4

Indigenous Equestrianism

A "New World" Frontier Model

Some of the most renowned examples of Indigenous equestrian cultures in the Americas gained fame for their opposition to colonial society. The Mapuche, who engaged in a century-long war against the Spanish in southern Chile, adopted horses in the sixteenth century as a central and formative cultural development. In North America, the Apache and then the Comanche adopted horses in the seventeenth century, as the migration of culture groups spurred the development of new economies and political structures based on livestock raiding and trading. Lying at the margins of Spain's claims to territory, these are examples of how the horse spread across the American continents not only as a symbol of conquest but also as a tool of resistance.[1]

Developing an "equestrian complex" or "horse culture" is a remarkable and transformative cultural adaptation. Native cultures with no

[1] For an overview, see Peter Mitchell, *Horse Nations: The Worldwide Impact of the Horse on Indigenous Societies Post-1492* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). Scholars have generally considered these adaptations on a cultural and regional basis. For North American plains cultures, see Pekka Hamalainen, *Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Tim Leidecker, *Native American Horse Culture: Looking at the Change in Culture the Horse Brought to the Blackfoot, Cheyenne and Comanche Tribes* (Munich: GRIN Verlag, 2003). For South America, see Helmut Schindler, "Equestrian and Non-Equestrian Indians of the Gran Chaco during the Colonial Period," *Indiana* 10 (1985): 451–464; Ronald E. Gregson, "The Influence of the Horse on Indian Cultures of Lowland South America," *Ethnohistory* 16, no. 1 (1969): 33–50; Martin Dobrizhoffer, *An Account of the Abipones, an Equestrian People of Paraguay* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corp, 1970). For Brazil, see Felipe Vander Velden, "A Tapuya 'Equestrian Nation'? Horses and Native Peoples in the Backlands of Colonial Brazil," in *The Materiality of the Horse*, ed. Miriam A. Bibby and Brian G. Scott (Budapest: Trivent Publishing, 2020).

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prior contact with horses incorporated the animal into social, political, and economic facets of life, a process requiring the core ability to conceive of these new relations and, ultimately, to produce their own knowledge about them. To take as an example a romantic legend of resistance to Spanish conquest from the area of Michoacán, immortalized in a famous mural: A Tarascan princess, Eréndira, was credited with stealing a white Spanish horse, taming it, then riding it to lead her warriors against invading Spanish forces.[2] This tale requires great facility with a new interspecies relationship that would be difficult for any individual actor; just imagine what would be required to transform an entire cultural group's way of life. The early details of such transformations often escape close scrutiny, as data only exists in a fragmented and incomplete form, and primarily from the perspective of a Spanish scribe.

Indeed, in evidence of the scale of this challenge, Indigenous opponents appeared to slowly develop an interest in horses. Early accounts from both New Spain and Peru show a marked preference for killing horses over capturing them, and when horse theft was used to neutralize the Spanish, the animals were more often killed or maimed than put to use.[3] In the northern borderlands of Mexico and the southern terrain of Chile, Indigenous people resisting resettlement and "pacification" by Spanish missionaries and colonizers used the tactics of horse theft and eventually raids on horseback. However, considering all the diverse native groups that were exposed to horses through conflict with Spanish colonizers, only a few adopted the horse as an integral part of their culture or effectively used horses as a means to resist.

Why would some Indigenous communities adopt horses, but not others? Domesticated animals were not new to the Americas, and many Indigenous groups relied on domesticated crops and animals bred in captivity, together with a whole range of important interspecies partnerships ranging from intimate companions to displays of wealth to useful

[2] Mural by Juan O'Gorman in Patzcuaro's Biblioteca Pública Federal Gertrudis Bocanegra, Michoacán. See also Ana Cristina Ramírez Barreto, "Eréndira on Horseback: Variations on a Tale of Conquest and Resistance," in *Women, Ethnicity and Nationalisms in Latin America*, ed. Natividad Gutiérrez Chong (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[3] "Probanza del Capitán Don Gonzalo de Alvarado, conquistador de Guatemala," *Colección de documentos sobre la Historia de Centro America*, in reference to "nos empeçaron a dar guerra con pensamiento de echarnos de la tierra o matarnos a todos fue causea este alzamiento de nos matar muchos caballos que hera toda la fuerza de los españoles y valía un caballo 600 pesos" (They began to fight us with the idea of driving us off the land or killing us all. This uprising killed many horses and wounded the entire force of the Spaniards, and a horse was worth 600 *pesos*).

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technology. According to ethnologists and, particularly, to new multispecies ethnographies, perceptions of interspecies relations and other relational "intimacies" with animals are shaped by cultural orientations that recognize humans and other "selves."[4] Ethnographer Philippe Descola, for example, has posited that the ontology of a given culture shapes how members perceive possibilities for relating to other animals. He distinguishes a European "naturalist" orientation towards animals from the "animism" that characterizes Amazonian cultures, and demonstrates that these cultural-ontological differences would also shape how these groups conceived of relations with individual animals. From a historical perspective, Marcy Norton has theorized that cultural "modes of interaction" govern relations between human and nonhuman animals, and has used postconquest encounters to show dramatically differing assumptions about these relations in hunting, animal husbandry, and pet-keeping across Spanish, Indigenous, and colonial contexts.[5] These ethnohistorical approaches enrich colonial explanations of difference: European colonizers, for example, may have seen the role of animals as chattel property as a civilized and civilizing influence, whereas Indigenous observers may have viewed this relation as a strange form of servitude.[6] At stake in these questions is how previous experiences with animals shaped interactions with new species, and answering them requires decoding interspecies relations, as they were both projected and understood within European and Indigenous ways of life.

Moving from theory to comparative studies of material cultures, archaeologist Peter Mitchell surveyed extant artifacts and historical evidence for forty distinct Indigenous cultures and relations with horses post-

[4] Radhika Govindrajan, *Animal Intimacies: Interspecies Relatedness in India's Central Himalayas* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2019); S. Eben Kirksey and Stefan Helmreich, "The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography," *Cultural Anthropology* 25, no. 4 (2010): 545–576; Brian McCormack, "Narrative, Meaning and Multispecies Ethical Ontologies," *Humanimalia* 11, no. 1 (2019): 64–88; John Hartigan Jr., "Knowing Animals: Multispecies Ethnography and the Scope of Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 123, no. 4 (December 2021): 846–860.

[5] Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013 [Editions Gallimard, 2005]); Marcy Norton, "The Chicken or the Iegue: Human-Animal Relationships and the Columbian Exchange," *The American Historical Review* 120, no. 1 (2015): 28–60 and Marcy Norton, *Tame and the Wild: People and Animals after 1492* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2024).

[6] Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Benjamin Breen, "'The Elks Are Our Horses': Animals and Domestication in the New France Borderlands," *Journal of Early American History* 3 (2013): 181–206.

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1492. He found that cultural groups within the same regional ecology had different responses to horses, and concluded that internal cultural dynamics shaped both the choice to use horses and the degree to which horses were incorporated: Some developed equestrian nomadism using horses for hunting big game; other pastoralist groups adopted horses for agricultural purposes; some found incentives in using them for raiding or trading (the Comanche, for example); and some sedentary groups (the Mapuche, for example) adopted horses for cultural rather than economic reasons. In other words, the adoption of horses in Indigenous cultures was a transformative moment, but one not easily explained by proximity to conflict, physical access to horses, or regional ecologies. More importantly, developing forms of Indigenous equestrianism required a cultural frame of reference capable of producing and organizing knowledge gained by this relational mode of "becoming with" horses.

This chapter collects early Spanish colonial archival evidence for Indigenous relations with horses, an approach that makes visible larger patterns in Indigenous relations with horses in the process of colonization across New Spain and Peru. These cases surface motivations to adopt new interspecies relationships within areas of Spanish influence and contribute insights into Indigenous people's use of horses in areas outside of Spanish influence. This work captures important stages in this transition: first, a period in which horses could be considered "commensal" animals, living in and around Indigenous settlements, followed by more active use and even breeding. Unlike other forms of animal husbandry or cultivation that Indigenous people would have been familiar with, the action of riding a horse would have been novel – the llama, the most comparable animal in terms of its breeding, management, and labor, was not large enough to support the weight of a full-grown human. Most prominently, horse riding played a dual role in Spanish governance, as both a symbol of exclusion and a means of social mobility. This duality informed emerging forms of Indigenous equestrianism, as Spanish colonizers rewarded allied *indios* for military service on horseback, and licenses to ride and own horses acquired throughout Spanish territories informed the social privileges of Indigenous leaders. Exposure to horses did not come solely at the fringes of the empire; rather, as horses were introduced as livestock and familiarity with them grew, so too did particular reasons for owning, riding, or raising them.

Far from proposing a direct transfer of knowledge about horses from Spanish experts to Indigenous recipients, the cases that follow demonstrate new processes for producing knowledge about horses. Indigenous

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uses of horses varied enormously. This range of observed choices and behaviors constitute, in effect, a form of boundary work: coproducing knowledge about horses, shaping ongoing relations with them, and mediating Indigenous status through interactions with horses.[7] Indigenous knowledge encompassed ecological and intellectual responses to new species, and allowed opportunities to develop new frameworks (an "emergent autochthony") for relating to them.[8] Although these individual examples do not arrive at root causes, they do highlight a core tension in colonial interests between prohibiting and encouraging access to horses. This tension created opportunities for Indigenous people to act and question the notion of the horse as a one-dimensional agent of conquest.

4.1 A "New World" Frontier Model

The Spanish zealously protected the advantages the horse brought to their military might and political status, dictating who was permitted to own and to ride horses. As a symbol of power for colonial officials, the horse served an important biopolitical function by defining social hierarchies. Just as the Spanish kings had prohibited Muslim subjects in conquered lands from riding horses, so too the kings issued a blanket prohibition against *indios* riding horses in claims to territory in the Americas.[9] By order of the First Audiencia in New Spain in 1528, the decree prohibited *indios* from riding horses under saddle or carrying arms, reinforcing the symbolic importance of the horse in the new regime and echoing the example of the Iberian frontier. It also prohibited Indigenous people

[7] The term "boundary work" is a concept used in the history of science to describe the transfer of knowledge between domains, such as between scientific and nonscientific communities. This presumes that knowledge is generated in social interactions between stakeholders, and boundaries serve as interfaces that facilitate the coproduction of new knowledge. See S. L. Star, "This Is Not a Boundary Object: Reflections on the Origin of a Concept," *Science, Technology and Human Values* 35, no. 5 (2010): 601–617. For the application of boundary work to animals and the environment, see also C. J. Robinson and T. J. Wallington, "Boundary Work: Engaging Knowledge Systems in Co-Management of Feral Animals on Indigenous Lands," *Ecology and Society* 17, no. 2 (2012): 16.

[8] Discussing Aboriginal histories in Australia, David Trigger suggests a form of "emergent autochthony" in which new species, including feral, introduced ones, become "naturalized" in cultural terms, demonstrating both authentic and changing bodies of traditional ecological knowledge and practice, "Indigeneity, Ferality, and What 'Belongs' in the Australian Bush: Aboriginal Responses to 'Introduced' Animals and Plants in a Settler-Descendant Society," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 14 (2008): 630.

[9] Miguel Abad Gavin, *El caballo en la historia de España* (Salamanca: Publicaciones Universidad de León, 2006).

