Contents

Preface

This book is an invitation to conduct research on Mexico. To be more precise, this documentary history has been designed to provide you with primary sources on the free and enslaved people who lived in Mexico over the past five centuries. This includes the early years of the military phase of the Spanish conquest, formal colonial rule as the viceroyalty of New Spain (1535–1821), and the first eight years after independence. For some, this will be a first glimpse into the deep history of the African diaspora in Mexico. For others, this book will speak to the complexity of Native history and its long entanglement with freedom and enslavement. The experiences of bondage, displacement, and community formation for Asian people, generalized as *chinos*, are also central to this project. Over the past thirty years, scholars have published dozens of books, articles, and dissertations on the African, Native American, and Asian populations who experienced enslavement in what is today Mexico. Along the same lines, historians have studied these groups and their descendants as they resisted, adapted to, and transcended slavery from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. The establishment of interracial alliances, the navigation of Catholicism, and the strategies used to secure freedom papers have all become essential elements for the study of Asian, Black, and Indigenous populations in Mexico.

This volume offers archival documents in their Spanish or Portuguese originals and in modernized English translations. At times, the original is necessary to make sense of idiomatic expressions or complex constructs, and may prove helpful to those interested in comparative projects on other Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking societies. The English translation intends to provide clarity and transparency on difficult topics and verbose statements. For the most part, I have translated key concepts into English as faithfully as possible to the original, so as not to alter the meaning of the primary source. I follow current capitalization practices in the introductory essay, but not in the document translations and transcriptions.

I have decided to retain the emendations, marginal comments, underlining, and other elements that indicate how a text was debated, censored, revised, or otherwise edited. I contend that this messiness is productive, as it often betrays an author's or scribe's hesitations. Capturing these corrections, then, is also an essential element of our work as researchers. (See the 1813 "The Sentiments of the Nation," attributed to José María Morelos y Pavón, for an especially powerful example of these tensions.) Any translation, however, necessarily distorts the original source; this volume is certainly not exempt from that reality. To improve comprehension, I have at times inserted periods or commas to allow the English reader a pause where the Spanish original continues for several more lines without any such pause. I have

also modernized certain names—such as "Xpoual" to "Cristóbal" or "Jhoan" to "Juan"—in the English translation. I take full responsibility for any mistranslations or unintentional anachronisms.

The book's bilingual format is explicitly intended to reach a vast English- and Spanish-language readership. As a graduate student, I constantly found inspiration in Robert Conrad's *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* and Gloria García Rodríguez's *Voices on the Enslaved in Nineteenth-Century Cuba*. Lisa Sousa, Matthew Restall, and Kevin Terraciano's *Mesoamerican Voices: Native Language Writings from Colonial Mexico, Yucatan, and Guatemala* provided a priceless model for analyzing translated sources. Over the years, I have also found Leo J. Garofalo and Kathryn Joy McKnight's *Afro-Latino Voices* to be an essential companion for teaching African diaspora courses.

The present documentary history differs slightly from the titles above in that I do not introduce the reader to the context of every document. Instead, I have penned an introductory essay that discusses key topics and developments on slavery and freedom in Mexico from the early colonial period to the first years after independence. Each thematic chapter also features a short introduction to situate readers, but I do not offer leading questions or arguments, so as not to influence the reader's interpretations or research interests.

The documents in this bilingual history range from 1520 to 1829 and have been drawn from a wide variety of regional, national, and imperial repositories. I have transcribed documents from the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City, the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and the Archivo General de Notarías del Estado de Puebla, among others. Some of these documents I studied in person; others I consulted in digitized form. I have also attempted to explore some of the variations that one encounters when studying experiences of freedom and enslavement in an immense viceroyalty. This documentary history features cases from Louisiana to Chiapas, from Oaxaca to Chihuahua, and from Veracruz to Manila. There is, admittedly, a geographical bias in the overrepresentation of cases from Puebla, the city that served as the setting for my first book. I have opted to use some of these documents (published here for the first time) for two reasons. First, because Puebla dynamics often mirrored urban interactions elsewhere in the viceroyalty, but also because the city's notarial archive contains priceless transactions, or copies of transactions, from Acapulco, Campeche, Mexico City, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Zacatlán, and other locations.

Ultimately, I hope this documentary history will generate debate, counterpoints, and dialogue. I am especially optimistic that you, the reader, will take these documents beyond the classroom or research paper. The dialogues generated by these documents should be shared in the private and public spaces where they are most urgently relevant. We need to have these (admittedly) difficult conversations within our families, with those we trust the most. Despite considerable achievements in

extending human and civic rights to marginalized populations over the last twenty years, there is much work to do in redressing the long legacy of slavery in Mexico and in the Western Hemisphere in general. Slavery was abolished, in theory, three times in Mexican history. Those momentous years were 1542, 1672, and 1829. And yet, the aftermath of slavery and the undeniable burden of racism and colorism in Mexico are still with us well into the third decade of the twenty-first century. I am under no illusion that this volume will cure those ills. I am hopeful, however, that this modest project will contribute to the construction of new educational models, the development of a memory of inclusion and empathy, and a clearer understanding of the roots of our present-day inequities.

Timeline

1519	Arrival of conquistadors in the Gulf Coast and Central Mexican highlands
1521	Fall of Mexico-Tenochtitlan to Iberian, Tlaxcalan, and other Native forces
1520s	Expansive Iberian slaving campaigns against Native populations
1535	Viceroyalty of New Spain formally established, Mexico-Tenochtitlan as capital
1537	Repression of Black rebels in Mexico City and the mines of Amatepec
1540–1542	Chichimec nations fight Spaniards in the Mixtón War
1542	Passage of the New Laws abolishing Native slavery
1565	Galleon route established between Acapulco and Manila
1570	Arrival of enslaved Muslims from the Philippines
1581	Beginning of the Iberian Union, King Philip II claims throne of Portugal
1590s	Transatlantic slave trade from West Central Africa intensifies
1612	Repression and execution of thirty-five Black men and women in Mexico City
1620s–1630s	Peak years of transatlantic slaving from West Central Africa to Mexican ports
1631	San Lorenzo de los Negros established by maroon population
1640	Transatlantic slaving networks disrupted by Portuguese independence
1658	Investigation, raids, and executions of men who had sex with other men
1669	Crax Bomba leads rebellion at La Rinconada, Veracruz
1672	Abolition of Asian and Chichimec slavery by Queen Mariana's decree
1680–1692	Pueblo Rebellion, Spaniards expelled from New Mexico for twelve years
1683	Mass abduction of Veracruz's African-descent population by buccaneers

1700	House of Bourbon ascends to the Spanish throne, ends Habsburg rule
1701–1713	French Compaignie de Guinée acquires *asiento* slaving monopoly
1713–1739	The English South Sea Company acquires slaving monopoly to Spanish America
1762–1769	Louisiana incorporated into the viceroyalty of New Spain
1792	Abolition of New Spain's African-descent militias
1803–1804	Spanish Louisiana transferred to France, then to the United States
1810	Beginning of the war for Mexican independence
1813	José María Morelos y Pavón proclaims "The Sentiments of the Nation"
1821	Mexican war of independence ends
1829	President Vicente Guerrero abolishes slavery, exempts Texas