

2011

“Somos Costeños”: Afro-Mexican Transnational Migration and Community Formation in Mexico and Winston-Salem, NC

Elizabeth Barnett

Connecticut College, elizabeth.barnett@conncoll.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/histhp>



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), and the [Chicana/o Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Barnett, Elizabeth, "“Somos Costeños”: Afro-Mexican Transnational Migration and Community Formation in Mexico and Winston-Salem, NC" (2011). *History Honors Papers*. 11.

<http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/histhp/11>

This Honors Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the History Department at Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. It has been accepted for inclusion in History Honors Papers by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. For more information, please contact bpancier@conncoll.edu.

The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

**“Somos Costeños:”
Afro-Mexican Transnational Migration and Community Formation in Mexico and
Winston-Salem, NC**

An Honors Thesis
Presented By
Elizabeth R. Barnett

To
The Department of History
In partial fulfillment of the requirement for
Honors in the Major Field

Connecticut College
New London, Connecticut
May 5, 2011

Table of Contents

<u>Acknowledgements</u>	2
<u>Preface</u>	4
<u>Introduction</u>	8
<u>Chapter 1</u> Mexican Blackness and Perceptions in Historical Perspective	19
<u>Chapter 2</u> Afro-Mexican National Migration	41
<u>Chapter 3</u> Afro-Mexican Migration and Community Formation in Winston-Salem, NC.....	61
<u>Chapter 4</u> “Are they with us or against us?”-Afro-Mexicans and African American-Latino Relations	88
<u>Conclusion</u> Looking Towards the Future.....	110
<u>Works Cited</u>	116

Acknowledgements

It is without question that this thesis would not have been possible if not for the commitment and unwavering support of numerous individuals whom I would like to thank.

I owe many thanks to Dr. Stefano Varese from the University of California - Davis, Dr. Kuhl and Dr. Vargas from Winston-Salem State University, and Dr. Hernández Cuevas from North Carolina Central University, who were incredibly supportive and enthusiastic about my research and donated their time to meet with me to discuss and share their own research on Afro-Mexicans. I am also grateful to everyone who works in the North Carolina Room at the Forsyth County Public Library whom, without their extreme patience and assistance, I would have not found many of the crucial documents and articles used throughout this thesis. This thesis also relies heavily on personal interviews and surveys and, as such, I am forever thankful to every person on Long Island, in Winston-Salem, and throughout southern Mexico, that I met along the journey who were generous enough to give me their time and tell me their stories. Without their voices and opinions this process would not have been possible.

I am also indebted to the unwavering support, encouragement and advice I received from many of the faculty and professors at Connecticut College. I especially owe my gratitude to my thesis readers, Dr. James Downs and Dr. Ronald Flores. They both went above and beyond to read and comment on my thesis throughout the writing process. Without their advice and direction this thesis would not have been such a success. I am especially grateful to the help given to me by Professor Flores, who aided me in analyzing and incorporating important sociological theories and data surrounding race and migration into my thesis.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Dr. Leo Garofalo. I was lucky enough to be placed in Professor Garofalo's course "Rebellion and Revolution In Latin America" when I first transferred to Connecticut College. It was this course, which ignited my interest in Latin America and encouraged me to first study abroad that summer in Oaxaca Mexico. Over the course of my two and a half years at Connecticut College, Professor Garofalo has been a driving force in my academic growth. His advising was crucial in challenging me to realize my own potential, in the classroom as well as outside the classroom as a leader. When I had doubts and frustrations about this project, he was always there to encourage me onwards.

Finally, none of this would have been possible if not for my parents. Their unconditional love, support, and encouragement have always been the backbone to all my achievements. In addition to their economic support, which made many of my research trips possible, their pride in my accomplishments and research made this project even more rewarding.

Thank you.

Preface

Dr. Stefano Varese first introduced the presence of Afro-Mexicans to me while studying abroad in Oaxaca, Mexico during the summer of 2009. Immediately, the subject intrigued me. I was familiar with, and well informed about the presence and struggles of Afro-descendants in countries like Cuba, Brazil, and Peru, but I had never seen Afro-Mexicans mentioned in the history books I read, nor had I seen any black Mexicans in Oaxaca City. When I asked residents of Oaxaca about African descendants, I received the same answer over and over again, “No, there are no Afro-Mexicans here”.¹ I was then often lectured about the *mestizaje*, or racial mixture of Mexicans, and told how every Mexican is included in this as all races had, over the centuries, blended into one superior “cosmic race”.²

Hearing Mexicans so adamant that blacks in Mexico are either foreigners from the Caribbean or their descendants, made me even more curious about the presence of African descendent populations in Mexico. Where do they exist, and why does no one know about them? After an eight-hour bus ride through some of the worst mountain terrain and roads I had ever seen, I arrived at the rural *Costa Chica* town of Puerto Escondido on the Pacific coast. Although the majority of discussions surrounding blackness in Mexico are oriented towards the Atlantic coast state of Veracruz, where a significant number of blacks from the Caribbean arrived in

¹ A large majority of the people I interviewed were also unaware of the history and presence of slavery in Mexico. Personal Interview, Oaxaca, Mexico (January 2010).

² José Vasconcelos coined the term “the cosmic race” to describe the outcome of the *mestizaje* in Mexico. José Vasconcelos and Jaen Didier Tisdell, *The Cosmic Race: a bilingual Edition* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

Mexico with a strong sense of black identity and African tradition, the *Costa Chica* region is located in the Pacific coast states of Guerrero and Oaxaca, and is where most blacks in Mexico live. The *Costa Chica* coastal region begins just southeast of Acapulco and extends eastward into the state of Oaxaca down to Puerto Escondido. The *Costa Chica* region, however, is not associated with blacks in the minds of most Mexicans, a truth that further underscores the relative cultural invisibility and marginal status of Afro-Mexicans today.



Illustration 1: Map of the *Costa Chica* of Guerrero and Oaxaca.³

³ Bobby Vaughn, "The Costa Chica Region," *Black Mexico Homepage* (Web. 26 Jan. 2011) <<http://www.afromexico.com/costa.htm>>.

Immediately after getting off the bus, I was surprised to see the large populations of Afro-Mexicans that the majority of Mexicans believe do not exist. Here, isolated in these rural towns along the Pacific coast are the African descendent populations that many Mexicans know little about. I was shocked by the extent of the marginalization, isolation, exclusion, poverty, and neglect that Afro-Mexicans faced. Having discovered for myself that there were considerable communities of black Mexicans, I wondered why their experiences and history were so little known.

Incorporated into this thesis are many of my results and findings from two earlier research projects. After my trip to Mexico in the summer of 2009, I was impelled to study the relationships between African Americans and Latinos in my home community of Suffolk County, Long Island, NY. After following the highly publicized violence and xenophobia present in Suffolk County and experiencing, firsthand, the tension and oftentimes tumultuous relationships in my high school, I was intent on understanding the historical roots of these problems. For my report, "To the Victor Goes the Scraps: Race, Power, Politics, Possession and Conflict in Latino-African American Relations," I carried out research and dozens of interviews regarding race relations between African Americans and Mexican migrants on Long Island. A striking number of my interviews with African Americans on Long Island suggested that some Mexicans arrived in the United States with preconceived stereotypes and racism towards African Americans. It was during this research that I learned how racial discourse and conditions in the United States combined with distinct Mexican and regional racial discourses, shaped race relations for Mexican immigrants.

Inspired by the questions left unanswered during my interviews in Long Island, I returned to southern Mexico in order to examine the history of Mexican racial discourse and racism. In my report, “Tracing *Mestizaje*: Race, Nation, and Blackness in Mexico,” I focused on how Mexico’s nationalist discourse and ideology influences race relations, identity, and popular perceptions. While in Oaxaca, I conducted numerous interviews and surveys and collected archival materials that highlighted the negative effects of Mexican racial discourse on Afro-Mexicans. Through this research I learned how Mexican racial discourse creates unique circumstances and relationships for Afro-Mexican migrants.

Intrigued by the topic of Afro-Mexican transnational migration, thanks to a generous grant from Connecticut College, I traveled to the large Afro-Mexican transnational community residing in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The findings from this trip make up the backbone of the second half of this work. This thesis is, in effect, a culmination of over two and a half years of my research inspired by numerous trips to Mexico and the social problems and debates surrounding immigration and minority relations in Mexican and the United States.

Introduction

Mexican national discourse greatly impacts the perception of blackness. This discourse on race relegated blackness to a status of foreign and separate from what it means to be Mexican. The large black population that once resided in Mexico was lost and forgotten as a result of post-independence (1810-1821) and post-revolutionary (1910-1920) racial ideologies scripted in accordance with the colonial principle of white superiority and black inferiority. In the attempt to forge a common national identity in the aftermath of Spanish colonialism, Mexican intellectuals and national leaders encouraged the acceptance of their conceptualization of the mixed-race *mestizo* identity. Due to the stigma of slavery and the belief in the inferiority of African slaves, the African presence and its contributions to Mexican national identity were left out of the national *mestizo* identity and discourse. The idea that blackness is foreign to Mexico, and the belief that there are no blacks in Mexico, allows for obvious anti-black racism to persist unquestioned.

Regardless of racial categorization, Mexicans remain unaware of the history and presence of African descendants in Mexico as a result of such discourse. Afro-Mexicans also are reluctant to acknowledge and identify with their African roots.⁴ Afro-Mexicans choose to define themselves as *morenos* instead of identifying as Afro-Mexicans or Afro-descendants. Mexicans reserve the terms *Negro* and Afro-descendent in Mexico for non-Mexican foreigners, as the

⁴ Bobby Vaughn, "Afro-Mexico: Blacks, Indigenas, Politics, and the Greater Diaspora," *Neither Enemies or Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos*, eds. Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

terms conjure up negative stereotypes and negative connotations that are connected to blackness.⁵

In the last 20 years, as the number of Mexican-born persons residing in the United States continues to rise, such overt displays of racism disseminating from Mexico have sparked cross-border conflict between Mexican politicians on one side and U.S. Politicians and African American leaders on the other.⁶ The recent attention in the media to the sometimes turbulent and violent relationships between African Americans and Mexican immigrants, and the claims that many Mexicans migrants arrive in the U.S. with negative stereotypes and perceptions of African Americans, provoked a Mexican reevaluation of the prevalence and acceptance of racism in Mexico, as well as the situation of neglect and exclusion facing Mexico's own African descendent population.⁷

Mexican-born persons who emigrate to the United States represent one of the largest flows of international migration.⁸

Country of Birth of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population: January 2009 and 2000

Country of birth	Estimated population in January		Percent of total		Percent change	
	2009	2000	2009	2000	2000 to 2009	Average annual change 2000 to 2009
All countries .	10,750,000	8,460,000	100	100	27	250,000
.....						
Mexico	6,650,000	4,680,000	62	55	42	220,000
.....						
El Salvador . .	530,000	430,000	5	5	25	10,000
.....						
Guatemala . . .	480,000	290,000	4	3	65	20,000
.....						

⁵ Vaughn 2005 122.

⁶ Darryl Fears, "Mexican Stamps Racist, Civil Rights Leaders Say," *Washington Post* 30 June 2005, A01.

⁷ José Antonio Aguilar Rivera, "Memin Penguin," *El Univesal* 2 June 2005.

⁸ George J Borjas, *Mexican Immigration to the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007).

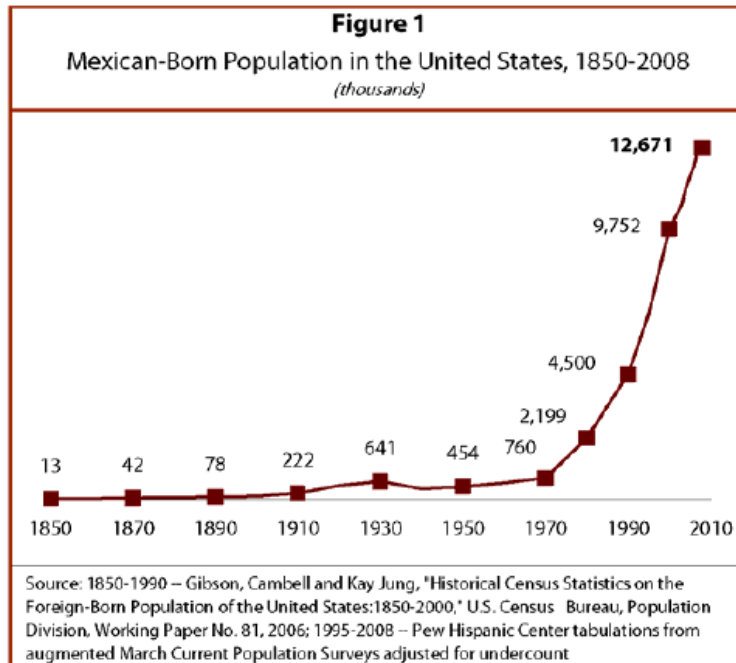
Honduras . . .	320,000	160,000	3	2	95	20,000
Philippines . .	270,000	200,000	2	2	33	10,000
India	200,000	120,000	2	1	64	10,000
Korea	200,000	180,000	2	2	14	—
Ecuador	170,000	110,000	2	1	55	10,000
Brazil	150,000	100,000	1	1	49	10,000
China	120,000	190,000	1	2	-37	(10,000)
Other countries	1,650,000	2,000,000	15	24	-17	(40,000)

— Represents less than 5,000. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.
Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The population of Mexican-born persons residing in the United States has increased at unprecedented rates in the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st century. During the 1950's, the approximately 300,000 legal Mexican immigrants who entered the United States made up 12 percent of the immigrant flow. By the 1990's, over 2.2 million Mexicans entered the United States legally, constituting almost 25 percent of the legal flow.⁹ Not included in these numbers are the estimated millions more of undocumented Mexicans residing in the U.S.¹⁰ Together, these two groups of legal and out-of-status Mexican residents reached 12.671 million in 2010.

⁹ U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services 2002.

¹⁰ In 2004 there was an estimated 4.8 million Mexican illegal residents in the United States. U.S. Department of Commerce 2004.



There is an increasing magnitude of Mexicans joining this migratory flow every year, including migrants from previously isolated regions of Mexico such as the *Costa Chica* of Oaxaca and Guerrero; the majority of which started migrating to areas of California and North Carolina in the mid 1990's.¹¹

Studies on the trends of international transnational migration show that the first migrants from a community experience migration as a very costly and risky enterprise both physiologically and monetarily.¹² Immigrants typically possessed little or no knowledge of conditions in the host country. Their lack of familiarity with the language, culture, and ways of life in their new home pushed them to maintain strong ties with their home community. From the

¹¹ Johnson and Kasarda 70.

¹² Douglas S. Massey, Luin Goldring, and Jorge Durand, "Continuities in Transnational Migration: An Analysis of Nineteen Mexican Communities," *The American Journal of Sociology* 99 (1994).

1920's through the 1970's, scholars focused on the tendency of immigrants to make a "clean break" with their old country.¹³ However, in the 1980's, a transnational perspective¹⁴ emerged to explain the newest tendency of migrants who do not strive to simply assimilate into U.S. society. Instead, they attempt to retain close ties with their home countries while selectively adopting elements from the new homeland.¹⁵ Nina Glick-Schiller proposes a transnational theory that disputes the previously thought inevitability of severing ties with the old country.¹⁶ Instead of the past belief that the transition from "immigrant" to "ethnic" to "native" will inevitably occur within two to three generations, Glick-Schiller argues that new migrants and their children, especially those from Latin America, may remain linked to their home countries for long periods.¹⁷ Robert Courtney Smith uses the term "transnational life" when discussing the practices and relationships linking migrants and their children to their home country and rooting them in the U.S.¹⁸ Transnationalism refers to a "process through which migrants cross national boundaries and synthesize two societies in a single social field, linking their country of origin

¹³ Robert Courtney Smith, *Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants* (Berkeley: University of California, 2006) 5; Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973).

¹⁴ It is important to note that counter arguments to the theory of transnationalism argue that its effects are overrated and will fade out as migrants move from the first generation to the third generation. See Richard D Alba and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2005).

¹⁵ Laura Velasco Ortiz, *Mixtec Transnational Identity* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 2005) 12.

¹⁶ Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* (645 1992).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ According to Smith, transnational life is also embodied in identities and social structures that help form the life world of immigrants and their children and is constructed in relations among people, institutions, and places. Transnational life usually involves travel between the home and host destination, but it can also include the experience of stay-at-home in close relationships with travelers. Smith 6-7.

with their country of immigration.”¹⁹ The Afro-Mexican community in Winston-Salem, NC that will be discussed in this thesis is a thriving example of a transnational community that exhibits many of these characteristics including cultural, religious, and political markers.

Until recently, an examination of Afro-Mexican migration within Mexico, as well as transnational Afro-Mexican emigration to the United States, remained absent from the immense historiography on *mestizo* and indigenous Mexican migration and emigration. This thesis will examine the history of Afro-Mexican migration from the *Costa Chica* region to points throughout Mexico, as well as abroad to the U.S. South. Limited scholarly work addresses the Afro-Mexican migratory experience in the transnational arena. Consequently, a large proportion of my research is derived from interviews, surveys and archival research I conducted between 2009 and 2011 in both the United States and in Mexico. I rely heavily upon interviews, surveys, and archival research in United States and Mexican libraries, museums, universities, and newspapers. The project reconstructs the history of Afro-Mexican migration from Mexico through the interweaving of interviews and archival documents. By using original oral histories and new archival documents, I can examine the histories of Afro-Mexican families living in the *Costa Chica* and better understand the reasons for migrating and their migrant experience while in the United States, especially how these are connected to state policies in both Mexico and the United States.

¹⁹ Velasco Ortiz 13.

This thesis is meant to be a contribution to understanding the complexities of race and racial ideologies in international migration. By examining the historical roots of racial discourse and racism in Mexico, one can better understand how they continue to influence the present. The history of Afro-Mexicans and their experiences during migration underscore the broader, transnational implications of Mexican racial discourse. The Afro-Mexican case study is unique from other Mexican migrants, as well as other Afro-Latino migrants, in that the majority of Afro-Mexicans demonstrate little connection or consciousness of their African ancestry; a direct result of Mexico's national discourse on racial identity. Through the Afro-Mexican experience, this study offers an important analysis of the racial forces dividing African Americans and Mexicans in the United States.

Upon arrival into the United States, Afro-Mexicans' racial denial comes into direct conflict with the black-white binary found in the United States, where Afro-Mexicans are automatically categorized as black. The Afro-Mexican case gives important insight into how race and racial ideologies influence migratory experiences and relationships. Afro-Mexicans' interactions with their African American, Mexican, and white neighbors are influenced and shaped by these two conflicting discourses. As Afro-Mexicans and their children struggle to carve out their space in United States society, the assimilation process of second and third generation Afro-Mexicans will offer important insight into questions of immigrant incorporation and racial hierarchies in the United States.

The first chapter examines the historical background of blackness in the *Costa Chica* region of Mexico. Starting with the arrival of slaves from Africa, this chapter traces the development of Afro-Mexican communities in the region explaining the processes and political, economic and social discrimination and circumstances that isolated Afro-Mexican communities from the rest of Mexican society. Over time, the national discourse of race in Mexico turned blackness into something foreign to Mexico, as well as an identity considered as inferior and relevant only to an earlier era of colonialism. The history of racial discourse and racism in Mexico helps to better understand how and why Afro-Mexicans, as well as other Mexicans, have no consciousness of an African identity and why they do not want to associate with any African roots or origins. This background in Mexican racial discourse proves critical in later discussions of why Afro-Mexicans migrate, as well as their perceptions, experiences, and relationships with other Mexicans, Hispanics, and African Americans outside of their home communities in the *Costa Chica*. Mexico's racial discourse that removes blackness from Mexico's self-conscious, allows for the neglect and marginalization of Afro-Mexicans and overt anti-black racism to persist unquestioned by the majority of Mexicans, leading to the high levels of poverty, lack of educational opportunities and health care in the Afro-Mexican *Costa Chica* towns. Not only does this discourse influence many of the key factors for Afro-Mexicans migration, but it also impacts the relationships that Afro-Mexicans forge with African-Americans in the United States by removing Afro-Mexicans' connection and association with their African ancestry.

The second chapter explores the historical factors that encouraged Afro-Mexican migration throughout Mexico by documenting how the historic exclusion and marginalization of

Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica* created economic, political, social, and cultural factors and experiences encouraging Afro-Mexican out-migration. This chapter highlights how Afro-Mexicans' experiences are related to their blackness; thus, they are *distinctive* from those of indigenous and *Mestizo*-Mexican migrants. This distinction proves that Afro-Mexican transnational migration deserves its own scholarly attention separate from other groups in Mexico. Conditions in *Costa Chica* towns acted as incentives for Afro-Mexican out-migration and resulted from the neglect and marginalization of these communities. By examining these factors, one can understand how Mexican racial discourse directly impacts Afro-Mexican migration.

Afro-Mexicans began migrating from their communities in the *Costa Chica* region starting in the late 1960's into the 1970's. The construction of the 1966 Pacific Coast Highway connected the small towns of the *Costa Chica* with the development of the tourism industry in Acapulco and allowed for domestic and international migration from *Costa Chica* towns. For the first time, Afro-Mexicans were connected to major cities and urban areas such as Acapulco and Mexico City where they could find urban jobs. The last part of this chapter describes the experiences of Afro-Mexicans outside of their hometowns. Due to their phenotypical appearances, upon leaving the *Costa Chica* for the first time, many Afro-Mexican migrants are exposed to other Mexicans' reactions to what they perceive as their "misplaced" and out-of-the-ordinary appearance.

The third chapter covers the history of Afro-Mexican emigration to the United States, especially to North Carolina. In the past 15 years, Afro-Mexican's migration to areas like Winston-Salem created a thriving transnational community in which migrants are proud of their *costeño* (from the *Costa Chica*) origins. The unionization of American tobacco workers in the region during the 1970's led tobacco giant R. J. Reynolds to recruit foreign workers in Mexico. Included among these workers were Afro-Mexicans such as Biterbo Calleja-García, whom many point to as the first Afro-Mexican to arrive to the Winston-Salem area in 1979. Next, I focus on the growth of the Hispanic community in Winston-Salem, tracing the emergence of Hispanic-oriented commerce, media communications, and communities. This part of the chapter highlights how Mexican and specifically Afro-Mexican migration has reshaped the community.

The last chapter addresses how Mexican national discourse on race plays out transnationally in the perceptions and behavior Afro-Mexican migrants exhibit towards their African American neighbors and co-workers. The neglect and avoidance in Mexico of the history of slavery and the immense contributions made by African slaves and their descendents eliminates any sense of shared experiences between African Americans and Afro-Mexicans. Despite their strikingly similar appearance, the majority of Afro-Mexicans living in Winston-Salem possess little connection to the larger African diaspora. Afro-Mexican perceptions and relations towards African Americans expose how the discourse of *mestizaje* in Mexico forges a barrier between Mexicaness and blackness.

Finally, the thesis concludes with a brief discussion of how Afro-Mexican migration has influenced new efforts and strategies to bridge the divides between Latinos and African Americans in North Carolina. The focus on education is viewed by many as the missing link in bridging relationships between the two communities. It is believed that by educating both Afro-Mexicans and African Americans about their common identity, a new consciousness will develop between the two minority groups that unite them. These education initiatives directly challenge the *mestizo* discourse on race that first generation Afro-Mexicans migrants subscribe to. In U.S. society where race is framed in terms of black and white, important questions are raised regarding how Afro-Mexicans' racial identity will shape the future generations' assimilation process into Winston-Salem society.

Afro-Mexican migration, both in Mexico and the United States, is an important topic that deserves more scholarly attention. This study aims to reveal the many ways in which Afro-Mexicans' blackness influences and shapes their migratory experience proving that African descendents from Mexico deserve their own scholarly attention separate from other groups in Mexico and in the Mexican diaspora. The historic marginalization of Afro-Mexicans and official Mexican racial discourse that transformed a black identity into something foreign creates an environment that profoundly shapes the Afro-Mexican migratory process as well as complicates the relationships Afro-Mexicans forge in their new communities.