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from taking care of horses or learning how to ride them, and issued penalties for theft.[10] Once issued, this prohibition against *indios* riding horses would not be formally lifted until 1653.

But the horse's imprint in Spanish governance also contributed to a powerful and competing dynamic, wherein access to horses served as a reward for taking new frontier territory. The Iberian Peninsula's long tradition of recognizing service with the benefits of horse ownership had already established the path for increasing status from *caballero* to *hidalgo*, and in the Americas it was extended to the *conquistador*-turned-*encomendero*. Whether by mutual interest or coercion, conquistadors acquired allies from among local Indigenous communities, and they used tens of thousands of these warriors and other skilled laborers, such as guides and translators, on military campaigns. Some of these relationships continued in subsequent campaigns and with incentives to colonize and settle new areas. Access to horses became a standard reward for service and assisting Spanish forces.

Despite formal prohibitions, Spanish officials facilitated access to horses through other channels. Individual cases or *probanzas de méritos* (Proof of Merit) submitted by or on behalf of Indigenous allies (also called *indios amigos* and *indios auxiliares*) emerge anecdotally. Some of these episodes appear retroactively in petitions that were submitted after campaigns that protested the retraction of rewards under changing colonial policies or by later generations. Viceroys also granted specific licenses to *indios* to ride horses for their service, in addition to other privileges around land and tribute. These permissions were distributed in areas that follow the cooperation of Indigenous groups with Spanish colonizers among the rich variety of regional civilizations and ethnicities encountered in the fabric of New Spain and Peru.

One of the earliest documented examples of a permission to ride horses comes from a lawsuit in the town of Huejotzingo, whose *cacique*, Don Tomé, had led a contingent of warriors on Nuño de Guzmán's ill-fated campaign to Nueva Galicia in 1530. Previously, warriors from Huejotzingo had served as allies to Cortés in numerous campaigns. According to testimony from an *indio* named Tamavaltetle, "a Christian Spaniard, who was at the time overseer in the said town of Huexotzingo, asked the lord and leading men of the town to give him

[10] Chevalier, *Land and Society in Colonial Mexico*, 86. Issued on April 5, 1528. Slaves, mulattos, and mestizos were not allowed to carry arms, but were not specifically prohibited from riding horses. Only young, unbranded horses could be sold to *indios*.

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gold to buy a horse so that Don Tomé, the lord of the said town, could go to the war on horseback."[11] Later, in Chiametla, Don Tomé fell ill and went to see Guzmán. The record states that he was carried on the back of another man, who led Don Tomé's horse by the hand. Guzmán apparently took the horse and did not let the sick man return home, and he died shortly after. In this suit, permission for Don Tomé to own the horse was implied in his military service and unfairly revoked by Guzmán. It is also clear that the *cacique* did not see the need to ride the horse, even as a physical support when ill; rather than personal use, its purpose was essentially to mark status.[12]

In the first book of *Mercedes*, or grants from the viceroy, kept by the viceroy of New Spain, the first license to ride horses was recorded in 1542 and given to a man identified only as "Francisco, *cacique* of Tlalmanalco," for assistance in the Guerra de Jalisco. This indicates it is a reward for military service to the Spanish in the violent uprisings that followed Guzmán's rapacious treatment of territory north of Guadalajara.[13] Although the license itself gives no more detail, this *cacique* wrote an account of his service in a manuscript later translated and titled *Conquista y Pacificación de los Indios Chichimecas*, under the name Francisco de Sandoval Acacitli. He had accompanied Viceroy Mendoza in his 1541 campaign to relieve the remaining settlers left in Guadalajara. In his account, he described the splendid outfit that he wore and his use of a horse, both marks of status for an *indio* ally. He also noted his loyal service by mentioning the hardships of this campaign, such as when there was nothing to eat and his horse refused to eat the maize offered to it by the people of Tlalotlacan.[14] Sandoval's town of Tlalmanalco was located southeast of Mexico City, near Chalco, a region where Cortés had found a favorable reception in Bernal Díaz's account of his campaigns, and this location indicates the early roots of an alliance with the Spanish, similar to that of Huejotzingo.

[11] Harkness Collection, LOC, documents 104, 109, 114, 117, 119. Lawsuit transcribed and translated by J. Benedict Warren, *The Conquest of Michoacán: The Spanish Domination of the Tarascan Kingdom in Western Mexico, 1521–1530* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 153.

[12] Ida Altman, "Conquest, Coercion and Collaboration: Indian Allies and Campaigns in Nueva Galicia," in *Indian Conquistadors*, ed. Laura E. Matthew and Michel R. Oudijk (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 157. The *Relación* of Pedro de Carraza, used in Zaragoza's *Crónicas de la Conquista*, confirmed that he later saw this horse in Guzmán's stable.

[13] AGNMX, MERCEDES, vol. 1, exp. 24, fs. 13v.

[14] Altman, "Conquest, Coercion and Collaboration," 147.

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Early correlations between *indio* allies and access to horses also appear in the Viceroyalty of Peru. Pizarro, for example, brought with him in 1528 an Indigenous ally, Don Martin, who was given a share in the treasure of Cajamarca and an *encomienda*. Don Martin not only converted to Christianity but also later went to Spain, where he fought mounted as a cavalryman.[15] In Peru, the Spanish also took advantage of earlier Incan conflicts to gain allies. Manco Inca was one of several princes who had supported competing claims to the incumbent Atahualpa and, like others, saw the Spaniards as potential strategic allies. Manco fought alongside the Spanish against rebellious Cañari natives (Quito, Ecuador), and he was considered a Spanish protégé. Both Manco Inca and his son, Titu Cusi, were taught how to ride and deal with horses under the tutelage of Pedro Oñate, while they were royal captives of the Spanish. Manco served one year in power under Pizarro and remained another year as a royal captive.

However, after this brief time as an ally and puppet ruler for the Spanish, Manco used his insights into horses and Spanish cavalry maneuvers for his own purposes.[16] In the 1535 siege of Cuzco and in his last battle against Diego Almagro at Ollantaytambo (1537), Manco Inca used tactics against horses such as seizing higher ground to prevent cavalry charges, digging pits to break horses' legs, and even flooding entire fields by redirecting river and irrigation to make them impassable for men on horseback.[17] Andean *bolas* (weighted leather straps) were used to target the horse's weakest point, its legs. Manco himself appeared on horseback to guide his own party, before retreating to the isolation of Vilcabamba. In the following battle over Lima, the Incan forces stayed up on the hill so that Spanish cavalry could not dislodge the siege until they exerted their

[15] John Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1973), 281.

[16] Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas*, 169.

[17] In the siege of Cusco, Garcilaso recounts the Spanish "saw how numerous the Indians were, and as they could not tell what weapons they had against the horses (which were what the Indians most feared), it was agreed to withdraw into the main square, where, owing to its great size, they could more easily dominate the enemy than in the streets. This was done, and they drew up there in formation. The infantry, numbering 120, were in the middle, and the 80 horses stationed themselves in twenties on either side and in front of and behind the square, so that they would be able to resist the Indians from whichever direction they launched their attack." Nonetheless, Manco Inca's forces held them in the square for seventeen days. In one sally, Francisco Mejia was isolated and beheaded along with his white horse. In total, the siege continued for eight months. Garcilaso de la Vega, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru 1616*, trans. Harold Livermore, 2 vols. (Austin: University of Tex, 1966), 799.

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forces to the max in a concentrated, seventy-horse charge, demonstrating the Incan command of counter-cavalry tactics.[18] When Pizarro's partisans were forced to retreat in 1541, Manco took in seven men who stayed at the Inca camp in Vilcabamba, and they taught Manco Inca how to use Spanish weapons, race on horses, and shoot guns.[19] Ironically, however, they also assassinated Manco Inca in their bid to flee, ending his attempt to train his men in the use of European weapons and horses.

4.1.1 License to Ride in New Spain

Rewarding *indio* allies could take many forms, including land grants, appointments to positions of high status, and exemption from tribute, together with more concrete privileges demarcating status, including the use of Spanish clothing, arms, and horses. According to colonial records, exemption from tribute as a proof of status among Indigenous elites was among the most sought-after privileges, and it is not always clear whether permission to ride a horse, dress in Spanish clothing, and carry arms was included.[20] Sometimes these privileges were granted wholesale or in a cluster, such as in a 1537 petition from Don Juan de Santiago of Tlatelolco stating that he and his heirs had been granted an *estancia* and the freedom to ride horses and bear arms.[21]

Beginning in 1542, licenses to own or ride horses were documented with regularity in the volumes of *Mercedes* in New Spain. Between 1542 and 1544, Viceroy Mendoza granted twenty-three licenses to *indios* from central Mexican Indigenous towns. For the most part, the details or rationale for granting the license go unmentioned, but one of these initial licenses rewarded a translator for his services, and several *indios principales*

[18] Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas*, 211.

[19] Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas*, 274, in reference to Fernando Montesinos's *Anales de Perú* (1498–1642) and Agustín de Zárate's *Historia del descubrimiento y conquista del Perú* (1555), Book 4, Ch 21.

[20] Record of Don Joachin de San Francisco, *cacique* of Tepexi de la Seda, testimony with thirty witnesses describing the services rendered by his grandfather, Don Gonzalo Matzatzin Moctezuma, in 1584. AGI Patronato 245, R.10, 4v.

[21] "Don Juan Quauiconoc gobernó Santiago Tlatelolco desde 1530 hasta 1537. Sucedió a su padre, don Juan Auelitoc, quien fue el tercer gobernador de Santiago," citing Robert Barlos, "Los Caciques Coloniales de Tlatelolco hasta 1561," AGN MX TIERRAS, Año 1537, vol. 3702, exp. 2 in Margarita Vargas Betancourt, "Caciques tlatelolcas y tenencia de la tierra en el siglo XVI. Don Juan Quauiconoc y don Juan de Austria, en los casos de doña Leonor y doña María Coatonal," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*, January 31, 2011.

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(leaders or officials of local community) were awarded for support in campaigns in Nueva Galicia and Jalisco. In the vein of service, Spanish viceroys began recording permission to ride horses for Indigenous allies in central Mexico while their territorial ambitions moved northwards.

These licenses followed a simple but standard form, first identifying the recipient by name and region, and then indicating that he could go about freely on a *haca* (a horse used for travel) with bridle and saddle, without being disturbed by justices (royal *corregidores* or locally appointed *justicias*) of the region. There were also distinctions between permissions to ride a horse under saddle, and permissions to mount a horse as a guard for livestock or for its use as an animal transporting cargo. Sometimes, licenses were explicitly limited to the governor's term of service, and they were always qualified as being valid only as long as it was the viceroy's pleasure. Extremely brief and highly formulaic in nature, these records do not consistently give the rationale for granting the license nor provide important information about the individual. Yet, each license documents a claim for services rendered that justified permission to ride a horse.

Over 1,100 individual permissions to ride, own, or use a horse appear in archival records of New Spain between the years 1542 and 1600 (Table 4.1). This set of licenses is incomplete, however, with at least twenty-five years' worth of gaps in these records.[22] Although the licenses are brief and formulaic, when considered together, interesting patterns emerge. The highest concentrations of licenses are centered in regions characterized by historic alliances and active frontier conflict, and these concentrations move from central Mexico to the northern frontier in Michoacán, and finally south to Oaxaca.[23] The highest frequency of such licenses cluster around the years 1550–1555 (294 licenses) and 1590–1592 (415 licenses).

