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Puebla. City and Province during the Independence Period, 1800-1824

Puebla became the principal centre of conflict during the years 1811-13. The object of this paper is to explain why it became so and with what result. It was a striking new development that the central-southern province of Puebla should by the winter of 1811 have become the focal point of an insurrectionary movement which had originated in September, 1810 from the social conditions of the central northwest of New Spain, a region of completely different cultural features. This transition, however, was not simply geographical. Moreover, it cannot be attributed uniquely to the appearance of the main revolutionary force under the leadership of José María Morelos on the Puebla perimeter in the summer of 1811. There was evidence of widespread popular participation in the insurgency movement within the province of Puebla itself. Morelos was able to tap this potential and for a time use it for his purpose, but it existed in its own right, and derived from circumstances which anticipated the outbreak of an independence movement. However, the roots of insurgent support are not easy to trace, especially since the archival documentation is only rarely concerned to point them out. It is one thing to identify support for the idea of political independence from Spain among urban intellectuals, in the main lawyers and members of the lower secular clergy, but quite another to explain why certain popular groups chose for a time to participate in an insurgency that to a large extent was initiated from outside their province.

Any examination of the social history of late colonial Puebla and Tlaxcala will show the existence of deep and long-lasting tensions at many levels, but it does not reveal the existence of any popular rebellions of breadth or duration which might be regarded as antecedents of the struggles of the 1810's. In the main, social conflicts took the form of limited demonstrations of popular grievances, usually designed to influence the course of litigation, and on occasions direct action either when litigation failed altogether or when particular abuses became intolerable. The frequence of litigation, and the predilection for appeals to the law and to the authorities entrusted with implementing it, indicate the degree of popular integration into the mental structure of the colonial system. The prerequisite for insurgency would be the breaking down of this structure, and the political objective of an insurgency movement would be to finish off any remaining sense of pertaining to the old structures and to create an alternative structure of authority and obedience.

A central problem lies in establishing the connection –if there was one– between localized, limited conflicts and insurgency participation in the 1810's. Once the "Independence period" is stripped of its nationalist rhetoric, we can see that many of the conflicts which preceded it continued throughout it, were on occasion subsumed into it, and often tended to supersede it well into the middle of the nineteenth century. The historical continuity lies not in the brief excitement over independence, but in the localized disputes which existed both before and after the armed struggles of the 1810's. The broader escalation of violence during that decade provided opportunities for popular action on a larger scale in pursuit of longstanding revindication of grievances concerning

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land or water rights, customary practices, abuse of labor, or wage levels. Such earlier conflicts were for a time transformed from isolated incidents into microcosms of the struggle beyond the local and provincial spheres. Once the official leadership of the independence movement had been removed and once the itinerant rebel bands were contained by government counter-insurgency policy, then these microcosms, stripped of their broader context, reverted to the limited spheres within which they had previously played their course. Such local issues remained generally as unresolved after Independence as they had been before it.

Land and Labor Disputes in the Puebla Countryside

Claude Morin contrasts land and labor conditions in Michoacán with those in the Puebla-Tlaxcala zone at the end of the eighteenth century. In the former, increased agricultural productivity resulted from greater use of irrigation and the extension of cultivated surface. In the latter, different ecological conditions and institutional practices impeded such procedures, and, instead, greater pressure was placed by the landowners upon the labor force, much of which was of indigenous origin. Morin argues that the result was a worsening of labor conditions on the land in the Puebla-Tlaxcala zone.[1] Resident estate workers (*gañanes*) in Tlaxcala and in several Puebla districts complained of long hours and of ill treatment by the hacienda owners or mayordomos. James Riley's study of labor relations in Tlaxcala draws attention to the generally small extent and perennially low yield of the Tlaxcala haciendas. Estate owners remained close to bankruptcy, a situation which led to pressure on the labor force and to repeated litigation with the Indian villages.[2] In many of the Puebla districts, the condition of the haciendas was little better than in Tlaxcala. By 1790, for instance, all the Cholula haciendas were burdened with mortgages, nearly 70% of which were in favor of some sort of religious foundation. Property owners usually borrowed in order to supplement deficient incomes or to pay off past debts, rather than to make improvements. Eleven of the 38 Cholula haciendas were bankrupt. The ranchos seem to have fared better: only one of the sixteen was bankrupt. In Puebla's most populous district, San Juan de los Llanos (now Libres), in the northeast, seven of the hacienda owners and ten lessees controlled the 36 estates. Of the 62 ranchos, half were under tenancies. Most of the Puebla ranchos were run as family enterprises. The haciendas tended to be market-oriented, and, in contrast to the ranchos, required a substantial outlay of capital and labor, neither of which could be counted upon. The Puebla *hacendados* experienced frequent frustation in their efforts to gain the upper hand over their labour force. Indian villages, moreover, continued to show reluctance to work on hacienda lands, particularly when wage labor services conflicted with their own planting and harvesting seasons.[3]

Disputes resulting from abuses of labor on estates in the main cereal districts of Atlixco, Tepeaca, Huejotzingo, and San Juan de los Llanos recurred during the 1770's and 1780's. Litigation accompanied the colonial authorities' recognition of the free status of gañanes in the *bandos* of 14 July 1773, 21 August 1779, and 23 March 1785. The laborers took their stand on the principle accepted in the bandos that as free men they had the right to take their labor where they chose. According to the proprietors, however, the workers

[1]Claude Morin, *Michoacán en la Nueva España del siglo XVIII. Crecimiento y desigualdad en una economía colonial* (Mexico City, 1979), pp. 250-253.