Chapter 1

Mexican Blackness and Perceptions in Historical Perspective

Although most Mexicans, as well as Afro-Mexicans, remain unaware of the past history of African slavery in Mexico, scholars agree that the African Diaspora in Mexico since the arrival of the conquistadors in 1519, was an absolute reality and had a significant effect on the development and history of the Mexican nation. The first African to arrive in Mexico is believed to be Afro-Iberian, Juan Cortez. Cortez arrived in Mexico in 1519 with Hernán Cortés as his slave and companion during the Conquest of Tenochtitlán. After the conquest, many of the slaves accompanying the Spanish invaders successfully petitioned for their freedom and lived as members of the conquering colonies. Anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, the first Mexican scholar to study this black population, systematically argues that six blacks participated in the military conquests of Tenochtitlán and that they also took part in the conquests of the Yucatan, Michoacan, Zacatula, and Baja California.²⁰ These slaves most likely came from Seville, were Christian, and spoke Spanish at the time they arrived in Mexico. These “black conquistadores” stand in striking contrast to the later groups of African slaves brought directly to Mexico from Africa during the peak of the slave trade that followed only a few decades later.²¹

²⁰ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, "The Slave Trade in Mexico," *Hispanic American Historical Review* XXIV (1944): 412.

²¹ Colin A Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976) 10.

Arrival of Africans to Mexico:

Less than fifty years after the conquest, the number of slaves rose significantly and became a topic of official discussion. In 1553, Viceroy Luis de Velasco urged the King to “command that so many licenses to import slaves not be granted, because in New Spain there are more than 20,000, a number still increasing, and they could become so numerous as to plunge the land into confusion.”²² Despite these fears, slaves continued to be systematically imported into Mexico in accordance with monopoly agreements, known as *asientos*, made between the Spanish crown and a company or individual responsible for transporting set numbers of slaves into the New World.²³ Powerful social and economic forces outweighed the colonial government’s fear of instability.

The rise of a large-scale slave trade in Mexico directly correlated to the decimation of the indigenous population, need for labor in domestic work and in the new industries including mining and cattle ranching, and emergence of wealthy government, ecclesiastic, and colonizer classes that valued slaves and the status conferred by black servants. The increasing demand for the importation of labor at the end of the 16th century resulted from the decline in the indigenous labor available due to severe epidemics and plight. It is estimated that before the arrival of the Spanish in 1519, the indigenous population numbered around 25 million people. Within 100 years, the population dropped 25 -90 percent as a result of harsh working conditions, and a series of epidemics including smallpox, measles, and what is now thought to have been typhus or

²² Archivo General de la Nacion, Mexico City, Ramo de Civil, tomo 705, fol. 709.

²³ Oriol Pi-Sunyer, “Historical Background to the Negro in Mexico,” *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 42 (October 1957) 237.

hemorrhagic fever.²⁴ The colonial project relied upon the Indian labor force. Fearful that the total destruction of the indigenous populations that occurred in the Spanish Caribbean would repeat itself in Mexico, Indian paternalism developed. To replace or supplement the Indian labor force working in the cities in domestic jobs as well as in mines, plantations, and cattle ranches, the Spanish acquired more slave laborers from Africa.²⁵

According to early census data from 1500-1700, nearly 200,000 slaves reached Mexican shores.²⁶ The emerging mining industry that was dependent on a cheap and secure source of labor represented another major influence in the emergence of the large-scale importation of slaves into colonial Mexico.²⁷ The peak of the importation of slaves to Mexico in 1592 corresponded with growing activity in the mines.²⁸ The importance of African slaves to the economic stability of Mexico during a period of declining indigenous populations is highlighted by the Viceroy's constant appeals for more slaves to avert a labor crisis.²⁹ Although mining was a driving force for the importation of slaves into the New World, it is important to note, however, that African slave labor was not reserved exclusively for the mine regions.

²⁴ Agustín Cué Cánovas, *Historia social y económica de México, 1521-1810* (México: UNAM, 1946) 120.

²⁵ Pi-Sunyer 239.

²⁶ In the 16th century an estimated 60,000 slaves were brought to Mexico, in the 17th century, this number doubled to about 120,000, and, in the 18th century, a sharp decrease to 20,000 as the profitability of new world slavery declined in Mexico as a large free black population emerged. Dennis N. Valdes, "The Decline of Slavery in Mexico," *The Americas* 44 (October 1987): 171.

²⁷ Nicolas Ngou-Mve, *El Africa Bantu en la Colonización De Mexico (1595-1640)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Científicas, 1994).

²⁸ Statistics demonstrate that as early as 1570, 35% of miners in the largest Mexican mines were African. Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1976) 76.

²⁹ Palmer 78.

In the 16th century, the majority of the black population could be found in New Spain's urban domestic settings, where they worked as servants attending the needs of the Spanish.³⁰ Due to the growth of free wage labor, it is believed that the slave population became increasingly urban and economically far less important.³¹ R. Douglas Cope writes that in New Spain, "the typical Mexico City slave was a maid, a coachman, a personal servant . . . slaves were status symbols rather than an economic necessity. Mexico City elites liked to advertise their social standing by, for example, parading around town with a retinue of armed mulattos."³² Slavery in New Spain after 1640 is defined in terms of both a small, skilled rural population and a larger urban population, both of which underwent a slow demographic decline as they slipped into economic unimportance.³³

The significance of the slave trade in Mexico is often overlooked in today's diasporic discourse. However, during the first half of the colonial project prior to the decline in the profitability of slavery in New Spain and the emergence of wide-scale, profitable, slave economies in the Caribbean and other areas throughout Latin American, Mexico received almost one out of every two slaves destined for the New World; even outnumbering Brazil for this period.³⁴ Population statistics show that the black population was significantly larger than that of

³⁰ 57% of the black population in 1570 and 55% in 1646 were found in Mexico City. Herman L. Bennett, *Colonial Blackness: a History of Afro-Mexico* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2009) 4; Valdes 170.

³¹ Frank T. Proctor III, "Afro-Mexican Slave Labor in the Obrajes de Paños of New Spain, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *The Americas* 60.1 (2003): 35.

³² R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994) 95-6.

³³ Proctor III 35.

³⁴ Palmer 1976.

the Spanish population (born in Europe and the Americas).³⁵ Despite the decline of slavery, the population of Afro-Mexicans continued to grow through the miscegenation of existing slaves and free blacks with *mestizos*, whites, and indigenous people.³⁶ It is suggested that the Afro-Mexican population grew from nearly 116,000 in the 1640's to almost 370,000 by the 1790's.³⁷ These statistics highlight the remarkable presence of blacks in colonial Mexico and prove that blacks were a significant, and active urban demographic that was interacting and mixing with other groups in New Spain.

History of Afro-Mexicans in the Costa Chica:

In the *Costa Chica* region of Mexico, the focus of this study, the black population is believed to be descended both from slaves brought to the region in the 17th century to work on the vast cattle ranches in the area, and from runaway slaves (*cimmarones*) who sought refuge in the area and formed small maroon communities. Santo Domingo Armenta and Cuajinicuilapa became the largest maroon communities.³⁸ The region offered optimal protection to these groups of slaves because of its inaccessibility and hot and dense tropical forests.³⁹ Some historians

³⁵ In 1570, the estimated black population was approximately three times greater than that of the Spanish; in 1646, it remained more than twice as large. Blacks continued to outnumber that Spanish in 1742. It was not until 1810 that the Spanish finally began to significantly outnumber blacks. Bobby Vaughn, *Race and Nation: A Study of Blackness in Mexico*, doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 2001, 20.

³⁶ Ben Vinson III, "From Dawn 'til Dusk: Black Labor in Late Colonial Mexico," *Black Mexico*, ed. Ben III. Vinson and Matthew Restall (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009) 99.

³⁷ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La Población negra de Mexico: Estudio Etnohistorico* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1989) 230.

³⁸ Laurentino Luna, "La Reforma Agraria en Cuajinicuilapa Guerrero: Micro-Historia de una Población Guerrerense," Diss., UNAM, 1975.

³⁹ Vaughn 49.

believe that blacks first arrived to the *Costa Chica* in the second half of the 16th century as slaves of el Mariscal de Castilla.⁴⁰ Tibon writes that:

This slaver arrived on the coast with 200 slave men and women, along with several heads of livestock. Mariscal wanted to establish a cattle hacienda in Ayutla. Ayutla was at the time a populous Tlapaneco community. In order to force the Tlapanecos off their land, he launched an attack of his armed slaves, as well as dogs, with orders to kill all. The few Tlapanecos who survived fled to other pueblos. For having pacified the region, the viceroy gave him the land, which Mariscal would call Los Cortijos. Those 200 black slaves at Los Cortijos multiplied and the rest of the blacks in the *Costa Chica* are descended from them.⁴¹

Tibon's account stresses the belief that the majority of blacks arrived in the region as a result of chattel slavery to look after a colonizer's livestock. It is also believed that many of today's black towns in the *Costa Chica* began with the maroon communities that formed in the area. In his study of the community of Cuajinicuillapa in the *Costa Chica*, Aguirre Beltrán emphasizes the maroon ancestry of the blacks in this area. According to this version, the blacks arrived in this area as fugitives from the Pacific port of Huatulco to the south and the sugar mills of Atlixco. These *cimarrones* settled in the area because the Spanish viewed the climate as inhospitable and unhealthy.⁴² It is important to note that there is minimal archival data available on blacks in the *Costa Chica* making it difficult to know the full extent that *cimarronaje* existed in the region. Tracing the history and the slave legacy of this region proves difficult and scholars have yet to define the circumstances and details surrounding the founding of these communities. In contrast to the Veracruz coast, the *Costa Chica* never became as an important sugarcane-producing

⁴⁰ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, "Cuijla, Esbozo Etnografico de un Pueblo Negro," (Veracruz, Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana, 1989).

⁴¹ Gutierre Tibón, *Pinotepe Nacional: Mixtecos, Negros, y Triques*, (Mexico City: Editorial Posada, 1981) 26-49.

⁴² Vaughn 2001 50.

region; thus, it is believed that slave experience in the *Costa Chica* may have been quite different from the slave experience in urban contexts and from the restrictive and harsh slave life in plantation settings.⁴³

Racial Discourse in Colonial Mexico:

The colonial obsession with the classification of colors continues to influence the policies of contemporary Latin American countries including Mexico. The Spanish Crown brought to the Americas a transplanted, neo-feudalism social system with the goal of maintaining the *status quo* of a hierarchical society-favoring male, Christian, Iberians and their descendants.⁴⁴ Due to the scarcity of European women, colonial intermarriage or sexual relations between Spanish, Indian, and black was commonplace. As a result, many Spanish offspring lost European and Christian status. Soon after slaves were introduced into New Spain society, racial mixing began to occur among blacks, Spaniards and indigenous peoples. During the early colonial period, the mixture between Spaniards and Indians was defined as *mestizo*, whereas the mixture between Africans and Spaniards was defined as *mulato*. As a result of racial mixing among Spanish, indigenous, and black populations a caste system appeared to categorize the offspring of these unions.⁴⁵

Widespread miscegenation “led those at the top of society...to cling to the concept of racial

⁴³ Ibid 52.

⁴⁴ This system was based on the medieval belief in the concept of life in which God, the Pope, and the Kings with their nobility represented the higher levels and, conversely, the left over masses of non-Spanish “serfs” made up the lower social classes. Arnoldo C Vento, *Mestizo: The History, Culture, and Politics of the Mexican and the Chicano: The Emerging Mestizo-American* (Lanham, Md.: University of America, 1998) 51.

⁴⁵ S Cruz-Carretero, “The African Presence in Mexico,”(Unpublished Manuscript 2009).

purity in order to maintain their...position of power and authority in society.”⁴⁶ In order to accomplish this, in the 17th century, the Spanish and *criollo* (Spanish born in the colonies) colonial elites developed the *sistema de casta*; a system that encouraged the implantation of prejudice based on race and color.⁴⁷ Due to the inherited prejudices and ignorance of the Spanish, the native and then African populations in the New World were regarded as inferior and, as such, mandated to the lowest stratum of society.

La Sistema de Castas (1500s-ca. 1829): Systematic Color and Racial Prejudices in Colonial Mexico:

The Spanish created this socio-racial system of categorization to segregate the mixtures between blacks and indigenous people. In doing so, the system sought to favor the hegemonic group of Spaniards and their descendants. Thus, the implementation of a *casta* system in New Spain systematically created a racial hierarchy in which white status was ideal.⁴⁸ Spaniards (from Spain) controlled the system and were then succeeded by creoles (Mexican-born Spaniards). Beneath them were mixed-race *mestizos* and *mulattos*, *Indios*, and finally *Africanos*, who outnumbered Spaniards at that time three to one.⁴⁹ Blacks and mulattos at the bottom of the hierarchy suffered the most restrictions and disabilities because they represented the greatest

⁴⁶ Gregory Rodriguez, *Mongrels, Bastards, Orphans, and Vagabonds: Mexican Immigration and the Future of Race in America* (New York: Vintage, 2008) 47.

⁴⁷ Vento 51.

⁴⁸ George Reid Andrews, *Afro-Latin America, 1880-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 44.

⁴⁹ Magnus Morner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967).

threat to the social order in New Spain.⁵⁰ Katzew states how “the threat to the white Spanish imperial body politic embodied by the emergence of the *castas* accounted for the ideological need to systematize society; this in turn brought about the purveyance of racial stereotypes.”⁵¹ In Mexico, as throughout most of Latin America, colonial power rested with the Spaniards who constructed their racist white, male-dominant, hierarchical caste system to maintain Spanish hegemony.⁵²



Illustration 2: Casta painting depicting the outcome of the 16 different categories of racial difference. Unknown Artist, Casta Painting, ca. 1725, oil on canvas, 175 x 115 cm. Private collection.⁵³

⁵⁰ Blacks were forbidden to wear expensive jewelry and clothing, to enter non-manual professions (i.e. The church, law, universities), were forbidden to carry guns or swords, and were required to have white patrons who would vouch for their whereabouts and good behavior. As a sign of their racial and legal inferiority, blacks, like their Indian counterparts, were subject to a racially defined dead tax and tribute. Andrews 44.

⁵¹ I Katzew, “Casta Painting, Identity, and Social Stratification in Colonial Mexico,” *New World Order: Casta Painting and Colonial Latin America*, ed. I. Katzew (New York: Americas Society, 2006) 22.

⁵² Frank F. Montalvo and G. Edward Codina, “Skin Color and Latinos in the United States,” *Ethnicities* 1 (2001): 4.

⁵³ Image taken from Ilona Katzew, *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-century Mexico* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2004) 6.

This caste system is clearly depicted in several series of colonial paintings (see Illustration 2) that portray this hierarchy of racial types in the cast system. These paintings represent artistic impressions of New Spain's unique mixed-race society and are among the first substantial models of racial profiling in the Americas.⁵⁴ The portraits depict the Spanish categories for the blended families of African and Indian ancestry in colonial society. They begin with *mestizo* and mulatto offspring followed by progressively mixed groups depicted by phenotype, dress, occupation and stereotypes.⁵⁵ The 16 different, ambiguous categorizations that occupy the spectrum between white and black in the paintings depict the systems uncertainty. A person's caste was determined by the person's social and economic status including language, family, marriage partners, occupation, residence, and clothing.⁵⁶ The *Casta* paintings were an easy way for the Spanish authorities to attempt to comprehend, classify, and control their delicate position as a ruling minority group.⁵⁷ These artistic representations of the Mexican caste system clearly depict the stratification of colonial society based on detailed categorizations of racial markers.⁵⁸

The *casta* paintings portray the caste's hierarchical system arranged according to the progeny of three major interracial relationships: Spanish-Indian, African-Spanish and African-

⁵⁴ The paintings always represent a man and a woman of different races with one or two of their children. A written caption naming the different races is included in order to clearly define the three distinct racial groups that the family members represent. Cesareo Moreno, "Una visión histórica: Representaciones afro-mexicanas e identidad en las artes visuales," *The African Presence in Mexico* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, 2009) 70

⁵⁵ M.C. García Saiz, *Las castas mexicanas: un género pictórico americano* (Milan: Olivetti, 1989) 14.

⁵⁶ Montalvo and Codina 5.

⁵⁷ Moreno 70.

⁵⁸ García Sáiz 17.

Indian. The arrangement reveals that the Spaniards controlled the definition of acceptable and unacceptable race mixtures; that Indian heritage played a recessive role in the unions with Spanish and black nomenclatures; that Indian blood was redeemable and “cleansed” after reproducing offspring with Spaniards; and finally that African unions had a poisonous influence by “spoiling” Indian and Spanish offspring’s *blanqueamiento*, or whitening process.⁵⁹ According to the *castas*, Spanish–Indian unions produced higher-caste white offspring in three generations; while unions of Africans with Spaniards resulted in lower-caste African children (*torna atrás*, or going backwards) after five generations; and unions between Indians and the African offspring produced the lower caste, black-skinned *cambujo* after six generations.⁶⁰

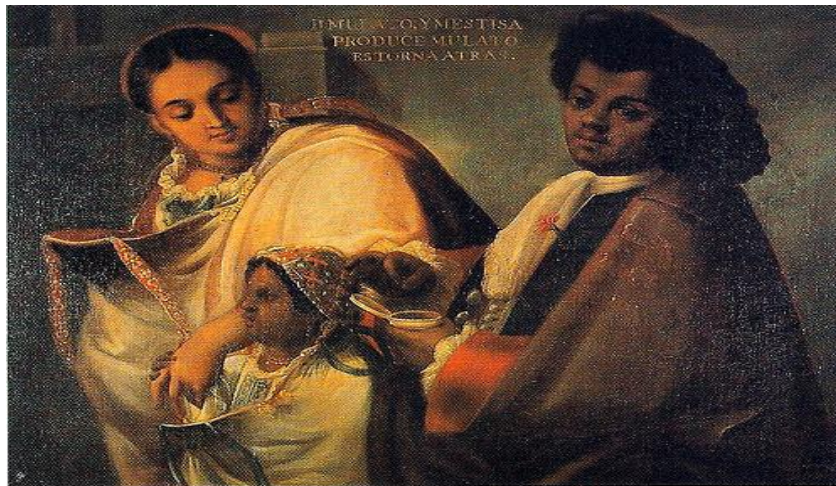


Ilustración 3: A graphic depiction of *torna atrás*. Painting attributed to Juan Rodríguez Juárez, “*De 29ulatto y de mestizo, produce 29ulatto es torna atrás*,” ca. 1715, oil on canvas, 80.7 x 105.4 cm. Breamore House, Hampshire England.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Montalvo and Codina 5.

⁶⁰ In one *castas* series, for example, one painting is inscribed, “In the Americas people of different colors, customs, temperaments, and languages are born: Born of the Spaniard and the Indian woman is a Mestizo, who is generally humble, tranquil and straightforward.” Another painting proclaims, “The pride and sharp wits of the Mulatto are instilled by his white father and black mother.” But in another family portrait, “the jibaro born of Indian mother and Calpamulato father is restless and almost always arrogant”; in yet another, “from Lobo and Indian woman, the Cambujo is usually slow, lazy, and cumbersome.” García Sáiz 103-11.

⁶¹ Photo taken from Katzew (2004) 14.

Las castas codified race mixing as a whitening process that improved and advanced the race by appearing more like a Spaniard. In doing so, the caste system forever tied phenotype to social status. Purity of blood was fundamental to those who aspired to participate as members of the judiciary, royal bureaucracy and those who aspired to ecclesiastical positions.⁶² “Marital alliances with the ‘impure castas offered [criollos] few advantages. Indeed, insofar as they lowered the family’s prestige, such marriages could be very damaging.”⁶³ Although this did not mean members of the elite stopped engaging in sexual relations with non-Spanish women, it did translate into a preference for light-skinned women as brides; a practice that continues past the colonial period.

In stark contrast to the ideologies and practices of the colonial elite, the plebeian class in colonial Mexico did not passively accept elite racial ideology and contested efforts to impose ethnic hierarchy through the creation of the *sistema de castas*.⁶⁴ The system, put into place by the Spanish elite, organized colonial subjects into groups and, taking advantage of the group ties, represented the best way to advance one’s personal goals in colonial society.⁶⁵ As a result of these groups, Afro-Mexicans took advantage of the colonial religious institutions and militias to access benefits in society. According to Herman Bennett, “writers rarely acknowledge the range

⁶² Rodríguez, *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: a Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California, 1980) 49.

⁶³ Cope 23.

⁶⁴ Cope instead argues that social control was maintained not by a system of racial control but instead by practices found within the urban labor market. Spanish social was structured upon a network of patron-client relationships that promoted competition and divisions among the poor plebeian class. The urban workplace gave the Spanish elite the ability to control their employees by validating a system of hierarchies that created divisions among the poor.

⁶⁵ Nicole Von Germeten. “Colonial Middle Men?: Mulatto Identity in New Spain’s Confraternities,” *Black Mexico* ed. Ben Vinson III and Ed. Matthew Restall (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009) 138.

of experiences that defined black life, a range that included an acknowledged legal status with the accompanying obligations and rights.”⁶⁶

The African and black populations throughout New Spain were not homogeneous: distinct hierarchies and racial and ethnic division existed within the Afro-Mexicans populations. Confraternities in New Spain were connected to social divisions and worked to form the racially divided society. “The fact the confraternities had labels such as *de los mulatos*, *morenos*, *pardos*, *mestizos*, or *negros* indicates that the institution contributed to racial divisions and to an idea of what each of these race labels meant.”⁶⁷ Similarly, Ben Vinson argues that militiamen did not inherently share a sense of community identity with others of their color. Instead, this unity was created in response to the concrete benefits to be gained from institutionally linked racial affiliations. Access to these corporate privileges gave Afro-Mexicans the foundation for building their racial consciousness.⁶⁸ Afro-Mexicans subscribed to racial labels only when they were likely to gain from these terms. In the confraternities and militias, Afro-Mexicans both fought over privilege based on fine racial distinctions or united, disregarding what they were labeled if they felt threatened from the outside; all depended on what was to be gained or lost.⁶⁹ Regardless of the system’s success controlling the hierarchy in colonial New Spain, the

⁶⁶ Bennett 212.

⁶⁷ Von Germeten 140.

⁶⁸ Ben Vinson III, “Bearing Arms for His Majesty: The Free-Colored Militia in Colonial Mexico,” diss., Columbia University, 1998, 419.

⁶⁹ For a longer discussion on the role of confraternities in black life in colonial Mexico see, Nicole Von Germeten, *Black Blood Brothers: Confraternities and Social Mobility for Afro-Mexicans* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 2006); Herman L Bennett, *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640*. (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2003).

ideologies and hierarchies encouraged in the *casta* system continued to influence Mexico's ideology on race even after independence.

Blackness in the Post-Independence Period:

Along with many of the other oppressive systems of control that the Spanish implemented in Mexico during the colonial period, *Las castas* categorization finally came to an end in 1821 as a result of the War of Independence led by Vicente Guerrero. Despite the rejection of racial classifications following independence in 1821, the dichotomy of black inferiority and white superiority and the negative stigmas associated with blackness continued to influence racial perceptions. The incentives for whitening were so powerful as many believed it to be one of the few ways of escaping the low-status of dark Mexicans and reducing marginality.⁷⁰ This, in turn, created an obsession with whiteness that continues to influence contemporary Mexican beliefs about racial color. Although the caste system was abolished with independence, the new system that replaced race with class still managed to preserve the idea that social privilege is based on phenotype.

Mexico's post-independence elite did not forget the stigma of blackness and its association with the inferior social status of slaves as they looked to define the new nation. Following the War of Independence (1810-1821), and the abolition of the *castas* system, Mexican leaders and intellectuals looked for alternative visions of a unified nation that would build Mexican nationalism. They struggled with how to construct a nationalistic racial identity

⁷⁰ Montalvo and Codina 6.

for Mexico along a European model, when Mexico had such a prominent indigenous and mixed-race population.⁷¹ During this time, Mexican intellectuals such as Manuel Gamio and José Vasconcelos embraced the concept of *indigenismo* and *mestizaje*, or the belief in the need to reconstitute the nation according to its Indian and Spanish heritage.⁷² For centuries the caste system classified indigenous peoples as one of the most inferior groups in colonial society and, as a result, Mexico's new elite needed to redefine indigenous civilization in a way that Mexicans would be proud to adopt it. They accomplished this through the systematic propaganda that celebrated Mexico's indigenous civilizations through representations of pre-Hispanic civilization's grandeur and the defense of indigenous religion and traditions.

