but one canoe of grain. With these concessions he was apparently content to play a waiting game, especially after he had been apprised of how well his daughter was being cared for.³² It would seem that Dale and Argall subscribed to the view that Pocahontas was the king's favorite daughter. As a result they over-estimated the impact that the abduction would have on Powhatan. If Dale is to be believed however, Powhatan's refusal to redeem his daughter by paying the ransom had a devastating effect on Pocahontas. According to him, Pocahontas told the Indians that if her father loved her "he would not value her lesse than old Swords, Peeeces, or axes" and he would concede to English demands. Since her father's actions revealed to

her that Powhatan cared more about the weapons the English wanted back than he did about his own daughter, Pocahontas stated, she would remain "with the English men, who loved her."³³

After it became evident that Powhatan was not about to pay the ransom, Pocahontas was placed under the guardianship of the Reverend Alexander Whitaker, who was to transform her into a model of civility. During her sojourn at Whitaker's farm, Pocahontas apparently became acquainted with John Rolfe. According to Smith, Rolfe was in love with Pocahontas and she with him.³⁴ This is debatable in so far as Rolfe had a great deal to gain by marrying an Indian woman of Pocahontas' stature, not the least of which was company support for his wife.³⁵ The primary benefit of such a marriage, not lost on Governor Dale, was that it could be used firstly to conclude peace with the Indians, and secondly, as an example of the good will and love which the Indians bore to the English.

The English used Pocahontas in a manner similar to the way Cortés used Moctezuma's daughters, to reflect his own political acumen and to depict their father as a willing and loyal vassal of the crown. With Pocahontas and her marriage to an Englishman, the Virginia Company had the ultimate form of advertisement. While in England Pocahontas was presented as an example of the truly civilized Indian, a product resulting from the positive influence of English civility.³⁶ For the English there were benefits to be had from 'civilized' Indians and especially the Rolfe-Pocahontas union. The marriage brought peace between the colonists and Powhatan.³⁷ The benefits of peace were primarily economic since concord promoted "friendly commerce and trade, not only with Powhatan himself, but also with his subjects around vs." [sic].³⁸ While trade was important, a

more significant consequence of the peace was "the lawful purchase of a great part of the Countrey from the Natives" who "freely and willingly" sold their land for copper, and other commodities.³⁹ If in 1609, Robert Gray could enquire "By what right or warrant can we enter the land of these savages, take away their rightfull inheritance from them, and plant ourselves in their places?" the English had found an answer in 1614 with Pocahontas.⁴⁰ While it is difficult to determine whether Pocahontas acted entirely of her own volition, the similarities between her situation and that of 'la princesa india' Tecuichpotzin are all too apparent. Both were daughters of 'emperors,' both spent a great deal of time with Europeans, were subject to much proselytizing and, according to the sources, both converted to the Christian faith. Finally both women were married to European men. If Isabel achieved security and protection ensured a degree of social standing through such a marriage, perhaps Pocahontas did so as well. Moreover, Isabel could not promise to marry a Spaniard in order to guarantee protection for her family since many of her siblings and her father had perished in the conquest, but Pocahontas could and may very well have entered into such an agreement with the English.

At the time of Pocahontas' marriage to John Rolfe, the English and Powhatan were still at odds. Perhaps by agreeing to the marriage, Pocahontas was given a guarantee that the English would seek peace with the Indians and not harm her father. While peace did result from the marriage, this peace also fostered a terrible form of exploitation. The Indians were now being deprived of their land. Perhaps this explains why, when John Smith visited Pocahontas in England, she charged that "your countriemen will lie much."⁴¹

Examples of marriages and relationships between European men and Indian women can also be found in other areas dominated by the English. In the early fur trading society of Canada extra-marital relationships according to "the custom of the country" were relatively frequent. As Sylvia Van Kirk notes, the Indians "initially encouraged the formation of marriage alliances."⁴² The Native perspective was that such alliances would create "a reciprocal social bond" which consolidated their economic ties with the stranger. Through marriage, traders became part of the Indian's kin and in return the Indians expected certain rights and privileges. Ultimately, "the marriage of a daughter to a fur trader brought prestige and the promise of security to the Indian and his family."⁴³

