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Archaeology in the Lettered City

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> La arqueología se hace andando.
>
> Pedro Armillas (qtd. in Matos 1985, 182)

In Cristóbal de Villalpando's 1695 *Vista de la Plaza Mayor de México* (Figure 1), over a thousand bodies occupy what has become a bustling emporium, a late colonial reenvisioning of the marvelous markets of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco that astonished Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo. Most of the canvas is taken up by two markets: the Parián, where Spanish imports and luxury goods were sold, appears at the bottom as a solidly enclosed, almost fortresslike space—despite the fact that it was unfinished at the time—while the Indian market, with local products laid out in the open air, is visible just above it. Fruits and vegetables, clothes, even guitars are bought and sold on the plaza as more goods arrive in canoes by way of the canal at the right side of the painting. Villalpando painted the image at the request of the outgoing Viceroy Conde de Galve, who peers from an elegant carriage at the bottom left (Maza 1964). The viceroy, it seems, wanted a positive visual representation of his record in office to take back with him to Spain, something that could be used to push back against his vocal critics. Against the lively and prosperous foreground, however, the background suggests a different reading: the royal palace, which frames the image and directly faces the viewer, is in shambles, half of its façade completely destroyed, its innards laid bare to the plaza and to the gaze of the multitude circulating through it. The palace has become a *colonial ruin*.

Three years before Villalpando set to work on the painting, a different sort of multitude with a different set of objectives occupied the same plaza. On the afternoon of 8 June 1692, in the context of widespread food shortages, an uprising broke out in the center of Mexico City (Cope 1994; Silva Prada 2007; Nemser 2011). By nightfall, the violence left vendors' stalls looted and burned, the jail empty, and government buildings including the palace in smoldering ruins. If the riot shattered the façade of the viceroy's palace—a state in which it remained for years, as Villalpando's painting attests[1]—it did the same for the façade of colonial hegemony. Shocked authorities sought to explain and rationalize the violence, identifying its causes and enacting

Figure 1 Cristóbal de Villalpando. *Vista de la Plaza Mayor de México*. 1695. Oil on canvas. Corsham Court, Wiltshire. Courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library.

policies to counteract them. Among other factors, colonial elites were obsessed with what they saw as the breakdown of earlier regimes of social control that had maintained divisions along racial lines—especially between Spaniards and Indians, the latter identified as the primary perpetrators of the uprising. In addition to the public execution of so-called ringleaders, then, what was urgently required was a means of purifying the 'mixed' city.

On 1 July, less than three weeks after the uprising, the viceroy asked Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, creole polymath and professor at the Royal University, to draft a proposal for segregating the city, dividing the Spanish center or *traza* from the peripheral Indian *barrios*.[2] To carry out this task, Sigüenza turned to the historical record, drawing on the chronicles of the conquest to show that, at the moment of its foundation over the ruins of Tenochtitlan, Mexico City had been laid out according to a segregated plan. This historical pivot was a logical move for an actor who served as 'a sort of official historian' and whose account of the uprising would become the official history of the event (Leonard 1929, 105). But in this case history takes a material form as well. For Sigüenza, the re-segregation of Mexico City would constitute not only a textual redeployment of the heroic figure of Cortés into a contemporary moment of political crisis but also a sort of excavation of a newly distant, Spanish past. More than historical, it is an archaeological operation. Beyond the ruined palace of Villalpando's painting, for Sigüenza the Spanish city as a whole has become a ruin.

If colonial ruins are the object of archaeology in the lettered city, the lettered creole (*criollo letrado*) is its subject. Erudite and intimately tied to the viceroy, Sigüenza epitomizes the intellectual class that composes what Ángel Rama (1998) called the *ciudad letrada*, the administrative apparatus of the colonial state. This 'lettered city' is bound up with the production and management of knowledge, including knowledge about the past and its calculated deployment onto the surfaces of the present. But the lettered city is too often read as operating within a strictly scriptural economy.[3] As Sigüenza's segregation proposal suggests, the knowledge at stake is not only textual/historiographic but material/archaeological as well. To be clear, reading the re-segregation of Mexico City as an archaeological project requires a revisionist history of Mexican archaeology, one that responds not to the positivistic, developmental rise of a scientific discipline as in standard histories (e.g. Daniel 1981) but to a genealogy of what Michael Shanks has called *the archaeological*, that is, 'a mode or aspect of experience prior to the formalisations of method and technique' (1995, 54–55). For Shanks, the shift from noun (archaeology) to adjective (archaeological) makes comparable a wide range of practices and experiences, such as particular ways of seeing. We inhabit the past: every piece of material culture, every unit of dead labor congealed in the built environment, everything we see when we navigate through urban space, is a potential relic, artifact, or ruin. What makes it so is not that object's materiality as such but the 'rules and protocols that determine our gaze' (Verdesio 2010, 343), in this case the way we see and experience it as an object located in time.

This essay begins, then, by situating both Sigüenza and his segregation proposal within a longer history of Mexican archaeology, one that includes and indeed begins with the emergence of a colonial archaeology critically engaged with the material past. I draw on recent scholarship in the field of archaeology that turns away from the discipline's traditional emphasis on depth, where the past appears as something buried and hidden from view, and looks instead to the surface, 'a physical stratum that contains not only the present, but all its physical and imagined pasts combined' (Harrison 2011, 154). Each of these spatial metaphors of temporality privileges a particular archaeological method: depth calls for excavation, surface for surface survey. Over the following two sections, I track the uses and implications of these archaeological modalities across Sigüenza's interventions in the wake of the 1692 uprising, as he moves from digging to 'walking in the city' (here I am playing off both the epigraph from Mexican archaeologist Pedro Armillas and Michel de Certeau's well-known essay [1984]). Overall, I am interested in the political instrumentality of the material past, in how certain objects—even, as I conclude in the epilogue, the Centro Histórico of Mexico City—come to appear as 'historic,' how they are transformed into bearers of information about the past or carriers of historical 'value,' and how, newly endowed with historicity, they are strategically mobilized and deployed within the political present.

Colonial Archaeologies

My point of entry is *A History of Mexican Archaeology* by Ignacio Bernal, who was trained by Alfonso Caso and went on to serve, among other important positions, as director of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) from 1968 to 1971. First published in Spanish in 1979 and translated into English the following year, this study remains the key source on the topic today.[4] For Bernal, Sigüenza marks a turning point in the history of archaeological thought in Mexico, having 'conducted the initial investigation in the true spirit of archaeology, in that it attempted to use a monument to throw light on a problem in history' when around 1675 he excavated the Pyramid of the Moon at Teotihuacan (1980, 49–50; see also Schávelzon 1983; Alcina 1991, 326–27).[5] I find the book especially valuable as a response to the standard periodization of archaeology that relegates the entire colonial period to a uniformly unscientific and speculative 'prelude to our story' (Willey and Sabloff 1993, 12; see also Daniel 1981, 40). '[N]ot enough attention,' affirms Bernal in the introduction, 'has so far been paid to the time of the viceroys from the archaeological point of view, though it has so much to give' (1980, 12). For his part, Bernal dedicates fully half of his study to the antiquarians of the colonial period, attesting to their contributions to the development of archaeological science. This essay shares much with Bernal's embrace of archaeological practices in colonial Mexico as well as his fascination with the figure of Sigüenza. But I also want to test the limits of Bernal's account of this early history, especially with regard to the

disciplinary assumptions that structure his narrative—namely, archaeology's proper subject and object.