In the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution of 1921, the concept of *mestizaje* and the *raza cosmica* (cosmic race) helped to solidify the view that Mexico's indigenous and Spanish mixed-race origins are a valuable and crucial asset to Mexico's advancement.⁷³ Through the two ideologies of *metizaje* and *indigenismo*, Mexico's indigenous roots became the touchstone for important aspects of Mexican national identity. This belief challenged contemporary European notions that held that mixed people were inferior to "pure" races by instead highlighting the *mestizo* as the "bridge to the future."⁷⁴ These ideologies made blackness invisible while emphasizing and making past Indian civilization and grandeur the forefront of Mexican pride. Thus, Indians were featured in nationalist ideologies and scholarly studies that glorified them,

⁷¹ Vaughn 2005 117.

⁷² Vaughn 2001.

⁷³ David Branding, *Los Origenes del Nacionalismo Mexicano* (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1980) 116-119; Vaughn 2001 118.

⁷⁴ José Vasconcelos, "The Latin-American Basis of Mexican Civilization," *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926) 83.

while generally disparaging or ignoring blacks in such discourse because of blacks' historically unwanted status as slaves, and the most inferior class in society offered little potential to conjure national pride.⁷⁵

During the presidential regime of Porfirio Díaz, racial classification was incorporated to aid in the nation-building process. It was during this time that the mixed-race, *mestizo*, became the symbol of Mexican racial identity. This mixed-race identity was structured on the roots of Spanish and Amerindian ancestry. In 1896, Antonio Martínez de Castro, Minister of Justice in the Juárez administration, fostered a nationalist narrative that incorporated Mexico's pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial culture, using *Indigenismo* as a component of Mexican nationalism.⁷⁶ This symbolic elevation of Mexico's indigenous people, accompanied by the simultaneous rejection of Mexico's African roots, is a constant theme in José Vasconcelos'⁷⁷ early-twentieth-century book, *La Raza Cósmica (The Cosmic Race)*. The ideas and ideals disseminated throughout *The Cosmic Race* represent the epitome of Mexican nationalistic racial discourse and national identity; one that bleaches out African presence and ethnic contributions to Mexicaness.

Vasconcelos wrote his cosmic race hypothesis in direct response to the Eurocentric racism that proclaimed that the countries of Latin America are doomed to third world status, as they would never reach the same echelon of whiteness as Europeans. He envisioned the cosmic

⁷⁵ Peter Wade, *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*. (Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997) 35-36.

⁷⁶ Taunya Lovell Banks, "Mestizaje and the Mexican Mestizo self: No Hay Sangre Negra, So There is no Blackness," *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal* 15 (2006): 219.

⁷⁷ Vasconcelos was a criollo, a Mexican who claimed pure Spanish blood. The question of race was central to his Cosmic Race Ideologies and actions. Leonard Folgarait, *Mural Painting and Social Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940: Art of the New Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 17.

race as “the fifth race” which would result from the natural and voluntary mixing of the best traits from all races. In Vasconcelos’ mind, this mixture would create a new race superior to all others.⁷⁸ However, missing from Vasconcelos’ vision of the cosmic race was the contributions of Mexico’s black ancestors. It is clear from Vasconcelos’ viewpoint that the black race represented the most primitive stage of human development. According to Vasconcelos, there were four stages of human development: in the beginning the black race, followed by a red race, a yellow race, and in the most advance stage, the white race. Intellectuals such as Vasconcelos adapted the centuries-old negative images of dark skinned people from the old prejudices and hierarchies formed by the colonial ruling class.⁷⁹

Vasconcelos depicts blacks as “eager for sensual happiness, inebriated with dances and wild lust,” while emphasizing that whites have a “clear mind...similar to their complexion and their fantasies”.⁸⁰ He accepted what he called “the higher ideals of white men” and envisioned that “perhaps among all characters of the fifth race, white characters will dominate”.⁸¹ His commitment to bleaching out the inferior black race is evident when he remarks that “in the Iberoamerican world...we have very few blacks and the majority of them have been transformed already into mulatto populations”.⁸² It was through intermarriage and natural selection that intellectuals such as Vasconcelos believed that the Amerindian roots could be improved by mixing with Spanish blood while “the black man could be redeemed; and little by little, by

⁷⁸ José Vasconcelos and Jaen Didier Tisdell, *The Cosmic Race: a bilingual Edition* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997) 14.

⁷⁹ Marco Polo Hernández Cuevas, *African Mexicans and the Discourse on Modern Nation* (Dallas: University of America, 2004) 14.

⁸⁰ Vasconcelos 14.

⁸¹ Vasconcelos 23.

⁸² Vasconcelos 25.

voluntary extinction the ugliest types would give way to the more beautiful...In a few decades of eugenic aesthetics, blacks could disappear along with those types marked by beauty as fundamentally recessive [and therefore] unworthy of reproduction".⁸³ Vasconcelos' ideology for *mestizaje* was focused on the eradication of what he saw as lower types of humans. This emphasis on the *mestizo* identity as the exclusive interweaving between whites and Indians led to the negation of African influences in Mexican national identity, further justifying the stigmatization and diminishing of everything related to black identity.⁸⁴

In order to uphold their idea of the superiority of the Mexican race, Mexican leaders and intellectuals such as Vasconcelos used tools such as the education system to successfully eradicate the evidence of African influence from Mexican memory. By creating a nationalized education curriculum that minimized the history of an African past and present, he successfully limited Mexican connections to blackness. An example of such curriculum includes a Mexican history book printed in 1980 containing the following lines:

Blacks, like other groups in New Spain, could not resist the twin forces of miscegenation and social change...The black and mulatto population merged with the larger criollo and *mestizo* population. By the end of the colonial period, blacks had all but disappeared into Mexico's *mestizo* society, a process completed in the ninetieth and twentieth centuries.⁸⁵

⁸³ Vasconcelos 29-31.

⁸⁴ Striking similarities are seen in the cases of racial discourse in Cuba. In his writings about Cuba, José Martí expressed a notion of Cubaness that breaks down the racial-hierarchical categories of white, mulatto, and black and places them into a single, national, Cuban race. However, this ideology instead allowed for racism and racial hierarchies to persist unquestioned. To unite under distinct ethnic and racial groups was seen as un-Cuban as it signified a separation and desire not to be a part of the larger Cuban racial identity. As seen by the cases of Mexico and Cuba, the concept of the "cosmic race" was taken up enthusiastically by many "liberal" Latin American intellectuals and promoted as an example of the region's racial democracy.

⁸⁵ Colin M MacLahlan and O. Rodriguez, *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: a Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California, 1980) 223.

Generations of Mexicans remain uninformed of the African past because of such textbooks. Answers given to the question “What race are you considered?” in a survey conducted during January 2010 in Oaxaca Mexico only confirm the potency of *mestizo* discourse in Mexico. 68 percent of respondents answered the question with some derivative of the *mestizo* identity.⁸⁶ “In Mexico (blacks) have not been given a place to be known, they practically have been made invisible since the epoch of José Vasconcelos and there is little information about the theme; maybe one or two books.”⁸⁷ Over 42% of survey respondents in Oaxaca had no previous knowledge of the African past and 52% did not know that there were still Afro-Mexican communities present.⁸⁸ Even today, to the irritation of Mexicans, “the most dishwasher-dingy American can come to Mexico, be considered blonde, and cash in on the cachet this culture awards people who look European”.⁸⁹ In many instances, blacks in Mexico have adopted the racial ideology of the *mestizo* Mexican. A clear example of this is Afro-Mexicans stated desire to work to “clear and better the race” a statement that embodies the nationalistic whitening sentiment of national leaders such as José Vasconcelos.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ When asked to give justification for their answers, some respondents justified their *mestizo* self identification by answers such as, “Our race is a mix of indigenous and Spaniards” and “everyone here is mestizo if you are not indigenous”. Personal Interviews, Oaxaca, Mexico (Jan 2010).

⁸⁷ Personal Survey January 10, 2010.

⁸⁸ Personal Survey, January 2010.

⁸⁹ M.W. Walsh, “Amid Dark-haired Mexicans, Blondes Really Have More Fun,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 February 1987: C1.

⁹⁰ Cristina Sue, “Race and National Identity in Mexico: An Ethnographic Study of Blackness in Veracruz,” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montreal Convention Center, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 2008, 4.

These negatively racialized sentiments inspired by the ideologies of modern Mexico's founding elites are seen in the beliefs of popular sectors throughout Mexico today. For instance, José, a 63-year-old taco vender with African-origins from the state of Veracruz, takes the idea of "bettering the race" very seriously when he expressed his preference for white women and race mixture. "Well here in Mexico we do not consider it to be a bad thing...because as I told you before, with my color, my wife's color is "cleaning the race" a little bit right? And the children of my children well, they will be white. They will not be my color. I mean, my grandchildren."⁹¹ Belinda, a 46 year-old *morena oscura* (person with clear and distinct African heritage) lower-class housewife gives outsiders insight into why she has always longed for whiteness: "Well all of them were white, all of my sisters and brothers were white. I was the only, the only *negrita* and I felt like they paid less attention to me. It was like they rejected me or made fun of me because, because I had this skin color."⁹² In the case of Belinda, as well as many others who come from mixed-race families, the possibility of coming out lighter or inheriting European characteristics makes them dwell on what "they could have been."⁹³ This underlying drive for whiteness stems from the belief found in Mexican society that whiteness signifies beauty, success and intelligence, while darkness signifies ugliness, lower-class status, and a variety of other negative characteristics.

By distancing themselves from the stigma attached to a black identity, Afro-Mexicans choose not to describe themselves as *negro* (black) and instead developed a rich vocabulary to

⁹¹ Sue 4.

⁹² Sue 5.

⁹³ Ibid.

describe their various skin shades and physical features.⁹⁴ The color black is symbolic of a long history tied to negative connotations of slavery and inferiority. The national mestizo identity allowed for Afro-Mexicans to separate themselves from the negative associations tied to a black identity and identify instead, as *Moreno*, thus, denying their African heritage. Anthropologist Bobby Vaughn observes that only the most educated Afro-Mexicans have any consciousness of Africa or of being part of any African diaspora.⁹⁵ Afro-Mexicans become removed from their own ancestry and history as they strive to be included in the nationalistic discourse of *mestizaje*; a discourse void of any African contributions. Afro-Mexican self-identification as *moreno* and their acceptance of the white aesthetic demonstrate the effect of the discourse of *mestizaje* on Afro-Mexicans.

The *mestizo* or cosmic race myth allows for racism towards blacks to continue unquestioned through the belief that in a racially mixed homogenous society, racism cannot exist. One man from the outskirts of the city of Oaxaca claimed that:

“In Mexico there is no racism because how can we be racist against ourselves? There is only one Mexican race in which we all are included...unlike [the United States] where everyone is divided into their own separate group. The government of Mexico has created laws against racism and it just doesn’t exist here like it does there [United States]. Immigrants from all over the Americas come to Mexico just because there is no racism here.”⁹⁶

This popularly held myth about the superiority and tolerant nature of Mexican society’s racial policies, a direct consequence of post-revolutionary racial ideologies, gives Mexican people a

⁹⁴ Chege J Githiora, *Afro-Mexicans: Discourse of Race and Identity on the African Diaspora* (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2008) 51.

⁹⁵ Vaughn 2001 124.

⁹⁶ Personal interview, Oaxaca, Mexico (January 4, 2010).

veil to disguise the overt and obvious racisms that persist towards people of African descent; one of the most marginalized and impoverished groups in Mexican society. The invisibility and negative classification of blackness allows Mexican racism towards blacks to be considered harmless by eliminating the general belief and knowledge that there is a black Mexican population, even amongst Afro-Mexicans themselves, who would be harmed by such beliefs. These manifestations of anti-black racism originate from the colonial paradigm of racial hierarchy and white dominance and create a unique set of conditions that not only influence Afro-Mexican migration, but also shape Afro-Mexican's relationships and perceptions towards African Americans in the United States. Neglect, isolation and marginalization of Afro-Mexican communities in the *Costa Chica* is a direct result of Afro-Mexicans' historical status as slaves and helps to explain the communities' reasons for migration including low levels of education, health services, and infrastructure. Once in the United States, this discourse of *mestizaje*, which removed the African element from Afro-Mexicans' self-identity, creates barriers to coalition building attempts between Afro-Mexicans and their African American neighbors.

Chapter 2

Afro-Mexican National Migration: Isolation, Marginalization, and Out-Migration from the *Costa Chica*

African descendants remained isolated physically, economically, politically, and culturally from other areas of Mexico. As described in chapter one, the black population in the *Costa Chica* originated, for the most part, from cattle ranch laborers and runaway slaves who formed small maroon communities in the area. Since colonial times, a pattern of official disinterest in the affairs in the *Costa Chica* appeared; the region's industry, infrastructure, and economic development and prosperity fell behind to other more populated and prosperous areas throughout Mexico.

Origins of Isolation and Marginalization:

Due partly to the unattractiveness of the *Costa Chica* ports, there was very little interest in keeping *Costa Chica* communities in communication by roads to the center of the country and, even today, there are no roads directly linking the *Costa Chica* to the nation's capital.⁹⁷ The lack of such roads meant that travel to other areas throughout Mexico was near impossible. Thus, the area was excluded from any development and connection to the larger Mexican society. In order to reach the interior of Mexico from the *Costa Chica*, it has always been necessary to travel up the coast to Acapulco and then inland, a long and arduous journey. On top of this, the road linking Acapulco to the *Costa Chica* was often times unreliable. Although, the road connecting

⁹⁷ Vaughn 2001 55.

Acapulco to Mexico City dates back to the colonial times, a safe, all-season road connecting the *Costa Chica* to Acapulco was not started until 1959 and was eventually completed in 1966, 25 years after the development of a large-scale tourism industry in Acapulco.⁹⁸ A study in 1953 stated that areas in the *Costa Chica*, such as Pinotepa Nacional, a well-known black community, were only accessible to other neighboring communities during the dry season. The minimal commerce and restricted movements of goods that did occur in the *Costa Chica* region required the transportation of goods by small ships, sent from ports along the coast to the market in Acapulco.

This same report highlighted the lack of electrical power in the region. *Collantes*, one of the *los pueblos negros* (the black towns), did not receive electrical power until the 1970's.⁹⁹ These conditions in the *Costa Chica* are also a direct consequence of post-revolutionary patterns of development and land reform fostered by political and military leaders, known as *caudillos*, who favored some regions over others. Thus, it is not surprising that many of the material benefits derived from winning the Revolution would be directed towards the North; the northern states had the support of the *grupo de Sonora* faction that took control of Mexico at the end of the Revolution. In the *Costa Chica* towns, land reform requests were submitted in 1923; however, collective *ejidos*, or communal land, were not granted until 1936.¹⁰⁰ The persistence of powerful families along the Pacific coast of Guerrero is a prominent feature of this region's

⁹⁸ Luna 6.

⁹⁹ Vaughn 2001 56.

¹⁰⁰ Luna 2.

history and explains why much of the region's residents experienced little to no economic gain following the Revolution.

During the end of the 19th century, families that enjoyed a position of prominence and influence created financial and political empires that survived the changes of reformist agendas. Instead of the Revolution reducing these families' power, they emerged as an even stronger economic and political force in the *Costa Chica*.¹⁰¹ The entire coastal economy was controlled by these families based in Acapulco; they aligned themselves with the prominent landowners in the Coast.¹⁰² Illades defines this system operating in the early 20th century as

A complex monopolistic system that, without owning directly all the goods of the coastal people, strictly controlled industry, commerce, retail business, land transport, maritime transport, activities at the port, the buying and selling of agricultural products, fishing, and the better part of the service sector... the *gachupin* control of the ports was accompanied by a kind of aberrant domination that had recourse to violence, racism, economic asphyxiation, fraud, intrigue, and crime.”¹⁰³

In this political and economic apparatus, the key regional players were the provincial elites, allied with the Acapulco magnates, who used various tactics to advance their local interests in the *Costa Chica*.¹⁰⁴

A tactic commonly used by these elites in the region was to seize *campesino* (poor farmer) holdings through the pretext of land reform. An example of this is the wealthy

¹⁰¹ John H McDowell, *Poetry and Violence: The Ballad Tradition of Mexico's Costa Chica* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 2000) 92.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Carlos Illades, *Guerrero, Una Historia Compartida* (Mexico, D.F.: Gobierno Del Estado De Guerrero, 1989) 280.

¹⁰⁴ McDowell 93.

landowners from Ometepec in the *Costa Chica*. They were able to use the Mexican Revolution to advance their interests at the expense of Afro-Mexicans and indigenous communities, who did not yield the same economic, political or social power as the wealthy elite. By signing onto the revolutionary *Plan de Ayala*, which called for the return of land to the *campesinos*, they were able to conserve their weapons, which they then used in support of the region's large landowners against the *campesinos*.¹⁰⁵ Ian Jacobs writes that in the *Costa Chica*

The Guillens, already prominent figures in the days of Porfirio Dias, were revolutionaries in 1911 and were still making political careers for themselves in the 1940's. Still more long-lived were the dynasties of the Regueras and Anorves of Ometepec, where both families were prominent royalists in the wars of independence, held local political office through the nineteenth century, joined the Maderista revolution, and were still holding political office decades later. The Revolution, whether as a matter of policy or merely through some accidental process, absorbed many of the established family dynasties in Guerrero and molded them into the new political system.”¹⁰⁶

Elites in Guerrero successfully maintained their power, influence, and privileges long after the Revolution. During the period of calm under the Partido de la Revolution Institucional (PRI), when much of the land redistribution in other areas throughout Mexico was taking place, the powerful elite in the *Costa Chica* found ways to block efforts to redistribute land and wealth. A clear example of this failure is how the land reform plans of President Lázaro Cárdenas were thwarted in the *Costa Chica* region of Ometepec. In this region, “the *campesinos* waited years to cultivate their *ejido* properties...because they continued to be invaded by the cattle of the previous owners; those *campesinos* who organized to work the lands were shot by ranchers and

¹⁰⁵ Ravelo Lecuona, *La Revolución Zapatista de Guerrero* (Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, México, 1990) 160.

¹⁰⁶ Ian Jacobs, *Ranchero Revolt: The Mexican Revolution In Guerrero* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982) 167-168.

hired gunmen.”¹⁰⁷ It was not until the late 1930’s into the 1940’s that land in the *Costa Chica* started to be reallocated successfully.¹⁰⁸

The most intense period of agrarian reform in the *Costa Chica* lasted from the late 1930’s through 1955. During this period, the indigenous communities in the *Costa Chica* regained some of their communal lands, and the Afro-Mexicans of the *Costa Chica* gained ownership of lands they had previously used through exploitative arrangements with the large landowners. In the municipality of Cuajinicuilapa, *ejidos* that were established initially received support from the government through loans, seeds, farming equipment, and transportation to market.¹⁰⁹ However, this aid did not last for long and the administrations that followed Cárdenas abandoned these changes. As the government shifted toward supporting the large-scale capitalist interest, *ejidos* were abandoned and land was taken back by the same powerful dynasties.

After the relatively unsuccessful attempts at reform, the *Costa Chica* remained a Mexican backwater, completely forgotten by the Mexican government. *Costa Chica* was isolated from centers of cultural and economic development, mired in poverty, lacking educational facilities, and subject to endemic violence. One explanation for the region’s late entrance into the migratory populace is the politics of Mexican government’s distribution of Bracero work passes (temporary visas to work in the U.S.). In Mexico, the national government determined the actual

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Bustamante Alvarez, "Periodo 1934-1940," *Historia de la Cuestión Agraria Mexicana, Estado de Guerrero, 1867-1940*, eds. J. Salazar Adame, R. Ravelo Lecuona, D. Molina Alvarez, and T. Bustamante Alvarez (Mexico, DF: Gobierno del Estado de Guerrero, 1987) 413-414.

¹⁰⁸ McDowell 94.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid 95.

allocation process by which the number of workers was to be chosen from among several of its states. The state governments, in turn, made similar decisions for their cities and other political subdivisions. The Mexican government sought to spread the job opportunities throughout the nation rather than to simply select workers from the available labor pools in the border towns. Due to the limited number of Bracero jobs, favoritism and bribery in the selection process became widespread, and regions like the *Costa Chica*, which had little political or economic advantage to offer, were left out from the program.¹¹⁰

Incentives for Out Migration from the *Costa Chica*:

After the building of the coastal highway in the mid-1960's, commerce and the ability for people to travel freely finally became released from the control of the powerful family monopolies in Acapulco. Before the 1960's, movement in and out of Afro-Mexican towns was nearly impossible. Today the towns that are located along this highway demonstrate the greatest signs of progress. However, there are still few signs of government investment in schools, health centers, and other facilities. In many *Costa Chica* towns such as Cuajinicuilapa, two story-buildings have recently begun to line the highway. However, away from the highway, dirt roads and old, rundown, adobe houses predominate. The progress one sees in these "commercial centers" along the highway is only superficial, and the more remote areas remain virtually unaffected by the economic benefits of the highway.

¹¹⁰ Vernon M. Briggs Jr., "Non-immigrant labor policy in the United States," *The Journal of Economic Issues* 17 (1983): 611.

This isolation from other areas throughout Mexico, and the neglect and delay in receiving most of the benefits promised at the end of the Revolution, only worsened the relative poverty and lack of education in the *Costa Chica* region. These circumstances created what migration scholars define as push factors, or the economic, political, environmental, and social dynamics in a given community or area that decrease the standard of living and make migration an attractive option.¹¹¹ In the *Costa Chica* region, the conditions that are forcing Afro-Mexicans to leave are high levels of poverty, the lack of jobs and government support programs, poor education services in the area, and the lack of an effective health care system. For Afro-Mexicans, many of the factors encouraging migration are directly related to their historic status as African descendants.

In the *Costa Chica*, Afro-Mexicans are dramatically more likely to be impoverished and, consequently, have poorer health than their *mestizo*-Mexican counterparts.¹¹² For many years this poverty has manifested itself in a deficiency of educational opportunities for Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica*, and has also resulted in the lack of a “clear consciousness of their African heritage.”¹¹³ In recent decades, while indigenous groups in Mexico have benefited from a national and international effort to alleviate the high levels of poverty and marginalization that they suffer, Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica* have continually lacked recognition from, and

¹¹¹ J. Craig Jenkins, “Push/Pull in Recent Mexican Migration to the U.S.” *International Migration Review* 11 (1977); Guido Dorigo and Tobler Waldo, “Push-Pull Migration Laws,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73 (1983).

¹¹² Muhammad points to the work of Aguirre Beltrán, who noted exceptionally high rates of Afro-Mexican infant mortality and death during delivery. Jameelah S. Muhammad, *No Longer Invisible: Afro-Latin Americans Today* (London: Minority Rights Publications, 1995) 171-172.

¹¹³ Montiel Martínez and María Luz, *Presencia Africana en Mexico* (Mexico City: Dirección General de Culturas Populares, 1994) 2.

participation in the political, economic, and educational institutions of their country.¹¹⁴ Even though the black populations in Mexico share comparable levels of poverty as indigenous Mexicans, who are repeatedly mentioned as one of the most marginalized in the Western Hemisphere, the rural Afro-Mexican population has received minimal attention and little has been done to relieve this marginalization. In short, Afro-Mexicans are largely ignored by government services, marginalized by racist attitudes, and relegated to lives of poverty and illiteracy on the fringes of society. As a result, many black communities like San Nicolás are experiencing an exodus of young Afro-Mexicans who are leaving in search of better opportunities elsewhere.¹¹⁵

The high level of poverty that one finds in the *Costa Chica* of Oaxaca and Guerrero is a direct result of the Mexican government's neglect to give resources to Afro-Mexicans. This is, in part, a result of the Mexican government's refusal to acknowledge Afro-Mexicans as an ethnic and cultural minority. Instead Afro-Mexicans are positioned within the homogenizing definition of *mestizo* and, thus, lose their ability to solicit the government for aid and funding on behalf of their unique needs and histories. Unlike the numerous indigenous groups throughout Mexico whose communities often benefit from specific government institutions created to aid in their progress, the Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica*, who suffer comparable levels of marginalization and poverty, receive little or no aid or recognition from the Mexican

¹¹⁴ Muhammad 178.