Indian women in fur trade society also played other significant roles which reflect upon their ability to adapt to the colonial situation. Thanadelthur or, "The Slave Woman", for example, acted as interpreter, guide and negotiator for the English expedition to establish a post at the mouth of the Churchill River. In 1713, following her escape from the Cree, Thanadelthur, a Chipewyan, made her way to the Hudson's Bay Company post at York Factory.⁴⁴ Governor James Knight, realizing she could be of immense value to his cause, enlisted her to help him mediate with the Indians concerning the post at Churchill. Thanadelthur negotiated with the Cree for the English, distributing Company goods among them in order to persuade them to allow the creation of the new post. According to Van Kirk, Thanadelthur "readily appreciated the importance of her position and soon became the dominant spirit of the expedition."⁴⁵ In order for the post to be established, peace between the Cree and the Chipewyan was necessary. Thanadelthur was entrusted with this task and with "perpetuall talking" she persuaded the Chipewyan to meet with the Cree.⁴⁶ Indeed, despite her

hoarse voice from so much talking, Thanadelthur "still had enough voice left to scold them and enough energy to quite literally push them around so that they all stood in fear of her."⁴⁷ The negotiations were entirely successful and the expedition returned to York Factory in the spring of 1716.⁴⁸ The usefulness of Thanadelthur to the English cause was noted by Knight after "the Slave Woman" died in 1717. "The Missfortune in Looseing her," he commented, "will be very Prejudicial to the Company's Interest."⁴⁹

Like Marina, Thanadelthur came to the Europeans as a slave of an Indian group. While Thanadelthur escaped her holders and Marina was given away by hers, both were nevertheless offered avenues for surviving the conflict generated by contact and conquest through their association with the Europeans. There are also similarities between the roles played by these two women. Both were entrusted with great responsibility in terms of giving accurate tactical and political advice. Both women were also guides, advisors, and interpreters. Like Marina, Thanadelthur was protected by her allies because she had a skill they greatly desired and needed if they were to achieve their purpose.⁵⁰ The use of such skills for the benefit of conquerors and colonizers demonstrates that some women adapted to the contact situation by providing the Europeans with the crucial means to achieve their ends.

The degree to which indigenous women such as Thanadelthur had great power over the unfolding of political events is difficult to gauge but the importance of their roles as guides and interpreters should not be underestimated. They stood between cultures which were incomprehensible to each other without the aid of a translator. As cultural bridges, these women were neither 'powers' or 'pawns.' Rather they were 'persons-in-

between.' This reflects upon the flexibility of contact and conquest. This is important since women's influence in the process depended upon the nature of conquest. If the conquest had meant the unyielding imposition of European rule and the absolute subjugation of the Native peoples, these women would have possessed no influence over the course of events; nor, would a variety of avenues to survival have been available to them. The process allowed them to be 'persons-in-between.' As such they may have directly influenced the course of events, which some sources, such as the Lienzo de Tlaxcala, suggest.

How some indigenous women came to such positions is not easily explained. Perhaps, though, reasons can be found in contemporary attitudes, not toward the Indians in general, but toward women. The conquest-contact situation was a military and political process and in the largest sense it can be defined as a male endeavour. The attempt to defeat the Triple Alliance, for example, was largely a military contest between European and indigenous men. Native women are scarcely mentioned in Spanish sources perhaps because the Spaniards did not feel militarily threatened by them. One expression of this idea is found in Spanish characterizations of Moctezuma after his imprisonment. As the eighteenth-century Mexican historian Francisco Clavijero, revealingly commented in his history, Moctezuma was a threat to the Spaniards until his captivity whereupon he was weakened to such a degree "that he appeared . . . to have changed his sex."⁵¹ This suggests that to Spaniards indigenous women did not need to be politically and militarily conquered since they were perceived as posing no threat to the success of the conquest.