Given that histories of archaeology resemble processions of white, well-educated men, any question regarding the subject of colonial archaeology in Latin America must begin with the *letrado*. External to the realm of textuality, archaeology is often overlooked as a site of knowledge production within the 'lettered city.' As Ángel Rama explains, this administrative and bureaucratic class composed of educated elites and functionaries was critical to not only the daily operations of the colonial state but also the ideological work of securing colonial hegemony. Following José Antonio Maravall's work on the culture of the baroque, Rama argues that the cultural production of the *ciudad letrada* constituted one of the earliest and most effective uses of mass media to convince the illiterate masses of the legitimacy of Spanish rule. But he acknowledges an important point: while these lettered elites effectively served the interests of institutional power, they nevertheless retained a certain autonomy by which to position themselves critically vis-à-vis the Spanish state (Rama 1998, 34–36).[6]

This is especially the case for creole *letrados*, some of the most visible protagonists in the archaeological field in colonial Mexico. Bernal writes that it was the prototypically creole desire for a 'new cultural type, the Mexican' in the late seventeenth century that gave rise to early archaeological studies; similarly, he frames later eighteenth-century archaeology as a 'Mexican reaction' to the European Enlightenment, an approach in which 'the archaeological and the nationalistic [ideas …] are one and the same' (1980, 49, 74). The characteristic ambivalence of creole identity complicates the conventional model for understanding archaeology in colonial contexts. In his influential study of archaeological types, Bruce Trigger (1984) proposes the category of 'colonialist' archaeology, in which the archaeologist belongs to the colonizing class and as such is deeply invested in demonstrating the cultural inferiority of the colonized peoples. Such archaeology, especially in conjunction with its anthropological counterpart, thus serves to justify colonial rule. While this framework may be helpful for thinking about archaeological work in colonial Africa, say, it is less useful for the case of colonial Mexico or Latin America more generally.[7] In addition to questions of periodization, there is also an important distinction with regard to the positionality of the colonial archaeologist. In colonial Mexico, archaeologists were neither necessarily Spanish nor invested in authoritatively demonstrating the inferiority of pre-Hispanic civilizations. On the contrary, as Sigüenza's foundational work on the indigenous past suggests, many were in fact creole intellectuals whose interest took precisely the opposite form: they studied pre-Hispanic cultures in order to reveal what they saw as the glorious origins of American identity.

This logic of 'creole patriotism,' based on the recuperation of the pre-Columbian past, is the most common reading of Sigüenza's intellectual projects, both archaeological (Bernal 1980, 52–54; Alcina 1995, 50–52) and otherwise (Leonard 1929; Iglesia 1944). A classic example is the triumphal arch he designed for the arrival of

the new viceroy in 1680, on which were displayed Aztec kings instead of the usual figures from the classical pantheon (Brading 1991, 362–63; More 2002). Ancient indigenous societies were magnificent, Sigüenza believed, but contemporary Indians were wretched, miserable creatures. The radical divide between pre-Columbian pasts and Indian presents both marked and shaped the ambivalent foundations of creole identity discourse (Rabasa 1994).

No doubt much of Sigüenza's work on the material past, like most archaeology in Mexico today, was directed at the recuperation of indigenous culture.[8] But this reading ignores the necessary flip side of creole discourse, which situates itself in critical relation to both Indian and Spaniard, and as a result ends up reinforcing a set of assumptions about the discipline of archaeology as such. Consider the way Bernal sets up the proper object of archaeology in the following two passages. The first offers a working definition of the discipline: 'I understand by archaeology that scientific search which, by discovering and studying the material remains of *vanished peoples*, seeks to learn about human behavior through what is left of the fruits of their thinking minds and their shaping hands' (Bernal 1980, 9; my emphasis). The second explains the importance of taking colonial antiquarians and ethnographers into account in the study of the material past in Mexico: 'Their writings are our link with the ancient culture, *not yet dead*' (Bernal 1980, 12; my emphasis). From this perspective, early studies of Amerindian material culture that evince this ethnographic character are valuable precisely because they seem to offer more direct access to their object of study—through a temporal elision, the Indian present comes to stand in for the human past. But because their objects have not yet 'vanished,' these early studies do not belong to the field of archaeology proper. Bernal reiterates this position in his discussion of early descriptions of Tenochtitlan: because what they represented were 'still functioning cities' or 'living cities,' Bernal argues, they were 'not strictly speaking archaeological' and are for this reason expressly excluded from his study (1980, 35, 45).

Not yet dead. This unsettling formulation is written from a present that already knows and seems even to tentatively desire the genocidal operations of Spanish colonialism in the Americas. It suggests a certain complicity between archaeology and the colonial project, since it is precisely colonial violence and exploitation that 'vanish' the indigenous population and by doing so produce the object of archaeological study. Colonialism is thus the condition of possibility for American archaeology. But when does a 'people' vanish? At what point does a 'living city' die? The logic of displacement is both temporal—*vanished peoples* are always assigned to a distant past, to the inaccessibly prehistoric—and spatial—*dead cities* are those that have been designated as ruins. To put it another way, peoples do not always 'vanish,' nor do cities always 'die,' on their own—they are often vanished or, to appropriate a term from a different Latin American context, they are *disappeared*. This is an active process based on two simultaneous and mutually constituting forms of violence: one foundational, the violence of conquest and the exploitation of colonial rule; the other epistemic, the violence of a colonial gaze that refashions the landscape according to

alien categories. The city does not die a natural death but is killed twice, smashed by invaders then ossified by the archaeological vision that transforms it into a site. As Quetzil Castañeda (2001) has observed, archaeology often destroys its object as it produces it. When the Spanish arrived in Tenochtitlan they marveled at the impressive architecture, but quickly set about dismantling the buildings, using the materials to construct their own palaces and churches. The buildings that composed what Bernal calls the 'living city,' that were, in other words, still in use by the local people, 'quickly became ruins thanks to the destructive actions of the Spaniards' (Verdesio 2010, 344). Even the viceroy's palace was eventually rebuilt after the 1692 uprising in part with 'piedra negra labrada de la gentilidad,' that is, with 'rescued' stonework from before the conquest (Maza 1964, 161).

There is a parallel between the logic of Bernal's exclusion of the 'living city' and the disciplinary mechanisms of periodization at work in the field of archaeology. In the last decade or so, a subfield that some call the 'archaeology of the present' has begun to emerge (Graves-Brown 2000; Buchli and Lucas 2001; Lucas 2004; González-Ruibal 2008; Harrison and Schofield 2010; Harrison 2011; León 2012).[9] Where archaeology in the twentieth century has emphasized the study of the distant past—the *archaic*—these scholars ask what archaeological methods can tell us about the materiality of contemporary life. Modern archaeology turns on the characteristically modern trope of a radical break between past and present, and, as Julian Thomas (2004) has observed, the consequent transposition of a break between depth and surface. As a result of this conception of the relationship between past and present, archaeology comes to be imagined, articulated, and practiced through the metaphor of excavation. This is not to say that archaeologists only dig but rather that the discipline is predicated on a set of epistemic foundations that overdetermine not only the kinds of methodologies that will be employed but also the kinds of projects that can be imagined from within it.[10]

Rather than archaeology-as-excavation, Rodney Harrison outlines an alternative organizing trope that he calls archaeology-as-surface-survey:

> If we begin to think of the surface as a metaphor for an unconstituted present, a space in which the past, present and future are combined and are still in the process of becoming, archaeological surface survey emerges as an allegory for a creative engagement with the present and the spaces in which the past intervenes within it. Like the traces of field ditches and embankments which archaeologists reconstruct from aerial surface survey, archaeology can only engage with the past where it is visible at the surface, refracted through the lens of the present. In this way, archaeology becomes a discipline which turns its attention to the surfaces of things, to the 'here' and 'now.' (2011, 154)

The significance of this proposal lies in the way it transforms how we see the world around us, what Gustavo Verdesio calls our 'regimes of visibility.' Verdesio is most interested in the axis of visibility that distinguishes the 'natural' from the 'human.' As an example, he cites complex indigenous technologies such as fisheries and irrigation

ditches which, under Western eyes, blend into the variegated and pleasing textures of the ostensibly untouched landscape (2010, 347–50). But the concept is equally useful for considering the manifestation of the 'historical.' Questioning the marginalization of 'living cities' within the set of possible archaeological sites, the archaeology of the present in a sense redefines the ruin—the object of study—in more expansive terms than its conventional association with the abandoned, decaying, and dead.