¹¹⁵ Future research and investigation is needed to better understand how Afro-Mexicans participate in national and transnational migration. Where did Afro-Mexicans in such isolated areas receive information about their places of origin and jobs available? Equally important to understand is who had the resources to migrate as the process of migration involves significant monetary funds and social connections.

government.¹¹⁶ Afro-Mexicans exist today as an almost completely marginalized group. They are, “arguably, the least represented and most oppressed of all Mexico’s ethnic groups, and have yet to enter the mainstream and be recognized as full citizens.”¹¹⁷ Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica* are not commonly considered to be a part of the discourse on *indigenismo*, ethnicity, and culture, and thus, they have been excluded from enjoying the ideological and strategic power of these concepts.¹¹⁸

Because of their lack of recognition in Mexico, Afro-Mexicans benefit little from government programs. In the region, there are constant manifestations of *indigenismo* while almost no acknowledgment of an Afro-Mexican presence. For example, the most powerful radio signal in the *Costa Chica* comes from the government funded XEJAM, known as “Voice of the *Costa Chica*”.¹¹⁹ The broadcast consists primarily of music, local announcements, and special programming focused on local concerns, such as health, education, and farming methods and techniques. It starts every day at 6 a.m. and reaches the majority of Afro-Mexican towns on the Oaxacan side of the *Costa Chica*. However, the station is not particularly useful to the Spanish-speaking Afro-Mexican communities because over 70 percent of its broadcasts are conducted in indigenous languages.¹²⁰ Like many of the resources in the *Costa Chica* region, the station was established on May 4th, 1994 by the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) and is housed in the

¹¹⁶ Muhammad 178.

¹¹⁷ Muhammad 164.

¹¹⁸ Vaughn 2001 111.

¹¹⁹ Vaughn 2001 105.

¹²⁰ Vaughn 2001 106.

INI's central office.¹²¹ In the few daily Spanish-Language announcements, one rarely hears the mentioning of an Afro-Mexican town.

Due to the efforts of Afro-Mexican activist Israel Larrea Reyes, there is one existing program that targets the local Afro-Mexican populations. "*Cimarron: The Voice of the Afro-mestizos*," was started on May 4th, 1994 and airs only for a half-hour twice a week on Sundays and Thursdays. Included in its programming is poetry, music, news from the Afro-Mexican *Costa Chica*, and information relating to the greater African diaspora.¹²² However, the program is scantily known, and the directors of the center in the *Costa Chica* refuse to give this programming more airtime because the INI's primary concern is with aiding indigenous communities. During an interview, the director of the INI acknowledged that, in his view, many of the Afro-Mexican communities are worse off than many of their neighboring indigenous towns. Although the director saw these black towns as extremely marginalized, he did not see these communities as falling within the scope/mandate of INI initiatives.¹²³ Due to the homogenizing *mestizo* discourse, blacks are not viewed as a unique cultural and racial group like their indigenous counterparts and, as demonstrated by the opinions of the INI director, are not a priority when it comes to receiving government aid. The INI, as well as Mexico's federal

¹²¹ "XEJAM La Voz De La *Costa Chica*. Ecos Indígenas, La Voz De La Diversidad. México." *Ecos Indígenas. La Voz De La Diversidad. Radiodifusora Indígena. México*. Web. 31 Mar. 2011. <<http://ecos.cdi.gob.mx/xejam.html>>; Vaughn 2001 106.

¹²² For more information on Radio Cimarron see "RADIO CIMARRON." *Colectivo AFRICA A.C.* Web. 31 Aug. 2011. <<http://colectivoafrica.blogspot.com/2010/06/radio-cimarron.html>>; "XEJAM La Voz De La *Costa Chica*. Ecos Indígenas, La Voz De La Diversidad. México." *Ecos Indígenas. La Voz De La Diversidad. Radiodifusora Indígena. México*. <<http://ecos.cdi.gob.mx/xejam.html>>.

¹²³ Vaughn 2001 108.

government, tend to view culture as synonymous to *indigenismo*, which gives ideological justification for excluding Afro-Mexicans from receiving much needed aid.

There is evidence that even Afro-Mexicans themselves subscribe to this *indigenismo* discourse and accept that their indigenous neighbors are receiving aid and resources from the government, while they remain neglected. Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica* look at Indians with respect and admiration for making an effort to better themselves educationally, economically, politically, and socially.¹²⁴ They admire the growing numbers of indigenous who are becoming doctors, engineers, and other professionals. The neighboring town of Cuajinicuilapa, Xochistlahuaca, is a perfect example of the advancement of an indigenous community and the stagnant progress of the Afro-Mexican community. Blacks point to how the neighboring town is progressing as it now consists of a well-planned town with a beautifully landscaped central plaza and numerous paved streets; a stark contrast to the blacks' poorly planned and maintained towns.¹²⁵ Possibly one plausible explanation for why certain indigenous communities are progressing in education and infrastructure at much faster rates than neighboring black communities is that government-sponsored initiatives and projects, such as INI, have created opportunities for indigenous development while ignoring the plight of the blacks.

Studies highlight the extremely alarming levels of marginalization and poverty facing Afro-Mexican communities in the *Costa Chica* region. One marker that experts use to measure

¹²⁴ Vaughn 2001 117.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

the level of marginalization is the educational attainment of a population.¹²⁶ Education is a process that implies the idea of advancement and progress. In theory, receiving a high level of education gives humans the ability and tools to understand and transform their own realities; giving them the power to combat these realities and change their social conditions. Formal education is a crucial aspect for those communities in the *Costa Chica* who suffer from educational deficiencies that hinder their development and ability to improve their lives. It is undeniable that a high level of educational attainment is a key factor for progress and improvement of socioeconomic conditions anywhere.¹²⁷

Recent studies highlight the alarming percentages of illiterate adults in the *Costa Chica* Region.¹²⁸ In 2000, a little over a quarter of the population in the region was still illiterate.¹²⁹ Cuajinicuilapa, a majority Afro-Mexican municipality that includes San Nicolás, has the largest percentage of population that is illiterate reaching levels as high as 30 percent.¹³⁰ This alarming circumstance is indicative of the disadvantaged situation of the Afro-Mexican inhabitants of this region with respect to their formal education. When asked about reasons for migrating from their home communities, the majority of Afro-Mexicans living in Winston-Salem, NC responded that they had little access to educational opportunities past the equivalent of U.S. middle school level

¹²⁶ CONAPO (2007), “Índice de marginación 2005.” México, 2005.

¹²⁷ Teresa Díaz Domínguez, “La educación como factor de desarrollo social,” <http://www.sapiens.com/html/ejemplos/sociedad/sapiens/comunidades/ejemplosociedad1nsf/unids/La%20educaci%F3n%20como%20factor%20de%20desarrollo%20social8129F1BDC4D9A84741256FAF00628DF82d8e.html>.

¹²⁸ Haydée Quiroz Malca, “Las nuevas diásporas de los afromexicanos y algunos de sus efectos en las culturales locales,” *Memoria y Sociedad* 7 (2003).

¹²⁹ INEGI, “XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda 2000, Estado de Guerrero,” *Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática* (Aguascalientes, México, 2002).

¹³⁰ Ibid.

in their home communities in the *Costa Chica*. *Costeños* in Winston-Salem emphasized how the limited possibilities of educational advancement led them to feel trapped in an endless cycle of poverty with no space for upward movement.¹³¹ In addition to lack of faith and interest in education, many Afro-Mexicans also emphasized the scarcity of quality jobs in the region and the poor system of healthcare.¹³² Together, these factors create an environment in which out-migration to work in larger urban areas in Mexico or the United States is not only seen as an attractive option, but also as the only option to support oneself and family.

Migratory Trajectory and Experience of Afro-Mexican Migrants Within Mexico:

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the lack of transportation infrastructure in the *Costa Chica* region meant economic, political, and social isolation from other areas throughout Mexico. This also meant that large-scale out-migration from these communities was nearly impossible. Thus, the first historical marker of Afro-Mexican out-migration was the construction of the 1966 Pacific Coast highway that, for the first time, opened up the region to the possibility of fluid ingress and egress. Notable out-migration from the *Costa Chica* is believed to have begun in the mid to late 1970's, increasing in the 1980's as more blacks left their homes in response to the increasingly worsening economic conditions in the area and the feeling of being trapped in economic immobility.¹³³

¹³¹ Personal Interviews, Winston Salem (July 2010).

¹³² Personal Interviews, Winston Salem (July 2010).

¹³³ Vaughn 2001 171.

The most popular destinations for Afro-Mexicans from the *Costa Chica* were initially Acapulco and Mexico City. In the mid 1970's, the growth of the tourism industry in Acapulco offered attractive job opportunities for *costeños* that desperately needed work. However, as tourism in Guerrero shifted to more of a Mexican clientele towards the end of the century, many jobs were lost, which could explain the large surge of migrants from Guerrero to the United States around this time. Those migrants, whose destination was not Acapulco, generally ended up in Mexico City. Afro-Mexican migration, first to Mexico City and then to the United States, fits the trends of many other Mexican migratory groups. The metropolis of Mexican City has historically been a city comprised of migrants from all parts of Mexico.¹³⁴ Fed by these migratory demographical shifts, the exponential growth of Mexico City attracts rural people such as Afro-Mexicans from the *Costa Chica* seeking work in the urban economy.¹³⁵

A major and visible shift from the national to transnational migration of Afro-Mexicans commenced in the late 1990's and accelerated in the beginning of the 21st century. This shift is likely the result of a series of economic and environmental crises that the *Costa Chica* communities suffered during this time. The economic crisis was the direct result of the signing of the 1994 NAFTA Free Trade agreement with the United States. Like many areas throughout Mexico, the treaty had a detrimental effect on the ability for *costeños* to profit from their small-scale agricultural production. In San Nicolás, about six hundred small farmers raise cattle, corn,

¹³⁴ Consejo Nacional de Población, and Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, "Delimitación de las zonas metropolitanas de México," *Secretaría de Desarrollo Social* (2004).

¹³⁵ Vaughn 2001 173.

and chile for subsistence and sesame and mangoes for local and regional markets.¹³⁶

Unfortunately, NAFTA eliminated protections such as import taxes and agrarian assistance programs that aided small-scale farmers like those in the *Costa Chica* and has left these small-scale producers suffering from dramatic price drops that they cannot compete against.¹³⁷ Thus, as an effect of this economic crisis, a growing and considerable number of Afro-Mexicans in this area are forced to become migrants to other areas in Mexico or to the United States. Since 1994, the accelerated migration stream from the *Costa Chica* is seen in almost all the municipalities of the region. Since 1999, indicators of the prominence of out-migration include travel agencies, electronic shops, and exchange houses, which previously did not exist outside of Acapulco.¹³⁸

Natural disasters were another factor that devastated the *Costa Chica* region. In 1996 and 1997, the area was hit by major hurricanes that devastated the area. In 2006, Hurricane John's heavy winds and surf caused serious damage to the Acapulco area. The hurricane produced a ten-foot storm surge that flooded coastal roads and destroyed infrastructure in the region.¹³⁹ The damage was more severe in the *Costa Chica* region where the majority of black communities are located. Here the heavy rainfall, approximately 12.5 inches, resulted in mudslides that left around 70 communities isolated.¹⁴⁰ The following year, Hurricane Pauline devastated the Pacific coast of Mexico for a second time. One of the strongest and deadliest hurricanes to hit Mexico,

¹³⁶ Laura A. Lewis, "Home is Where the Heart Is: North Carolina, Afro-Latinos Migration and Houses on Mexico's *Costa Chica*," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, Special Issue *The Last Frontier: The Contemporary Configuration of the U.S.-Mexico Border* 105 (Fall 2006) 106.

¹³⁷ Lewis 107.

¹³⁸ Haydee 9.

¹³⁹ Richard J. Pasch, "Hurricane John Tropical Cyclone Report" *National Hurricane Center*, 2006.

¹⁴⁰ International Federation of Red Cross And Red Crescent Societies, "Mexico: Hurricane John Information Bulletin No. 1," (30 Aug. 2006).

Pauline produced torrential rainfall along the Mexican coastline, peaking at 16 inches in Acapulco. Intense flooding and mudslides in some of the poorest areas of Mexico killed between 230 and 400 people, making it one of the deadliest Eastern Pacific storms in recorded history. The passage of the hurricane destroyed or damaged tens of thousands of houses, leaving around 300,000 homeless and causing \$7.5 billion in damage.¹⁴¹ In the *Costa Chica* of Guerrero, heavy rainfall led to severe mudslides and flooding throughout the region leaving entire communities destroyed, with flooding continuing for over a week after the hurricane. The flooding washed out or destroyed thousands of acres of crops, killed thousands of cattle, and mudslides isolated more than 45,000 people from the outside world and resulted in severe damage to houses, bridges, and electrical and water supplies.¹⁴² According to one preliminary estimate, 123 people died in Guerrero, primarily in the Acapulco region; and 50,000 people were left homeless across the state.¹⁴³ The hurricane also destroyed the productive capacity of the region, making it even harder for those who lived off of small-scale agriculture. Tragedies like these act as the strongest catalysts for migration. Communities throughout the *Costa Chica* region were left literally with nothing and, for many, migration was the only option for survival and rebuilding lives.¹⁴⁴

Patterns of Mexican migration to the United States can often be traced to one or a few first pioneers and, in Winston-Salem, many from the Afro-Mexican community point to Biterbo

¹⁴¹ "Estadísticas sobre los riesgos a atenuar de fenómenos perturbadores", Centro Nacional para la Prevención de Desastres (1999).

¹⁴² "Situation Report Hurricane Pauline," Church World Service (1997).

¹⁴³ "Mexico Hurricane Pauline Situation Report No.1," United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (1997).

¹⁴⁴ Many Migrants living in Winston-Salem who arrived after 2007 mentioned the devastating effects of Hurricane John and Pauline. According to one migrant, "The hurricane destroyed the little that I did have. What other options did I have but to leave and try to rebuild what was lost." Personal interview, Winston Salem (July 2010).

Calleja-García as the first to arrive in North Carolina. His story of migration coincides with the construction of the 1966 highway and marks the start of significant migrant flows that follow in Calleja-García's footsteps. The story of his journey from Mexico to Winston-Salem will be discussed in the following chapter, but what is important to note is the date of his arrival in the United States and his trajectory before arriving to the United States. Calleja-García was likely a member of the first group of migrants to leave the *Costa Chica* after the completion of the 1966 Pacific Coast Highway. In the early 1970's, Calleja-García migrated from San Nicolás to Acapulco, and then to Mexico City to find work. As a result of this migration out of their relatively isolated homogeneous communities, Afro-Mexicans were exposed for the first time to their phenotypic differences from the average Mexican. In the *Costa Chica*, black characteristics are seen as the norm, something that Afro-Mexicans are exposed to everyday of their lives. However, as Afro-Mexicans began to migrate to other areas throughout Mexico, they were exposed to their black identity as something foreign and not normal to Mexico.

Because of their dissimilar appearance in other areas throughout Mexico, Afro-Mexican migrants often fell victim to discrimination and suffered from the inability to find work. When asked why they could not find jobs in Mexico, Afro-Mexicans in Winston-Salem believed it was because of the way they looked. One Afro-Mexican resident in Winston-Salem explained that "employers would much rather hire people who look whiter and more Mexican than us."¹⁴⁵ Black Mexicans are also commonly mistaken to be immigrants or descendants of Caribbean immigrants and not real Mexicans. This is due in part to the state's close proximity to Cuba or to

¹⁴⁵ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (July 2010).

other heavily black populated Caribbean islands.¹⁴⁶ “Many blacks here in Mexico are afraid to leave or travel away from their homes because it is not uncommon for them to be mistaken by police as immigrants. There have been many instances of Afro-Mexicans being deported because they did not have their papers on them that day.”¹⁴⁷

Effects of Out-Migration in Afro-Mexican Communities in the *Costa Chica*:

The effects of this out-migration from Afro-Mexican towns can be seen today as there is an increase in the appearance of outside materials and the reorganization of community events, parties and weddings. Many customs that were discontinued for lack of money have already reappeared with increased spending and exchange and reciprocity between individuals, their households as well as between communities.¹⁴⁸ As more money enters the region as a result of migrant remittances, there has been greater economic movement within Afro-Mexican communities. An example of this is the competition that has emerged regarding who will have the honor to sponsor the feasts of saints and virgins.¹⁴⁹ The sophistication of festivals has also begun to increase as a result of migrants’ earnings. The manner in which weddings are now being celebrated highlight the monetary influence of migration. Weddings have returned to

¹⁴⁶ Vaughn 2001.

¹⁴⁷ This claim is also substantiated in Chege Githiora’s book about Afro-Mexicans when he writes, “I have also recorded several incidents of mistreatment of Afro-Mexicans of San Nicolás and of Malta Clara in Veracruz. Some describe how Mexican police arrested them while in Mexico border towns such as Tijuana as they attempted to enter the United States. They spent several days in jail while they sought to prove their Mexican citizenship; one of their parents had to travel several hundred miles in order to secure their release. In another case, a birth certificate and a lawyer were needed to free a youth from another jail in Tijuana.” Githiora 58; Personal Interview, Oaxaca Mexico (January 23rd, 2010).

¹⁴⁸ Haydee.

¹⁴⁹ Haydee.

lasting two to three days, a tradition that ceased to exist for many years due to the lack of money. The amount of food and drink has increased, and the clothing of the participants, both men and women, is fancier and accompanied by more expensive jewelry. For those who cannot attend the festivities because they are away working when the festival or ceremony takes place, technology, such as digital and video cameras, are used to record the events.¹⁵⁰

As Laura A. Lewis highlights in her work on Afro-Mexican cinderblock homes, the materials valued and used in Afro-Mexican towns is changing dramatically as a result of migration.¹⁵¹ Construction materials have changed, especially in remote communities of the municipalities that originally were defined by very simple construction styles that always used local materials. These communities now used brick and cement and have electrical appliances such as televisions, tape recorders, sound equipment, refrigerators, washing machines and other appliances that improve the quality of life and separate them from those community members without migrant ties.¹⁵² Today, the houses most desired in San Nicolás are not the traditional African influenced Redondo, but as Lewis describes, “boxy, unadorned structures made of cinder block... financed mainly through personal remittances sent by San Nicoladenses living in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, who frequently couch their motivations for migrating in terms of ‘building my house’ (*hacer mi casa*) in San Nicolás.”¹⁵³ The construction of a more “modern” house has become a symbol of status and advancement in these *Costa Chica* towns. In Winston-

¹⁵⁰ Lewis 807.

¹⁵¹ Lewis 802.

¹⁵² Haydee.

¹⁵³ Lewis 802.

Salem, many Afro-Mexican migrants plan to leave the United States to return to the home community once they have saved enough money to build their houses.¹⁵⁴

Due to circumstances that are directly tied to Afro-Mexicans' ancestry as descendants of African slaves, including isolation, marginalization and neglect, the history and trajectory of Afro-Mexican migrants varies from the general trends of other Mexican migratory groups. Afro-Mexicans were not part of the first waves of Mexican migration to the United States in the mid-20th century due to their isolated location in remote *Costa Chica* villages: a feature of Afro-Mexican migration directly tied to their origins as runaway slave communities. Mexican national discourse that ignores and denies the nation's African elements, leaves Afro-Mexicans with almost no leverage to request special aid and attention from national institutions like those that aid nearby indigenous populations. Such neglect leaves Afro-Mexicans in the *Costa Chica* with a deficiency in medical care, education and infrastructure, creating the strong incentives for out-migration. After the building of the 1966 Pacific Coast Highway, Afro-Mexicans finally had the opportunity to easily migrate to other areas of Mexico and eventually areas of the United States, including Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The following chapters examine Afro-Mexican manifestations and contributions in the emergence of a vibrant transnational Latino community in Winston-Salem and how Afro-Mexicans' racial identity continues to play an important role in shaping Afro-Mexicans' lives.

¹⁵⁴ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (July 2010).

Chapter 3

Afro-Mexican Migration and Community Formation in Winston-Salem, NC

In the last decade of the 20th century, the United States Southeast became a new destination for Mexican immigration. Historically, the South had not attracted immigrants in large numbers due, in part, to its slower pace of industrial development and the presence of a large number of poor blacks and whites who provided a secure and steady pool of low-wage labor. Prior to the 1980's, there was little sign of Hispanic immigration into areas such as Winston-Salem, in Forsyth County, North Carolina. Beginning in the 1980's, economic restructuring and growth, coupled with new immigration policies, have drawn Latin American immigrants to the South in increasing numbers, turning the region into the most rapidly growing immigrant destination in all of the United States.¹⁵⁵

As described briefly in the previous chapter, economic globalization, neoliberal policies, and immigration policies in the United States are responsible for creating many of the conditions that propel international labor migration. In the mid 1990's the economic crisis created by NAFTA in 1994 destroyed traditional economies and industries throughout Mexico and accelerated out-migration not only from the traditional sending states, but also from new sending states, including the *Costa Chica* region of Guerrero and Oaxaca. Further instigating Mexican migration to the U.S., the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) encouraged mass migration from Mexico and gave migrants, such as Calleja-García the opportunity to obtain legal

¹⁵⁵ Johnson and Kasarda 70.

status and petition for family reunification afterwards. As a result of IRCA, classic immigrant gateway communities, such as California, experienced a dramatic surge in the number of Mexican immigrants. This surge meant that securing reliable work in these traditional gateway communities became more difficult, resulting in the dispersal of Mexican migrants into new areas throughout the U.S. South, including Winston-Salem, North Carolina, which is undergoing a dramatic transformation as immigration from Mexico grows rapidly.

Among the new Hispanic magnet states, North Carolina led the nation with the greatest population growth of its Hispanic population during the 1990's.¹⁵⁶ The state's Hispanic population grew by 393 percent, from 76,700 in 1990 to 378,963 in 2000.¹⁵⁷

Hispanic Population in Forsyth County, North Carolina¹⁵⁸

	1990	2000	2008
Hispanic Population ^{Rank}	2,102 ⁵⁷⁸	19,577 ²¹¹	37,235 ¹⁸⁰
Total County Population	265,878	306,066	343,028
Hispanics as Percent of County Population ^{Rank}	1% ^{1,599}	6% ⁶⁷²	11% ⁵⁷⁷
	Change from 1990		Change from 2000
Hispanic Population Change ^{Rank}	17,475 ¹²⁷		17,658 ¹²⁸
Percent Change in Hispanic Population ^{Rank}	831% ⁷⁹		90% ⁴²⁶

¹⁵⁶ James Johnson, "Immigration Driven Population Change in North Carolina: Opportunities for the Banking Industry," *Carolina Banker* (Fall 2004) 13-14.

¹⁵⁷ Johnson and Kasarda 70.

¹⁵⁸ "Forsyth County, North Carolina Data" *Pew Hispanic Center*, Web. 10 Apr. 2011. <<http://pewhispanic.org/states/?countyid=37067>>.

This chapter examines the participation of Afro-Mexicans from the *Costa Chica* who migrated in large number to the Winston-Salem area in this new migration trend. It will study the emergence of the Latino community in Winston-Salem through the examination of local newspaper articles, businesses, organizations and religious institutions. The examination of these sources proves Afro-Mexican influence and participation in the development of the Latino community in Winston-Salem, N.C.

A Single Pioneer: Biterbo Calleja-García and the Beginning of Afro-Mexican Migration to Winston-Salem:

As is the case with most Mexican migration to the United States, people tend to settle where others from their home cities or towns have settled, creating what is known as “ethnic communities” that grow in size as a result of chain migration and the emergence of social networks.¹⁵⁹ The social process of network growth helps explain the rapid increase in the numbers of Mexicans migrating to the United States. Migrants create networks that act as webs of social ties that link potential migrants in sending communities to people in receiving societies, thus forming a “chain” of migration. As a result, these networks lower the costs of international movement. Each person that becomes a migrant, in effect lowers the cost of migration for a set of friends and relatives, inducing them to migrate and further expanding the network. This interaction has resulted in the emergence of widespread social network connections to the United

¹⁵⁹ For more on the social network theory see Alejandro Portes, “The Social Origins of the Cuban Enclave Economy of Miami,” *Sociological Perspectives* 30 (1987); Douglas S. Massey, Rafael Alarcon, Jorge Durand, and Humberto Gonzdlez, *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico*, (Berkeley, California/London, England: University of California Press, 1987).