In his semiotic study of the conquest Tzvetan Todorov makes several suggestive comments on the idea of contemporary perceptions of women. Identifying women as the 'other,' Todorov remarks that for both Spaniards and Aztecs "the worst insult . . . that can be addressed to a man is to treat him as a woman."⁵² In Todorov's view, for both conquerors and Indians words are for women, weapons for men. Todorov links this with communication between Spaniards and Indians. Indians, according to Todorov, were honest and truthful while the Spaniards were hypocritical and deceitful. Thus while Spanish and indigenous men fought battles in the literal sense, the Spaniards, unbeknownst to the Indians, waged a war of words. They improvised, telling the Indians various things, depending upon the requirements of circumstance. Todorov concludes that:

The cultural model in effect since the Renaissance, even if borne and assumed by men, glorifies what we might call the feminine side of culture: improvisation rather than ritual, words rather than weapons. Not just any words . . . but those whose *raison d'être* is action upon others.⁵³

In contrast to the Spaniards the Indians were constricted in communication by the very nature of Nahuatl which is a highly formalized language oriented toward ritual. This interpretation of Todorov's could be significant in terms of Marina. Her ability to translate Nahuatl into Mayan, and later, into Castilian could demonstrate that she was able to adapt more readily to the Spanish presence than the indigenous men engaged in battles with the conquerors. Moreover, if Todorov's perception is correct, Marina's role as an interpreter can be interpreted as being more suited to women than to men in the eyes of both Spaniards and Indians. Her ability to translate Nahuatl into Castilian therefore reflects her considerable

adaptative capacity but also that she was playing a role which may have been perceived as a women's role in both Spanish and Nahua culture.

Taking Todorov's conclusions one step further, one may suggest that in the 'weaknesses' of women, such as their lack of military power, are found certain strengths including resourcefulness, and the ability to improvise. This is immensely significant because it could imply that women were in a much better position than indigenous males to at least influence events to greater degree than has been traditionally supposed.

This interesting perception of women could be applied to the examples of Marina and Isabel whose adaptation to conquest demonstrate an ability to improvise and create strategies for survival. In terms of political influence, one example which is intriguing but difficult to substantiate with conclusive evidence is the case of Luisa Xicoténcatl. Consider, for instance, the massacre ordered by Luisa's Spanish husband, Pedro Alvarado, during Cortés' absence from Tenochtitlan. As Alvarado's wife and as the sister of Xicoténcatl, leader of the Tlaxcalan forces, Luisa may have been in a position to influence Alvarado's decision. The Tlaxcalans were longstanding enemies of the Aztecs. When the inhabitants gathered for their festival in the main plaza on that fatal day, perhaps Xicoténcatl saw his chance for revenge and used his sister as an informant. Through Luisa he could have falsely accused his enemies of evil intentions, thus persuading the temporary commander of the Spanish company to act swiftly in suppressing a supposed rebellion. While this idea remains on the level of speculation because of a lack of evidence, it is suggestive of how some women might have achieved a degree of influence over the course of events. Moreover, further study on such issues could have the added

benefit of finally putting to rest the misrepresentations, myths and overly-romantic treatments of indigenous women found in popular imagery.

Images of the exotic 'Indian princess,' and love-struck women have not enhanced historical understanding of indigenous women who were the bridges between two cultures. Negative images of treasonous activities and overt sexuality have only further imbalanced popular perceptions, while the noble and ignoble savage conventions perform a similar disservice. The significance of popular imagery lies in the fact that it often colours supposed historical treatments. Such images obscure historical realities because they imply that emotion is the primary motivator for female action. Consequently, historical processes, such as the conquest, are personalized and individual women are shown to take action only because they are affected emotionally by their particular circumstances. The emotional and psychological effects of contact and conquest should not be ignored, but effect should not be confused with cause. Moreover, indigenous women should be seen as possessing the ability to reason and think pragmatically, both of which are denied by the emotional approach. Indigenous women such as Marina and Isabel, and their North American counterparts, were able to perceive and take advantage of the opportunities provided by the fluid, often improvised, nature of conquest. They took the avenues of survival made available to them. In comparison with indigenous men, women's adaptation to contact and conquest may have been facilitated by their gender. It is possible that women were not perceived as threats by the Spaniards. In addition, the absence of Spanish women and the initial response to inter-racial marriage were factors which may have eased the circumstances of some women. In adopting various strategies which helped

to ensure their survival, these women were not 'powers,' or 'pawns'; nor were they the women of popular imagery.