Some practitioners of the archaeology of the present have argued that it is the intensely destructive nature of late capitalism or 'supermodernity' that calls for such a method (González-Ruibal 2008; see also Harrison 2011, 159). To the extent that disciplinary shifts are historically contingent and respond to the social context in which they emerge (Trigger 1984), this is certainly true. Still, I am interested in what the metaphor of archaeology-as-surface-survey can contribute to the way we imagine past engagements with the material present. If archaeologists like Buchli and Lucas (2001, 3; see also Lucas 2004, 115) have questioned the application of arbitrary temporal brackets on one end of the archaeological field, that is with regard to defining its 'proper' object of study—a move that excludes the contemporary past or present, much like Bernal's exclusion of 'living cities'—I want to suggest that it is equally arbitrary to place temporal boundaries on the other end. Why not trace a genealogy of experiencing the past, of the archaeological (Shanks 1992; 1995), that takes seriously archaeology's 'premodern' subjects—antiquarians or 'pre-archaeologists' (Bernal 1980, 7)—treating them with the same interest, detail, and care as their 'modern' counterparts?

In the following sections, I read the interventions of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora in the aftermath of the 1692 uprising as an archaeology of the *colonial* present, whose tropes are both excavation and surface survey. If the production of the archaeological site constitutes an ideological intervention, articulated through a regime of historical visibility that makes it possible to see some things (but not others) as bearers of information about the past, Sigüenza's recuperation of the foundational moment of Spanish colonialism in Mexico—the original layout of Mexico City over the ruins of Tenochtitlan—renders the Spanish city for the first time an archaeological ruin. To be clear, I am not suggesting that Sigüenza is doing the same thing as today's archaeologists of the present. The most interesting distinction, I think, has less to do with periodization than the political valence of these methods. All archaeology is potentially political, of course, but the archaeology of the present is often seen as uniquely so, a political form that moves beyond the limits of both literary criticism and the social sciences—the subaltern cannot speak, but she may leave material traces (Buchli and Lucas 2001, 12–15; González-Ruibal 2008, 259–61). While Sigüenza's archaeological gaze is explicitly political, however, it is deployed in the interest not of recuperating subaltern voices but rather of repressing them—it is a counterinsurgent archaeology.[11] But these political differences correspond more to the subject position of the archaeologist than to something embedded in the discipline itself, and in any case should not blind us to the methodological resonance that I outline below.[12]

Excavation, or, Sigüenza the Archaeologist

As a political intervention in response to popular violence, segregation had three main objectives. First was the purification of urban space, deemed dangerously mixed. Many colonial elites saw Mexico City as a sort of giant *pulquería*, a sinister and unregulated space in which the city's heterogeneous racial groups came together to drink, dance, make love, and plot against the authorities (Connell 2005; Nemser 2011). By forcing them into their respective zones, segregation was meant to impede these formations of solidarity. Second, rooted once again in appropriate sectors of the city, underclass bodies would be newly subjected to mechanisms of control. Parish priests constituted an important instrument of the surveillance state, and placing the Indians under their watchful eyes would help to enforce secular law. In addition, Indian bodies in particular would constitute a site of economic extraction for the colonial state, in the form of both tribute and labor for public works (O'Gorman 1938, 11, 25–26). Third, for Sigüenza and other creole elites, segregation promised the actualization of a unified white-elite bloc and its inscription onto the space of the city, bringing together *criollos* and *peninsulares* under a revanchist banner of counter-insurgency. When read against sixteenth-century policies of *congregación*, designed to consolidate and territorialize the dispersed indigenous population in order to protect them and facilitate their evangelization, the 1692 segregation can be seen as an inversion—instead of purifying Indian communities by removing non-Indians, its goal was to purify 'Spanish' communities by removing Indians (Nemser 2011).

Four days after the viceroy's initial request, Sigüenza responded with a report in which he proposed and mapped out a 'línea de separación' in the form of a narrative itinerary. I will return to this itinerary in the following section, but I want to look first at the way Sigüenza explains the project and its methodology. The report opens with a revealing flourish, invoking Mexico City's founding moment to call for a policy that reproduces 'lo que ejecutó el Marqués del Valle cuando después de su debelación y conquista reedificó esta ciudad' (O'Gorman 1938, 6). Citing a series of Spanish chroniclers, including Antonio de Herrera, Juan de Torquemada, Francisco López de Gómara, and Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Sigüenza locates the precedent of segregation in the original orders to divide the Spanish zone from its Indian counterpart. According to Gómara, for example, Cortés 'mandó que el barrio de españoles fuese apartado del barrio de los indios,' while Torquemada asserted that

> esta ciudad está ahora fundada y constituída en el riñón y medio de lo que antes era población de los indios de este primer barrio, llamado Tenochtitlán; no se mezcla esta ciudad con los indios, pero cércanla por sus cuatro partes, haciendo barrios por sí, que son los arrabales de dicha ciudad. (O'Gorman 1938, 6)

The conquistador-turned-city planner is mobilized as both a historical justification for the segregation and a model upon which it is to be based.

Kathleen Ross has noted the special significance that Cortés held for Sigüenza, carefully tracing the intertextuality of the *letrado*'s account of the June 8 uprising

which draws on and refigures the conquistador's own descriptions of the invasion of Tenochtitlan—in particular, the devastating retreat of the Spaniards during the so-called 'noche triste.' The popular uprising of 1692 is glossed as a 'noche triste criolla,' in which the hero of the story is not Cortés the conquistador but Sigüenza the *letrado*, who rescues the city's *libros capitulares* from the burning archive. Highlighting the power of its baroque rhetoric, Ross reads Sigüenza's account as effecting a double conquest: 'No sólo se trata de una conquista militar del indio por el español, sino de una conquista textual del español por el criollo' (1988, 188). For Sigüenza, the chronicles of the conquest have become the new classics upon which to elaborate a new kind of creole history.

Building on Ross's description of the creole incursion into Spanish narrative terrain, I would like to move beyond the textual and consider material culture and the built environment as emerging fields of tension between Spaniard and creole. There is a parallel between Ross's emphasis on genre and textuality and the standard treatment of Sigüenza's historical interest. According to Irving Leonard's hagiographic biography, Sigüenza was an 'antiquarian and historian' who collected 'at the cost of much diligence and expense […] material of a varied nature pertaining to the Indians' (Leonard 1929, 92). But this material turns out to be composed almost entirely of books. No doubt Sigüenza had an excellent library, but this reading overlooks the fact that he was also, as noted above, the first archaeologist in the Americas. While no manuscript documenting his excavation of the Pyramid of the Moon has survived, a later reference by Lorenzo Boturini captures a concrete if fragmentary snapshot:

> Era este Cerro en la antiguedad perfectamente quadrado, encalado y hermoso y se subia à su cumbre por unas gradas, que hoy no se descubren, por haverse llenado de sus proprias ruinas, y de la tierra que le arrojan los vientos, sobre la qual han nacido arboles y abroxos. No obstante estuve Yo en èl y le hice por curiosidad medir, y, si no me engaño, es de docientas varas de alto. Assimismo mandè sacarlo en Mapa, que tengo en mi Archivo, y rodeandolo vì, que el cèlebre Don Carlos de Siguenza y Gongora havia intentado taladrarlo, pero hallò resistencia. (Boturini 1746, 42–43)

Although it is difficult to say exactly what Sigüenza was looking for, what is clear is that the excavation required an enormous amount of work, most likely at the hands of indigenous laborers. The tunnel, measuring about 25 meters, was documented by numerous commentators until it was finally filled in around 1924 (Schávelzon 1983).