States throughout Mexico, and increases the probability of international migration from Mexico.¹⁶⁰

It is not uncommon for the pattern of migration from a small town, such as San Nicolás in Guerrero, to be traced back to a single pioneer or group of pioneers. These groups of pioneers create what migration scholars define as the links in a chain of migration.¹⁶¹ They are the forerunners of larger migration flows and make it possible for others in their family, friends, or community to make the journey after them. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the history of Biterbo Calleja-García marks the arrival of the first Afro-Mexican to the Winston-Salem area. According to locals in Winston-Salem, Calleja-García crossed the border illegally in 1978 to work as a migrant farm worker in Tejas Rancheros, Texas as he had done for years, returning to Mexico annually after the harvest season. This time, however, he was persuaded by a local coyote [or pollero] (a guide who assists undocumented workers) to cross and find employment in North Carolina. The coyote promised Calleja-García that he would be able to find more work and better pay if he made the switch to Winston-Salem. “Who knows how he knew to bring me here, but he knew,” Calleja-García said in an interview with *Winston-Salem Journal* reporters in 2002.¹⁶² For Calleja-García, the move was a huge success. Shortly after arriving, he started earning \$3.35 an hour cultivating seventeen acres of tobacco. Following the logic of “chain migration”, Calleja-García returned to Mexico during the off-season and spread the word of the

¹⁶⁰ D. S. Massey and F. G. Espana, "The Social Process of International Migration," *Science* 237 (1987).

¹⁶¹ George J. Borjas and Stephen G. Bronars, "Immigration and the Family," *Journal of Labor Economics* 9.2 (1991).

¹⁶² Lisa Hoppenjans and Ted Richardson, "Mexican Ways, African Roots; Most of City's Hispanic Residents are Natives of a Region Populated by descendants of Black Slaves," *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 2002.

economic opportunities present in North Carolina among his friends and family living in the *Costa Chica* town of Cuajiniquilapa, as well as to other friends and family working in California. His two sisters eventually joined him in Winston-Salem, and the family lived in a trailer on a tobacco farm, working grueling days from 7 a.m. until 10 p.m., May through November. Calleja-García was successful in creating a strong foundation in North Carolina; one where he was able to return annually with his sisters to the same employer. After ten years of the same routine, traveling back and forth between Winston-Salem and Mexico, he likely became a permanent resident alien in 1988 through IRCA and, in 1989, stopped returning to Mexico.¹⁶³ The lasting connection between Cuajiniquilapa and other *Costa Chica* towns and Winston-Salem was cemented.

In the years following Calleja-García's arrival in Winston-Salem, others from *Costa Chica* towns began following his lead, spreading out throughout the larger Winston-Salem area. As more migrants from the *Costa Chica* region began arriving in Winston-Salem, Calleja-García, possibly because of his advantage in knowing and being familiar with the Winston-Salem area, was able to change his line of work; first obtaining a job in roofing, then becoming a construction worker, pouring cement for a company in Kernersville. He started off earning a salary of \$4 an hour which then increased to \$6, enabling him to move into a two-bedroom home in the Waughtown section of Winston-Salem with about twelve other people that he knew from

¹⁶³ Wayne A Cornelius, "Impacts of the 1986 US Immigration Law on Emigration from Rural Mexican Sending Communities," *Population and Development Review* 15.4 (1989).

Cuajiniquilapa.¹⁶⁴ “After that, many that I didn’t know began to come,” he said in an interview with local reporters.¹⁶⁵ As more and more migrants from the *Costa Chica* made the journey to North Carolina, the social networks grew larger and stronger as each new migrant recruited their network of family and friends.¹⁶⁶

In the 1990’s, as the tobacco industry in the region declined, many immigrants, such as Calleja-García, moved into other industries to work. They began working in construction, in factories packaging T-shirts and toiletries, and in assembly plants putting together products such as window frames and drainage pipes for swimming pools. The migrants also moved into bakeries and kitchens of restaurants and the *Costa Chican* community grew in size, eventually opening their own restaurants and shops, hiring family and friends from back home in the *Costa Chica*. Calleja-García stayed in the construction business and, in 1992, he found a job pouring concrete for a company in Archdale, NC. His starting pay was \$9.50 an hour, and he worked helping build megastores such as Home Depot, Lowe’s and Wal-Mart along Hanes Mall Boulevard. By 2002, he was earning \$18 an hour working with a construction company in

¹⁶⁴ Hoppenjans and Richardson, “Mexican Ways, African Roots.”; Personal Interview in Winston Salem (July 2010); Bobby Vaughn and Ben Vinson III, “Unfinished Migrations: From the Mexican South to the American South,” *Beyond Slavery: the Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Darién J. Davis (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007) 230.

¹⁶⁵ Hoppenjans and Richardson, “Mexican Ways, African Roots.”

¹⁶⁶ Many scholars recognize that migration has a social basis and well as economic basis. Massey argues that migration develops a social infrastructure that enables movement on a mass basis. For the first migrants, the costs of migration are high. However, over time, the number of social ties between the home community and immigrant community increases; creating a social network that dramatically reduces the costs of international migration. “People from the same community are enmeshed in a web of reciprocal obligations upon which new migrants draw to enter and find work in the receiving society. The range of social contacts in the network expands with the entry of each new migrant, thus encouraging still more migration and ultimately leading to the emergence of international migration as a mass phenomenon.” Massey 1990 5.

Greensville, NC. In Cuaji, a day laborer might earn only \$120 pesos a day (approx. 10 dollars), half of what he was now earning per hour in North Carolina.¹⁶⁷

Although it is hard to verify if Calleja-García was indeed the first Afro-Mexican in Winston-Salem, he undeniably represented one of the earliest waves of immigrants, and his singular influence in paving the way for other migrants from the *Costa Chica* is significant. In Cuaji, it is not uncommon to find North Carolina license plates on trucks, Carolina blue baseball caps in a sea of cowboy hats, and Duke University T-shirts. In this part of rural Mexico, the name Winston-Salem is familiar, as many residents have spent time or have friends of family who have spent time working in Winston-Salem.¹⁶⁸

Biterbo Calleja-García's shift from Texas to Winston-Salem is worthy of further examination. According to newspaper articles at the time of Calleja-García's arrival to Winston-Salem in 1978, there was a strong union-led movement against the local tobacco companies and other large-scale production industries in the area. The Winston-Salem area has had a long history of union organizing among African American tobacco workers during the Civil Rights era.¹⁶⁹ In the early 1940's, black tobacco workers channeled their resistance and self-organization into a successful union drive against the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company in Winston-Salem. In 1942, organizers from the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Affiliated Workers of America (UCAPAWA- later the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural, and Allied

¹⁶⁷ Hoppenjans and Richardson, "Mexican Ways, African Roots."

¹⁶⁸ Vaughn 2001 174.

¹⁶⁹ Robert Rodgers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2003) 289–300.

Workers, FTA) arrived in Winston-Salem and, along with a cadre of black union supporters in the plants, they won the loyalty of a majority of black tobacco workers, churches, a segment of the black middle-class and a small minority of white Reynolds employees.¹⁷⁰

The establishment of Local 22 in December 1943 led to the emergence of a vibrant labor-based civil rights movement that challenged the class-based system of white supremacy that was present in the area for decades. In 1944, the union negotiated a historic contract that empowered black tobacco workers in the workplace, and undermined whites' expectation of black subservience. The contract provided for higher wages, replaced arbitrary hiring with seniority, and established a grievance procedure that allowed black union stewards to democratically resolve grievances with foremen and supervisors. The union, as Korstad states, also sought to empower "unionists in the political and social life of the community."¹⁷¹ Local 22's left-wing leadership cultivated a union culture that fostered loyalty and connected the workplace and community. Local 22 translated union solidarity into political action. The union led voter registration drives and membership campaigns for the NAACP, and helped elect the city's first black aldermen since the turn of the century. This organizing success fueled further black momentum and empowerment that continued throughout the 50's and 60's throughout the U.S. South and not just Winston-Salem.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ David Lewis-Colman, rev. of *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth South*, by Robert Rodgers Korstad, *Left History* 2004: 234.

¹⁷¹ Korstad 293.

¹⁷² Lewis-Colman 235.

With the memory of the large-scale, successful black union organizing still on the minds of the owners of the large-scale industries in Winston-Salem, it would not be unusual or surprising for employers to look for ways in which to undermine and stifle any new unionizing activity. Newspaper articles highlight that in the late 1970's, when the first waves of *Costa Chica* migrants arrived in Winston-Salem, there was notable union organizing and activity in the Winston-Salem area. It is not implausible that, in an attempt to avoid a repeat of the 1940's and 1950's worker strikes in Winston-Salem, employers began to recruit foreign workers such as Biterbo Calleja-García. Compared to the majority black workforce who were still mobilized over the recent civil rights movement in Winston-Salem, undocumented workers were much more docile and easily controllable. The African American workforce proved to be a threat to employers, especially in the farm industry, where farmers rely on cheap, exploitable labor to secure profits.

It is not unprecedented for U.S. agribusinesses to use Mexican immigrant labor as a weapon against union organizing and as a tool to break strikes. This sort of employer behavior was existent in the labor unionizing attempts of César Chávez in California.¹⁷³ The presence of undocumented Mexican immigrants has constantly undermined the efforts of workers in low-wage industries of the Southwest to become unionized. This migration and work recruitment depresses wages and working conditions so much so that citizen and resident workers, who might otherwise seek to establish a trade union, are forced to look elsewhere for employment. If attempts are made to form a union, illegal Mexican immigrants are frequently used as

¹⁷³ "Chávez charges scheme," *Washington Post*, 23 Sep. 1974: C3.

strikebreakers. The most prominent contemporary example is the effort of the United Farm Workers (UFW) to establish a union for agricultural workers in California.¹⁷⁴ Cesar Chavez, the leader of the UFW, had repeatedly charged that employers were using undocumented Mexican workers as strikebreakers.¹⁷⁵ Chávez stated that it was primarily because of the inability to keep migrants out of the fields that his union lost much of its agency and had to appeal for a nation-wide boycott as the only effective method of exerting pressure on employers for bargaining recognition.¹⁷⁶

In the majority of cases, immigrant workers arrive in the country desperate for work, poor, lacking language skills, and unfamiliar with U.S. Labor Laws. They are willing to work the most arduous job for horrendous pay, and often they will do the work without complaint because of the fear of repression and deportation. Because they are new to the country, they are also not likely to be active in established unions, and without protections, they are the perfect tools to replace troublesome unionized workers. This is a possible reason why Biterbo Calleja-García was first prompted to come to the Winston-Salem area by his coyote in 1978. There is significant evidence that points to the presence of union activity in the Winston-Salem area at that time.¹⁷⁷ Throughout the 1970's, North Carolina, a right to work state, had the lowest levels of unionization throughout the country. Prior to 1978, only 6.9 percent of the state's eligible

¹⁷⁴ Vernon M Briggs, "Mexican Workers in the United States Labour Market: A Contemporary Dilemma," *Human Resource Studies Paper* 50 (1975): 366.

¹⁷⁵ "Chávez charges scheme," *Washington Post*, 23 Sep. 1974: C3.

¹⁷⁶ Richard Severo, "The flight of the wet-backs," *New York Times Magazine* 10 Mar. 1974:81.

¹⁷⁷ Bob Raissmen, "Unions Gain in State, but Appeals Delay Contracts," *Winston-Salem Journal* 1 January 1979: B7

workers were members of a union, while the national average was over three times that at 26.2 percent.¹⁷⁸

There is evidence that unions were once again picking up momentum in the Winston-Salem area during the late 1970's. In the fiscal year that ended on September 30, 1978, unions won 35 elections conducted in North Carolina by the National Labor Relations Board. According to NLRB statistics, unions in the state added over 5,000 members. The state's unemployment rates were at record lows during the end of the 1970's, and workers began to not be afraid of losing their jobs due to union activity.¹⁷⁹ Articles from in the *Winston-Salem Journal* from early 1979 highlight the activity of various union organizations in the area.¹⁸⁰ The majority black unions were rallying against oppressive employer behavior, including the firing of employees for their unionizing efforts.¹⁸¹ The workers were frustrated with companies' hostile policies towards collective bargaining. These worker strikes and confrontations with the employers were not profitable to the companies.¹⁸² It is evident that the employers were viciously fighting back against the recent surge of union activity at the time by threatening union leaders and firing those employees who were involved in organizing activities. Thus, it would not be unreasonable for employees to also look at immigrants as a labor force to replace unionized workers.

¹⁷⁸ Raissmen "Unions Gain in State."

¹⁷⁹ Raissmen "Unions Gain in State."

¹⁸⁰ Raissmen "Unions gain in State;" Michael Skube, "N.C. Production Workers," *Winston-Salem Journal* 13 January 1979.

¹⁸¹ "Labor Law Violations Charged," *Winston-Salem Journal* 4 February 1979.

¹⁸² On May 14, 1978, black workers led a picket line on Seaboard Foods for two weeks. "Labor Law Violations Charged."

The desire of Winston-Salem employers' to undermine union activity is one of the many explanations for the rapid increase in Mexican migration. The economic conditions present in Winston-Salem at the end of the 1970's also proved conducive to the arrival of immigrant labor to the area. The unemployment rates in the farm industry were extremely low and there was constant need for labor.¹⁸³ The rapid industrialization that was occurring during this time period was also unprecedented. According to the State Board of Economic development, companies invested 1.4 billion dollars in new plants and additions to old plants in the state in 1977. The following year, the same year that Biterbo Calleja-García was encouraged by the coyote to go to North Carolina, almost the same amount of money was invested, and 43,000 new jobs were reported.¹⁸⁴ Unemployment rates were at record lows in the Piedmont Triad area.¹⁸⁵ Business owners in the Winston-Salem area cited the diversification in the job market and the expansion of existing industry as the main factors responsible for the favorable job situation in the area.¹⁸⁶

Many people celebrated the lower levels of unemployment in the area; however, others voiced concerns that unemployment rates so low also brought problems. Several large

¹⁸³ The U.S. Department of Agriculture, along with the U.S. Census Bureau, published in 1977 statistics highlighting this low-level of unemployment. The unemployment rate for farm residents was 3 percent, versus 7.5 percent for the nonfarm population. The report also highlighted, for the first time, the population of Spanish-speaking farm workers. It estimated that 112,000 Spanish origin farm residents were in the United States (approximately 1% of the total farm population). The report also highlighted that blacks living on farms declined at a faster rate than the white farm population – a decrease of 53 percent compared with a decrease in 16 percent since 1970. "Unemployment Rate Is Low for Residents of Farms," *Winston-Salem Journal* 1 January 1979.

¹⁸⁴ Raissmen, "Unions Gain in State."

¹⁸⁵ State reports on unemployment, known as The Greensboro High Point Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, show that between December 1977 and October 1978, the rate of unemployment dropped from 4.1 percent to 2.1 percent. "Unemployment Dropped in Northwest," *Winston-Salem Journal*. 7January 1979.

¹⁸⁶ "Unemployment Dropped in Northwest".

corporations, with their headquarters in the Winston-Salem area, were worried that too low of an unemployment level would discourage other companies from investing in an area where there might not be an adequate workforce in the community to support industry.¹⁸⁷ Not only were immigrants needed to fill positions in the new industries being developed, but there was also need for the labor in the construction of these new plants. This may also explain why Biterbo Calleja-García was first brought to Winston-Salem area by the coyote in 1978, and why he was able to keep recruiting friends and family from the *Costa Chica* to North Carolina. Without these economic conditions present, it would be unlikely that a vibrant transnational community of Afro-Mexicans would have formed in Winston-Salem.

Like many migrant groups, the development of a visible and significant transnational Afro-Mexican community did not happen overnight. Biterbo Calleja-García spent ten years working and traveling back and forth between Winston-Salem and Cuaji before he had the resources and documentation status to settle permanently in North Carolina. For years he spent his time isolated in a trailer on the tobacco farm where he was employed. It was not until these first pioneer groups of migrants were able to ascend to better positions in the workforce and enter into the outside community that transnational communities began to be formed. This explains why it was nearly 30 years after the arrival of Calleja-García before a vibrant and visible transnational community would be recognized in Winston-Salem.

¹⁸⁷ “Unemployment Dropped in Northwest”.

Post 1990's Development of Afro-Mexican Transnational Community:

Although the Afro-Mexican presence already existed in Winston-Salem for over two decades, it was not until the late 1990's that a strong and visible Afro-Mexican transnational community emerged. In general, Hispanic migration to North Carolina is a form of labor migration.¹⁸⁸ Despite the massive losses countrywide of textile jobs during the 1990's, North Carolina was a magnet for employment growth especially in the late 1990's. Much of this employment growth was driven by the heightened demand for housing, schools, and other public infrastructure, as well as other services associated with the rapid growth of the North Carolina population during that time period.¹⁸⁹ The yearly unemployment statistics for the decade of 1990 highlighted the demand for workers created by these new developments. Throughout the 1990's, North Carolina's unemployment rate was consistently below the national average. Towards the end of the decade it was either at or below 4 percent, never going above that level.¹⁹⁰ As a result of this low-level of unemployment, there was a constant demand for workers to fill the unskilled and low-skilled jobs. This incentive of the promise of work and job security, coupled with the economic and social factors in the *Costa Chica* region (poverty, natural disasters, social networks and NAFTA's destruction of small, scale, agricultural markets), created the pretext for the massive waves of migrants from the *Costa Chica* region that arrived in Winston-Salem during the end of the 1990's and beginning of the 2000's. Overall, the Latino population of

¹⁸⁸ Johnson and Kasarda 71.

¹⁸⁹ Johnson and Kasarda 73.

¹⁹⁰ 4 percent is a rate that economists consider to be indicative of a tight labor market, one in which there are more jobs than there are people to fill them. Johnson and Kasarda 73.

Forsyth County, where Winston-Salem is located, represented one of the most dynamic growing demographic sectors in all of North Carolina.¹⁹¹

Given the economic conditions in North Carolina during the 1990's, employers began to recruit Hispanic labor both domestically and abroad. They utilized various tactics to recruit this labor including advertising in Spanish language and mainstream media (newspapers, radio, and television) in immigrant gateway communities. They even went as far as to hire Hispanic labor recruitment intermediaries and establish referral networks with local Hispanic nonprofit and government agencies, such as the Mexican consulate.¹⁹²

The demand for Hispanic labor continued unabated in North Carolina even after the economic downturn following September 11, 2001.¹⁹³ This is especially true in job sectors that non-Hispanic workers are less inclined to seek employment in because of low wages and unfavorable working conditions. Between 1995 and 2005, North Carolina added 687,579 workers to its workforce, a 22.1 percent increase. During this same period, the state's Hispanic workforce expanded by 241,602, a 431 percent increase. Hispanics now represented an astounding 35.1 percent of North Carolina's overall workforce increase.¹⁹⁴ These statistics

¹⁹¹ Official estimates from the 2000 census places their numbers at 16,043, or roughly 8.6 percent of the county's total population of over 185,000.

¹⁹² K.D. Johnson-Webb, *Recruiting Hispanic Labor: Immigrants in Non-Traditional Areas* (New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2003).

¹⁹³ Johnson and Kasarda 73.

¹⁹⁴ The construction industry contained the largest increase in Hispanic workers (111,630) and today Hispanics account for nearly a third of all construction workers in the state. In 2005, nearly two thirds of all Hispanics in the state were employed in only four employment sectors: construction (42.2 percent), wholesale and retail trade (11.5 percent), manufacturing (10.7 percent) and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (9.2 percent). U.S. Bureau of Labor

demonstrate the dependency North Carolina employers had for Hispanic labor at the turn of the century and the ease with which migrants filled these labor demands.

Employers went as far as to publicly denounce anti-immigrant legislation and looked for ways to gain documentation for their illegal workers.¹⁹⁵ This proves how dependent the industry in Winston-Salem was on securing cheap, expendable immigrant labor. In the beginning of the 21st century, workers from other countries increasingly filled the job needs in the Winston-Salem area. These jobs included mostly unskilled positions that attracted migrants from Mexico and other areas in Latin America.¹⁹⁶ According to an article published in the local *Business Journal*, many of the local employers in the area had “struggled over the...years with a lack of available workers. Some local companies say the growing ranks of immigrant workers have made the difference between whether or not they can stay in business and fulfill their commitments.”¹⁹⁷ The article also points to the tight job market in the local hospitality industry. Mo Milani, the executive vice president of the hospitality division for Koury Corp in 2001 told reporter Deanna Thompson "God bless 'em, they save us."¹⁹⁸ With the tight job market and increased competition locally in the hospitality industry, Milani declared that it was hard to find front desk, housekeeping, banquet, restaurant and other workers for Koury's Sheraton Greensboro Hotel, Joseph S. Koury Convention Center, Park Lane Hotel and Grandover Resort. If not for the

Statistics, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2005. “Top Ten Occupation for North Carolina Hispanics by Gender, 2005.”

¹⁹⁵ Deanna Thompson, “Some employers are wary of new legislation regarding illegal aliens,” *The Business Journal* 19 Feb 2001.

¹⁹⁶ Deanna Thompson, “Labor Saviors: Foreign-born Worker Fill the Gaps,” *The Business Journal* Feb 19 2001.

¹⁹⁷ Thompson “Labor Saviors.”

¹⁹⁸ Thompson “Labor Saviors.”

company's immigrant workers, representing about 26 countries, "We'd be locked up, and go home," he said during the interview. "I'm serious."¹⁹⁹ The mentality with which Mo Milani addresses migrant workers is very significant. It demonstrates Winston-Salem employers' symbiotic relationship with, and dependence on, migrant laborers. It was during this time that visible cultural and social impacts and influences of Afro-Mexican transnational migration in Winston-Salem community emerged.

During the early 2000's, the key markers of a transnational community begin to present themselves in Winston-Salem neighborhoods. Some markers found in the Afro-Mexican transnational community in Winston-Salem include: the emergence of Spanish mediums of communication, Spanish language advertisements, shifting businesses, and the emergence of Hispanic community and religious organizations. Before the 1980's signs of Spanish businesses were absent from the records kept on minority businesses in Winston-Salem. The Sprague and Waughtown areas, which are now inhabited by the businesses and homes of migrants from the *Costa Chica*, were purely African American zones. Hispanic migration into the area has stimulated a redevelopment of community space.

In Winston-Salem, most Mexican immigrants from the *Costa Chica* live in four or five enclaves in the Waughtown and the Lakeside communities. Comprised of a number of low-income housing and apartment complexes, these communities shifted from being predominantly white in the 1950's, to being all black in the late 1960's and early 1970's, to being majority

¹⁹⁹ Thompson "Labor Savors."

Mexican today.²⁰⁰ The Lakeside apartment complex projects and the Columbia Terrace housing represent two neighborhoods that in the past 15 years have undergone an Afro-Mexican transformation. Built in the 1950's as Winston-Salem's first low-income housing project, Columbia Terrace was occupied exclusively by black families for nearly four decades. However, starting in the 1990's, increased migration shifted the housing demographics of Columbia Terrace to half Mexicans from the *Costa Chica* and half African American.²⁰¹ It appears that as Mexicans began settling in these majority African American communities, African Americans moved out to other predominately African American communities.²⁰² Evidence suggests that migrants from the *Costa Chica* tend to settle in apartment complexes with others from their specific towns. For instance, an apartment complex may consist of clusters from just two or three villages while several blocks away, the residents may originate from a different group of towns. Such differentiation results from the strong social ties that people have to their extended families and friends in Mexico as well as from the attempt to create certain comfort zones of familiarity.

Since the 1990's, there has been a visible decrease in black businesses in the areas once dominated economically and culturally by African Americans.²⁰³ Migrants from the *Costa Chica* prefer doing business in these familiar settings, where they often feel better understood

²⁰⁰ Amy Frazier and Carey Hamilton, "Where Home is No Haven; Sprawling Lakeside Apartment Complex, A Portrait of Housing in Decline," *Winston-Salem Journal* 18 August 2002.

²⁰¹ Hoppenjans and Richardson "Mexican Ways, African Roots".

²⁰² "Where? Eastern Part of Town Isn't Definable," *Winston-Salem Journal* 6 August 2002.

²⁰³ "King's Full House; King Plaza Shopping Center is Getting Three New Tenants," *Winston-Salem Journal* 12 October 2001.

linguistically, as well as culturally.²⁰⁴ As such, they have a strong tendency to remain secluded from other parts of society. The emergence of Mexican businesses and organizations throughout Winston-Salem indicates that a number of immigrants have achieved success in utilizing the growing Mexican demographic to their advantage entrepreneurially. As Afro-Mexican migrants from the *Costa Chica* solidify their presence in Winston-Salem, they bring with them their unique identities, tastes, customs, and habits that are beginning to reshape the Winston-Salem community.²⁰⁵ To cater to these tastes, a number of migrants opened up small businesses and restaurants in Winston-Salem where they not only serve the Winston-Salem community and hire others from their hometown, but also forge economic relationships with those back in Mexico.²⁰⁶



Ilustración 4: “Costa Chica” Variety Store in Kings Plaza, Winston-Salem, N.C.