Licenses to own or ride horses granted to specific individuals or community leaders within Spanish military-legal codes replicated an element of social mobility from the Iberian frontier. Permission to ride horses was

[22] Licenses for New Spain were collected from the AGN (Mercedes, especially vol. 4 and 8, Indios, Indiferente, General de Parte, or Tierras), the Ayers Collection at Newberry Library, and the Kraus Collection at the Library of Congress. The list totals 1,183 licenses dated between 1537 and 1620. There is no way to ascertain a complete list, but given the dates in this series, it appears that there must be missing data, as there are gaps in the years 1544–1550, 1557–1565, 1572, 1574, 1577, 1581, and 1584–1587. To request a full list of references, please contact the author.

[23] In this chapter, I have retained the transcribed orthography of these towns or names of Indios, adopting modern accents only if the town could be confidently identified.

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TABLE 4.1 *Licenses to Ride Horses in New Spain, 1537–1620*

Towns grouped by current-day provinces of Mexico	1537–1620	1550–1555	1590–1592
Eastern and Southern regions (Veracruz, Tabasco, Chiapas, Yucatan, El Salvador, Guatemala)	44	17	20
Puebla/Tlaxcala	187	47	91
Oaxaca	179	46	82
Mexico	170	49	65
Hidalgo	48	9	31
Guerrero and Morelos	45	7	25
Michoacan	160	90	45
Northern and Western regions (Aguascalientes, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Nayarit, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Tamaulipas, Zacatecas)	95	35	29
Unidentified provinces	143	77	30
Total	1,071	377	418

Region	Towns
Michoacán	Apatzingan, Aranza, Capacuaro, Capula, Charan, Chilchota, Chucandiro, Ciudad Hidalgo, Condembaro, Cuitzeo, Erongaricuaro, Guayameo, Indaparapeo, Irimbo, Jacona, Jiquilpan, Ucareo, Marvatio, Matalcingo, Michoacan, Morelia, Nexpa, Ostula, Paracho, Pamacuaran, Patzcuaro, Periban, San Miguel (Huango el Viejo), Santa Fe, Tancitaro, Tarimbaro, Tezazalca, Tiripetio, Tuxpan, Tuzantla, Tzintzuntzan, Ucareo, Uruapan, Zacapu, Zinapecuaro, Zirandaro, Zirosto
Oaxaca	Achiutla, Apaxco, Antequera, Ayoquezco, Calihuala, Coatlán, Coyotepeque, Cuilapan, Etla, Huamelula, Huazolotitlán, Huajolotitlan, Ixcatlán, Ixtepec, Jicayan, Juxtlahuaca, Miahuatlan, Mitla, Mitlatengo, Mixtepec, Nochixtlan, Oaxaca, Ozolotepec, Pochutla, San Andrés Chicahuaxtla, San Lucas Ojitlán, San Pedro Sayultepec, San Sebastian tutla, Santiago Juxtlahuaca, Silacayoapan, Teutila, Tehuacan, Tehuantepec, Telixtlahuaca, Teocuatlán, Teotitlan, Tepetotutla,

(*continued*)

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TABLE 4.1 (*continued*)

Region	Towns
	Teposcolula, Tenexpan, Teticpac, Teutila, Tilantongo, Titiquipa, Tlacamama, Tlapalcatepec, Tlacolula, Tlacochahuaya, Tlaxiaco, Tlalixtac, Totontepec, Tutepetongo, Tutla, Tututepec, Tuxtepec, Yanhuitlán, Zaachila, Zimatlan
Puebla / Tlaxcala	Atrisco, Cholula, Huauchinango, Huatlatlauca, Huejotzingo, Izucar de Matamoros, Nauzontla, Puebla, Tecamachalco, Tehuacan, Tetela de Ocampo, Tepeaca, Tilapa, Tlaxcala, Topoyang, Tzontecomatlan, San Miguel Tulapa, San Nicolas, Xaltepec, Xaltocan, Xicotlan, Xonotla
Veracruz	Atlihuayan, Altotonga, Chicontepec, Chila, Coatepec, Coatzacoalcos, Cosamaloapan, Huatusco, Huayacocotla, Jalapa, Panuco, Tamiahua, Tantoyucan, Teotzacoalco, Tilapa, Texistepec, Xochiapa, Xonotlan, Zempoala, Zongolica
Northern and Western regions (Aguascalientes, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Nayarit, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Tamaulipas, Zacatecas)	Acambaro, Ameca, Atotonilco, Atoyac, Ayutla, Cocula, Colima, Coyotitlan, Huauchinango, Jilotepec, Jocotepec, León, Nochistlán, Nombre de Dios, Ocotlan, Olutla, Queretaro, Saltillo, San Luis de la Paz, Sayula, Talistaca, Tamazula, Tampamolon, Tampayacal, Tanchinoltipac, Tanpico, Tepuxtla, Tlantengo, Tlaquepaque, Tlatlayan, Tonala, Yuriria, Zapotlan, Zimapan
Central regions (Guerrero, Hidalgo, Mexico, Morelos)	Acatlan, Acatempan, Acatepec, Acayuca, Ahuacatlan, Amecameca, Atitalaquia, Atotonilco, Chicontepec, Chilapa, Chiautla, Chilconautla, Coatlinchan, Coyoacan, Cuernavaca, Cuitlavaca, Cuautitlán
	Huechapa, Huehuetla, Huejutla, Huatepec, Huamuxtitlán, Huitzuco, Iguala, Ixmiquilpan, Iztapalapa, Ixtlahuaca, Iztapa, Jilotzingo, Jocotitlán, Malinalco, Mazatepec, Metepec, Metztitlán, Mexicaltzingo, Mexcaltepec, Mitlatongo, Mixquiahuala, Oaxtepeque, Ocoyoacac, Otumba, Oxtotipac, San Juan Acazuchitlán, San Sebastián Atzacoalco, Santa Maria Navitas, Taxco, Tecamachalco, Temascalcingo, Temoac, Tenango, Teotenango, Teotihuacan, Tepecoacuilco, Tepatepec, Tepetitlán, Tepotzotlán, Tequixquiac, Tetepango, Tetipac,

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Region	Towns
	Texcaltitlán, Texcoco, Tlacotlapilco, Tlacolula, Tláhuac, Tlalchichilpa, Tlalmanalco, Tlalnepantla, Tlapa, Tlapanaloya, Tlatelolco, Tlayacapan, Toluca, Tonatico, Tula, Tulancingo, Tultitlán, Tultengo, Tuxpan, Xalatlaco, Xipacoya, Xochimilco, Yecapixtla, Yoloxochitlan, Zinacatepec, Zumpango del Rio
Southern Regions (Chiapas, Veracruz, El Salvador, Guatemala, Tabasco, Yucatan)	Aztapa, Coatepeque, Cuzcatlan, Ixtapa, Petlalcingo, Pueblo de Maya, Pueblo de Yucatán, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Soconusco, Teapa, Tepetitlan, Totolapa, Tuxtla
Other	Transcription of town name unidentifiable

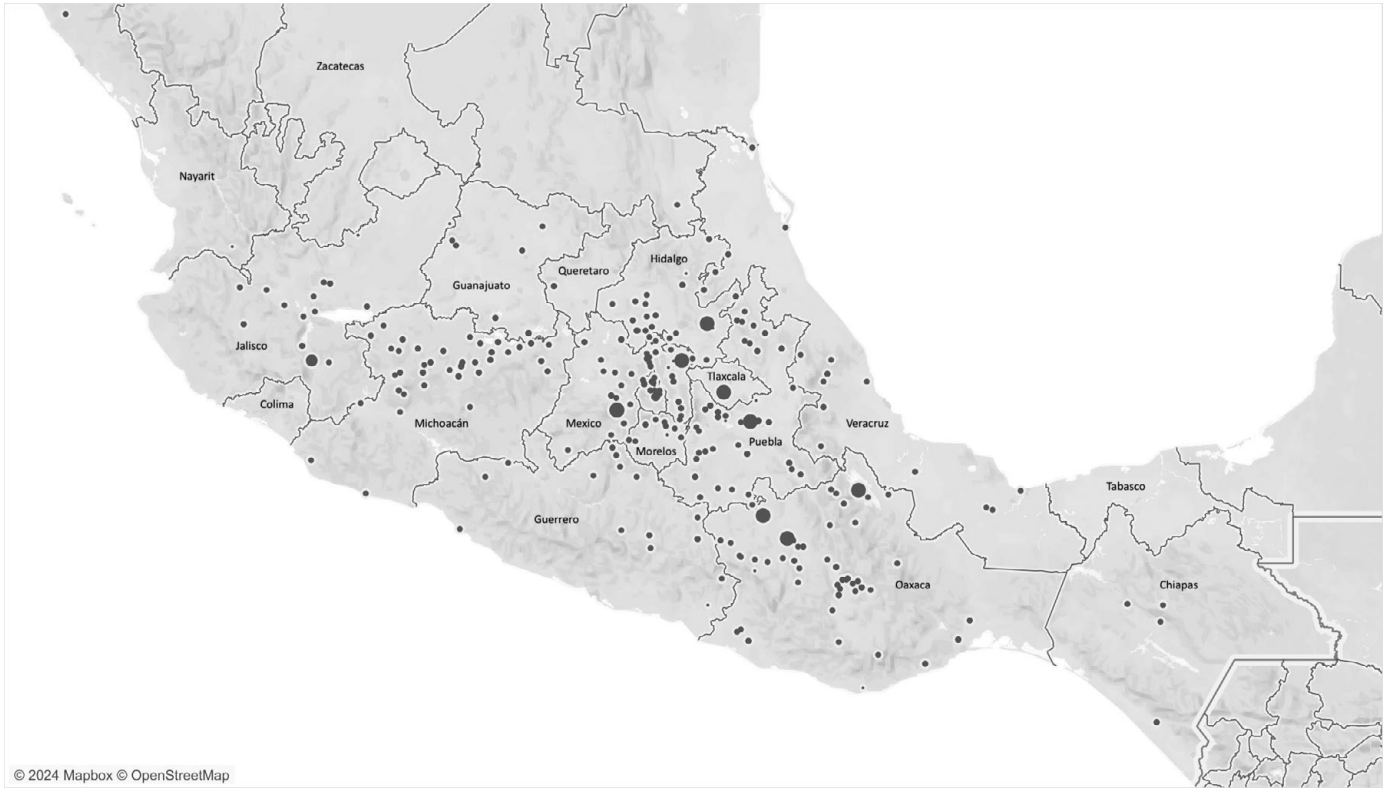
given to members of allied communities who provided manpower in the conquest's push to expand the frontier. In these examples, a frontier social logic applied to Indigenous allies, even down to the commonly repeated phrase that their service was undertaken "at their own cost" to justify recognition of their service.