Whether or not the excavation yielded any significant artifacts, Sigüenza was familiar with precisely the kind of finds that it would likely produce. When the Italian traveler Giovanni Francisco Gemelli Careri visited New Spain at the end of the seventeenth century, Sigüenza gave him a personal tour of a collection of 'antiguallas' and 'piedras antiguas' held at the Colegio de San Ildefonso. According to Gemelli's description, these pieces included 'figuras y jeroglíficos esculpidos, y, entre otras cosas, un águila con hojas de nopal alrededor; y en otra [piedra] puesta en el muro,

círculos y otras figuras' (1976, 123). After briefly describing these artifacts, Gemelli notes that Sigüenza offered a cogent explanation of their significance. 'Don Carlos de Sigüenza, gran anticuario de las memorias de los indios, me dijo que eran restos de un templo del ídolo *Huitzilopochtli*, que le fue dedicado en el año 1486, pues por otras pinturas y figuras antiguas del gentilismo se deducía que aquel templo estaba en ese sitio' (Gemelli 1976, 123).

In his own personal collection, and in addition to the varied textual sources documented by Leonard and Bernal, Sigüenza also had at least one such 'piedra antigua.' His testament records the presence of a 'Quixada y en ella una muela como de elefante que se sacó pocos años ha de la obra del desagüe de Huehuetoca.' The document goes on to explain that it must have belonged to 'los que se ahogaron en el tiempo del diluvio' (Sigüenza 1984, 138n19). I am less interested in debates about whether this jawbone 'counts' as a properly archaeological artifact than I am in, on one hand, Sigüenza's deployment of an interpretive framework and, on the other, the context in which it was unearthed. Eighty years ago, O. G. S. Crawford (1932, 168–69) linked the emergence of modern archaeology in England to the large-scale public works and infrastructure development projects of the industrial revolution. It was 'the dredging of rivers (especially the Thames), the excavation of huge gravel-pits (for railway ballast and road-metal), the building of houses and factories, farm and fen drainage and dock excavation' that made possible the recovery of large quantities of fossils and artifacts that would, in the right intellectual context, lead to scientific advances. Some of the most important archaeological finds in Mexico have occurred under similar circumstances, both before and after the nineteenth century. In 1790, the statue of Coatlicue was pulled out of the excavation of an underground aqueduct near the viceroy's palace, and the same year the famous 24-ton Aztec Calendar Stone was discovered beneath the city's central plaza. Likewise, the massive Templo Mayor, which dominates the *zócalo* of Mexico City today, was discovered by unsuspecting electrical workers in 1978. But Sigüenza was collecting and analyzing fossils and artifacts unearthed by the same methods centuries before.

The precious elephant jawbone, notes Sigüenza in his testament, was uncovered during excavations related to the *desagüe* of Huehuetoca. In the early seventeenth century, the colonial state began work on a massive drainage project in an attempt to dry up the lake on which Mexico City had been built so as to protect it from persistent and devastating floods. Central to this project was the construction of a complex assemblage of canals, tunnels, sluices, and dams that would divert the water entering Lake Texcoco from the direction of Huehuetoca, northwest of the city (Mathes 1970; Candiani 2012). An initial component was completed in 1608 by some 60,000 indigenous laborers, conscripted through the *repartimiento*. But due to structural problems as well as ideological blockages (Valle 2009, 214; Candiani 2012, 13–15), both this original *desagüe* and various later expansions failed to halt the inundations, which continued through the eighteenth and even into the nineteenth century.

Notably, in Sigüenza's account of the 1692 uprising, the violence is framed, in both formal and allegorical terms, by water:

> habiendo sido por uno de aquellos medios de que Dios se vale para castigar a los impíos y reducir al camino de la justicia a los que lleva extraviados la iniquidad, yo no dudo que mis pecados y los de todos le motivaron a que, amenazándonos como padre *con azote de agua*, prosiguiese después el castigo con hambre por nuestra poca enmienda y, si ésta no es absoluta después del fuego en que, en la fuerza del hambre, *se transformó el agua*, ¡qué nos espera! (Sigüenza 1984, 107-8; my emphasis)

Here, the baroque play of opposites, which recurs throughout the text, not only attributes a causal, divine force to the violence but at the same time serves as a sort of narrative dike aimed at containing the threatening flood of disorder. The mainly indigenous rioters are themselves likened to a natural force that flows through and destroys the city. The management of the indigenous population thus comes to mirror the management of water, a technology called for and engineered by colonial technocrats—often, as Ivonne del Valle (2009) has detailed, with little success. After personally inspecting the canals in and around the city, Sigüenza informs the viceroy that the response to the flooding has not gone far enough. Not only must the canals be thoroughly cleaned, he writes, but a new one must be dug: 'Parecióme (después de haberlo premeditado por muchos días) que, para que no se anegasen otra vez los barrios occidentales de la ciudad, no bastaba esto; y proponiendo para conseguirlo una nueva acequia, aprobó su excelencia mi dictamen y me encargó esta obra' (1984, 106). Having narrated his ascension to the role of engineer, Sigüenza proceeds to map out a plan for the new canal and at the same time describes the ongoing expansion and maintenance of the *desagüe* of Huehuetoca, including the construction of an open trench and removal of debris by indigenous laborers (1984, 107).

If these excavations were the source of Sigüenza's elephant jawbone, they are also tied, in the narrative of the uprising, to other, more urgent, archaeological finds as well:

> Mucho tiempo antes de ir abriendo la acequia nueva, que dije antes, se sacó debajo de la puente de Alvarado infinidad de cosillas supersticiosas. Halláronse muchísimos cantarillos y ollitas que olían a pulque, y mayor número de muñecos o figurillas de barro y de españoles y todas travesadas con cuchillos y lanzas que formaron del mismo barro o con señales de sangre en los cuellos, como degollados.
>
> Fue esto en ocasión que llegó a ver aquella obra el señor virrey, a quien (y después al señor arzobispo en palacio) se los mostré. Preguntáronme uno y otro príncipe que qué era aquello; respondí ser prueba real de lo que en extremo nos aborrecen los indios y muestra de lo que desean con ansia a los españoles porque, como en aquel lugar fue desbaratado el marqués del Valle cuando en la noche del día de julio del año de mil quinientos veinte se salió de México y, según consta sus historias, se lo dedicaron a su mayor dios (que es el de las guerras) como ominoso para nosotros y para ellos feliz, no habiéndoseles olvidado aún en estos tiempos sus supersticiones antiguas, arrojan allí en su retrato a quien aborrecen para que, como pereció en aquella acequia y en aquel tiempo tanto español, le suceda también a los que allí maldicen. Esto discurrí qué significaban aquellos trastes, por lo que he leído de sus historias y por lo que ellos mismos me han dicho de ellas cuando los he agregado; añado ahora que, siendo el número de aquellas figuras mucho y recientes, no fue

> otra cosa arrojarlas allí que declarar con aquel ensaye el depravado ánimo con que se hallaban para acabar con todos. (Sigüenza 1984, 116–17)

Perhaps the most explicitly archaeological passage in all of Sigüenza's work, this description is framed by excavation and activated by the viceroy's arrival to inspect the drainage project. In this context, the creole archaeologist supplies the critical model for reading the 'cosillas supersticiosas' as artifacts. In part, he is interested in their utility—vessels used for consuming *pulque* are significant precisely because of what colonial elites widely saw as the indigenous alcohol's causal role in provoking the violence. Sigüenza's historical and ethnographic knowledge also contributes to his ability to decipher these meanings so effectively: 'por lo que he leído de sus historias y por lo que ellos mismos me han dicho de ellas.' This historical knowledge is, furthermore, situated in space—he identifies the location of the discovery as the Puente de Alvarado, the site where the Spanish invaders suffered a major defeat as they fled the city during the 'noche triste' (Ross 1988). In the end, however, these histories are insufficient to explain the contemporary moment—text has become context. What is most needed, declares Sigüenza, is a 'prueba real' that lends a powerful and immediate urgency to these acts of historical translation. It is the objects' sensuous materiality: beyond descriptive details, beyond historical context, the clay figures and ceramic bowls are characterized by shapes, textures, colors, smells. Together these characteristics are what give the objects meaning. The materiality of the evidence—'lo que yo vi con mis ojos y toqué con mis manos' (1984, 116)—confirms his speculations about the Indians' secretive plotting against the colonial state.