While women such as Marina and Thanadelthur provided the Europeans with skills, other women provided less tangible but not necessarily less advantageous benefits, such as a level of social standing and material rewards. Some, such as Isabel and Pocahontas, became advertisements; one for the skills and integrity of Hernán Cortés, and the other for the great effects which English civility had on American savagism. Yet, such circumstances were not without benefits for the women. There were significant advantages, including physical protection and support and also material rewards which brought a degree of financial security and an inheritance for their mestizo children. By associating or allying themselves with conquerors, colonizers and fur traders, these indigenous women were adapting to changed and often trying circumstances. Ultimately, these adaptative strategies resulted in their survival.

Appealing as a heroic epic, the conquest of Mexico has been mythologized and romanticized in popular perceptions. Both novelists and historians have aided in this myth-making by perpetuating distortions and stereotypes: relationships between indigenous women and European men have been romanticized in popular fiction and restrictive methodologies have been imposed upon these male-female associations in scholarly accounts by historians. Such perceptions and interpretations fail to provide a profound understanding of human relationships in the past because they lack sensibility and reduce historical processes to the fallacy of an either/or dichotomy. More realistic and sensitive appraisals are necessary in the case of women such as Marina and Isabel who have been transformed in popular imagery into exotic beauties inspired only by emotion. Approaches

which fashion these women into 'Indian princesses,' traitors, or love-struck agents to the conquistadores or impose a limiting explanatory model on their lives, such as the 'power, or pawn' thesis, fail to acknowledge the subtleties of experience and circumstance in the process of cultural contact and conquest. Unmasking these myths and reappraising the life-experiences of indigenous women are the first important steps in coming to a deeper understanding of the realities such women faced and the strategies for survival they developed in the conflict engendered by the conquest and the Spanish presence in sixteenth-century Mexico.

Notes to Chapter Five

¹ Francisco Terán "Las Mujeres de la Conquista," Americas 28 (1976): 13.

² Bernal Díaz del Castillo, The True History of the Conquest of New Spain 5 vols. Genario García (ed.) Alfred P. Maudsley (trans.) (Hakluyt Society, 1908-1916), vol. 2, p. 251. Alvarado's brother, Jorge, also married a Tlaxcalan woman. Jorge's first marriage was to Luisa's sister, doña Lucía Xicoténcatl. See Edgar Juan Aparicio y Aparicio, Conquistadores de Guatemala y Fundadores de Familias Guatemaltecas (México: Corregida y Aumentada, 1961), p. 3.

³ Díaz, vol. 2, p. 251.

⁴ John Eoghan Kelly, Pedro de Alvarado, Conquistador (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1971), p. 43.

⁵ Díaz states that Francisca and Beatriz de la Cueva were the second and third Spanish wives of Pedro de Alvarado, vol. 2, p. 282. Doña Leonor de Alvarado Xicoténcatl, the daughter of Pedro Alvarado and Luisa Xicoténcatl, married Francisco de la Cuevas y Villacreces who was Pedro Alvarado's lawyer. Cuevas y Villacreces founded a powerful mayorazco in his native town of Jerez de la Frontera, Guatemala. For genealogical data see Aparicio y Aparicio, p. 7.

⁶ Kelly, p. 43.

⁷ AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9; Hernán Cortés, Cartas y Documentos Mario Hernández Sanchez-Barba (ed.) (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1963), p. 358. In AGI, Justicia 181 Leonor Moctezuma is also referred to as Marina; Charles Gibson discusses the name confusion, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule: A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico, 1519-1810 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), p. 418.

⁸ Amada López de Meneses, "Grandezas y Títulos de Nobleza a los Descendientes de Moctezuma II," Revista de Indias, 22 (1962) 98-90: 341-352. María may have been the daughter who was pregnant with Cortés' child at the time of her death on the Noche Triste. See Archivos Mexicanos: Documentos para la Historia de México: Sumario de la Residencia a Don Hernando Cortés 2 vols. (México: Tipografía de Vicente García Torres, 1852-1853), vol. 1, p. 39. Although Diccionario Porrúa de Historia Biografía y Geografía de México 3 vols. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1986) records that María Moctezuma died as a child, vol. 2, pp. 1921-1922 there are significant contradictions in the documentation as to the names and numbers of daughters Moctezuma placed with Cortés. Rafael García Granados finds sources which maintain that María Moctezuma died "under the tutelage of

Hernán Cortés," Diccionario Biográfico de Historia Antigua de México. 3 vols. (México: Instituto de Historia, 1952-1953), vol. 3, p. 151.