4.1.2 Indios Conquistadores

Who were the recipients of these licenses? The towns named for each *indio* petitioner represent a broad range of ethnic and linguistic subdivisions from central Mexico: Nahua, Zapoteca, Mixteca, Tlaxcala, Cholula, Coyoacan, Oaxaca, Quauhquechollan, Tenochca, Texcoca, Otomí, and so on (Map 4.1). Using this geography as a guide, the licenses to ride and own horses closely align with the ethnicities of allies from the conquest of central Mexico. In their indication of service in military campaigns and their general chronology, these licenses also correspond closely to periods and places of conflict as Spain's territorial ambitions expanded further north and south. In this sense, *indios* riding horses in these early years represent both Indigenous alliances and the concept of the *indio conquistador*.[24]

[24] Matthew and Oudijk, *Indian Conquistadors*; Yanna Yannakakis, "Allies or Servants? The Journey of Indian Conquistadors in the Lienzo of Analco," *Ethnohistory* 58, no. 4 (2011): 653–682.

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MAP 4.1 Licenses to ride horses in New Spain, 1537–1620[25]

[25] The names of towns are as transcribed, with the addition of modern accents but not modern spelling.

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Early licenses mention uprisings in the states of Colima, Jalisco, and Zacatecas, which began in 1537 and were still ongoing in 1542.[26] Three licenses were granted for assistance in the "pacification" of Nueva Galicia, referring to violent resistance from the Caxanes and Zacatecos after Nuño Beltrán de Guzmán had terrorized the areas surrounding present-day Guadalajara. In the Mixtón War that followed, Spanish forces under Pedro de Alvarado and later Viceroy Mendoza employed Tlaxcalan, Mexica, Tarasca, Huejotzinca, and Chalca Indigenous allies to recapture the stronghold of Mixtón, in Zacatecas, in 1542. These licenses were granted to Alonso, *cacique* of Cuitlavaca; Juan of Coyoacán (who, it was mentioned, had also served Cortés as the Marques de Valle); and Francisco, *gobernador* of Suchimilco and Olaque.[27] Additional licenses given in 1542–1544 do not mention service directly, but also were given to individuals from towns near Mexico City (Malinalco and Toluca) and further north in Michoacán (Ucareo and Jacona) and Jalisco (Tlaquepaque).

Service on exploratory conquest expeditions also resulted in licenses to ride horses. Two licenses indicated service in the "Tierra Nueva" (mainland North America) on the expedition of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado. Luis de León, who served as an interpreter, was given the privilege to both ride a horse and carry arms.[28] The other license was granted to Damián, *indio principal* of the city of Mexico, *barrio* (English translation needed) de San Sebastián, and mentioned his service on the same expedition.[29]

The outbreak of the Chichimeca War in the 1550s is evident in a surge of licenses granting permission to ride horses in areas bordering this conflict, which pitted the Zacatecos against their former allies, the Caxcan, who had recently allied with the Spanish. Frontier military action also drew on Mexica, Tlaxcalan, Tarascan, and Otomí forces.[30] On the

[26] The Mixtón Rebellion in Nueva Galicia (Jalisco) opposed the rule of Beltran Nuño de Guzman. The arrest of eighteen rebellious Indian leaders and the hanging of nine of them led to the uprising and the death of Juan de Arze in 1539. Rebellions from multiple areas took shape under the leadership of Francisco Tenamaztle (Tenamaxtli). The city of Guadalajara (then governed by Cristóbal de Oñate) was besieged in 1541.

[27] AGNMX, MERCEDES, 1542, vol. 1, exp. 101, f. 51v.

[28] AGNMX, MERCEDES, vol. 2, exp. 240.

[29] AGNMX, MERCEDES, vol. 2, exp. 23.

[30] *Chichimeca* is plural; *Chichimecatl* is singular. This term applied to eight or nine separate Indian groups with distinctive languages (Guachichiles, Zacatecos, Pames, Otomis, Guamares, Tepehuanes, Tecuexes, Cazcanes). The Caxans (in alliance with Cora and Guahichiles) were largely defeated in Nueva Galicia, so the Chichimeca War primarily pitted the Zacatecos against the Spanish and their allies.

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active border with the Chichimeca, the Spanish made use of the intact Purépecha/Tarascan army as well as minority Otomí groups in the Toluca Valley between Mexico and Michoacán.[31] Of the almost three hundred permissions granted between the first years of this Chichimeca War (1550–1555), the majority (at least ninety) came from the region of Michoacán.

To support Spanish interests in settling the Chichimeca War, claims to land were also offered to allies from Tlaxcala and Oaxaca. Not surprisingly, a significant portion of licenses in the 1550s came from Puebla/Tlaxcala (about thirty from Puebla), and another twenty-five from the areas surrounding Mexico City. These allies were brought north as part of a colonization effort to protect the Zacatecas mines and set an example for the nomadic groups in those areas, establishing claims as *indios conquistadores*. In fact, in 1557, a *cacique* of Tula was also proclaimed a *hidalgo* for having captured the Chichimeca leader, Maxorro.[32]

The Tlaxcalans were the most famous of the initial Spanish allies, both on campaigns to the south to Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Guatemala, as well as to the north to Michoacán. They are well represented among licenses for riding horses. In 1542, three licenses were granted to the governor and *indios principales* of Tlaxcala (Don Valeriano de Castañeda, Sebastian, and Lucas Gracales).[33] Altogether, sixty-two *indios* in Tlaxcalan towns from the region surrounding Puebla had received licenses by 1555. In the Obispado de Tlaxcala, multiple licenses were granted to *indios* in the towns of Tlaxcala, Huejotzingo, Cholula, Tetela, Tecamachalco, and Tepeaca. A license also was granted in Totolapa, in the Grijalva River valley of the Chiapas region, and a native language land dispute indicates the presence of such *indios conquistadores* further south, as well.[34]

[31] David Wright, *Conquistadores otomíes en la Guerra Chichimeca* (Querétaro: Dirección de Patrimonio Cultural, Secretaría de Cultura y Bienestar Social, Gobierno del Estado de Querétaro, 1988). Wright reproduced Lamina 2, an image of Otomí allies pictured with a horse, captioned: "El Capitán General don Pedro Martín de Torro y señor de los indio conquistadores guachile, cayó murió don Masadin, capitán don Mazandin, caballo de guerra." Otomí from the Xilotepeque region later populated San Miguel (Allende) in Querétaro and also the pueblo of Chamacuero (San Francisco).

[32] Philip Wayne Powell, *Mexico's Miguel Caldera: The Taming of America's First Frontier (1548–1597)* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977), 68.

[33] AGN MX, MERCEDES, vol. 2, exp. 151, exp. 156, exp. 157.

[34] Archivo Histórico Diocesano de San Cristóbal de Chiapas. "Actas de Cabildo, Villa de Chiapa" June 6, 1541. Archivo Histórico Diocesano de San Cristóbal de Chiapas. Translated to Spanish from the "lengua Chiapaneca" by Bernardino Seiba y Claudio Nuricumbo as supporting evidence for why the *encomienda* of Pueblo de Chiapas de los Indios was given to Baltasar Guerra: "D. Francisco Doho Cacique de este pueblo de

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The regional distribution of licenses reflects areas that had developed associations with Spanish interests, and in some cases, a concentration of licenses indicates that an indigenous center or important crossroad held particular strategic value. This is notable in the states of Oaxaca and Michoacán. William Taylor has already documented the important role of Oaxacan Indigenous nobility in colonial administration, such as the repeated military service of Don Luis Cortés, governor of Cuilapan, in 1525, 1547, and 1549, "at his own cost."[35] Towns in Oaxaca that received numerous licenses include Tlalixtac, Yanhuitlán, Teposcolula, Zimatlán, Huazolotitlán, and Tehuantepeque, and by 1555, a total of sixty-nine licenses had been granted in Oaxaca. In Michoacán, closest to the ongoing conflicts with territory further north, numerous acts of service were recorded in licenses issued to ride horses. In the single year 1555, this added up to fifty-five licenses for the Ciudad de Michoacán and surrounding Indigenous towns.

During this ongoing conflict, rewarding *indio* leaders with permissions to ride horses helped the Spanish to develop auxiliary forces, a policy actively deployed by Viceroy Luís Velasco. In 1553, Velasco issued an order for all the *encomenderos* and *corregidores* to supply Juan Torres with armed *indio*s to fight against the Chichimecas and Guachichiles.[36] Velasco distributed horses and other rewards to *caciques* to garner support, including a remarkable gift of 1,000 horses to Don Nicolás de San Luis, descendent of the "Reyes de Tula y Xilotepeque," and similar gifts to the *caciques* of Tacubaya, Coyoacán, and Michoacán.[37] Two Naguatato *indios* from the town of Metztitlán in Hidalgo were rewarded for their loyal service against the Zapotecas, Migas, and Chontales ("con toda fidelidad como fue vasallo de su magestad," or with loyalty as if he were a vassal of the king) with perpetual rights for them and their descendants to be free from tributes and taxes, together with licenses to ride a horse and carry a sword, a piece of land, and appointment to the position of *alcalde mayor*.[38]

chiapa de indios real corona y vinieron tambien con los españoles capitanes D. Luis de Marariegos" (D. Francisco Doho Cacique of this town of Chiapa de Indios also came with the Spanish captain D. Luis de Marariegos).

[35] William Taylor, *Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford: University of California Press, 1972), 5. Títulos of Cuilacán in Tierras 1016, exp. 5, fol. 1or.

[36] Request for "indios armados para ir contra los chichimecas y guachichiles," 1553, Collection Ayers, NLA, MS1121, f. 212v.

[37] Río Moreno, *Caballos y equidos españoles en la conquista y colonización de America (S. XVI)*, 64; Wright, *Conquistadores otomíes en la Guerra Chichimeca*, 82.

[38] Merced to Don Juan (indio Naguatato), 1553, Collection Ayer, NLA, MS1121, f. 220v.

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In Peru, the list of viceregal *Mercedes* does not contain parallel amounts of rewards due to intense upheaval and rapid turnover in leadership prior to the arrival of Viceroy Toledo in 1568. Yet, acting as allies also granted Indigenous people access to horses there. Much as they had exploited competing local powers in New Spain (e.g., the Tlaxcalans against the Mexica), in Peru the Spanish made use of groups that had maintained their distance from Incan rulers. The Chachapoyans, who lived in the Amazon region inland from Cajamarca, were known for being skilled with the lance and had earned a warlike reputation as a result of staging earlier rebellions against the Inca in Cajamarquilla, Pomacocha, and Pacllas; Chachapoyas *cacique* Guaman, an Incan official in Cochabamba under Atahualpa, became an important Spanish ally.[39] Chachapoyans who served with the Spanish and later settled in Cusco did not pay tribute up to the time of Viceroy Toledo, while those remaining in Chachapoyas raised horses.[40] Allies also came from the Cañari, on the northern border with Ecuador. According to Titu Cusi's chronicle, both Cañari *indios* and the Chachapoyans served the Spanish during the rebellion of the Spanish-installed ruler, Manco Inca, in the 1530s.[41]

As the Spanish conquistadors arrived in Peru, they also received support from *yanaconas*, a category of servant for Incan nobles outside of the *ayllus* (kinship-based political, social, and agricultural units) that organized tributary subjects of the Inca. Although the term *yanaconas* was used in a specific economic context precontact, it also later applied to a wide range of Indigenous allies, servants, and slaves who were brought by incoming would-be conquistadors and auxiliary *indio* forces. With time, the potential *yanacona* population of Indigenous allies expanded, as some Indigenous individuals preferred this status as a direct servant to the labor obligations

[39] Waldemar Espinoza Soriano, Solomon Machover, and Universidad Nacional del Centro del Perú, *Los Huancas, aliados de la Conquista: tres informaciones inéditas sobre la participación indígena en la conquista del Perú, 1558–1560–1561* (Huancayo: Universidad Nacional del Centro del Peru, 1972), 137. Espinoza cites the *questionario* of 1572 taken by Sarmiento de Gamboa, BNLA585f127. Guaman followed Pizarro to Andahuaylas in November of 1533 and went with Alonso Alvarado to conquer Chachapoyas and Moyobamba, along with another *cacique* of Chilcho. Pizarro made Guaman the *cacique principal* of Chachapoyas and granted him *ganados* (livestock), *charcas* (lands and pastures), *yanaconas* (personal attendants), and *hamaqueros* (servants for carrying leaders in a hammock strung between them, a sign of elite status).