Sigüenza's fascination with optics is well known. Lenses, of course, play a key role in his treatise on astronomy, the *Libra astronómica y filosófica* (1690),[13] but microscopes and telescopes are deployed with equal flourish in his narrative of the uprising. Indeed, in the opening paragraphs, he establishes the text's explanatory power precisely within a visual matrix:

> El que mira un objeto, interpuesto entre él y los ojos un vidrio verde, de necesidad, por teñirse las especies que el objeto envía en el color del vidrio que está intermedio, lo verá verde. Los anteojos de que yo uso son muy diáfanos porque, viviendo apartadísimo de pretensiones y no faltándome nada, porque nada tengo, sería muy culpable el que así no fueran; conque acertando el que no hay medios que me tiñan las especies de lo que cuidadosamente he visto y aquí diré, desde luego me prometo, aun de los que de nada se pagan y lo censuran todo, el que dará asenso a mis palabras por muy verídicas. (1984, 96)

The image of glasses, one of the major symbols of a New World Baroque fascinated with optics, emphasizes the authority of the witness. To the extent that this first-person claim to authority is also an important trope of colonial writing, Sigüenza here follows a long line of Spanish chroniclers including Bernal Díaz and Las Casas. However, the formula for the production of truth in Sigüenza's account of the

uprising makes a subtle yet significant shift over the course of the narrative. If truth is initially a clear lens, a relation of 'lo que cuidadosamente he visto,' as the narrative approaches the moment of crisis, the historical apparatus begins to absorb and incorporate other senses, as if the weight of political crisis demanded a proliferation of authorized and authorizing forms of evidence. To privilege sight in our reading of Sigüenza, then, misconstrues the narrative trajectory, for in the end what constitutes Sigüenza's authority vis-à-vis the material past is precisely the inseparability of at least two senses, which intersect in the embodied practice of the archaeologist: 'lo que yo vi con mis ojos y toqué con mis manos.' It takes more than eyes to make an artifact. The layering of multiple forms of sensory perception constitutes a complex archaeological apparatus, a regime of visibility that goes beyond the visible.

Surface Survey, or, Walking in the Colonial City

Alongside references to historical texts—printed books, city archives, and official pronouncements—Sigüenza also draws on another, very different archive to determine how best to trace the segregation line. Introducing the narrative itinerary mentioned above, he describes his methods by noting that a precise boundary could only be drawn

> después de haber contemplado muy despacio la planta topográfica de esta ciudad, y después de haber andado sus barrios y contornos tres o cuatro veces en estos días. (O'Gorman 1938, 7)

This short but significant gesture activates two ways of seeing and engaging with the cityscape. In an essay entitled 'Walking in the City,' Michel de Certeau (1984, 92–93) outlines two divergent modalities of apprehending the city, what he calls the perspectives of the 'voyeur' and the 'walker.' He begins by reflecting on the view of New York City from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center. The viewer's height 'transfigures him into a voyeur […] looking down like a god,' while at the same time transforming the cityscape into a map, a legible 'text that lies before one's eyes.' The gaze is given meaning by the desire to transcend the geometrical strictures of perspective, to detach itself from its material moorings and project itself into the sky. 'The exaltation of a scopic and gnostic drive: the fiction of knowledge is related to this lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more.' At street level, however, this totalizing gaze is incapable of predicting or even perceiving the multiplicity of possible movements and decisions that the built environment presents. With the voyeur straining against the limits of visibility above, the 'ordinary practitioners of the city' engage in a very different operation: 'They walk—an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, *Wandersmänner*, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it.'

That voyeurs and walkers represent oppositional practices for de Certeau is clear insofar as he is interested in the relationship between agency and the practice of

everyday life. 'We are concerned,' he writes, 'with battles or games between the strong and the weak, and with the "actions" which remain possible for the latter' (1984, 34; see also Dym 2012). For Sigüenza, in contrast, the gazes of the voyeur and walker represent not oppositional but mutually supporting, simultaneous claims to authority. While de Certeau sees these two perspectives as distinct apparatuses of knowledge production, here the differences are subsumed by the 'place' of the gaze. Paradoxically, the voyeur's lust to become an immaterial field of vision is itself made possible by its intimately material relation to the institutional power of the colonial state. Sigüenza's 'planta topográfica' provides a point of entry into these discourses of optical objectivity. Named Royal Cosmographer of the Realm in 1680 by Charles II, Sigüenza understood the relationship between cartographic discourse and the exercise of state power (Leonard 1929, 75). He was the author of a number of topographic maps, including an image of the central valley of Mexico that visualizes various components of the *desagüe* project. In presenting his segregation proposal to the viceroy, however, Sigüenza opted to use not a graphic map but a textual one, what Ricardo Padrón (2004) calls 'prose cartography.' Instead of composing a visual representation of the 'línea de separación,' he chose instead to trace the path as a textual itinerary, structured as a walk through the city. '[C]omenzando desde la Puente que llaman de Las Tres Parroquias, que es a las espaldas de la casa que fué del Marqués Urrutia, se venga por la calle de Santa Isabel, hasta llegar al Salto del Agua,' and so on, proceeding through the streets of the *traza* until the loop is complete (O'Gorman 1938, 7).[14] The itinerary map draws the reader into the author's circulation through urban space: 'It apostrophizes the reader, not as an onlooker looking down on the territory from a height, as in a map, but as a traveler, moving through that territory, place by place, along routes' (Padrón 2004, 60). Far from a disembodied gaze, Sigüenza's itinerary both performs a synthesized version of his own act of walking and simultaneously draws in the reader—in this case, the viceroy—as a fellow walker, capturing the embodied experience of moving through urban space and seeing with creole eyes.

We have to distinguish between the representation of walking in the city and the multiple and repeated walks that Sigüenza thought necessary in order to define the boundary. Yet even the itinerary captures the embodied experience of navigating urban space, of a walker who weaves, turns, makes 'guiñadas' (O'Gorman 1938, 8) within a built environment that enables, shapes, and limits his movements. Directions are articulated from and addressed to an embodied subject who passes landmarks, for example, 'a mano derecha' (O'Gorman 1938, 7); turns are conditioned on the situated gaze that sees and makes sense of these components of the city's material and spiritual landscape. Walking in the colonial city was a deeply sensory experience, as residents 'oriented themselves by aural and visual clues provided by prominent buildings, especially the churches that were at the center of public life' (O'Hara 2010, 24). Sigüenza's itinerary too orients the reader/walker by means of landmarks like churches, hospitals, and schools while at the same time taking advantage of ground-level markers like bridges, canals, and street names. These last elements in particular

reveal the complementarity of his dual cartographic practices, in that he seems to distinguish between but incorporate both official and popular names, those that appear on the topographical map of the voyeur and those that are used on the streets of the walker: 'la Puente *que llaman* de Las Tres Parroquias,' for example, and 'la Puente de la Leña *y por otro nombre* de Cozotlán' (O'Gorman 1938, 8; my emphasis).