²⁰⁴ Vaughn, Bobby and Ben Vinson III, “Unfinished Migrations: From the Mexican South to the American South – Impressions on AfroMexican Migration to North Carolina,” *Beyond Slavery: The Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Darién J Davis (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007) 231.

²⁰⁵ “Latin Music Fills the Air as Patrons Dance the Night Away in a Flashy New Cub in City’s ‘Little Mexico,’” *Winston-Salem Journal* 7 July 2002; Fran Daniel, “A True Variety Store; New Market Offers Customers a World of Choice,” *Winston-Salem Journal* 18 December 2000; Fran Daniel, “King’s Full House; King Plaza Shopping Center is Getting Three New Tenants,” *Winston-Salem Journal* 12 October 2001; A New Language; Producers, Retailers Turning Attention to Buying Power of Hispanics,” *Winston-Salem Journal* 28 April 2002.

²⁰⁶ For instance, there is the *Costa Chica* convenience store on East Sprague Street in Winston-Salem. Here much of the merchandise comes directly from the *Costa Chica*. These links further reinforce the transnational connections between the Winston-Salem community and the *Costa Chica* community. Personal Interview, Winston-Salem, July 2010.

In Winston-Salem the *Costa Chica* variety story (See illustration above) not only hires workers from the owner's hometown of San Nicolás Guerrero, but also stocks their store with merchandise from the *Costa Chica* region. Inside the store, the shelves are stacked with food, clothing, music, and religious paraphernalia from the *Costa Chica* to satisfy the large population of Afro-Mexicans residing in the area.



Ilustración 5: Chicharrones and Nopales (Cactus) being sold in Winston-Salem Market.

Not only do stores like these highlight the significance of the Afro-Mexicans population in Winston-Salem, but they are also indicative of the strong and co-dependent relationship between migrants and their communities back home. Oftentimes, the transnational relationship gets framed one dimensionally, focusing on the flow of remittances home but leaving out the

substantial flow of goods from the home country. Not only are communities back at home reliant upon the success of communities abroad, but communities abroad are also contingent upon their connections to their home community. The *Costa Chica* variety store would not be able to survive if not for the participation and cooperation of their transnational partners back in Mexico.

Another sign of a thriving transnational community is the emergence of Hispanic community organizations and mediums of communication. The emergence of Spanish radio stations and newspapers is another important marker of the development of the transnational community in Winston Salem. In the fall of 2001, the Hispanic media mogul, José Isasi, launched in the Winston-Salem area a Spanish-language newspaper and radio station, “Qué Pasa!”. Isasi had a strategic vision to follow the influx of Hispanic immigrants, offering his media services wherever they were likely to be seen and heard by large numbers of the Spanish-speaking public; Winston-Salem being one of these locations.²⁰⁷



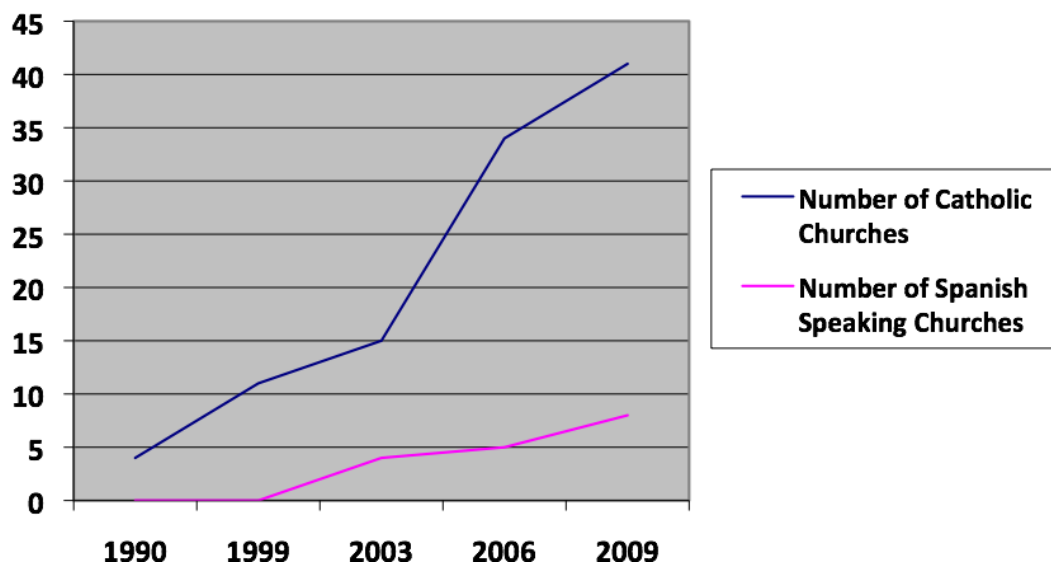
Ilustración 6: Qué Pasa! Radio Station Head Quarters

²⁰⁷Doug Campbell, “Exec launches Hispanic radio, newspaper in Triangle,” *The Business Journal* 10 December 2001.

The emergence of “Qué Pasa!” in Winston-Salem is a crucial marker of the Hispanic community formation in Winston-Salem. It marks the appearance of a Hispanic community with powerful economic capabilities. There has also been a significant emergence of Hispanic social and religious organizations, in the last ten years throughout the Winston-Salem area, which also marks the prominence of this growing community.

Migrants from the *Costa Chica* also bring their religious practices and beliefs with them to Winston-Salem. Within the past decade there has been an emergence of Catholic churches into an area that, for years, had been solely dominated by Baptist churches.²⁰⁸

Figure 1: Growth of Spanish Speaking Churches in Winston-Salem²⁰⁹



²⁰⁸ Although the majority of Spanish speaking churches in Winston-Salem are Catholic, there are a significant number of evangelical churches that now cater to the Hispanic population.

²⁰⁹ Church data is derived from listings in various years of the *Winston-Salem, North Carolina Polk City Directory*.

There are now over seven churches in the Winston-Salem area that cater to Spanish speaking and Catholic audiences. During large celebrations, such as the Day of the Dead and the day for the Virgin Guadalupe, Winston-Salem comes alive with festivities.²¹⁰ Along with the emergence of religious institutions, there is a significant surge of community organizations aimed at serving Winston-Salem's new Hispanic residents (many times in harmonization with church activism). In 2007, the Winston-Salem public library developed their Spanish Speaking services department. Not only does this branch offer services such as Spanish books and a bookmobile that visits the Hispanic communities, but it also runs community celebrations. In coordination with *Qué Pasa!*, they organize a posada every December, an annual dance performance in the fall to benefit the Hispanic community, and large celebrations for day of the Virgin of Guadalupe and Three Kings Day.²¹¹ According to Esmirna Esparza, the coordinator of Spanish-speaking services at the library, "Hundreds and hundreds of people turned out for these events. The majority of Hispanic residents are eager and excited to continue to celebrate their most cherished holidays, traditions, and dances."²¹²

Another important indication of the recent surge in the Hispanic workforce in Winston-Salem is the shift of labor unions in the region. As discussed earlier in this chapter, before the 21st century, the unions present in the Winston-Salem area were predominately African American, as the majority of workers were African American. The transition from unions that targeted an

²¹⁰ "Sponsorships grow for Winston-Salem, N.C., Hispanic festival," *Winston-Salem Journal* 30 June 2005.

²¹¹ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (17 January 2011).

²¹² Ibid.

American workforce to unions that targeted a Mexican and Hispanic workforce underscores the emergence of a dominant Hispanic farm labor source in the area. The historic trajectory of the Farm Labor Organizing committee (FLOC) and their arrival to the North Carolina/ Winston-Salem areas in the 1990's emphasizes the scope of the Mexican migrant community.

FLOC was founded in Toledo, Ohio, in 1967 by Baldemar Velasquez²¹³ and was concurrent with the civil rights movement and the farm labor movement in California.²¹⁴ FLCO is modeled along the same lines as the UFW. They subscribe to a philosophy that includes securing labor rights as the main solution to farm workers' problems with an emphasis on non-violence.²¹⁵ In the attempt to better serve its members, FLOC functions transnationally, opening up offices in various spots throughout Mexico to aid migrants in obtaining worker visas and secure, safe jobs. Initially their campaigns were focused towards tomato growers in Lucas County, Ohio but eventually spread from the Midwest to the Southeast, following the large flow of migrants into these areas.

1967	FLOC is founded and leads strikes in Northwestern Ohio
1976	FLOC is called in to direct strike in Warren, Indiana
1981	FLOC organizes Campbell's workers in Texas and Florida areas.
1984	FLOC organizes Ohio and Michigan Vlastic cucumber workers.
1990-1991	FLOC organizes Dean's pickle workers first in Ohio and Michigan then in Texas and Florida.
1991	FLOC appears in North Carolina for the first time to organize cucumber pickers and pickle processing workers.

²¹³ As a migrant worker who had worked in the fields since he was six years old, Velasquez led his first strike at the age of 12. Franklin, "Farm Workers' Group Pushes for Better Pay, Rights," *Chicago Tribune* 8 April 2006.

²¹⁴ W.K. Barger and Ernesto M. Reza, *The Farm Labor Movement in the Midwest* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994) 52-54.

²¹⁵ Ibid 54.

1998	FLOC announced a boycott of <u>Mount Olive Pickle Company</u> , the major pickle processor in North Carolina.
September 16, 2004	FLOC signed a collective bargaining agreement with Mount Olive and the growers. More than 6,000 of the state's 10,000 <u>guest workers</u> joined FLOC, boosting the union's membership to more than 23,000. ²¹⁶
2006-Present	FLOC began its campaign against <u>R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company</u> . The goal of the new campaign was to put pressure on <u>Big Tobacco</u> executives to change its abusive procurement system.

Ilustración: Chart of the historical development of FLOC.²¹⁷

The arrival of FLOC into North Carolina and the Winston-Salem area during the late 1990's to present is an important marker of the extent of the Hispanic population growth in the region.

Prior to the late 1990's FLOC was not present in the state arguably because the region, at this point, was not home to the large number of migrants that it is today. As described earlier in this chapter, the largest flow of migrants into the Winston-Salem area accrued in the early 2000's.

The arrival of FLOC in Winston-Salem in 2006 is not coincidental. It was a direct result of the quantity of migrants residing and working in the area, and their desire to organize and participate in a union that directly represented their needs and concerns as migrants both in the United States and in Mexico.

Effects of Afro-Mexican Migration in Winston-Salem:

Overall, migration from the *Costa Chica* region of Mexico to Winston-Salem, North Carolina is resulting in the reshaping of community demographics and characteristics. The recent

²¹⁶ Franklin, "Farm Workers' Group Pushes for Better Pay, Rights." *Chicago Tribune*; Sengupta, "Farm Union Takes Aim At a Big Pickle Maker," *New York Times* 26 October 2000; Greenhouse, "North Carolina Growers' Group Signs Union Contract for Mexican Workers," *New York Times* 17 September 2004.

²¹⁷ Dates and events for chart are derived from Barger and Reza 45-98; Kristin Collins. "Farm union targets RJR." *News & Observer*. October 27, 2007.

surges of migrants into the region in the past 10 years can be attributed to the favorable economic opportunities present in the Winston-Salem-based industries. These conditions made it possible for such a large number of migrants to successfully find employment in Winston-Salem. Over the last decade the Afro-Mexican community in Winston-Salem developed at unprecedented levels. This development is marked by the appearance and growth of expressions of Mexican transnationalism. This includes the development of majority Mexican communities, such as those found on Waghntown Street in Winston-Salem. In this area there are numerous expressions and characteristics of a vibrant transnational Mexican community, including the development of Spanish media sources, Spanish speaking Catholic churches, Mexican businesses, and social organization and unions aimed at aiding the Latino population.

The influence of Afro-Mexicans from the *Costa Chica* in the development of a Latino community in Winston-Salem is undeniable. There are shops with names associated with the *Costa Chica* region that sell merchandise, food, clothing and other services distinctly from the region. Bobby Vaughn estimated that nearly 80 percent of the Hispanic population in Winston-Salem is from the Afro-Mexican regions of the *Costa Chica*.²¹⁸ With such high percentages of Afro-Mexicans in Winston-Salem, it is inevitable that there be constant interactions between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans.

Mexican racial discourse makes forming positive, long lasting and stable relationships between Afro-Mexicans and Afro-Mexicans difficult. As discussed earlier, Mexico's racial

²¹⁸ Hoppenjans and Richardson, "Mexican Ways, African Roots."

discourse of *Mestizaje* marks blackness as foreign to Mexico and, as a result, Afro-Mexicans find it hard to find common ground between themselves and African Americans. Further impeding strong coalitions between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans, are the negative perceptions of blackness that are common throughout Mexico. Negative images and characterizations of blackness not only offend African Americans, but also make Afro-Mexicans reluctant to acknowledge their historic ties to African Americans.

In the Winston-Salem community, as well as in other neighborhoods throughout the country, Mexicans and blacks live and work side-by-side; a condition that often creates serious tension between the two ethnic groups. The following chapter will discuss Afro-Mexican relations with their African American neighbors in Winston-Salem, and how these interactions influence Afro-Mexicans' perceptions of their own "black" identity. In Winston-Salem, the tensions between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans inspired a new approach to uniting the two groups. Through educational and community awareness initiatives that focus on the African roots of Mexicans, educators and community leaders in Winston-Salem are directly challenging the soundness of Mexico's *mestizo* discourse.

Chapter 4

“Are They With Us or Against Us?” Afro-Mexicans and African American-Latino Relations

“I am ‘Blacksican’, not African” responded Magdaleno Salinas, a.k.a. “DJ Negro” when prompted to discuss his racial origins. An undocumented migrant from the *Costa Chica* of Guerrero, DJ Negro’s racial perceptions offer interesting insights into how the racial discourse of *mestizaje* results in Afro-Mexican disinterest in the greater African Diaspora.



Illustration 7: Magdaleno Salinas aka DJ Negro

As his name suggests, DJ Negro’s pride in his black identity was undeniable; however, he did not associate this black identity with African roots. Instead, he stressed repeatedly that he “does not consider himself in any sense part African.” As a consequence of the neglect in the Mexican system of education to teach Afro-Mexican history, he has no consciousness of the history of slavery in Mexico and, as a result, identifies as a part of the larger Latino identity. The extent to which DJ Negro removed Africanness and African ancestry from his “blacksican” identity is alarming in that it makes a much greater statement about how the stigmas and stereotypes associated with Africa and blackness in Mexico have discouraged Afro-Mexicans from

exhibiting pride in their ancestry. Afro-Mexicans' desire to disassociate themselves from blackness generates tension, conflict and misunderstanding between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans. "Other than Hip-Hop, I share nothing in common with African Americans," said DJ Negro. "I am Latino not an Afro-descendant...this will never change."²¹⁹

The racial ideology in Mexico leads Afro-Mexicans to become separated from their African ancestry; in turn influencing the relationships Afro-Mexicans share with their African American neighbors. Stereotypes and perceptions of blackness are propagated by representations in the media and cartoons throughout Mexico today. These perceptions are then manifested in the United States, making alliance-building efforts difficult. The 2007 controversy over a Mexican cartoon character called *Memin Pinguin* exemplifies the barriers that exist between African American and Mexican coalition building attempts.



Illustration 8: *Memin Pinguin* Cartoon

²¹⁹ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (July 2010).

Mexicans' defense of *Memin*, an overtly racist depiction of blacks, is a direct consequence of a homogenizing *mestizaje* discourse; this same discourse makes it nearly impossible for African Americans and Afro-Mexicans to find common ground. Like many communities throughout the United States, Winston-Salem shares many of the same problematic characteristics of Mexican-African American relations including misunderstanding, miscommunication, racism, and economic and political competition. These economic and racial tensions between African Americans and Mexicans are exhibited in court cases and in the writings of both African Americans and Mexicans that date back almost a century. These same tensions are also visible in newspaper articles and recent interviews and surveys from Long Island and Winston-Salem. This data offers important insights into the origins of much of today's tensions between African Americans and Mexicans. Despite these formidable challenges, the significant Afro-Mexican community in Winston-Salem is inspiring government and community leaders, and the local school district to create a new approach to using community engagement and curriculum reform to inspire dialogue between the two groups; bridging the gap between the two minority groups that, if successful, can serve as a model for other communities throughout the country.

"Aquí No Hay Racismo": Mestizaje, the *Memin Pinguin* Controversy, and Transborder Racism:

As described in chapter one, negatively racialized sentiments were inspired by the ideology of *mestizaje* that rendered blackness as undesirable, inferior, and contrary to progress. In an attempt to distance themselves from the stigma attached to a black identity, Afro-Mexicans

tend to not describe themselves as negro (black) and instead developed a rich vocabulary to describe their various skin shades and physical features. The color black is embedded with a long history tied to the negative connotations of slavery and black inferiority. Thus, Afro-Mexicans separated themselves from these negative associations and identified most commonly with the term *Moreno*. Chapter one also described how the mestizo or cosmic race myth allows for racism towards blacks to exist throughout Mexico. It is a commonly held belief that in a racially mixed homogenous society, like Mexico, racism cannot exist. This popularly held myth about the superiority of Mexican society's racial attitudes gives Mexican people a veil to disguise the overt and obvious racisms that persist towards people of African descent. The invisibility of Afro-Mexicans in Mexican society and the negative classification of blackness allows Mexican racism towards blacks to be considered harmless and persist unquestioned by most, including Afro-Mexicans themselves.

The representations of African Americans in Mexican popular culture, literature, and politics continue to play an important role in the distribution, acceptance, and maintenance of the “negative negro”²²⁰. The discourse throughout Mexico continuously reproduced the negative portrayals of blacks through the cultural and social mediums. Mexican television networks show delinquent, violent and impoverished representations of blacks, while commodities have labels such as *el negrito*, showing black inferiority, or *cabanista* projecting the black person as a troublemaker. Such discourses reproduce, reconstruct, and spread racial stereotyping in ways that allow such views to become integrated into part of everyday life.²²¹ What many Mexicans on the street deem as just harmless jokes, are really manifestations of racial stereotypes that were

²²⁰ Githiora 178.

²²¹ Githiora 179.

once prevalent when anti-black racism was the national policy. Unfortunately, negative connotations of blacks are visible throughout almost all parts of Mexican society and hinder the possibility of unity between Mexican migrants and African Americans.

Representations of blacks in popular culture further validate the idea of the foreignness of blackness within Mexico. This sentiment is highlighted by the recent controversy surrounding the Mexican government's circulation of the commemorative *Memin Pinguin* postage stamps.



Illustration 9: *Memin* Postage Stamps

The stamp was created in 2005 as a commemoration of artist Yolanda Vergas Dulche's 1940's popular character, *Memin*.²²² *Memin* was drawn with the exaggerated features used to portray blacks in that era (i.e. huge lips, an exaggeratedly broad, flat nose, and little hair).²²³ When publicly celebrated by the Mexican postal service in the 21st century, *Memin*'s simian appearance provoked the fury of many civil rights activists in the United States including Jesse Jackson²²⁴, who condemned the stamps as racist. Leaders of the NAACP, the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, the

²²² Marco Polo Hernández Cuevas, "Memin Pinguin: uno de los comix mexicanos más populares como instrumento para codificar al negro," *Afro-Latino Review* 22, no.1 (2003): 52.

²²³ Githiora 180

²²⁴ Darryl Fears, "Mexican Stamps Racist, Civil Rights Leaders Say," *Washington Post* 30 June 2005.

National Council of La Raza and the National Urban League denounced the image in strong terms, calling it the worst kind of black stereotype. They called the stamp a classic "pickaninny" -- a black child, oafish and with apelike features. "It is offensive," said Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, who called on Mexican President Vicente Fox to apologize and stop the circulation of the stamps and even vowed to lead a demonstration at Mexican consulates if Fox did not do so. Critics pointed to how such depictions helped Mexicans "build mental models of ethnic situations and generalize these to general negative attitude schemata or prejudices that embody the basic opinions about relevant minority groups."²²⁵ However, Mexican leaders disagreed saying that the cartoon boy was simply a harmless and much beloved fictional character in Mexican society.

In defense of the *Memin Pinguin* carton, Professor José Antonio Aguilar Rivera wrote an editorial in the newspaper *El Universal* on July 2, 2005 highlighting *Memin*'s misinterpretation by the U.S. critics.²²⁶ In his editorial, Aguilar Rivera explained how such exchanges between Mexico and the United States shed light on the increasing divergences of beliefs between the United States and Mexico.²²⁷ Aguilar reiterated the common belief that in Mexico, because of Mexicans' inclusive and superior racial ideologies, there is no racism like that seen in the United States. He writes:

In recent weeks we have had two tests on it. The first was the statement made by President Fox regarding the jobs of Mexican immigrants in the United States. In Mexico the word "black" does not have the same connotations as in the U.S., where the word black was always a derogatory term ... The image, which for the

²²⁵ Van Dijk, "Mediating Racism The Role of the Media in the Reproduction of Racism," *Language, Power, and Ideology: Studies in Political Discourse*, ed. Ruth Wodak (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Pub, 1989) 202.

²²⁶ José Antonio Aguilar Rivera, "Memin Penguin," *El Univesal* 2 July 2005.

²²⁷ Ibid

Mexicans of that era evokes childhood memories, for Americans only represents a pickaninny, the stereotypical portrayal of a black boy with ape-like features from the era of Jim Crow. Are they right? The point is not "objectivity" of representation, but if at the time the character was seen as a demeaning manifestation, like the word negro and pickaninny in the U.S.²²⁸

Mexican intellectuals and leaders, like Aguilar, purport the innocence of *Memin*, urging critics to remember that to blacks in Mexico, "may not have been offended by the cartoon during its time. The nice and naughty character was not interpreted as a way to denigrate blacks."²²⁹ According to Aguilar, *Memin* is a beloved and celebrated icon of Mexican popular culture that is not offensive or degrading to blacks in Mexico.²³⁰ He declares the response of African-Americans as exaggerated because of the different notions of blackness in the United States and in Mexico. The response expressed by Professor Aguilar in his editorial serves as a useful demonstration of the foreignness of blackness in Mexico.

Like many Mexicans, it is obvious that Professor Aguilar strongly and decisively adheres to the limiting concept of *mestizaje* in his understanding of race relations in Mexico. His opinion

²²⁸ Translation by Author. *En las últimas semanas hemos tenido dos pruebas de ello. La primera fueron las declaraciones del presidente Fox sobre los trabajos que realizan los inmigrantes mexicanos en Estados Unidos. En México la palabra "negro" no tiene las mismas connotaciones que en EU, donde la palabra Negroe fue siempre un término denigrante... La imagen, que en los mexicanos de esa época evoca recuerdos de niñez, para los estadounidenses no es sino un pickaninny, el retrato estereotipado de un niño negro con rasgos simiescos de la era de Jim Crow. ¿Tienen razón? El punto no es la "objetividad" de la representación, sino si en su momento el personaje fue visto como una manifestación denigrante como la palabra Negroe y los pickaninnys en EU. Ibid.*

²²⁹ Translation by Author. *Quizá no se haya sentido ofendida por la caricatura en su momento. El simpático y travieso personaje no fue interpretado como una forma de denigrar a los negros Ibid.*

²³⁰ When shown an example of the Memin Stamp, the majority of Mexicans interviewed both in the United States and Mexico, responded that they did not think the stamp was offensive. Personal Interviews, Oaxaca Mexico (Fall 2010); Personal Interviews, Winston Salem (July 2010)

reflects how the concept of *mestizaje* blinded the wider Mexican society to what is undeniably racist. Mexicans remain largely uncritical and unaware of the racist stratagem by believing that the racial inequalities embedded into Mexican society by the colonial caste system disappeared in the melting pot of *mestizaje*.²³¹ Professor Aguilar, in his response to the *Memin* controversy fails to recognize the negative consequences of *mestizaje* discourse. By theorizing the Mexican nation as *mestizo* (a racially mixture), *mestizaje* removed the perspective required to critically examine how the dissolution of the caste system did not eliminate racism. Although *mestizo* discourse claims to create a racially just and equal society, in reality it makes it almost impossible for African descendants, as well as indigenous groups throughout Mexico, to confront their historically disenfranchised and marginalized status throughout Mexico. Attempts by both Afro-Mexicans and indigenous to mobilize behind a specific identity is viewed as anti-Mexican; an attack on the *mestizo* identity that all Mexicans are supposed to share. The discourse creates a veil of unity and equality that masks the unique needs of minority groups throughout Mexico.