Identifying María Moctezuma exactly is made more complicated by the fact that different sources list several daughters of tlatoque who were baptized with similar names and associated with the Spaniards. Amada López de Meneses, for example, lists several indigenous women who were with the Spaniards on the Noche Triste. These include Isabel, María, Leonor, Ana and Inés Moctezuma and Francisca and Ana, sisters of Cacama, tlatoani of Texcoco. Ana and Inés Moctezuma and Francisca, Cacama's sister, died on the Noche Triste but Cacama's other sister Ana survived and married a conquistador, Juan de Cuéllar, "El Primer Regreso de Hernán Cortés a España," Revista de Indias 14 (1954): 75. This data is contradicted in other sources, however. Alfonso Figueroa y Melgar states that Ana, Elvira, and Inés, all intimates of Cortés, were with the Spaniards on the Noche Triste but only Ana perished during the retreat. He identifies Francisca as Isabel's half sister and states that she lived with Isabel until 1532 when she married Diego Huanitzin, the son of the tlatoani of Ecatepec. According to Figueroa y Melgar Doña Inés Moctezuma married Sebastián de Moscoso a conquistador who held the encomiendas of Tepexi, Utlazpa, Mistengo, "Los Moctezuma en España y América," Higualdía, 1 (1960) 11: 75. But García Granados states that Inés married Gonzalo Mexía, regidor of Mexico City, vol. 3, p. 70.

⁹ Included in the grant were the pueblos of Coatitlan and Acalhuacan, AGI, Patronato 245, legato 9; Cortés, p. 362; Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 419; France V. Scholes and Eleanor B. Adams, Documentos Para la Historia del México Colonial 7 vols. (México: José Porrúa e Hijos, 1955-1961), vol. 3, p. 27.

¹⁰ Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 419.

¹¹ Victor M. Alvarez, Diccionario de Conquistadores 2 vols. (México: Cuadernos de Trabajo del Departamento de Investigaciones Historicas, INAH, October, 1975), vol. 2, p. 564.

¹² Francisco Paso y Troncoso (ed.), Epistolario de Nueva España, 1505-1815 16 vols. (México: Antigua Librería Robredo de José Porrúa y Sus Hijos, 1939), vol. 9, p. 8. Hereafter referred to as ENE.

¹³ Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 424.

¹⁴ ENE, vol. 9, p. 169.

¹⁵ AGI, Patronato 245, legato 5.

¹⁶ Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 424. Gibson discusses later disputes between the heirs of Diego Arias de Sotelo and Leonor Valderrama y Moctezuma, pp. 419-420.

17 Gibson, The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule, p. 419; Mary Ellis Kahler (ed.), The Harkness Collection in the Library of Congress: Manuscripts Concerning Mexico J. Benedict Warren (trans.) (Washington: Library of Congress, 1974), p. 15.

18 Garcilaso de la Vega, El Inca, Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru. Part Two Harold V. Livermore (trans.) (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1966), pp.1229-30.

19 Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1230.

20 Garcilaso de la Vega, p. 1230; In his introduction, Livermore also points out, "Garcilaso praises those conquerors who had married Indian women - 'in those early days when the Indians saw some Indian woman give birth to a child by a Spaniard, her whole family gathered to serve and respect the Spaniard like an idol because he had become connected with them,'" p. xvi.

21 Livermore, "Introduction," pp. ix-x.

22 Livermore, "Introduction," pp. xv-xvi; Terán cites other similar examples in the Peruvian context, pp. 15-18.

23 Raymond William Stedman points out the similarities between the myths about these two women, Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), pp. 21. Myths and images of Pocahontas are also discussed by Phillip Young, "The Mother of Us All: Pocahontas Reconsidered," Kenyon Review, 24 (1962): 391-415.