But Sigüenza is not trying to find his way home. Given the explicitly historical frame of the segregation proposal, Sigüenza's insistence on walking the city not once but 'tres o cuatro veces' calls for reading these repeated excursions as a historical and even, as Pedro Armillas might have suggested, an archaeological method. Transposing Harrison's trope of archaeology-as-surface-survey to the colonial context, I want to suggest that, for Sigüenza, walking in the city constitutes an archaeological practice, in which the material textures of the contemporary cityscape are scanned, inspected, and analyzed for their ability to represent the past. If the excavation-based archaeology of Sigüenza's account of the uprising can be encapsulated in the expression 'lo que yo vi con mis ojos y toqué con mis manos,' we might reassemble this operation for the segregation proposal as *lo que yo vi con mis ojos y anduve con mis pies*. The city's past is contained in the stones that make up the bridges and the walls of conquistadors' palaces, the orientation of canals and the intersections of streets, the relative location of the doors, gates, and corners of churches and colleges, and so on. But archaeology does more than passively read a given object. Governed by a regime of visibility that shapes what can and cannot be seen as historical, it at the same time constructs its object as historically meaningful. If the indigenous communities of Mexico City saw in the 'stone and mortar' of the city's sacred buildings the memory—and congealed labor—of their ancestors who built them (O'Hara 2010, 92), for creole *letrados* like Sigüenza, steeped in the city's thickly layered history, the built environment would certainly bear the weight of a different historical memory. Under Sigüenza's gaze, for example, sixteenth-century fortifications could be recast as boundary markers and signs of the danger posed by the Indian population, whose 'innata malicia' against the Spaniards had played out repeatedly in the form of popular uprisings and violence since the time of the conquest (O'Gorman 1938, 7). Likewise, the city's gridded layout, as noted above, is linked to Cortés and the foundational story of the conquest, destruction, and rebuilding of Mexico (O'Gorman 1938, 6). Deployed through the practice of walking, the archaeological gaze transforms the Spanish city into part of an archaeological record.

After mapping the boundary of the *traza*, Sigüenza concludes with a curious admission. While the northern, western, and southern edges of the zone are 'conforme a lo que dicen los autores que cité arriba,' he notes, the eastern edge proved more intransigent: 'por lo que mira a la parte Oriental, atento a no haber por allí acequia a propósito ni calle derecha y toda poblada por donde guiarse, no fué posible tirar dicha línea, sino del modo dicho, porque no quedasen despobladas las parroquias de Santa Cruz y San Sebastián' (O'Gorman 1938, 8). This acknowledgment of the constructed nature of the eastern boundary should not be read as a disavowal of the archaeological basis of the project. Just as archaeological sites and the archaeological record are constructed by the archaeologist, so archaeological

restorations and reconstructions respond to and actualize the exigencies of the institutions that enable them. Indeed, Sigüenza's point is precisely that the words of those distinguished—and notably *peninsular* Spanish—chroniclers of the conquest ('lo que dicen los autores que cité arriba') are insufficient for drawing an effective boundary. Beyond written history, and history written from a distance, what is needed is a local intermediary in direct, sensory contact with the materiality of the city, to determine how best to intervene in the complex web of material and social relations that compose the urban landscape.

Aimed at maintaining the contours and composition of the Santa Cruz and San Sebastián parishes, the designs reveal a close attention to and familiarity with the contested politics of religious jurisdiction. Sigüenza clearly understands the tensions that spatial interventions such as segregation could ignite between parishes, warning of 'los pleitos inacabables que entre los religiosos que ocupan sus parroquias se originarían y mantendrían con grande empeño, porque se les quitaban sus feligreses' (O'Gorman 1938, 6). Such concerns, of course, were shared by religious actors as well, such as the minister of the Convento de Santa Cruz, who noted the 'competencias de jurisdicción' in his own report to the viceroy (O'Gorman 1938, 28). Recognizing this potential for 'pleitos' and 'competencias,' the colonial state put significant effort into administering these boundaries. Already in 1690–1691 the government had asked the parishes to generate census-like lists (*padrones*) of their parishioners (Silva Prada 2001). In the wake of the uprising, the project received renewed attention, and a number of the *padrones* were eventually bundled together with Sigüenza's segregation proposal. One such document, for example, the 'Memoria de los naturales que viven en la ciudad,' recorded the names of the families and individuals from the parish of San Joseph who had moved to the Spanish *traza* (AGN *Historia* 413, ff. 32r–40v).[15] It was Sigüenza's intimacy with the spiritual and material cityscape that allowed him to negotiate these complexities to such an extent that the Real Acuerdo recommended carrying out the segregation policy to the letter of the 'Mapa, y Linderos, q[ue] hizo el d[ic]ho Don Carlos, para q[ue] se evitassen dudas' (AGN *Historia* 413, f. 73r).

As this example suggests, Sigüenza's archaeological gaze is political and at the same time his political gaze is archaeological. By this I mean more than the fact that the recovery of the material past contributes to the ideological construction of 'imagined communities' like the nation (Anderson 1991, 178–85). That Sigüenza's 'creole patriotism' manifested by way of his antiquarian sensibilities, as noted above, has been much remarked. But the archaeological gaze as outlined here is also political in the more direct sense that it actively participates and intervenes in the sphere of institutional politics, at once constituting a technology of colonial governance and the language in which that technology is deployed. Archaeology is not a search for knowledge in and of the material past but the production and deployment of such knowledge within the material present. In Mexico, it is already a state project, tied to particular forms of state violence, long before the nineteenth-century rise of archaeology as an academic discipline. Its foil, however, is not only the indigenous poor but the Spanish elite as well. There is both a political dimension, by which

Sigüenza positions himself as uniquely capable of responding to local needs, and a temporal dimension to this operation. If in Villalpando's painting the viceroy's ruined palace, as the most concrete symbol of the power of the colonial state, stages the cracks in the surface of Spanish hegemony, Sigüenza renders the Spanish city in its totality as a colonial ruin to be curated by a creole administrative apparatus. For the first time, the Spanish present has become the colonial past.

Epilogue

Like Sigüenza, I have walked the approximate itinerary described in the *informe* three or four times, twice during the summer of 2007 and again in the winter of 2009.[16] On my first attempt, I took the metro to Salto del Agua—the landmark I was most certain of—and, taking note of the Hotel Virreyes on the northeast corner of the intersection, set off east down Calle José María de Izazaga. Passing Sor Juana's old convent (now a private university) and the former Colegio de San Pablo that Sigüenza included as a landmark (now part of an ISSSTE office complex, enclosed by a metal fence topped with barbed wire), I too ran into problems when I reached the eastern boundary. But Sigüenza's complaint about the lack of a 'calle derecha' to guide him led me to take Calle Roldán, which runs slightly northwest and confuses the Centro's otherwise orderly grid. Eventually, angling due north, the street suddenly dropped in the middle, leaving two raised sidewalks running along the edges (Figure 2); I recalled

Figure 2 '… la acequia en medio ….'? Photograph by Daniel Nemser.

Figure 3 Avenida Lázaro Cárdenas / Calle de Sta. Isabel. Photograph by Daniel Nemser.