As an expression of Mexican popular culture, *Memin Pinguin* represents the failure of *mestizaje* to successfully engage Mexicans in a discourse acknowledging the multi-ethnic population in Mexico. The fact that Mexicans, like Professor Aguilar, were comfortably able to assert that Afro-Mexicans were not “offended...at the time” illustrates the depth of the historical negation of a positive Afro-Mexican self-identification. Having erased the African from the Mexican national identity, *Mestizaje* created a crisis of belonging and identity among the Afro-Mexican population, and it made associating with a black identity undesirable for Afro-Mexicans.

²³¹ This excludes many indigenous and Mexican activists who also challenge the belief that Mexican society is free of racial prejudice and discrimination. Banks 199-234.

Memin Pinguin is not unique in the personification of the black person; identical representations can be seen across the spectrum in present-day popular culture. Another manifestation of negative black stereotypes is the popular children icon Cri Cri the Little Singing Cricket (*cri cri el grilito cantor*). Cri Cri sings a song entitled the “Little Black Watermelon Man” (“*Negrito Sandia*”). The song warns children about the consequences of using dirty language by basing the lyrics of a black man who had a foul mouth from the time he first learned to speak. Another popular doll icon called “Little Black Dancing Man” (“*Negrito Bailarin*”) features song lyrics that draw particular attention to the stereotypical colonial-like way blacks were portrayed. The dancing doll is referred to as having bad behavior (“*pero que se porta mal*”), as well as being lazy (“*perezoso, mueva los pies*”).²³² These cultural representations perpetuate the view of the black person as he was depicted in the colonial past, and illuminates the depth of the historical negation of a positive, black identification.

Historic Overview of Mexican- African American Relations:

The consequences of the negation of a positive black identification in Mexican society are visible in the transnational arena. Many Mexicans are reluctant to settle in areas that are highly populated by African Americans and show little, to no interest in developing friendships with their African American neighbors. The recent prominence of turbulent fights, disagreements, and competition between African Americans and Latinos should act as a reminder that the racial stereotypes bred in Mexico have transborder consequences. Throughout

²³² Gabriel Orozco, “La Página no oficial de Cri Cri el Grillito Cantor: Francisco Gabilondo Soler,” <http://www.cri-cri.net/Canciones.html>.

the history of Mexican migration to the United States, evidence points to some Mexican American attempt to remain separate from blacks in an effort to self-identify as whiter.²³³

Attempting to disassociate themselves from African Americans, many Mexicans adopted views associated with white supremacists including anti-black sentiments. For example, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was formed in Texas in 1929 to serve the Mexican American community and incorporated the goal of establishing a white identity for Mexicans into its legal strategy.²³⁴ In 1936, a LULAC official encouraged members to “tell these Negroes that we are not going to permit our manhood and womanhood to mingle with them on an equal social basis.”²³⁵ Some Mexican American newspapers published articles with titles such as, “*conserva su raza blanca*,” preserve your white race, and “*segregacion es libertad*,” segregation is liberty.²³⁶ Such papers encouraged their readers to join the Spanish Organization of White People and criticized organizations that “consistently promoted integration to raise the equality, intelligence, and superiority of the black race.”²³⁷ Such statements should not be analyzed without taking into consideration the racist undertones of *mestizaje* that some Mexican migrants were most likely familiar with and brought with them from Mexico.

²³³ Helen Marrow, “New Immigrant Destinations and the American Colour Line,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 32.6 (2009); Neil Foley, “Becoming Latino: Mexican American and the Faustian Pact with Whiteness,” *Reflections 1997: New Directions in Mexican American Studies*, ed. Neil Foley (Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1998)

²³⁴ Rather than challenging discrimination head-on, LULAC consistently argued that no grounds existed for discrimination against Mexicans because Mexicans were white.

Ian Haney-López, *Racism on trial the Chicano fight for justice* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap of Harvard UP, 2003) 76.

²³⁵ Foley 54.

²³⁶ Foley 63.

²³⁷ Ian Haney-López, *Racism on Trial the Chicano Fight for Justice* (New York: Belknap Pub., 2004) 4.

African Americans point to hard evidence to defend their belief that some Latinos hold certain stereotypes of blacks and that Latinos attempt to distance themselves from blacks in their struggle to advance in U.S. society. Lawsuits filed by black employees of the Del Taco Corporation appear to provide empirical evidence that a few Latinos have negative conceptualizations of blacks. The complaints filed in the lawsuit are astounding and contain a list of 42 causes of action against the Del Taco Corp; the worst of them being based on race discrimination by Latino employees against black employees.²³⁸

During the scope of Plaintiff Moore's employment, Defendants' Latino employees used racial slurs and racial derogatory statements against him and his girlfriend Irene Rivera, a Del Taco employee at Restaurant No. 152. Defendants' Latino employees called Plaintiff Moore a "Nigger" and/or "Mayetta" (sic), which means a "nigger" in Spanish. Defendants' Latino employees further called Plaintiff Moore a monkey and told his girlfriend, who was pregnant by him, that she was "carrying a monkey's baby."²³⁹

Instances like the case above, which were most likely well publicized, help to explain why some African Americans may resist forming meaningful and lasting coalitions with Mexicans. Although the majority of Mexican migrants do not hold these strong opinions towards African Americans, the publicity of these cases creates mistrust and tension between the two minority groups.

The majority of African Americans interviewed in Huntington, New York are also fearful that Latinos threaten their economic security by taking their jobs and benefiting from government programs directed towards minorities. In a Pew survey taken in 2006, more blacks than whites said that they or a family member did not get a job because their employer hired an

²³⁸*Ronnie Patton et al. v. Del Taco, Inc. et al.*, Los Angeles County Superior Court (Unlimited Jurisdiction), no. BC 269 863, First Amended Complaint.

²³⁹*Ronnie Patton et al. v. Del Taco, Inc. et al* 47.

immigrant worker.²⁴⁰ Many African Americans note that “Latinos won't hire African Americans because they see us as lower than them” or that employers have chosen Latino workers over them. One African American woman stated that she “applied at 7-11 five times and the owner, who was a white guy, kept telling me we'll call you, we'll call you, but he never did and he ended up hiring Latino s”.²⁴¹ Experiences and incidents like these help to explain why some African Americans resist forming meaningful and lasting coalitions with Latinos.

Competition over scarce resources generates animosity between the two minority groups and further complicates relations. In an article entitled “Blacks vs. Browns” in *The Atlantic Monthly*, Jack Miles concluded that blacks were competing more with Latinos than with any other ethnic group. He concluded that Latino immigrants did, in fact, take jobs away from blacks.²⁴² Regarding this competition Miles wrote:

If the Latinos were not around to do that [gardening, busboys, nannies, janitors, construction workers], non-black employers would be forced to hire blacks-- but they'd rather not. They trust Latinos. They fear or disdain blacks. The result is unofficial but widespread preferential hiring of Latinos-- the largest affirmative action program in the nation, and one paid for, in effect, by blacks.²⁴³

Competition over government aid also affects race relations. Many African Americans in already poor school districts believe that peers who do not speak English holds them back, and that

²⁴⁰For blacks, the growing presence of immigrant workers adds to the formidable obstacles they face in finding a job. More than three-quarters of blacks (78%) say jobs are difficult to find in their community, compared with only about half of Latinos (55%) and whites (52%). In addition, 65% of African Americans say the availability of good jobs is a “very big problem” for the country; that compares with 43% of Latinos and just 31% of whites. Carroll Doherty, “*Attitudes Toward Immigration: In Black and Whit*,” *Pew Research Center* 26 April 2006.

²⁴¹ Personal Interview, Huntington, NY (19 Oct. 2009).

²⁴² Nick Corona Vaca, *Presumed alliance the unspoken conflict between Latinos and Blacks and what it means for America* (New York: Rayo, 2004) 12.

²⁴³ Jack Miles, “Blacks vs. Browns,” *The Atlantic Monthly* October 1992: 53.

money for better educational facilities gets spent on bilingual teachers. “It just infuriates me that our children's education has to be shortchanged for a subculture that, in many instances, doesn't want to assimilate”, said Sammie Whiting-Ellis, an educational consultant from D.C.²⁴⁴ Many African Americans fear the impact that immigrants from Latin America have on their job stability and access to government programs aimed at helping historically disadvantaged minorities. As one African American who works at a Long Island health center points out:

I see that they [Latinos] are offered more opportunities than I would be. I see that they do get more favoritism and they are offered more opportunities than I would be...It is amazing how they get these nice houses and benefit from programs that should be helping us African Americans. They have been displacing and taking the homes and jobs of African Americans that are already here. I have seen them in their groups and they are taking everything away from us...they have all the stores and they just hire their own and this is all. They leave us jobless.²⁴⁵

Other responses to the Long Island survey confirm that a large percentage of African Americans hold these views.²⁴⁶ African Americans and Latinos disagree to the greatest extent regarding the impact of immigrants in the United States and which minority group is benefiting the greatest from government programs.²⁴⁷ Many Latinos believe that government policies created to help

²⁴⁴Keyonna Summers, “Black Leaders Oppose Alien Amnesty Plan,” *Washington Times* 24 May 2006.

²⁴⁵ Personal Interview, Huntington, NY (10 Oct. 2009).

²⁴⁶ Personal Interviews, Huntington, NY (Fall 2009).

²⁴⁷ The survey results indicated that there were specific topics and questions that generated the greatest variant in answers between African Americans and Latino immigrants. In the survey, each group was asked identical questions regarding controversial aspects and common stereotypes surrounding the topic of immigration. The questions with the greatest divergence of answers between African American and Latino immigrants were as follows:

- 1) Government programs for minorities favor African Americans?
- 2) African Americans have too much power?
- 3) Immigrants take jobs from African American?
- 4) It is ok for people to speak Spanish in the workplace?
- 5) What is the impact of immigration in the United States?
- 6) Anglos favor African Americans/Anglos favor Latinos?
- 7) African Americans have more opportunities than Latinos?

minorities primarily benefit African Americans.²⁴⁸ On the other hand, African Americans feel a sense of ownership over government benefits because of the struggles of the 1960's and believe that Latinos have benefited from African Americans' hard-fought battles for civil rights.²⁴⁹ In particular, there is growing resentment among a group of African Americans towards Latinos who they believe benefit from government programs created for African Americans such as affirmative action.

Certain African Americans perceive that Latinos did not suffer from discrimination to the same degree and in the same manner as they have (slavery, Jim Crow, segregation, lynching). As such, they believe that Latinos are not entitled to the same governmental programs and benefits as blacks. Many African Americans tend to forget or are unaware that Mexicans suffered equally from Jim Crowism and segregated schools, and many do not realize that Latinos played leading roles in the civil rights movement. In other words, Latinos are not simply benefiting from the struggles and battles fought by blacks.²⁵⁰ For example, the discrimination that Mexican Americans faced in California and Texas led to their mobilization and litigation that predates the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by almost a decade.²⁵¹ Mexicans filed lawsuits against housing segregation, staged strikes at plants and factories for better working conditions, and

For all of these questions and statements, the level of agreement/average response to the question varied tremendously between the African American responses and the Latino responses. Such answers help to further substantiate the claim that relations between the two minority groups are shaped by economic incentives and competition for scant government handouts.

²⁴⁸ Latino university faculty and students, in general, believe that affirmative action has served African American colleges and student body more than it has served Latinos. Tatcho Mindiola Jr., Yolanda Flores Niemann, and Nestor Rodriguez, *Black-Brown Relations and Stereotypes* (Austin: University of Texas P, 2002) 27.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Vaca 62.

²⁵¹ *Mendez v. Westminster* and *Delgado v. Bastrop Independent School District* were both landmark cases in the Mexican American struggle for civil rights. Vaca 63.

fought for unions and civil rights long before the 1960's. However, some African Americans such as Ted Hayes, a leader in the black anti-immigrant movement, remain uneducated to the history of Mexican activism. Hayes told interviewers in the Fall of 2006 that:

If you allow illegal invaders to take something from you, then you done lost everything that you stand for. And then the civil rights struggle — all the people who were lynched and beat and shot and murdered and whapped and dogged and sat upon and water hosed, which, by the way, no Latinos were out there. Not one of the Mexicans came up here and tried to fight for black folks' freedom. They just sat there and watched that mess. They even had slaves themselves. So if we let them just have our country, we will have betrayed Martin Luther King and all of the civil rights movement.²⁵²

African Americans, such as Ted Hayes, who claim sole credit for the civil rights victories of the 1960's, fail to recall the gains and support that Latinos gave blacks during the civil rights movement.²⁵³ Through this mindset, many African Americans have become ardent supporters of anti-immigration legislation across the country and have opted to not only verbally attack illegal immigration from Latin America, but to take the fight one step further to form and join anti-immigrant groups; further impeding the possibility of a strong coalition between the two groups.

²⁵² Brentin Mock, "Smokescreen," *Intelligence Report: The Southern Poverty Law Center* (Fall 2006).

²⁵³ The battle Mexican farm workers waged in the 1950's and 60's against growers for higher wages, union and civil rights was just as vital to the success of labor organizing as union struggles by African Americans in the northern industries. In fact, during that time period, Dr. Martin Luther King and Cesar Chávez supported each other's struggles and held mutual admiration for one another. In 1968 Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote a telegram to Cesar Chávez that emphasized the connections and shared struggles of African Americans and Mexicans. He wrote that, "Our separate struggles are really one. A struggle for freedom, for dignity, and for humanity. ... You and your valiant fellow workers have demonstrated your commitment to righting grievous wrongs forced upon exploited people. We are together with you in spirit and determination that our dreams for a better tomorrow will be realized." Jacques E Levy and César Chávez, *César Chávez: Autobiography of La Causa* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2007) 246.

African American-Mexican Relations in Winston-Salem:

The relationship between African Americans and Mexicans in Winston-Salem mimics the indifference to outright violent characteristics that is visible throughout all of the United States. A few Latino immigrants hold negative stereotypes of blacks, and feel they have the most in common with whites. In Winston-Salem, the relationship between African Americans and Mexicans developed into an issue that needed to be addressed by the local government. In the late 1990's into the early 2000's, the relationship between African Americans and Latino immigrants was a major community issue as there were constant violent interactions between the two minority groups.²⁵⁴ As described earlier, as a result of Mexican and Latin American immigration into the Winston-Salem area, the community experienced drastic changes. The group most affected by these changes was undoubtedly the African American population which resided and worked in the same areas that were rapidly being redefined as a result of immigration. Affordable housing projects previously developed for the African-American community were being rapidly taken over by the growing Mexican immigrant community. On top of this, Mexican workers represented new competition for low-skilled and low-wage jobs that were historically filled by the African American workforce. "When I was growing up this whole areas was filled with African American businesses and families," said Rolanda, a middle-aged African American women in Winston-Salem. "All the barber-shops, salons, restaurants, and businesses belonged to us, but now it is a struggle to find a place to shop where things are in

²⁵⁴ "Persisten los problemas raciales," *La Voz de Carolina* 19 March 1998: 5.

English. Sometimes I travel twice the distance to do my shopping.”²⁵⁵ As the words of Rolanda suggest, much of the tension can be attributed to economic factors. “We have had a lot of downsizings and closings in our region,” said Wanda Allen-Abraha, director of the City’s Human Relations Department.²⁵⁶ “With the general overall downturn of the economy, I think that’s making people compete even more for jobs.” As the immigrant community grew larger, so did this sense of competition and even instances of violence between the two minority groups.

African American-Mexican street violence marked changes occurring in the area during the late 1990’s and continuing into the 21st century. In 1998, *La Voz de Carolina* covered an assault in Winston-Salem where a group of African Americans attacked a group of Mexicans who were at a local shelter. According to eyewitnesses, “the *afroamericanos* who have committed this type of act have signed their intention to get rid of the *hispanos*.” Writing with a clear bias, the author of the article then proceeded to claim that “Once Martin Luther King fought for the human rights of his own race; now they think they are untouchable.”²⁵⁷ Racial stereotyping clouds both groups’ ability to see each the other’s humanity. In Winston-Salem, the relationships between African Americans and Mexicans are defined by competition, stereotypes, and misperceptions of the other.

Winston-Salem's human-relations department investigates and mediates complaints of discrimination, and studies and promotes ways to increase positive community relations.

²⁵⁵ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (July 2010).

²⁵⁶ Hoppenjans and Richardson “Mexican Ways, African Roots.”

²⁵⁷ “Persisten los problemas raciales,” 5.

Director Wanda Allen-Abraha said that her department has heard "all kinds of misconceptions and stereotypes" about Latinos and blacks.²⁵⁸ According to Allen-Abraha, African Americans complain that Latinos get special tax breaks or are able to get business loans more easily than blacks. They say that Latinos pack too many people into one house or apartment. On the other hand, Latinos complain that African-Americans have too many children out of wedlock, are all on welfare, and resent the Latinos for taking jobs.²⁵⁹

In an attempt to bridge the gap between the two communities, the local government, in coordination with local churches began hosting annual events and discussions to bring the two communities closer together. Biannually they host an event, "Beyond Soul and Salsa," with the aim of breaking down the strong stereotypes that divide the two communities. Since its inception in June 2005, the forums have been held at churches and community centers around Winston-Salem to facilitate dialogue. Over the years, panelists have included elected officials, city and federal government officials, local religious leaders, community activists, and numerous local organizations. The topics of each forum have ranged from discussing stereotypes and misconceptions, involving African-Americans and Latinos in local elections, positive police relations, and community activism, gang prevention, challenges facing adult and student immigrants in the community, economic development and small business concerns in the African-Americans and Latino communities, diversity challenges in education, gang prevention, immigration, fair housing, the 287 (g) programs, and workplace diversity.

²⁵⁸ Hoppenjans and Richardson "Mexican Ways, African Roots."

²⁵⁹ Ibid

African Americans point out that one serious shortcoming of these programs is the disinterest of the Latino population in attending these events. In response to this, DJ Negro responded, “Yes, I believe that their churches host more events and workshops to build community relations. They often complain that they are poorly attended by us *Hispanos*, and that we are uninterested and unwilling to work with them. It is not so much that we are unwilling but, in reality, most *Hispanos* here we don’t speak English and we are more concerned with working and supporting our own families and community then building relationships with them.” As DJ Negro highlighted, the significant differences in every-day life experiences between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans, reinforced by their cultural and historical differences, prevent solidarity and coalition building between the two minority groups.

Afro-Mexican-African American Relations in Winston-Salem:

Examining Afro-Mexican interactions with African Americans, with whom they commonly share neighborhoods, provides a window into the effects of *mestizaje* discourse on Afro-Mexicans. Vaughn notes that Afro-Mexicans tend to associate exclusively with Spanish speaking people, rather than with African Americans and that “blackness in this case---is not a primary identity marker”.²⁶⁰ Perhaps this lack of interaction is because the Afro-Mexicans subscribe to stereotypes depicting African American as violent, drug addicted, and generally undesirable.²⁶¹ Afro-Mexicans are commonly mistaken for African Americans by white Americans or not believed to be true Mexicans by other Mexicans. Consequentially many Afro-Mexicans exhibit animosity towards African-Americans. “When I walk down the street everyone

²⁶⁰ Vaughn 2001 132.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

takes me to be an African-American, that is until I open my mouth to speak...it bothers me because I am proud of my *costeño* origins and hate to be categorized as someone I am not. Although we might look alike, we are very different from them.”²⁶² As where blacks are seen as foreigners, the Mexican immigrant community in the United States is equally unaware of black Mexicans. They believe Afro-Mexicans are Cubans or Dominicans, highlighting the extreme limits of nationalist conceptions of *mestizaje* for black Mexicans.²⁶³

Following in the general trends for other Latinos, the majority of Afro-Mexicans view their African American neighbors in an indifferent, to confrontational manner. They see little to no similarities or connections to African-Americans and associate solely as first a *costeño*, then as a Mexican, and finally as a Latino, never associating as an Afro-descendant. One viable explanation for this behavior is the influence of the discourse of *mestizaje*. In Mexico, Afro-Mexicans are immersed in a discourse that relegates Africanness and traits associated with it to a place of inferiority and undesirability. *Mestizaje* has erased the knowledge that Afro-Mexicans have of their African ancestry and replaced it with a discourse in which depictions of blacks in Mexico, such as a *Memin*, create perceptions of blackness that few people would want to associate with. As a result of this denial, Afro-Mexicans remain unaware of the racist ideology and imagery present throughout Mexico. In Winston-Salem, the majority of Mexicans interviewed (73%) stated that the *Memin* cartoon was not offensive to them. As a result, Afro-Mexicans attempt to distance themselves from African Americans who find the cartoon offensive and racist. Afro-Mexicans use terms such as *negro negro* or *moreno moreno* (black black) or *negro de aqui* (black from here) to define African Americans. These terms clearly distinguish African

²⁶² Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (27 July 2010).

²⁶³ *ibid*

American identity from Afro-Mexican identity. Due to their lack of knowledge of the history, Afro-Mexicans see no similarities, nor feel any connection to a greater African diaspora and to African Americans.

Although Afro-Mexicans know that they look different from other Mexicans, they have only recently begun to truly understand their heritage. The people have their own story about how blacks came to live in the Costa Chica region. Uninformed to the extent of slavery in the Costa Chica region and how their ancestors really arrived in Mexico, the story, passed down by mothers and grandmothers for generations, tells of a shipload of slaves that became shipwrecked at Punta Maldonado, a rocky beach 20 miles from Cuaji.²⁶⁴ This narrative describes how this small group of blacks sought refuge in the surrounding hot and densely wooded region and these escaped slaves formed small, isolated communities, one of the largest being Caujinicuilapa. Over generations, the slaves mixed with native Mexicans. Some people believe that the descendants of these original slaves--thought to be no more than 200 in number--now populate the entire Costa Chica.²⁶⁵ Through their interviews with Afro-Mexicans in Winston-Salem, Hoppenjans and Richardson highlight how *mestizaje* has even further alienated Afro-Mexicans from their real ancestry. In an interview, Silvestre, a teenage Afro-Mexican whose classmate mistook him for an African-American, insisted that “We’re from Aztec warriors,” are darker skinned solely due to sun exposure.²⁶⁶ Like most Afro-Mexicans in Winston-Salem, Silvestre knows nothing about the true history and experiences of his African ancestors.

²⁶⁴ Hoppenjans and Richardson, “Mexican Ways, African Roots.”

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

Mexico's mestizo racial discourse proves a major hindrance to Afro-Mexican-African American racial relations. As a result of this discourse, Afro-Mexican history is missing from discussions of Mexican identity and Afro-Mexicans and African Americans remain unaware of the commonalities that the two groups share such as common origins, struggles against slavery, and social and political disenfranchisement. Consequently, they see little common ground or common experience with which to start a dialogue. In response to this, many community leaders and educators in Winston-Salem are beginning to look towards Afro-Mexicans' history, and their shared heritage with African Americans, as the answer to successfully creating a common identity with which to build a foundation for improved relations.

Conclusion

Looking Towards the Future: Afro-Mexicans as the Key to Bridging Ethnic Relations

Originating from the *casta* system in colonial Mexico, racial discourse in Mexico has continuously impacted the lives and perceptions of Mexico's African descendant population. By framing blackness as a stigmatized and inferior trait that is foreign to Mexico, the discourse of *mestizaje* eliminated the ability for Afro-Mexicans to identify with their African roots. In effect, Afro-Mexicans are not seen as an unique ethnic minority and thus, are not able to solicit the Mexican Government for much needed resources and aid. Therefore, Afro-Mexicans' economic, political, social, and cultural marginalization can all be connected back to racial policies and discourse in Mexico.

In the United States, Mexico's racial discourse continues to influence Afro-Mexicans' lives and relations. Since Afro-Mexicans are separated from any knowledge of their African ancestry and are exposed to racist and negative characteristics of blacks while in Mexico, they are more likely to subscribe to racist perceptions and characterizations of blacks in the United States. These ideologies not only make it difficult to create strong relationships with Africans Americans, but they also, as in the case of *Memin*, pit the two ethnic groups against each other. In the words of Marta, an Afro-Mexican from the *Costa Chica* living in Winston-Salem, "here nobody even realizes that we come from the same roots. I think that if the African Americans

knew about our common history we would get along better.”²⁶⁷ Inspired by the large percentage of Afro-Mexicans in Winston-Salem, town officials and educators, view the African roots of Mexicans as the key to bridging Mexican-African American relations. Afro-Mexican and African American phenotypic characteristics place them in a unique position to initiate a dialogue and gain an understanding about each other’s history.²⁶⁸ If successful, Winston-Salem could potentially serve as the model for other similar communities nationwide, including Long Island, NY.