[40] Inge Schjellerup, *Incas and Spaniards in the Conquest of the Chachapoyas: Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Research in the North-Eastern Andes of Peru* (Göteborg University, Department of Archaeology, 1997), 128.

[41] Titu Cusi Yupanqui, *An Inca Account of the Conquest of Peru*, trans. Ralph Bauer (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2011).

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imposed by the distribution of former Inca *ayllus* to *encomenderos*. In campaigns driving south into Chile, for example, the Spanish brought *indios amigos* and *indios de servicio* drawn from Picunches, Promacuaes, and Moluches in northern Chile, as well as *yanaconas* from Peru.

Services were rendered in a variety of ways and in a variety of places in these first fifty years of colonization, and, with some frequency, permission to ride a horse was offered as a reward. The sparse documentation available does not fill in whether or how this familiarity with horses continued, nor in what fashion the horses were used. However, it does become clear that these permissions had significance not only for the Spanish in their attempts to generate alliances, but also for the individuals who were seeking confirmation of their reward in a recorded license, and the granting of repeated licenses in some regions suggests a more active use and identification of status with the horse.

4.2 EXPANDING USES OF THE HORSE

Besides constituting a recognizable facet of military service, the horse was a potent symbol of other kinds of political and social mastery. In their sparse documentation, recorded licenses do not specify Indigenous uses of horses, but they do clearly demonstrate recognition of the horse's social and symbolic importance among *caciques* and governors, who were considered by the Spanish to be representatives of Indigenous nobility. The motivation to be recognized by riding a horse spread beyond the inner circle of *caciques* to other Indigenous officials and forms of service.

Gaining a license to ride a horse required active participation on the part of the Indigenous individual, as would developing the set of skills to care for or ride a horse, once granted. Very often, these licenses were given in a location outside of the *indio*'s town, meaning the recipient had also traveled to address the viceroy's court in Mexico City or while its representative was traveling on official business. Additionally, some requests to receive written licenses indicated the desire to be free of harassment for using a horse. In this context, a recorded license could represent the granting of a new request or reconfirm a prior permission to ride horses. Practically speaking, just a few months would have been ample time to observe the basic elements of horse behavior and acquire the skills needed for riding, so the leap from securing a license to actually using a horse depended greatly on the individual recipient. The timeline over which licenses were issued also suggests a sustained interest among Indigenous elites and officials to acquire permission to ride a horse.

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Under Spanish colonial governance, local Indigenous notables were elected to serve in *indio cabildos*, bodies well represented in permits to ride horses. Known as *principales*, their role mirrored that of the *regidores* in Spanish municipal government.[42] Many individuals seeking licenses were identified by the honorific *Don*, while others were identified only by name and office, as governor, *cacique*, *principal*, or simply *natural*. Moreover, in some instances, licenses were given in multiples to the *principale*s of a town's local government, supporting access to horses as a feature of their select status. The association of permission to ride horses with municipal offices reached further in some places. In the City of Michoacán (Valladolid, and later Morelia), for example, licenses were given to *principale*s as well as a variety of other administrative offices held by *indio*s (including *sacristán de la iglesia*, or church sacristan, *escribano de la comunidad*, or notary, and *principal de los pintores*, or master of painters). On occasion, other special occupations also applied, such as an *indio* blacksmith (*indio herrador lengua mexica* in Matalcingo, Michoacán).[43] These permissions primarily conferred status, and this status was not only understood with respect to Spanish hierarchies but also incorporated into Indigenous ones: One license, for example, specifies that the governor of Ucareo (Michoacán) should receive this license to ride because his father, the previous governor, had received the same privilege.[44]

Permission to ride a horse sustained the dignity of office for Indigenous leaders, and some licenses were granted to accommodate *caciques* of advanced age and poor physical condition. Early in 1539, Don Hernando of Tepeaca submitted a petition to the viceroy of New Spain to ride a horse due to his age: "es hombre viejo y por esta causa querría andar cabalgando y suplica que pues esa buen cristiano se le diese licencia para andar a caballo" (he is an old man and for this reason would like to go on horseback, and asks that because he is a good Christian he be given a license to ride a horse).[45] The judgment of the viceroy was indifferent:

[42] Almost universally these are granted to males. One notable exception is one granted to an *india cacica* of Tetula, Doña Madalena, in 1552, to "montar a caballo, andar en una mula o haca" (ride a horse, going on a mule or a hackney). Kraus Collection, Library of Congress (LOC), Reel 2 No. 140, f. 426.

[43] Ramo de Patzcuaro, Archivo Histórico Municipal Patzcuaro (AMHPA), Caja 131, Legajo 2.

[44] "Para tener una haca como la tenia don garcia su padre," Kraus Collection, LOC, f. 171v, Reel 2 No. 140, s.f.

[45] Permission to ride granted via Real Cédula al Virrey de la Nueva España, AGI Mexico 1088, L3, F242v.

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"it seems no inconvenience will follow to grant this license." In 1542, two additional licenses were granted for similar reasons, one to Alonso, *gobernador* of Tuxchupa (near Tetela de Ocampo) and the other to Francisco, *cacique* of Gamelula. In both cases, it was noted that the permissions were granted because these *caciques* were "viejo y gordo" (old and fat) but still acting in their official capacity. To continue to be able to oversee their affairs, they were permitted to ride a mare.[46]

The licenses show that horses came to demarcate higher social status within Indigenous communities, and often, when granted by Spanish officials, these licenses recognized de facto access to horses within these same communities. Domesticated livestock, including horses, ranged with little supervision over large swathes of land, and their dispersal required new guards to keep livestock from crowding the main roadways and harming agricultural lands. Additionally, *mesta* regulations gave Indigenous towns permission to capture and keep roaming horses in small quantities, usually about a dozen. A license granted in 1541 in Teotitlán (Oaxaca) referred to the town's location on a well-used route that supplied *tamanes* (local cargo carriers), and the license confirmed existing use of ten to twelve horses for cargo (not under saddle and bridle) against harassment. Thus, while fewer licenses issued in the 1560s referred to *principales* or *caciques* riding horses, forty-three issued in 1565 permitted the use of horses to carry cargo (licenses for *bestia de cargo*) or sell on horseback (*vender a caballo*) along the network of the *Camino Real*, or to be ridden while guarding livestock (licenses for *indios de servicio*).[47]

4.2.1 Growing Tensions

The complex reality of colonial New Spain challenged simple expectations that the horse would serve merely as a symbol of Spanish authority, as horses were also used in Indigenous communities, whether for practical purposes or to claim higher status. The growing importance of the horse within Indigenous communities followed the frontier model of Spanish governance, but this did not limit Indigenous use of horses to Spanish methods alone.

[46] AGNMX, MERCEDES, Año 1542, vol. 1, exp. 280, fs. 130; MERCEDES, Año 1542, vol. 1, exp. 267, fs. 126.

[47] Ross Hassig, *Comercio, tributo y transportes. La economía política en el Valle de México en el siglo xvi* (Mexcio: Alianza editorial mexicana, 1990), 213.

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Early on, European-style husbandry and settlements were proposed to "civilize" Indigenous subjects. As early as 1525, Rodrigo de Albornoz, accountant of New Spain, wrote to Charles V advertising that his new subjects demonstrated a natural propensity for raising fowl and cattle ("being as much given to it as are the farmers of Spain, and being much more subtle and quick") and, moreover, that this affinity for domesticated husbandry was itself a promising sign for potential conversion.[48] Instructions sent in 1536 from the king to Viceroy Mendoza encouraged the raising of *ganados menores* (goats, sheep, and pigs) among *indio* populations.[49] In this instance, the civilizing benefits of domesticated animal husbandry were limited to small livestock, rather than large animals like horses and cattle, which were both material and symbolic indicators of wealth and prestige. Livestock husbandry was not an integral complement to existing native agricultural practices, yet with the growth of the *mesta* and requirements for guards for livestock, *indios* and other enslaved people also frequently interacted with livestock as part of their tribute or service, learning how to handle and even manage their own herds of livestock. Between 1550 and 1555, when viceroy of New Spain Luís Velasco issued almost three hundred licenses to ride horses, he also issued new regulations to supplement the *mesta*, including instituting the requirement that *estancias* be issued at least one league away from existing settlements. Moreover, Velasco personally gave horses as gifts to *caciques*, confirming that the role of an Indigenous elite within Spanish colonial society was represented by access to horses.

But others strenuously objected to Indigenous people's growing familiarity with domesticated animals. Also in 1555, the Franciscan Motolinía wrote to King Carlos V to object to how many *indios* were already riding horses. He recommended that future licenses be given only to those of highest status. Motolinía based his reasoning on preserving the social symbolism of the horse for the Spanish, "because if the Indios learn to deal with horses, many will become riders wanting to be equal for a time with the Spanish."[50] This same complaint about the number of *indio*s

[48] "Letter from Rodrigo de Albornoz, Accountant of New Spain, to Charles V," December 1525, AGI Mexico 95.

[49] Orders from Viceroy Mendoza, 1536, AGI Indiferente 415, L2, f65.

[50] "Carta, Fray Toribio de Motolinía a Emperador Carlos V, January 9, 1555," in Joaquín García Icazbalceta, Juan Bautista Pomar, and Alonso de Zurita, *Nueva colección de documentos para la historia de México* (Mexico, DF: Editorial Salvador Chávez Hayhoe, 1941), vol. 1, 264–265.

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riding horses was echoed in Puebla in 1556.[51] In these examples, the distribution and availability of horses by the 1550s challenged the version of political and social order symbolized by the horse.

Horse theft also posed a great threat in the mid-sixteenth century. Horse theft had sustained the rebellion in the Chichimec territory against the Spanish encroachments of mining and punitive slaving practices. Between the 1550s and 1600, horse theft and later trade would bring horses north from central Mexico into the North American plains, and somewhat more slowly into the western Sonora region.[52] A few cases documenting horse theft appear in the local archives of Michoacán in the 1560s, and demonstrate that Indigenous agents had thorough knowledge of horses. One case records an *indio* from Queneo complaining that another *indio*, Pedro Cuini [Quiniz?] of Tzintzuntzan (from the "barrio curandero" or the neighborhood of healers) had stolen his horse.[53] In another case, an *indio* from Pátzcuaro complained that he had bought a horse in Uruapan, but it was taken from him by a Spaniard who claimed it was a stolen horse; this *indio* then stole the horse back, and ultimately was fined four *pesos*, equal to the value of the horse in question.[54]

Between the 1550s and the 1580s, *indios* in the region between Zacatecas and Saltillo acquired horses, mules, and cattle and learned to ride.[55] The sixteenth-century chronicler Juan Suárez Peralta commented on the large number of horses wandering the northern country of New Spain and also recorded that the Chichimeca had developed their own form of horse breeding in *rancherías* (temporary corrals).[56] The unsettled nature of this northern frontier, known as the "tierras de guerra" because

[51] "Carta al Emperador, de Gonzalo Díaz de Vargas, alguacil mayor y regidor de la ciudad de los Ángeles," in *Epistolario de Nueva España*, vol. 8, ed. Francisco del Paso y Troncoso (Mexico: José Porrúa, 1939–1942): 99–114.