24 John Smith, The Generall Historie of Virginia. New England and the Summer Isles [London, 1624] (March of America Facsimile Series, no. 45, 1966), p. 49.

25 Smith, p. 77.

26 Smith, p. 121.

27 Alden T. Vaughan states that her actions were entirely voluntary, American Genesis: Captain John Smith and the Founding of Virginia (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1975), p. 88.

28 Bernard W. Sheehan, Savagism and Civility: Indians and Englishmen in Colonial Virginia (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 128.

29 Ralph Hamour, A True Discourse on the Present State of Virginia, and the Success of the Affaires There till the 18 of June, 1614 [London, 1615] (English Books, 1475-1640. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms), p. 4.

30 Samuel Purchas, Hakluytus Postumous, or Purchas His Pilgrimes [London, 1625] 20 vols. [reprint] (Hakluyt Society, 1905-1907), vol. 14, p. 103.

31 Hamour, p.10.

32 Hamour, p.10.

33 Purchas, Hakluytus Posthumous, vol. 14, p. 104.

34 Smith, p. 64.

35 Vaughan, p. 93.

36 Evidence of her civility is reflected in the "Booten Hall Portrait" (1616) where she is depicted in English court dress, Grace Steel Woodward, Pocahontas (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), p.31.

37 Hamour, p. 3.

38 Hamour, p. 11.

39 Hamour, p. 11 and Samuel Purchas, Purchas His Pilgrimes, or the Relations of the World and the Religions Observed in All Ages and Places Discovered from the Creation Unto this Present (London, 1617) (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1976), p. 946.

40 Cited in Gary B. Nash, Red, Black and White: The Peoples of Early America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1974), p. 40.

41 Smith, p. 123.

42 Sylvia Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870 (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer Publishing, Ltd., 1980), p. 28.

43 Van Kirk, p. 29. Other indigenous cultures in contact and colonial settings acted similarly. See Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock (eds.), Women in Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives (New York: Praeger, J.F. Bergin Publisher, 1980), passim.

44 Van Kirk, p. 66.

45 Van Kirk, p. 68.

46 Van Kirk, p. 69.

47 Alice M. Johnson, "Ambassadress of Peace," The Beaver (1952): 45.

48 Van Kirk, p. 69. Van Kirk notes other examples of Indian women used as guides and interpreters by the fur traders, pp. 64-66.