Sigüenza's description of a street divided by 'la acequia en medio' and figured I was on the right track. At the church of San Sebastián, I turned west, eventually passing the Arena Coliseo and idly wondering whether Sigüenza would have enjoyed *lucha libre*. I had not yet been able to locate the former 'Puente de las Tres Parroquias' where Sigüenza begins his textual map, but when I reached Eje Central (Avenida Lázaro Cárdenas), I noticed a small *azulejo* on the wall of the corner building just below the official street sign, a layering of historical street names (Figure 3): 'Calle de Sta. Isabel.' The loop was complete.

What makes the Centro Histórico historic? In recent decades, the Centro Histórico has changed significantly. To begin with, it has become the target of a sequence of intensive state interventions and corporate investment. Deteriorating stone buildings featuring 'colonial' architecture, many of which had been damaged in the 1985 earthquake and left unrepaired for years, are now being restored and renovated as a result of a public-private alliance between the city government and the Mexican businessman Carlos Slim, who *Forbes* currently considers the richest man in the world. Through a non-profit foundation and a for-profit real-estate company, Slim

has invested tens of millions of dollars to buy up and restore buildings throughout the zone—including the Hotel Virreyes I passed on the walk—whose freshly painted façades stand out against those of their faded, crumbling neighbors (González 2007). According to a report on the 'revitalization' of the Centro prepared by the Fundación Carlos Slim (2011, 140–41), furthermore, private spending has dwarfed its public counterpart: for every peso invested by the latter, the former has invested fifty-eight. With the establishment of a specialized Centro Histórico police force, the installation of 110 CCTV cameras, and the creation of a high-tech command post for police monitoring (technology courtesy of Telmex, the Mexican telephone giant owned by Slim), the zone has come under increasing surveillance.

In the inevitable counterpart to these land appropriations, the tens of thousands of street vendors who had made the zone a late capitalist version of Villalpando's bustling marketplace, selling everything from pirated DVDs to kitchen appliances, have been evicted. Because they occupy public space, these bodies appear in official reports as a component of the increasing decay and insecurity of the Centro Histórico. On 12 October 2007, in an operation involving 1,200 police officers, these *ambulantes* were forced to pack up and leave the zone, which was then literally swept clean by teams of workers with brooms—the program's official slogan was 'Por un Centro Histórico Limpio.' The vendors were relocated to off-street empty lots, from public plazas to new 'plazas comerciales,' that the city government had allocated for them to once again set up their stands (Silva Londoño 2010). Walking the route again in 2009, the streets, packed with vendors just two years before, felt strangely empty.

In a curious twist, archaeological concerns dominated much of the discussion about the eviction. Beginning in early 2007, the city expropriated a series of ruined *predios*, demolished the remaining structures, and cleared the debris, in order to hand over the freshly paved lots to the street vendor associations for relocation. Several of these lots, however, contained buildings that dated back to the colonial period, such as the Casa de Calderas, located at Calle Regina 97, which was later incorporated into the eighteenth-century Convento de los Camilos (Tello 2007a). Coincidentally, that building dates back to 1692, when the wealthy Spaniard Manuel de Calderas bought the two smaller houses on the lot and transformed them into the unified structure that was entered into the official registry of historical monuments in 1980 (Tello 2007b). Despite this, in the weeks before the eviction, the city sent in heavy machinery with a police escort to raze it. Under fire from the building's owner as well as INAH officials, Alejandra Moreno Toscano, historian and director of the Autoridad del Centro Histórico, a government body established in 2006 to coordinate local and federal management efforts, defended the demolition in this way:

> Hay que entender que la recuperación de los centros históricos no solamente significa conservar por conservar las piedras. Lo que significa es aumentar la calidad de vida de las personas que viven en él y […] todos esos inmuebles fueron aplicados a la reordenación del comercio en vía pública, para que esa reordenación permitiera precisamente un rescate realmente profundo y consolidado del Centro Histórico. […] Es mucho más complicado que un catálogo, o que sea antiguo o

> moderno, porque no se cataloga el edificio en sí, sino su integración a un conjunto. La catalogación es Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México, es decir el conjunto Centro Histórico, por lo tanto el perfil de las calles, el conjunto de las fachadas, la armonía interna de los edificios. (Tello 2007a, 76)

These are the comments of a state agent speaking in her official capacity overseeing the neoliberal gentrification of the zone: monuments have become properties, with historical nostalgia trumped by an economic logic dedicated to ordering and managing the flow of bodies and commodities. It is this economic restructuring and not what we might call an 'antiquarian' nostalgia for the past in itself, Moreno Toscano asserts, on which the true recovery of the Centro Histórico must be based.

The biopolitical emphasis on human life over lifeless 'piedras' that have been evacuated of historical meaning appears at first glance to contrast sharply with the standard discourse of archaeology that privileges the 'dead city' over its 'living' counterpart. But this reading overlooks not only the critique that I have outlined here, drawing on the archaeology of the present, but also the double movement of archaeological work. Archaeology destroys the past in the process of creating it, both materially (as in the excavation, restoration, and construction of archaeological sites) and epistemologically (as in the closing off of possible interpretations of an archaeological record produced from within a particular regime of visibility). Even the INAH archaeologists who criticized the demolition of Regina 97 applauded the removal of *ambulantes* from public space, since after all these bodies constituted a threat to the built environment and, perhaps more importantly, to its *appearance* as historical. In other words, the demolition of a particular building must be read within the logic of a totalizing project for the production of the Centro Histórico as a signifying bloc: the designation and demarcation of an archaeological—insofar as material and historical—site as a 'conjunto,' a coherent and singular assemblage. It has become a site, its historical valence officially appended to its name in the 1980 declaration and propelled into the realm of international recognition by a UNESCO declaration seven years later. Like the ruins at Chichén Itzá, dug out of the forest and built by Mayan workers to match the vision of Mexican and North American archaeologists, the Centro Histórico is 'restored' through a process that destroys information about the past and closes off alternative possibilities for interpretation. The freshly painted and renovated building *qua* ruin is 'simultaneously both a copy and an original. It is a copy of an original that never existed' (Castañeda 2001, 454–56). And also like the ruins at Chichén, the Centro Histórico is primarily an economic project, meant to capitalize on heritage by extracting the value, vampire-like, that has been objectified in the built environment over the last five centuries.

With the gentrification of the Centro, then, comes a double reappropriation of the material past. The revitalization of the Centro Histórico, which sets in motion another round of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2003), continues the project begun by Sigüenza with the careful articulation of the *traza* as an object of historical interest: the *ruination* of the Centro Histórico, its transformation into a

'living' ruin. Walking in the colonial city, Sigüenza constructs a Spanish past to tell a story about the political present and inscribe that story onto the cityscape. As a result, the city is both materially transformed and handed over to a new principal agent: the lettered creole as colonial administrator. Today, Mexico City's economic elites and the *letrados* who serve them have invested in what is by and large the same narrative, evoking a colonial nostalgia that appeals to the managers and administrators of neoliberal Mexico and the heritage economy on which it depends. Archaeology in the lettered city constitutes another mode of cultural and capital accumulation, another terrain on which state power is consolidated and negotiated. But walking in the city can also reveal the limits of these projects, generating alternative histories and facilitating connections with the users of the material present and the targets of displacement via the state- or corporate-led production of ruins and other archaeological sites.

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Notes

[1] While the façade was rebuilt by 1699, the interior of the building, including the main patio, as well as parts of the south wing, such as the jail and the hall where the *audiencia* met, were not finished until well into the eighteenth century (Maza 1964, 160–61).

[2] The archival records of these documents, including Sigüenza's proposal, are located in Mexico City at the Archivo General de la Nación (hereafter AGN) *Historia* 413, ff. 1r–31v. In the interest of simplicity and unless otherwise noted, I use the version edited by Edmundo O'Gorman (1938) and published in the *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* as 'Sobre los incovenientes de vivir los indios en el centro de la ciudad,' which contains the most important *informes*. On Sigüenza and the segregation proposal, see O'Gorman 1960, 27–38; Nemser 2011, 110–12; and More 2013, 164–69.