[52] Francis Haines, "The Northward Spread of Horses among the Plains Indians," *AMAN American Anthropologist* 40, no. 3 (1938): 429–37; Jack Forbes, "The Appearance of the Mounted Indian in Northern Mexico and Southwest to 1680," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 15, no. 2 (1959): 196. To place this expansion primarily in the 1560s, Forbes cites Baltasar de Obregón's account of Francisco de Ibarra's 1565 expedition, in which he writes that the Indians of the Yaqui river were "astonished at the sight of horses, negroes [and other] things never seen by them."

[53] Fondo Antiguo, Caja 2, Exp. 27, AHMPA. According to accompanying local testimony, the horse itself had cost ten pesos.

[54] 1584. Fondo Antiguo, Caja 4, Exp. 15, AHMPA.

[55] J. Edward De Steiguer, *Wild Horses of the West: History and Politics of America's Mustangs* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011), 71.

[56] *Libro de Albeyteria*, Book 2, Ch 6, published by Francois Chevalier in "Noticia inédita sobre los caballos en Nueva España," *Revista de Indies* 16 (1944): 324.

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of its ongoing conflicts, and the roads through it that led to the Zacatecas mines also generated a need for continued permissions for *indio* governors within Spanish territory to use horses in order to be able to collect tribute.

In Peru, a state of civil unrest highlighted the potentially destabilizing role of horses. In 1565, García de Castro introduced the new office of the *corregidor de los indios*, a royal representative for collecting tribute and taxes, to gain greater oversight of Indigenous communities. His request followed the rise of Taqui Ongo, an anti-Christian millenarian sect that was supported by the rump Inca state in Vilcabamba, now under the rule of Titu Cusi (1560–1571), and another presumably narrowly avoided Indigenous uprising in Jauja. In 1566, Governor García de Castro complained to the king of the great carelessness in allowing *indio*s to have horses in Peru. He proposed that all horses be confiscated from *indios*, although he also suggested paying damages for this reversal, and assigned this task to his new *corregidores*.[57]

Further south, the Spanish faced serious and deep-seated struggles controlling strategic territory around the Strait of Magellan against the coalesced forces of the Mapuche-speaking groups (and English pirates). A new leader, Lautaro (also known by the Spanish name Alonso), used his familiarity with horses in ways parallel to Manco Inca, and his leadership contributed to the development of a large Indigenous cavalry force by the 1560s. The chronicle of Ocaña indicates that Lautaro was from the Arauco valley, where he was likely taken for service during Pedro de Valdivia's push south in 1550–1551. A *ladino* (Spanish-speaking *indio*), Lautaro served as a stable groom for Valdivia, the leader of the Spanish campaigns in Chile.[58] On December 25, 1553, at the age of

[57] In Peru, Governor Castro introduced the *corregidor de indios* in 1565. Mumford, *Vertical Empire*, 63 fn 56. Mumford cites AGI Lima 121, loose file, f. 5, "Copia de un capítulo de carta que el licenciado Castro escribió a Su Mag. . .," Lima 30 April 1566: ". . .como les iba quitando todos los caballos y yeguas y todas las armas de españa que tenían. . ." (how he was taking away all the horses and mares and all the weapons of Spain that they had). Mumford notes that Castro "endorsed the ban on caciques' access to horses and guns. He was alarmed that some of them could ride and shoot better than many Spaniards, made excellent gunpowder, and even excelled in the juego de cañas, a Spanish game." He also notes that Spanish officials had long debated whether caciques should ride and bear arms, and that orders from the royal court or from viceroys were also ignored or not effectively enforced.

[58] Alonso de Góngora Marmolejo, *Historia de todas las cosas que han acaecido en el reino de Chile y de los que han gobernado* . . . Series Biblioteca Indiana, vol. 24 (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2010), 120; Diego Ocaña, *Relación del viaje a Chile año de 1600*, ed. Lorena Loyola Goich and Eugenio Pereira Salas (Santiago: Editorial Universitaria, 1995),

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twenty, Lautaro joined Mapuche forces to lead the Battle of Tucapel, which left for dead the entire Spanish force of 55 Spaniards and 2,000 *yanacona*s. Using his insider knowledge, Lautaro continued the Mapuche offensive in the 1554 Battle of Marigarenu, where he fielded a force of 8,000 men that drove the Spanish cavalry off a cliff in a complete rout. While celebrating another victory at the Battle of Mataquito in 1557, Lautaro was ambushed and killed. Despite this loss, the Mapuche were already able to field their own cavalry by the 1560s. Chronicler Marmolejo reported on the Mapuche's alarming facility with horses during an attack in 1566 at the fort of Reinogüelen, where a Mapuche warrior took down Cristóbal de Buiza and then mounted his horse and proceeded to ride it as well as the best in Andalusia: "El caballo tomó un indio, y en presencia de los cristianos subió en él, y lo comenzó a manejar como si fuera jinete andaluz" (The *indio* took a horse, and in the presence of the Spanish mounted it, and began to manage it as if he were a horseman from Andalusia).[59] These threatening instances of *indios* riding horses with great mastery accumulated in the 1560s and generated concern among the Spanish.

Indigenous interactions with horses ranged widely: They slaughtered them, stole them from Spaniards, rode them in military service, took care of them, traded them, and used them for political posturing. Although Spanish colonizers thought of themselves as gatekeepers for the privilege of using horses, Indigenous actors also had their own interests in mind as they became more familiar with the growing presence of horses across military, political, and economic aspects of life. Although Indigenous people participated in colonial systems for frontier rewards to gain social status and political office, their knowledge and use of horses was not limited to only conforming to colonial expectations.

4.2.2 Sharpening Divisions

The Spanish crown renewed its blanket prohibition against *indios* riding horses in 1568, the same year in which two new viceroys arrived to govern New Spain (Martín Enríque Almanza) and Peru (Antonio Toledo). The renewed prohibition against riding, coupled with the

36. See also Alvaro Jara, *Guerre et société au Chili. Essai de sociologie coloniale*, trans. Jacques Lafaye (Paris: Institut des hautes études de l'amérique latine, 1961).

[59] Marmolejo, *Historia de todas las cosas que han acaecido en el reino de Chile y de los que han gobernado* … Series Biblioteca Indiana, 170.

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installation of *corregidores* to provide oversight of *indio gobernador*es and *caciques*, sharpened divisions between *indio* and Spanish communities. These divisions also elevated the importance of horses in colonial conflicts and in claims to social status.

Individual towns were governed by local notables who were elected or appointed to the city council, but the regional authority of the *corregidor* provided an increasingly strong corrective and representation of Spanish royal power to both municipalities and individual landholders – a long-term strategy that had begun to be instituted as early as the 1530s in New Spain but not effectively until the 1560s in Peru.[60] In the second half of the sixteenth century, the Crown flexed this muscle on the renewed prohibition against *indios* riding horses, and *corregidores* increasingly confiscated horses, even from *indios principales* with licenses in hand. In 1567, a *vecino* in Pátzcuaro accused two *indios* (Felipe and Pedro) of taking his horses, but because the *indios* were *caballeros*, he complained, they had refused to turn over their horses without legal process.[61] This refusal is a wonderful example of the strength of the equestrian frontier tradition tying horses to social status that had developed through rewards for service and other licenses, even while provoked by an attempt to rescind or police such privileges. In 1568, Francisco Gómez, an *indio* from Puebla, had his horse confiscated from him by the *alguacil* (constable) while he was riding in public on business in Mexico City. He protested to the viceroy that he did not know there was any law against *indios* riding horses, and was held in jail until he paid his fine.[62] Even as late as 1573, when the *indio* Juan Augustín from Tzintzuntzan had the horse he used to bring wood from the *montes* confiscated, he protested that he had not known there was a law to this effect; it was read out loud to him, and he was fined twelve pesos, or the value of the animal.[63] These examples show the lax prior state of enforcing a

[60] The increasing importance of the *corregidor de indios* and stricter enforcement of difference in the use of the horse between Spanish and Indigenous categories corresponded to *indio* elites losing some of their political relevance. Chevalier, *Land and Society in Colonial Mexico*, describes how indigenous lands were taken in the north of Mexico. Taylor, *Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca*, describes how, although Indigenous elites kept most of their land in the Oaxaca valley, they nonetheless lost their political representation.

[61] Fondo Antiguo, AHMPA, Caja 2, Exp. 65.

[62] AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja-exp.: 1253–39.

[63] AHCP Sección Repartimiento de Indios (Caja 3, Exp. 23, June 12, 1573), in Rodrigo Martínez Baracs y Lydia Espinosa Morales, *La vida michoacana en el siglo XVI.*

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prohibition on *indios* riding horses and the effort to have it more stringently enforced surfaces existing assumptions and uses of horses.

While the confiscation of *indio* equine mounts increased in the 1560s, so too did requests for *indios* to continue to ride horses, especially for work related to livestock, cargo, or trade. This may account for the sudden appearance of over forty licenses issued in the year 1565 for *bestia de cargo*. Well into the 1580s and 1590s, Spanish landowners also began to facilitate requests to permit their *indios de servicio* to go mounted and armed, to protect their livestock and maintain the necessary guards to keep herds from entering protected areas of other towns, and likely to avoid the inconvenience of having these horses confiscated. In 1596, the town of Puebla, a major crossroads for the long-distance movement of animals, tried to prohibit *vaqueros*, and especially *indio*, *mestizo*, and *mulatto* ones, from entering the city at all for fear of theft and general disruption.[64]

For the elite *indio cacique* or governor, confiscation of a horse was a grave blow against their presumed status, and in turn required requesting a new license from the viceroy and restitution of their horse. In 1573, for example, the *regidor* Gaspar Montiel applied for a "licencia para continuar andando en caballo" (a license to be able to continue riding). According to his petition, the *corregidor* had forced him to stop riding on a mule. In reply, Gaspar claims that he had always had the freedom to ride a horse, and currently as *regidor*, he used his mule for business. His request was approved, and he was also granted a license to ride a mule as well.[65] Despite legal permissions, stricter enforcement and justifications appeared more frequently in the 1570s and 1580s. Even for *indios* who were granted permission to ride horses based on their status as *principal*, licenses were needed to travel outside of a known area.

The effects of the renewed ban on Indigenous horse riding are even more apparent in Peru. A 1573 *residencia* (judicial review of official acts

Catálogo de los documentos del siglo XVI del Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de Pátzcuaro (Mexcio: INAH, 1999), 227: "Ante Hernando Caballero Alcalde Mayor desta ciudad Bartolomé Osorio alguacil mayor pide que se proceda contra el indio Juan Agustín natural del barrio de Tzintzuntzan, sujeto desta ciudad que tiene por costumbre andar a caballo con silla y freno, sin permiso" (Before Hernando Caballero, Mayor of this city, Bartolomé Osorio, the chief constable, requests that action be taken against the Indian Juan Agustín, a native of the Tzintzuntzan neighborhood, a subject of this city who has the habit of riding a horse with a saddle and bridle, without permission).