49 Johnson, p. 45.

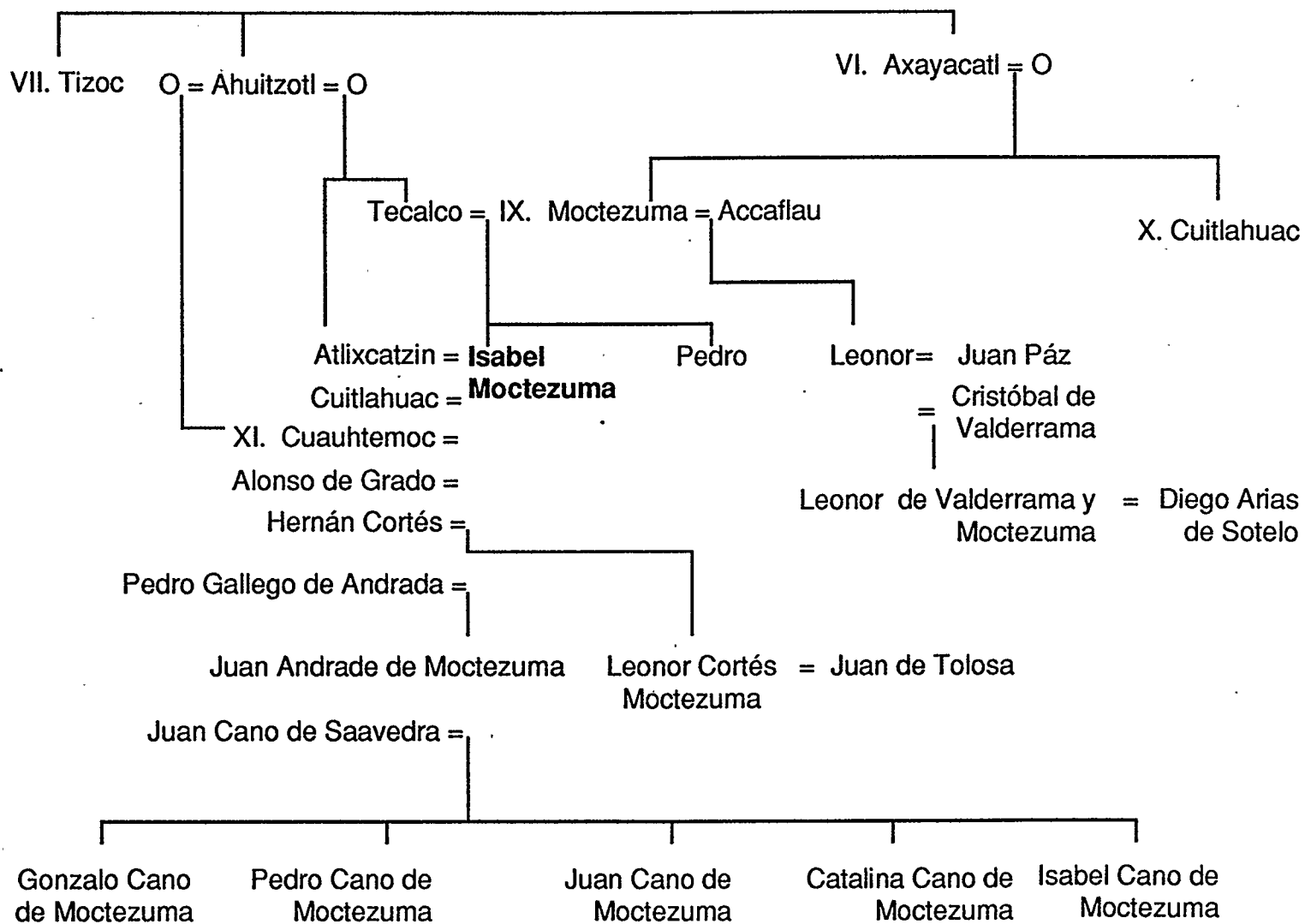
50 Van Kirk, p. 69. According to Van Kirk, Knight Commanded that members of the expedition should not let the Indians "Misuse or Abuse" Thanadalthur, p. 69.

51 Fransisco Saveiro Clavijero, The History of Mexico Charles Cullen (trans.) (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson Publisher, 1817), vol 2, p. 413.

52 Tzvetan Todorov, The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other Richard Howard (trans.) (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1984), p. 91.