[3] Gustavo Verdesio has proposed an approach to colonial studies based on material culture. While scholars have begun to take more interest in alternative historical methods and sources, he argues, they continue to place 'excesivo énfasis […] en los sistemas simbólicos en desmedro de la cultura material' (2001, 634). This includes studies privileging those indigenous artifacts like *amoxtli* that rely on systems of signs.

[4] '[C]ualquier incursión en el terreno de la historia de la arqueología mexicana,' writes José Alcina Franch, 'debe contar inevitablemente con la obra fundamental de don Ignacio Bernal' (1991, 325). Bernal's book figures as the main source on colonial archaeology in the Americas in Bruce Trigger's

landmark study *A History of Archaeological Thought*. In an unfortunately short section, Trigger (2006, 116) cites Bernal to suggest that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Spanish authorities were not only uninterested in pre-Hispanic artifacts and monuments but indeed sought actively to destroy them. I will return to this argument below.

[5] In standard histories of American archaeology—which often overlook Latin America entirely (Alcina 1991, 335)—Thomas Jefferson occupies this foundational position. 'What we most remember about Jefferson's work,' writes Glyn Daniel, 'is not only that he excavated […] but that he dug for a purpose—not to find treasure, but to find the answer to a problem' (1981, 42). Sigüenza, of course, was doing this kind of work a century before.

[6] Recently, Stephanie Merrim has taken this argument a step further, suggesting that Rama problematically conflates the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While the ordered city of the sixteenth century functioned seamlessly as a sort of ideological state apparatus, the logic of what Merrim calls the seventeenth-century 'Baroque Spectacular City' enabled the writings of the lettered class—many of them creoles like Sigüenza—to question if not contest colonial hegemony (2010, 50, 204).

[7] Mexico plays an important if supporting role in Trigger's typology, insofar as it reveals the limits of his categories. While Mexican archaeology first appears as an example of 'nationalist' archaeology—in the wake of the 1910 Revolution archaeologists were drafted by the state to construct an official national identity based on pre-Hispanic societies—Trigger later acknowledges that it might count equally as an example of 'colonialist' archaeology (1984, 361, 368). On the limits of Trigger's typology for understanding the history of archaeology in Latin America, see Oyuela-Caycedo 1994.

[8] Pre-Hispanic concerns have long dominated Mexican (and Latin American) archaeology's field of vision, due primarily to archaeology's character as a state project with nationalist and economic goals (Vázquez León 1994; Cummins 2002, 229n2; Fournier G. 2003). But perhaps it is also a result of the discipline's colonial origins. Alcina (1995, 16–20) identifies a distinction with regard to the emergence of archaeology in the Old World and the New that persists in academic structures and curricula today. In Europe, archaeology arose in the context of the Renaissance from a growing interest in all things classical, while in the Americas, it grew directly out of the colonial encounter. Methodologically speaking, argues Alcina, the former is an 'arqueología de reliquias muertas,' intimately tied to excavation, while the latter is an 'arqueología antropológica,' more closely associated with ethnography. If American archaeology has been concerned, from its earliest moments, with the indigenous 'other,' it makes sense that historical archaeology has been slow to take hold. This does not mean, however, that the field is nonexistent. In the last 30 years or so, and especially over the past decade, archaeological interest in and scholarship about colonial Mesoamerica has increased significantly (Kepecs and Alexander 2005; Rodríguez-Alegría 2005; Liebmann and Murphy 2010; Fournier G. and Charlton 2012). In spite of these developments, historical archaeology still faces structural limitations and 'should be regarded as an expanding field of inquiry that primarily engages with salvage archaeology and architectural restoration of historical monuments in Mexican urban centers' (Fournier G. and Charlton 2012, 925). I discuss one such case of archaeological restoration in the epilogue.

[9] Others call it 'archaeology of the contemporary past' or 'archaeology of the recent past.' For a history of the subfield, see Harrison and Schofield 2010, 21–53.

[10] Surface survey, for example, plays an equally important methodological role in practice. In the 1960s and 70s, the archaeologist William T. Sanders popularized its use for the study of pre-Hispanic settlements in Mesoamerica. 'We believed that the settlement data we required could be collected in a reasonable way by systematically walking over the ground surface, locating architectural remains and areas of artifact concentration by visual inspection, plotting these remains on a map, making systematic collections of surface artifacts, and describing these archaeological features in a notebook and in a photographic record' (Sanders et al. 1979, 17).

[11] On the other hand, subaltern voices do play a significant role in Sigüenza's account of the uprising (Rabasa 1994; Silva Prada 2007, 411–24).

[12] The most seemingly anti-imperial, anti-capitalist, 'rhizomatic' thought can be deployed in the interest of counterinsurgency and the state, as Eyal Weizman (2007, 185–220) has documented in his study of the Israeli army's appropriation of everything from Situationism to Deleuze and Guattari.

[13] 'No hay mayor argumento para convencer al quien lo negare que ponerle un telescopio o anteojo de larga vista en las manos para que en el globo de la Luna (no sin admiración) contemple mares inmensos y dilatados, islas, promontorios, valles, cerros, y aun más eminentes que los nuestros' (Sigüenza 1984, 387).

[14] The route continues as follows: 'y desde allí, tirando al Oriente por la calle Real de San Pablo hasta llegar a dicho colegio, y dejándolo a mano derecha, proseguir hasta una alcantarilla y puente antigua de piedra que está en la acequia que llaman de Los Curtidores y viene de Mexicaltzingo, y desde dicha puente, viniendo por la misma acequia hacia el Norte, hasta el puente de la Leña y por otro nombre de Cozotlán, se hará una guiñada por entre casas de Antonio Domínguez y otras inmediatas, (la acequia en medio) que pertenecen a la Santa Iglesia Catedral, hasta un poco antes de la Puente de Santa Cruz, que es por donde corre una calle que llaman del Chico, y sale por las espaldas del Colegio y Hospital de la Santísima Trinidad, la cual se seguirá hasta una esquina que llaman de Rivillas, desde la cual se tirará al Occidente hasta salir a la Plazuela de San Gregorio, y de allí volviendo otra vez al Norte y pasando por la puerta de la iglesia de este santo, se llegará a la esquina que hace la huerta del Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo, de los padres de la Compañía de Jesús, desde donde se correrá hasta la puerta seglar de dicho colegio; y de allí, siguiendo una acequia pequeña, se llegará hasta donde se cruza con la que pasa por delante de la iglesia de San Sebastián, de religiosos del Carmen, la cual corre para el Occidente hasta llegar a la puente de Las Tres Parroquias, desde donde se comenzó a tirar esta línea de separación, entre lo principal de la ciudad, en que sólo han de vivir españoles, y los barrios de su circunferencia que quedan por todas partes para vivienda de indios y de otros que allí tienen labradas casas' (O'Gorman 1938, 7–8).

[15] In total there are seven of these 'memorias,' including information from San José (cited above), San Pablo (ff. 41r–42r), Santa Cruz (ff. 43r–v), San Sebastián (ff. 44r–51r), Santa María la Redonda (ff. 52r–55r), and Santiago Tlatelolco (ff. 56r–v; 57r–60v). Their dates indicate that at least some of the documents represent the original *padrones* from 1691. Although they form part of the same *expediente*, these documents are not included in the published version of the segregation proposal.

[16] I have found Christopher Tilley's work on the phenomenology of landscape, and especially his discussion of walks and paths (1994, 27–33), useful for thinking about my own walks (as well as those of Sigüenza) as a sort of archaeological practice.

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