[64] *Libro de Cabildo*, 6 October 1596, AHMPU.

[65] AGN, Indiferente Virreinal, caja-exp.: 6340–011.

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in office) into the tenure of Gregorio González de Cuenca, an *oidor de la Audiencia de Lima* (a judge in the high court of Lima), investigated whether he had issued and revoked licenses to ride horses under questionable circumstances. As *visitador general* (royally appointed official reporting to the Council of the Indies) between 1563 and1566, Cuenca had made rounds in northern Peru, where he had ostensibly traveled to announce that *indios* were not permitted to ride horses, unless they purchased a license from him, and he simultaneously proceeded to threaten such privileges in order to collect penalties and fees from a large number of Indigenous communities. His additional abuses included demanding excessive amounts of supplies to sustain his entire entourage and physical abuse and public ridicule of Indigenous leaders.

According to the testimony collected, Cuenca made his announcement – that it was not permitted for any *indio* to ride horses, unless they purchased a license from him – in Indigenous villages in the native language. He then sold licenses for one or two *pesos* each. It is recorded that he issued at least two hundred individual licenses to ride horses in twenty-nine towns, including San Miguel Piura, Chachapoyas, Guánuco, Trujillo, Lambayeque, and Cajamarca. *Indio*s in Trujillo alone were granted sixty-eight licenses in this short period of time, of which the majority (more than twenty each) were issued in Huamachuco and Chicama. The Lambayeque area likewise received sixty-eight licenses, divided more equally among the towns in the valley, including Jayanca, Illimo, Chuspo, Túcume, and Zaña. Cajamarca received twenty-seven, and Chachapoyas, located further inland, received four. On average, a town would receive four to eight licenses, while larger towns received up to ten licenses. The licenses themselves are also telling of existing Indigenous use of horses. Given the circumstances in which Cuenca threatened to confiscate horses and subsequently collected payments for new licenses, they confirm existing access to horses in these areas was thriving.

4.2.3 Status and Lineage Mediated by Horses

Although 1568 marked a downturn in access to horses and reinforced prohibitions and concerns about the distinctions of social status, this trend also vacillated over time. On the one hand, the horse served as a symbol of power and dominance over opposing forces, and, on the other hand, as a tool of social mobility. This duality suggests the spread of a particular frontier model for thinking about the link between horse and

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status, which, to a significant extent, depended on the claims made by the *indio*s interested in such privileges and status. Over time, the *indio* "nobility" also began to assert claims to ride horses as a natural matter of status and lineage.

Following a period of relatively low activity in the 1570s–1580s, a veritable explosion of requests for licenses appears from 1589 to 1592. These coincide with the official end of the Chichimeca War and the arrival of a new viceroy in New Spain, Luís Velasco II. While the earliest licenses focused on military service, already by the 1550s they had begun to mention the lineages of *cacique*s, *gobernadore*s, and *principale*s in the rationale for permission to ride horses under saddle. At the end of the hostilities in the 1590s, the terms of these licenses primarily aimed to confirm status. Applicants increasingly referred to former generations' access to horses to solidify their claims to status. Finally, instead of being limited to their time in office, these licenses confirmed an existing privilege that could be passed on to the next generation.

In the last years of the Chichimeca conflict in northern New Spain, the earlier model of using *indios conquistadores* became official policy. The Crown had diverged from their "war of fire and blood" following a Bishop's Council in 1580 and the intervention of a *mestizo*, Miguel Caldera, to follow a more conciliatory policy. Under Viceroy Villamanrique (1585), this new policy aimed to domesticate the nomadic groups and used Tlaxcalans to establish model settlements. In 1591, 400 hundred Tlaxcalan families earned the status of *hidalgos* and rights to *estancia*s *de ganados* (grazing rights to land), as well as rights to ride horses and carry arms for thirty years.[66] Near the Chichimec border, just over 100 licenses to use horses were issued in approximately sixty different towns between the years 1589 and 1592.

This late sixteenth-century set of permissions prioritizes status over mention of service. In addition to those near the northern border, a few hundred licenses were granted in areas that had not been part of this long-standing conflict. Distributed around major population centers, the bulk of these licenses were granted to residents in the Oaxaca Valley. Many of these, moreover, explicitly make the connection between being a son of a *principal*, *cacique*, or governor, and the new license as an extension of status for that lineage. One issued in the town of Huajolotitlán (Oaxaca),

[66] Cédula Real with capitulations signed by Viceroy Velasco II, March 14, 1591. *Colección de documentos para la historia de San Luis Potosí*, ed. P. F. Velázquez (San Luis Potosí: Imp. Del Editor, 1897), 179.

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for example, refers to Don Luis Garçes as the "legitimate" son of Don Paolo Garçes in order to confirm that the license issued to the father to ride horses remained valid for the son. This series of licenses between the 1540s and the 1590s shows a clear transition from the granting of permissions to ride horses due to military service to granting them as a matter of lineage.[67] Even though these licenses were perfunctory documents and the categorization of the individual receiving the permission was often imprecise, it seems that horse riding emerged as a natural expectation for Indigenous elites seeking to maintain their social status. In fact, facing challenges to or possible loss of Indigenous influence, these licenses served as a means to claim elite lineage in a manner similar to that of the *hidalgo* – originating with military service, qualified by political office, and then confirming the generational transfer of social status and customary privileges.[68]

Although the body of licenses documenting this transformation only refer to New Spain, a similar trajectory for *indio* allies gaining access to horses and claiming the inheritance of status can be found in Peru.[69] When Viceroy Toledo arrived in Peru in 1568, he decided to take concrete action against the Incan rump state and called on some traditional Indigenous allies. The *caciques* of Chachapoyas, following the capture of Túpac Amaru in 1572, made a collective request from Toledo for liberty from tribute in return for their aid in retrieving the rebellious

[67] Laura Matthew examined a collective petition in Ciudad Vieja, Guatemala, in 1564 for Indigenous people of a variety of ethnicities who had participated in the conquest of Guatemala under Pedro de Alvarado, and she argues that over the course of the petition, the language evolved from emphasizing the service rendered in conquest (1564) to explicitly emphasizing lineage (1573), appealing "to their individual and communal qualities: as nobility, as conquistadors and allies, and as non-slaves." *Memories of Conquest: Becoming Mexicano in Colonial Guatemala* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 119.

[68] Of note, there are at least five instances of an Indigenous woman seeking license to ride: Doña Ana in Tututepec in 1553 (Ayers Collection, f. 328v) is an early outlier. In 1591, four women named as *principales* of Tepexi de Rodríguez, Puebla, were also given permission to ride: Petronila Garcia (AGN, MEX, INDIOS. 1591, vol. 5, exp. 873, fs. 295), Maria Salome (AGN, MEX, INDIOS. 1591, vol. 5, exp. 874, fs. 295), Ana de Santa Barbara (AGN, MEX, INDIOS. 1591, vol. 5, exp. 875, fs. 295), and Doña María de Esquivel (AGN, MEX, INDIOS. 1591, vol. 5, exp. 910, fs. 304v).

[69] See Jeremy Ravi Mumford, "Aristocracy on the Auction Block: Race, Lords, and the Perpetuity Controversy of Sixteenth-Century Peru," in *Imperial Subjects: Race and Identity in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Matthew D. O'Hara, Andrew B. Fisher, Walter D. Mignolo, Irene Silverblatt, and Sonia Saldívar-Hull (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 39–60.

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leader from Vilcabamba.[70] The Chachapoyans also gained recognition in a colony further south, in the Villa de Oropesa (Valley of Cochabamba), after aiding Toledo in suppressing a group of Guaraní-speaking people in the Chaco region (southeastern Bolivia), collectively known by the pejorative Chiriguanos, in 1574.[71] Diverse Indigenous groups in New Spain and Peru made similar efforts to claim privileges from military service and then maintain it through defined lineages.

More specifically, descendants of Incan elites pursued titles of nobility, aiming for the Spanish *hidalgo*'s full constellation of privileges, including exemption from tribute, permission to dress in Spanish clothes, carry arms, and ride a horse.[72] Already in 1545, descendants of the preconquest Inca (Túpac Inca Yupanqui, c.1441–1493) had received an *escudo nobiliario* (noble coat of arms) from Charles V, and other descendants received analogous treatment based on their lineage. For example, Don Carlos Inca (the nephew of Manco Inca and son of his successor, Paullu Inca) learned to ride, was educated with other *mestizo*s, and became a *regidor* of Cuzco.[73] His son, Melchor Carlos Inca, inherited the family's *encomienda* in the 1580s.[74] In later eighteenth-century documents, numerous Andean families solicited recognition of noble origins and corresponding privileges from the crown.[75]

Possession of the horse was a material sign of status, but in the context of these claims to noble lineage, mastery of the horse itself also became a shared indicator of noble origins. Spaniard Luis Morales, vicar-general in Cuzco, described Inca nobility as natural riders whose talents were squandered on just herding horses, a sentiment echoed by others.[76] In 1582, the Aymara *principales* of Charcas sent a letter to Philip II asking him to recognize their noble status, claiming that their participation in the

[70] Karen Spalding, "Social Climbers: Changing Patterns of Mobility among the Indians of Colonial Peru," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 50, no. 4 (1970): 645–664.

[71] Informaciones de oficio y parte, AGI, LIMA, 204, N.23.

[72] Scarlett O'Phelan writes that "to integrate into colonial society it was as important to use the book and pen as a horse and firearms." *Kurakas sin sucesiones: Del cacique al alcalde de indios (Perú y Bolivia 1750–1835)* (Centro de Estudios Regionales Andinos Bartolomé de Las Casas, 1997), 17–18.

[73] Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas*, 339.

[74] Ward Stavig, "Ambiguous Visions: Nature, Law, and Culture in Indigenous-Spanish Land Relations in Colonial Peru," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (2000): 77–111.

[75] Scarlett O'Phelan, *Mestizos reales en el virreinato del Perú: indios nobles, caciques y capitanes de mita* (Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 2013).

[76] Letters of Luis Morales to the King, 1582, quoted in Hemming, *The Conquest of the Incas*, 343.

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uniquely Spanish tradition of horsemanship known as the "game of canes" should be a sign of natural nobility.[77] Drawing on a similar logic, the Indigenous chronicler Guaman Poma drew connections between generations of service and access to horses. His father had been christened with a Spanish name, Don Martín de Ayala, by the Spanish conquistador, Luis Ávalos de Ayala, in recognition of his service, which included saving his life during La Gasca's defeat of Gonzalo Pizarro, and Guaman Poma depicts himself walking with a horse as a sign of this prestigious origin and its future potential in his own son (see Figure 4.1).