In 2006, the Human Relations Commission co-sponsored three art exhibitions that successfully called attention to the common heritage of many of Winston-Salem's Latino and African American residents. One featured exhibit was titled "An African Presence in Mexico: The Photographs of Romualdo Garcia and Wendy Phillips." Also on display was an exhibit "Colors of Mexico", an exhibition organized by the Museum of Anthropology at Wake Forest University, and "Going to Carolina del Norte: Narrating Mexican Migrant Experiences", an exhibition organized by the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art.²⁶⁹ Wanda Allen-Abraha, the director of human relations, said that the exhibits are part of the commission’s on-going efforts to improve relations between African Americans and Latinos in Winston-Salem. "The majority of the Latinos in Winston-Salem are descendants of African slaves who settled in

²⁶⁷ John Jackson et al, “Charting Racial Formations in the New U.S. South: Reflections on North Carolina’s Latin. African American, and Afro-Latino Relations,” *Center for Africana Studies* (Johns Hopkins, 2008) 37.

²⁶⁸ Manuel Vargas, “Bridging the Communication Gap,” *Journal of Latino Education* (October 2008) 337.

²⁶⁹ City of Winston-Salem North Carolina, “Past Events,” <http://www.cityofws.org/Home/Departments/HumanRelations/Outreach/Articles/Outreach#AfricanMexican>

Mexico," she said. "They have a common heritage with our black residents."²⁷⁰ Winston-Salem is not the first community to use Afro-Latinos as a possible link between the two communities. In Southern California, African American community activists are exploring shared racial links to build a sentiment of ethnic fraternity between African Americans and Mexicans as well.²⁷¹ Where Winston-Salem veers from the California example is in the drastic re-envisioning of the public education system, a direct result of Afro-Mexicans migration into the area.

One day during recess, Dr. Manuel Vargas from the Winston-Salem State University overheard two African American fourth graders at a social school in Winston-Salem. As the two students observed their Afro-Mexican classmates, they candidly asked each other "Are they with us or against us?"²⁷² Not surprisingly, these children were struggling to understand the suspicion, fear and, at times, hostility that their elders felt towards Mexicans. Vargas believes that if a greater sense of the African Diaspora and inter-ethnic solidarity is to develop between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans, one needs to rely upon the younger generations.²⁷³ This population of Afro-Mexican youth is learning English and interacting with African-Americans, whites, and other ethnic groups and minorities in the Winston-Salem public school system. As such, educators believe that the school environment and the educational system represent the greatest opportunity for improving minority relations. Putting these beliefs into action, Dr. Vargas developed a new curriculum to better fit the evolving needs and demographics of the Winston-Salem community.

²⁷⁰ Hoppenjans and Richardson, "Mexican Ways, African Roots."

²⁷¹ Mimi Lozano, "Black Latino Connection," *Somos Primos* (23 February 2005).

²⁷² Personal interview, Winston-Salem (July 2010).

²⁷³ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (July 2010).

The proposal is to develop a curriculum in Latin-American studies with an emphasis on Afro-Latinos that would “afford the opportunity to future k-12 schoolteachers to gain knowledge about the history, culture, geography, and traditions of these Afro-descendants.”²⁷⁴ The initiative involves the University’s Department of Education, whose main responsibility is to prepare future school teachers, as well as the Department of Social Studies, whose responsibility is to deliver academic content for teachers who opted to become social studies teachers. This knowledge is the first step in transforming the disposition of classroom teachers and initiating a systematic approach for a community dialogue between African Americans and Afro-Latinos.²⁷⁵

Dr. Vargas’ interdisciplinary curriculum development initiative was originally funded by the United Negro College Fund/Special Programs Corporation and lays the foundation for schoolteachers to learn about Afro-Latinos through two courses, “African Presence in the Americas” and “African Presence in Mexico”. With these courses, Vargas aims to give educators the tools to successfully understand and teach about Afro-descendants from Latin America. Learning about Afro-Mexican history will aid African Americans in understanding how the unique conditions and history of blackness in Mexico created a racial experience very different from what African Americans in the United States experienced. This information is helpful in explaining why, to the dismay of many African Americans, Afro-Mexicans disassociate with their African ancestry and do not see Mexicans’ depictions of Africans, such as *Memin*, as offensive.

²⁷⁴ Vargas 337.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

Although the curriculum initiative is very new, Dr. Vargas claims that the classes are already having a definite impact on the faculty and students. Teachers from the area are shocked when they are educated about the African presence in Mexico. “I get asked time and time again ‘why wasn’t I taught this history of Mexico,’” said Vargas. “It profoundly impacts the way people view and associate with their Afro-Latino neighbors.”²⁷⁶ This knowledge is crucial for educators in Winston-Salem who are facing the changes in demographics every day in their classrooms. Through these educational initiatives, there is hope that the next generations of Afro-Mexicans and African Americans will exhibit a greater understanding of each other’s histories and commonalities, thus breaking down the negative stereotypes and perceptions that pit the two groups against each other. Afro-Mexican migration into Winston-Salem is creating the outlet for crucial discussions of the history and experience of Afro-Mexicans; a dialogue, that for nearly two centuries, was deemed irrelevant and absent from Mexican and United States discourses of race.

Winston-Salem’s new educational curriculum and community events that aim to raise awareness towards the county’s new Afro-descendant population, make it nearly impossible for second and third generation Afro-Mexicans to deny their associations with African Americans like first generation Afro-Mexicans did. These education initiatives and community events directly challenge the *mestizo* discourse on race that first generation Afro-Mexicans migrants subscribed to. As second and third generation Afro-Mexican youth grow up in a drastically different environment with drastically different racial connections than their parents and grandparents, their trajectory of assimilation into Winston-Salem society economically, socially,

²⁷⁶ Personal Interview, Winston-Salem (July 2011).

and culturally will offer important insights into the role and strength of racial hierarchy in the U.S. South. Whereas first generation Afro-Mexicans arrived to Winston-Salem with racial perceptions strongly rooted in Mexico's homogenizing *mestizaje* ideology, later generations will grow up with the knowledge of their black ancestry. It is possible that racial hierarchies in the U.S. will create a divergence between *mestizo*-Mexican and Afro-Mexican immigrants; one where the groups split into different communities and socio-economic standing. In a society where racial discourse forces African-descendants to occupy a specific category within the U.S. black-white binary, perhaps the future dialogue between Afro-Mexicans and African Americans will address important questions about what privileges, in terms of status or access to economic and political resources, ethnic and racial status affords immigrants in the United States.

Works Cited

“A New Language; Producers, Retailers Turning Attention to Buying Power of Hispanics.”
Winston-Salem Journal 28 April 2002.

Aguilar Rivera, José Antonio. “Memin Penguin.” *El Univesal* 2 July 2005.

Alba, Richard D and Victor Nee. *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2005.

Alvarez, Thomas Bustamante. "Periodo 1934-1940," *Historia de la Cuestión Agraria Mexicana, Estado de Guerrero, 1867-1940*. Eds. J. Salazar Adame, R. Ravelo Lecuona, D. Molina Alvarez, and T. Bustamante Alvarez. Mexico, DF: Gobierno del Estado de Guerrero, 1987.

Andrews, George Reid. *Afro-Latin America, 1880-2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Archivo General de la Nacion, Mexico City, Ramo de Civil, tomo 705, fol. 709.

Banks, Taunya Lovell. “Mestizaje and the Mexican Mestizo self: No Hay Sangre Negra, So There is no Blackness.” *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal* 15 (2006): 199-234.

Barger, W.K. and Ernesto M. Reza. *The Farm Labor Movement in the Midwest*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994.

Beltrán, Gonzalo Aguirre. "The Slave Trade in Mexico." *Hispanic American Historical Review* XXIV (1944): 402-31.

Beltrán, Gonzalo Aguirre. *Cuijla, Esbozo Etnografico de un Pueblo Negro*. Veracruz, Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana, 1989.

Beltrán, Gonzalo Aguirre. *La Población Negra de Mexico: Estudio Etnohistorico*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1989.

Bennett, Herman L. *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2003.

Borjas, George J and Stephen G. Bronars. "Immigration and the Family." *Journal of Labor Economics* 9.2 (1991): 123-48.

Borjas, George J. *Mexican Immigration to the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007.

Branding, David. *Los Orígenes del Nacionalismo Mexicano*. Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1980.

Briggs, Vernon M. "Mexican Workers in the United States Labour Market: A Contemporary Dilemma." *Human Resource Studies Paper* 50 (1975): 351-368.

Briggs, Vernon M. "Non-immigrant labor policy in the United States." *The Journal of Economic Issues* 17 (1983): 609-630.

Campbell, Doug. "Exec launches Hispanic Radio, Newspaper in Triangle." *The Business Journal* 10 December 2001.

"Chávez charges scheme." *Washington Post* 23 Sep. 1974: C3.

"City of Winston-Salem, NC : Outreach." *City of Winston-Salem, NC : Home Page*. Web. 28 Jan. 2011.

<<http://www.cityofws.org/Home/Departments/HumanRelations/Outreach/Articles/Outreach>>

Collins Kristin. "Farm union targets RJR." *News & Observer*. October 27, 2007.

CONAPO (2007). "Índice de marginación 2005." México, 2005.

Cope, R. Douglas. *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994.

Cornelius, Wayne A. "Impacts of the 1986 US Immigration Law on Emigration from Rural Mexican Sending Communities." *Population and Development Review* 15.4 (1989): 689-705

Cruz-Carretero, S. "The African Presence in Mexico." (Unpublished Manuscript 2009).

Cué Cánovas, Agustín. *Historia social y económica de México, 1521-1810*. México: UNAM, 1946.

Daniel, Fran. "A True Variety Store; New Market Offers Customers a World of Choice." *Winston-Salem Journal* 18 December 2000.

Daniel, Fran. "King's Full House; King Plaza Shopping Center is Getting Three New Tenants." *Winston-Salem Journal* 12 October 2001.

"Delimitación de las zonas metropolitanas de México." *Secretaría de Desarrollo Social* (2004).

Dorigo, Guido and Tobler Waldo. "Push-Pull Migration Laws." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 73 (1983): 1-17.

Díaz Domínguez, Teresa. "La educación como factor de desarrollo social." Web.
<<http://www.sappiens.com/html/ejemplos/sociedad/sappiens/comunidades/ejemplos/sociedad1nsf/unids/La%20educaci%F3n%20como%20factor%20de%20desarrollo%20social8129F1BDC4D9A84741256FAF00628DF82d8e.html>>

Doherty, Carroll. "Attitudes Toward Immigration: In Black and White." *Pew Research Center* 26 April 2006.

"Estadísticas sobre los riesgos a atenuar de fenómenos perturbadores." Centro Nacional para la Prevención de Desastres (1999).

Fears, Darryl. "Mexican Stamps Racist, Civil Rights Leaders Say." *Washington Post* 30 June 2005: A01.

Foley, Neil. "Becoming Latino: Mexican American and the Faustian Pact with Whiteness." *Reflections 1997: New Directions in Mexican American Studies*. Ed. Neil Foley. Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1998. 53-71.

Folgarait, Leonard. *Mural Painting and Social Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940: Art of the New Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

"Forsyth County, North Carolina Data." *Pew Hispanic Center*, Web. 10 Apr. 2011.
<<http://pewhispanic.org/states/?countyid=37067>>.

Franklin. "Farm Workers' Group Pushes for Better Pay, Rights." *Chicago Tribune* 8 April 2006.

Frazier, Amy and Carey Hamilton. "Where Home is No Haven; Sprawling Lakeside Apartment Complex, A Portrait of Housing in Decline." *Winston-Salem Journal* 18 August 2002.

García, Saiz M.C. *Las castas mexicanas: un género pictórico Americano*. Milan: Olivetti, 1989.

Githiora, Chege J. *Afro-Mexicans: Discourse of Race and Identity on the African Diaspora*. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2008.

Glick, Schiller Nina, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton. "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 645 (1992). 1-24.

Greenhouse, Steven. "North Carolina Growers' Group Signs Union Contract for Mexican Workers." *New York Times* 17 September 2004.

Handlin, Oscar. *The Uprooted*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1973.

Haney, López Ian. *Racism on Trial the Chicano Fight for Justice*. New York: Belknap Pub., 2004.

Hernández Cuevas, Marco Polo. "Memín Pinguín: Uno de los Cómics Mexicanos Más Populares Como Instrumento para Codificar al Negro." *Afro-Hispanic Review* XXII, no. 1 (2003): 52-59.

Hernández Cuevas, Marco Polo. *African Mexicans and the Discourse on Modern Nation*. Dallas: University of America, 2004.

Hoppenjans, Lisa and Ted Richardson. "Mexican Ways, African Roots; Most of City's Hispanic Residents are Natives of a Region Populated by descendants of Black Slaves." *Winston-Salem Journal*, February 24, 2002: A2.

Illades, Carlos. *Guerrero, Una Historia Compartida*. Mexico, D.F.: Gobierno Del Estado De Guerrero, 1989.

INEGI. "XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda 2000, Estado de Guerrero." *Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática*. Aguascalientes: México, 2002.

Jackson, John et al. "Charting Racial Formations in the New U.S. South: Reflections on North Carolina's Latin. African American, and Afro-Latino Relations." Center for Africana Studies, Johns Hopkins, 2008.

Jacobs, Ian. *Ranchero Revolt: The Mexican Revolution In Guerrero*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982.

Jenkins, Craig J. "Push/Pull in Recent Mexican Migration to the U.S." *International Migration Review* 11 (1977): 78-189.

Johnson, James H and John D. Kasarda. "Hispanic Newcomers to North Carolina." *Latino Immigrants and the Transformation of the U.S. South*. Eds. Mary E. Odem and Elaine Cantrell Lacy. Athens: University of Georgia, 2009. 70-90.

Johnson, James. "Immigration Driven Population Change in North Carolina: Opportunities for the Banking Industry." *Carolina Banker* Fall 2004: 13-14.

Johnson-Webb, K.D. *Recruiting Hispanic Labor: Immigrants in Non-Traditional Areas*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2003.

Katzew, Ilona. "Casta Painting, Identity, and Social Stratification in Colonial Mexico." *New World Order: Casta Painting and Colonial Latin America*. Ed. I. Katzew . New York: Americas Society, 2006. 13-14.

Katzew, Ilona. *Casta Painting: Images of Race in Eighteenth-century Mexico*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2004.

"King's Full House; King Plaza Shopping Center is Getting Three New Tenants." *Winston-Salem Journal* 12 October 2001.

Korstad, Robert Rodgers. *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-twentieth-century South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003.

"Labor Law Violations Charged." *Winston-Salem Journal* 4 February 1979.

"Latin Music Fills the Air as Patrons Dance the Night Away in a Flashy New Club in City's Little Mexico." *Winston-Salem Journal* 7 July 2002.

Lecuona, Ravelo. *La Revolución Zapatista de Guerrero*. Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero, México, 1990.

Levy, Jacques E and César Chávez. *César Chávez: Autobiography of La Causa*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2007.

Lewis-Colman, David. Rev. of *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the Mid-Twentieth South*, by Robert Rodgers Korstad. *Left History* 2004: 233-236.

Lewis, Laura A. "Home is Where the Heart Is: North Carolina, Afro-Latinos Migration and Houses on Mexico's *Costa Chica*." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 105, no.4 (Fall 2006): 801-29.

Lozano, Mimi. "Black Latino Connection." *Somos Primos*. 23 February 2005.

Luna, Laurentino. "La Reforma Agraria en Cuajinicuilapa Guerrero: Micro-Historia de una Población Guerrerense." Diss. UNAM, 1975.

MacLahlan, Colin M and O. Rodriguez. *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: a Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico*. Berkeley: University of California, 1980.

Marrow, Helen. "New Immigrant Destinations and the American Colour Line." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 32.6 (2009): 1037 -1057.

Martínez, Montiel and María Luz. *Presencia Africana en Mexico*. Mexico City: Dirección General de Culturas Populares, 1994.

Massey, Douglas S. and F. G. Espana. "The Social Process of International Migration." *Science* 237 (1987): 733-738.

Massey, Douglas S., Luin Goldring, and Jorge Durand. "Continuities in Transnational Migration: An Analysis of Nineteen Mexican Communities." *The American Journal of Sociology* 99 (1994): 1492-1533.

Massey, Douglas S., Rafael Alarcon, Jorge Durand, and Humberto Gonzdlez. *"Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico."* Berkeley, California/London, England: University of California Press, 1987.

"Mexico: Hurricane John Information Bulletin No. 1" International Federation of Red Cross And Red Crescent Societies. 30 August 2006.

"Mexico Hurricane Pauline Situation Report No.1." United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (1997).

McDowell, John H. *Poetry and Violence: The Ballad Tradition of Mexico's Costa Chica*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 2000.

Miles, Jack. "Blacks vs. Browns." *The Atlantic Monthly* October 1992: 41.

Mindiola, Tatcho Jr., Yolanda Flores Niemann, and Nestor Rodriguez. *Black-Brown Relations and Stereotypes*. Austin: University of Texas P, 2002.

Mock, Brentin. "Smokescreen," *Intelligence Report: The Southern Poverty Law Center* (Fall 2006).

Montalvo, Frank F. and G. Edward Codina. "Skin Color and Latinos in the United States." *Ethnicities* 1 (2001): 321-341.

Moreno, Cesareo. "Una visión histórica: Representaciones afro-mexicanas e identidad en las artes visuales." *The African Presence in Mexico*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, 2009.

Morner, Magnus. *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967.

Muhammad, Jameelah S. *No Longer Invisible: Afro-Latin Americans Today*. London: Minority Rights Publications, 1995.

Ngou-Mve, Nicolas. *El Africa Bantu en la Colonizacion De Mexico (1595-1640)*. Madrid: Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Cientificas, 1994.

Orozco, Gabriel. "La Página no oficial de Cri Cri el Grillito Cantor: Francisco Gabilondo Soler," Web. <<http://www.cri-cri.net/Canciones.html>>

Palmer, Colin A. *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570-1650*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976.

Pasch, Richard J. "Hurricane John Tropical Cyclone Report." *National Hurricane Center*, 2006.

"Persisten los problemas raciales." *La Voz de Carolina* 19 March 1998: 5.

Pi-Sunyer, Oriol. "Historical Background to the Negro in Mexico." *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 42 (October 1957): 237-246.

Portes, Alejandro. "The Social Origins of the Cuban Enclave Economy of Miami." *Sociological Perspectives* 30 (1987): 340-372.

Proctor, Frank T. III. "Afro-Mexican Slave Labor in the Obrajes de Paños of New Spain, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." *The Americas* 60.1 (2003): 33-58.

Quiroz Malca, Haydée, "Las nuevas diásporas de los afromexicanos y algunos de sus efectos en las culturales locales," *Memoria y Sociedad* 7 (2003): 229-237.

RADIO CIMARRON." *Colectivo AFRICA A.C.* Web. 31 Aug. 2011.
<<http://colectivoafrica.blogspot.com/2010/06/radio-cimarron.html>>

Raissmen, Bob. "Unions Gain in State, but Appeals Delay Contracts." *Winston-Salem Journal* 1 January 1979: B7

Rodriguez, Gregory. *Mongrels, Bastards, Orphans, and Vagabonds: Mexican Immigration and the Future of Race in America*. New York: Vintage, 2008.

Rodríguez, Jaime E. *The Forging of the Cosmic Race: a Reinterpretation of Colonial Mexico*. Berkeley: University of California, 1980.

Ronnie Patton et al. v. Del Taco, Inc. et al., Los Angeles County Superior Court (Unlimited Jurisdiction), no. BC 269 863, First Amended Complaint.

Sengupta, Somini. "Farm Union Takes Aim At a Big Pickle Maker." *New York Times* 26 October 2000: A22.

Severo, Richard. "The flight of the wet-backs." *New York Times Magazine* 10 Mar. 1974: 81.

"Situation Report Hurricane Pauline," Church World Service (1997).

Skube, Michael. "N.C. Production Workers," *Winston-Salem Journal* 13 January 1979.

Smith, Robert Courtney. *Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants*. Berkeley: University of California, 2006.

“Sponsorships grow for Winston-Salem, N.C., Hispanic festival.” *Winston-Salem Journal* 30 June 2005.

Sue, Cristina. “Race and National Identity in Mexico: An Ethnographic Study of Blackness in Veracruz.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montreal Convention Center, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 2008.

Summers, Keyonna, “Black Leaders Oppose Alien Amnesty Plan.” *Washington Times* 24 May 2006.

Thompson, Deanna. “Labor Saviors: Foreign-born Worker Fill the Gaps.” *The Business Journal* Feb 19 2001.

Thompson, Deanna. “Some employers are wary of new legislation regarding illegal aliens.” *The Business Journal* 19 Feb 2001.

Tibón, Gutierre. *Pinotepa Nacional: Mixtecos, Negros, y Triques*. Mexico City: Editorial Posada, 1981.

“Top Ten Occupation for North Carolina Hispanics by Gender, 2005.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2005.

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services 2002.

“Unemployment Dropped in Northwest.” *Winston-Salem Journal* 7 January 1979.

“Unemployment Rate Is Low for Residents of Farms.” *Winston-Salem Journal* 1 January 1979.

United States. U.S. Department of Commerce 2004.

Vaca, Nick Corona. *Presumed alliance the unspoken conflict between Latinos and Blacks and what it means for America*. New York: Rayo, 2004.

Valdes, Dennis N. "The Decline of Slavery in Mexico." *The Americas* 44 (October 1987): 167-194.

Van Dijk, T. "Mediating Racism The Role of the Media in the Reproduction of Racism." *Language, Power, and Ideology: Studies in Political Discourse*. Ed. Ruth Wodak. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Pub, 1989. 199-226.

Vargas, Manuel. "Bridging the Communication Gap." *Journal of Latino Education* (October 2008): 336-345.

Vasconcelos, José and Jaen Didier Tisdell. *The Cosmic Race: a bilingual Edition*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Vasconcelos, José. "The Latin-American Basis of Mexican Civilization." *Aspects of Mexican Civilization*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926. 3-102.

Vaughn, Bobby and Ben Vinson III. "Unfinished Migrations: From the Mexican South to the American South." *Beyond Slavery: the Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Ed. Darién J. Davis. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007. 223-245.

Vaughn, Bobby. "The Costa Chica Region," *Black Mexico Homepage* (Web. 26 Jan. 2011) <<http://www.afromexico.com/costa.htm>>.

Vaughn, Bobby. "Afro-Mexico: Blacks, Indigenas, Politics, and the Greater Diaspora." *Neither Enemies nor Friends: Latinos, Blacks, Afro-Latinos*. Eds. Anani Dzidzienyo and Suzanne Oboler. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 117-136.

Vaughn, Bobby. *Race and Nation: A Study of Blackness in Mexico*. Diss. Stanford University, 2001.

Velasco Ortiz, Laura. *Mixtec Transnational Identity*. Tucson: University of Arizona, 2005.

- Vento, Arnoldo C. *Mestizo: The History, Culture, and Politics of the Mexican and the Chicano: The Emerging Mestizo-American*. Lanham, Md.: University of America, 1998.
- Vinson, Ben III. "From Dawn 'til Dusk: Black Labor in Late Colonial Mexico." *Black Mexico*. Ed. Ben Vinson III. and Matthew Restall. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009. 96-135.
- Vinson, Ben III. *Bearing Arms for His Majesty: The Free-Colored Militia in Colonial Mexico*. Diss. Columbia University, 1998.
- Von Germeten, Nicole. "Colonial Middle Men?: Mulatto Identity in New Spain's Confraternities." *Black Mexico*. Ed. Ben Vinson III and Ed. Matthew Restall. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009. 136-154.
- Von Germeten, Nicole. *Black Blood Brothers: Confraternities and Social Mobility for Afro-Mexicans*. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 2006.
- Wade, Peter. *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America*. Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997.
- Walsh, M.W. "Amid Dark-haired Mexicans, Blondes Really Have More Fun." *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 February 1987: C1.
- "Where? Eastern Part of Town Isn't Definable." *Winston-Salem Journal* 6 August 2002.
- XEJAM La Voz De La Costa Chica. Ecos Indígenas, La Voz De La Diversidad. México." *Ecos Indígenas. La Voz De La Diversidad. Radiodifusora Indígena. México*. Web. 31 Mar. 2011. <<http://ecos.cdi.gob.mx/xejam.html>>.