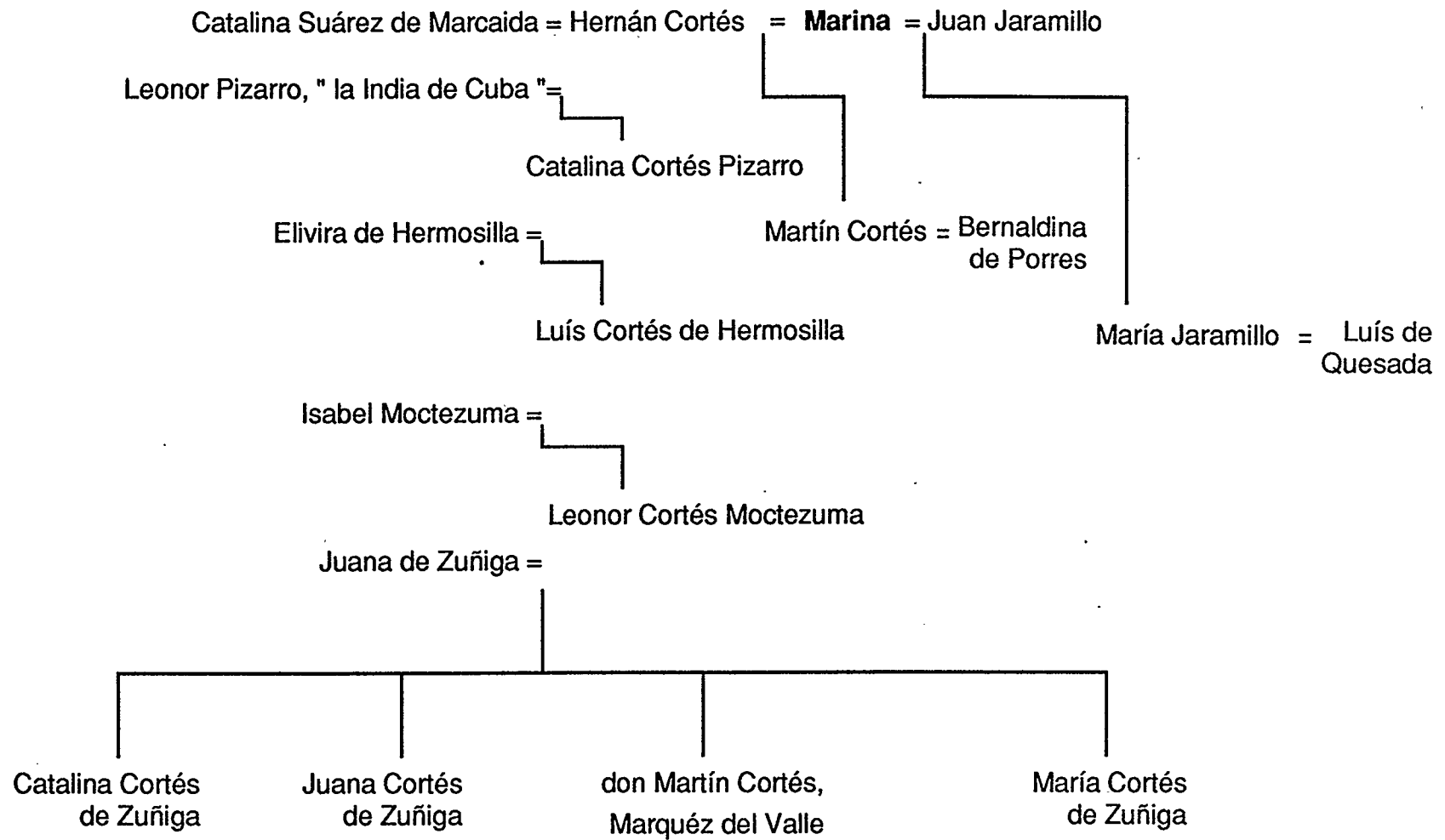
53 Todorov, p. 92.

Genealogy of Isabel Moctezuma



Roman numerals indicate rulers of Tenochtitlan

Genealogical Data: Marina, and Hernán Cortés



Glossary

Alcalde: cabildo member and judge.

Alférez: standard-bearer; second lieutenant.

Audiencia: court; legal and political jurisdiction under the viceroy.

Ayuntamiento: municipal council.

Caballería: agricultural land; unit of approximately 105 acres.

Cabildo: municipal council.

Cacique: Spanish term for local Indian rulers.

Calpullec: headman of a calpulli, or clan.

Calpulli: clan

Casa de Fundación: Royal foundry or smeltry.

Cihuapílli: female member of the Aztec elite.

Donación: donation; grant.

Encomienda: grant which entitled the holder, or encomendero[a] to receive tribute and obtain labour from the Indians in a stipulated area.

Estancia: subordinate Indian community; farm.

Hidalgo[a]: individual of the social elite; minor nobleman or woman; yeoman; country squire

Juéz de Residencia: judge who oversaw the proceeding of the residencia.

Merced: grant; usually a grant of land.

Mayordomo: majordomo; steward.

Mitad: half.

Oidor: literally, hearer: audiencia judge

Pilli; Pilpiltín (plural form): male member of the Aztec elite.

Privilegio: privilege; grant of privilege.

Pueblo: town; community.

Regidor: councilman on a municipal council.

Residencia: court or trial which always followed the end of a term in office.

Tlacatecatl: political title, or rank, achieved en route to the position of tlatoani.

Tlatoani; Tlatoque (plural form): Indian ruler of a community.

Uey-tlatoani: Revered Speaker; Title used by Moctezuma, ruler of Tenochtitlan.

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