Archival evidence suggests that *indios* raising horses and interacting with them on a daily basis continued to grow in the second half of the sixteenth century. In a prosaic fashion, many forms of interactions with horses were recorded in the colonial *Relaciones geográficas*, conducted in 1577–1584. These reports on the resources and livelihoods of towns throughout the Spanish colonies provide ample evidence of the normalcy of seeing *indios a caballo* and Indigenous communities that maintained horse populations despite this practice's perceived threat to established order. City notarial records offer numerous examples of horses raised by *indios principales* and of the regular trade and sale of horses between Indigenous parties.[78] The last will and testament of *cacique* Don Juan Guaman of Chachapoyas listed the seventy horses he owned in the late 1590s.[79] Many lawsuits and other petitions demonstrate active participation in owning and breeding horses, far beyond the limited permission to ride them.[80] Such cases deserve a more thorough examination, but as a

[77] John V. Murra, "The Economic Organization of the Inca State," PhD thesis (University of Chicago, 1956), xviii. On the *juegos de cañas*, see Luis Toro Buiza and Pedro Camacho de Morales, *Noticias de los juegos de cañas reales, tomadas de nuestros libros de gineta* (Sevilla: La Imprenta municipal, 1944).

[78] In the Lima *Notoriales*, one case in 1571 records the use of horses raised by *indios principals*: "Gonzalo Ruiz Pardo residente en Lima se obliga de entregar a Nicolas Macata principal de Xongo Marca y hermano, Pedro Caquia, dos yeguas con crias" (Protocolos Notoriales, N119,217, AGNP). *Indios* also traded and sold horses to each other (Ramirez, 129, citing ARL CoR,30-VI-1576). In 1585, Juan Tacori, *mitmae* of Pachacámac, bought some mares and a colt in Lima (*Protocolos Notariales*, N76, 332, AGNP), and in 1589, Carlos de Cuniga, *cacique* of Acarí, bought a chestnut horse for twenty pesos from Pedro de Bilbao, *indio alcalde de los naturales* (*Protocolos notariales*, N140, 190, AGNP).

[79] Schjellerup, *Incas and Spaniards in the Conquest of the Chachapoyas*, 181.

[80] Schjellerup, *Incas and Spaniards in the Conquest of the Chachapoyas*, 171. For example, in 1612, in Uchumarca near Leymebamba, two *indios principal*es from Tacac (Don Juan Anamba and Don Fernando Andaipisco), brought a suit against Don Juan Tomallaxa, *principal* of Llamac, for not guarding his mules and horses, and encroaching on lands where they themselves were already raising maize and breeding horses.

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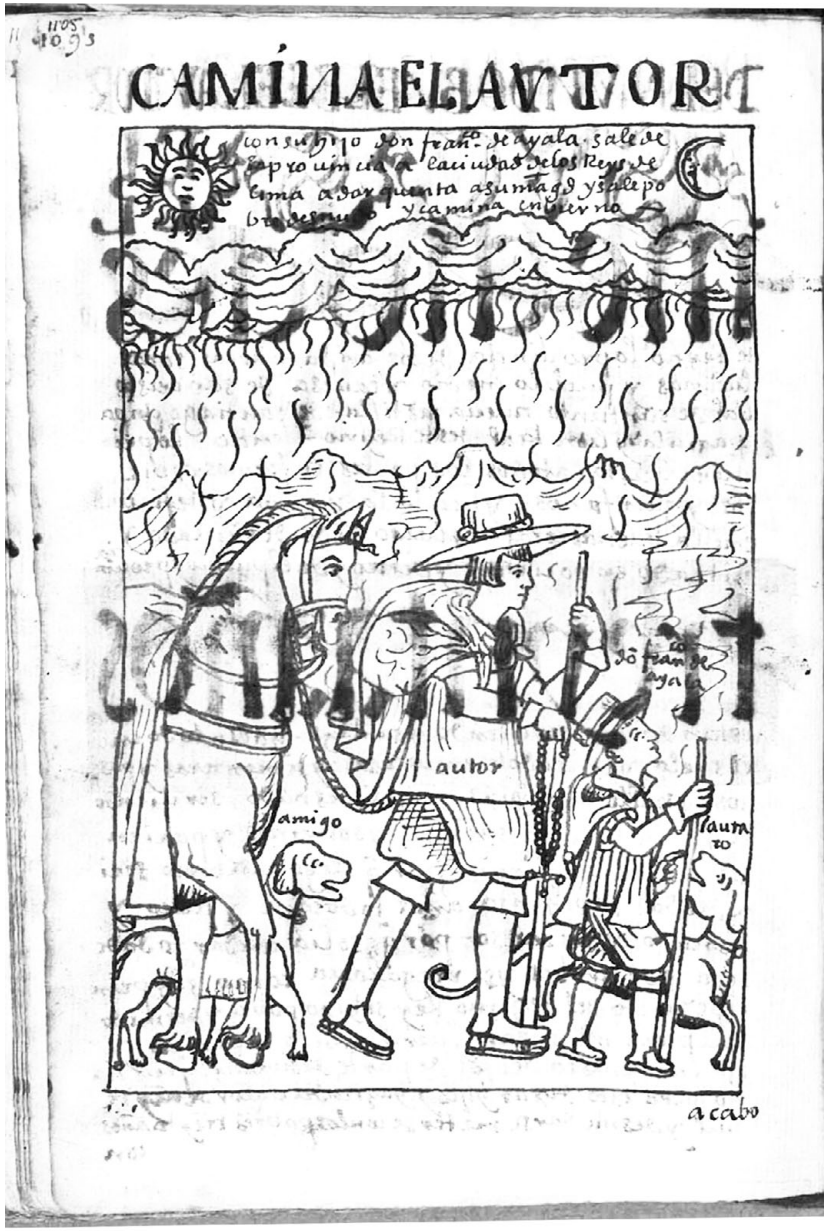


FIGURE 4.1 "*CAMINA EL AVTOR con su hijo don Francisco de Ayala*" from Nueva Corónica y Buen Gobierno (c.1615) (Ms. Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS 2232), p. 1105.
Courtesy of the Copenhagen Royal Library

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FIGURE 4.2 (a) Anganamón and (b) Martín García Oñez de Loyola from Diego de Ocaña's *Viaje a Chile* (1608). Anganamón and Martín García Oñez de Loyola ("Anganamón, yanacona del gobernador Martín García de Loyola, el cual mató al dicho gobernador. Este indio vive hoy, año de 1607, y es el que ha destruido todo el reyno.") from Diego de Ocaña's *Viaje a Chile* (1608), University of Oviedo Fondo Antiguo 195.
Photo Credit: Marcial Gómez Martín.

survey, they demonstrate an active and developing engagement with horses from varied Indigenous perspectives.

Visual evidence of *indios* on horseback is far more rare. The Mercedarian friar Diego de Ocaña documented his travels through Peru and Chile, including an account of the ongoing Spanish conflicts with the Mapuche, which drained enormous resources into the creation of one of the first European standing armies. He included a portrait of Anganamón, the leader of a new uprising in 1598, on horseback (see Figure 4.2).

Like others before, Anganamón had served as the *yanacona* of Captain Loyola, before he led Mapuche forces that killed Loyola and then wreaked further havoc. Anganamón reportedly had mounted his infantry; such was the abundance of horses in Mapuche forces at this stage. In the 1598 "Desastre de Curalaba," another leader, Pelantaro, led five hundred Mapuche and Huilliches against fifty Spanish and their three hundred *yanacona* allies, causing the Spanish to lose four hundred horses and as

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many saddles and bridles, as well as gold, clothing, and *yanacona*s to the Mapuche forces. On the following March 20, 1598, four hundred mounted *indios de a caballo* took another two hundred fifty horses from the Spanish in Argol. Just a week later, on April 8, a massive force of one thousand mounted *indios de a caballo* emptied the whole countryside of all kinds of livestock, so that the town had no more than twelve horses left.[81] In all, the Spanish lost thousands of horses to a remarkably large Mapuche cavalry.

4.3 BECOMING EQUESTRIAN

When seen through the records left by Spanish conquistadors like Cortéz or Bernal Díaz, horses played a major role in the conquest by surprising the native inhabitants, who purportedly viewed them as invincible. More accurately, however, conquest victories were supported by thousands of Indigenous allies, and, in fact, many of these allies gained access to horses according to Spanish customs that rewarded service to the crown on the frontier – a population of *indios conquistadores*. A growing familiarity with horses was at times facilitated by Spanish colonial governance in the form of licenses to ride, raise, or use horses, even if at other times it was threatened by efforts to control or revoke this access. Starting from within Spanish territorial claims, permission to own and ride horses was regularly extended to Indigenous allies, and this impulse was aided by the growing abundance of horses. Some data suggests a de facto access to horses, later acknowledged formally. Within Indigenous communities, knowledge about horses could be mobilized for resistance, used to claim status, or utilized in other ways to respond to internal motivations or external pressures.

Spanish, creole, mixed, and Indigenous populations all made social claims through their access to horses. A Spanish backlash to the growing access to and adoption of horses, which they perceived as a threat to social order in terms of theft, rebellion, and social distinction, intensified

[81] "Relación de lo sucedido en Chile desde 20 de diciembre de'98 hasta primero de mayo de'99 escripta por el Capitán Gerónimo [Gregorio] Serrano proveedor general de la guerra deste Reyno para el Excelentisimo Señor don Luis de Velasco virrey del Piru," *Colección Gobernantes del Perú: Cartas y papeles* (Madrid: Juan Pueyo, 1924), vol. 4, 483. Captain Serrano bitterly concluded as the Spanish retreated back to Angol: "All these calamities were caused by Loyola setting a fort in Lumaco against the will of the experienced soldiers, because there 18 men died and 3000 horses were taken." Because they are identified specifically as "*de a caballo*," we know that these Indigenous forces were mounted.

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in the mid-sixteenth century. An effort to clamp down on *indios* riding in 1568 both acknowledged contemporary access to horses and a strong desire to enforce social difference. But Spanish colonial power was also fractured by conflicting policies enacted by viceroys, *audiencias*, religious orders, *encomenderos*, and *indios*. In the Americas, as in Spain, mobility was crystallizing into hierarchies based on lineage by the end of the sixteenth century, requiring documentation and proof of bloodlines. Horse privileges became a part of this trend, with a license to ride horses becoming one possible way to challenge the loss of status and claim an elite lineage.

The development of Indigenous equestrianism in the Americas is a complex phenomenon, and the initial motivation to engage with or adopt horses into existing ways of life is not self-evident for any given people. By tracing early stages of exposure to horses within areas of Spanish control, these archival examples of familiarization offer insight into the process of adopting a new set of interspecies relations. Remarkably, Spanish attempts to regulate the use of horses did not intend to help *indios* acquire knowledge about horses. Yet, as petitions to ride and own horses and success in breeding and using horses for daily labor demonstrate, engaging with horses also offered a means to challenge and redefine the boundaries of what was "Spanish." Opposition to Spanish domination through horse theft and the use of Indigenous cavalry forces are the most obvious examples, but claims to Indigenous nobility through horses served a similar function.

From a broader perspective, particular historical forms of Indigenous equestrianism were not adopted wholesale, but developed within specific cultural frameworks. These adaptations to the horse differed by cultural groups, perhaps shaped by previous types of interspecies relationships. Motivations could be internal or external to the culture, in response to Spanish pressures or the adoption of a colonial hybridity. Horse populations certainly expanded both within and outside of Spanish-controlled territory, particularly aided by the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 in New Mexico, which released large herds into lands northwest of Spanish presence. The subsequent developments of Indigenous communities, ranging across multiple regional environments and ecosystems, suggest the importance of framing this adoption in terms of negotiating a new equine political ecology.

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