[2]James D. Riley, "Landlords, Laborers and Royal Government: The Administration of Labor in Tlaxcala, 1680-1750", in Elsa Cecilia Frost, Michael C. Meyer, and Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, eds., *El Trabajo y los trabajadores en la historia de México* (Mexico City, 1979), pp. 223-225.

[3]Reinhard Liehr, *Staatrat und Städtische Oberschicht von Puebla am Ende der Kolonialzeit (1787-1810)* (Wiesbaden, 1971), pp. 8-12. In San Juan, there were also *terrazgueros*, who paid either with part of their crop or in personal services their obligations to the landlords.

were by nature "idle" and "drunken".[4] Gañanes, as the litigation testified, would not tolerate verbal abuse or physical ill-treatment without protest. Between 1776 and 1778, the *alcalde mayor* of Tepeaca, Puebla's principal maize-producing district, registered nine cases of ill-treatment. In 1779, resident laborers in San Juan de los Llanos marched on the landowner's house when one of their number had been beaten on the Hacienda de Virreyes. The alcalde mayor responded by forming a body of men and arresting 25 of the protesters, though no one was excessively punished and the landowner proved concessive.[5] *Indios gañanes* from the Hacienda de San Marcos in Acatzingo (Tepeaca) sent representatives to the city of Puebla in 1777 to press claims for unpaid wages. Although the Puebla courts upheld the laborers' case, nothing was paid by the employers, and a second journey to Puebla was required, at great inconvenience to the workers.[6] Gañanes on the Hacienda de San Sebastian Puchingo in San Juan de los Llanos appealed in 1782 for a liquidation of accounts, in view of the hacienda's failure to pay them.[7]Landowners throughout these districts, in Tlaxcala, and in the upland districts of Veracruz repeatedly blamed their economic difficulties both on worker recalcitrance and on government protection of worker interests. They demanded a change of policy.[8] The above instances show that resident hacienda workers in the main cereal districts were not prepared to remain passive in face of abuses, especially when it appeared that the colonial authorities were disposed to listen sympathetically to their complaints. Practical redress at the place of work, however, remained another matter. This is not to argue that either repeated failure of redress or a general deteriortion of laborers' conditions in Puebla at the end of the colonial period contributed to insurgency support in the 1810s. On the contrary, there does not appear to be any systematic evidence in either respect. Nevertheless, the existence of tensions on the land among proprietors, mayordomos, and resident workers may have created conditions which made insurgency support possible when the opportunity arose.

The recovery of population during the eighteenth century added a further dimension to the sources of local conflict. Suits between villages, or with haciendas and ranchos, concerning possession of disputed borderlands appear frequently in the archival documentation. Several land suits in the later eighteenth century involved requests by hacienda laborers for formal incorporation as a *república de indios* with the statutory 600 *varas de fundo legal*, on the grounds that existing land resources were inadequete to sustain an increased population. Such requests generally received a favorable response from the viceregal authorities, as in the case of the request from the gañanes of the Hacienda de San Miguel Villanueva in Tepeaca in 1799 for formal pueblo status, with the full support of the parish priest of Acatzingo. The audiencia refused to sustain the vigorous opposition of the hacendado.[9] Similar requests came from the gañanes of the Hacienda de San Pablo in the same district.[10] Since these petitions also continued after the insurgency, as in the case of Atlixco in 1820, it seems that they formed part of a continuous trend, unabated by the years of violence in the countryside.[11]

[4]Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain (hereafter AGI), *Audiencia de México*, leg. 1739, audiencia to crown, México, 23 July 1785, with 18 *cuadernos*. See Herbert J. Nickel, *Soziale Morphologie der Mexikanischen Hacienda* (Wiesbaden, 1978), p. 183. The daily wage was 1.5-2 reales.

[5]Archivo Judicial de Puebla (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City, Microfilm Collection), Rollo 68, "Levantamiento de gañanes de la Hacienda Virreyes (1779) y Hacienda de San Miguel (1780), San Juan de los Llanos".

[6]Archivo General de Notarías, Puebla (hereafter AGNP), leg. 238 (1770-71), notaría 3; *registro* (1777), f. 48.

[7]Archivo Judicial de Puebla (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Cerro de Loreto, Puebla), leg. 1782, no. 2651, 30 August 1782.

[8]AGI, *México*, leg. 1739, landowners of Tlaxcala and San Juan de los Llanos, 21 December 1785; see cuaderno 2 (1778) for the detailed file concerning the grievances of the gañanes; consejo de Indias, Madrid, April 1778.

[9]Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City (hereafter AGN), *Tierras*, vol. 1296, exp. 6 (1798), Ambrosio Sagarzurrieta, México, 31 August 1799; Viceroy Azanza's decision, Mexico, 9 October 1799.

[10]AGN, *Tierras*, vol. 1366, exp. 3, f. 119.

[11]AGN, *Tierras*, vol. 1903, exp. 6, Hacienda de Santa Lucía Nocemaluapan.

Villagers in extreme circumstances were quite prepared to take the law into their own hands when they felt that the orthodox legal channels had failed them. Even though the Intendent of Puebla, Manuel de Flon, commented sharply on Indian litigiousness--"it is well known and a constant occurrence that the Indians with a blind passion and tenacity pursue in the law courts of this realm their claim to the land"--the failure of the villagers of Chalcoapan in Cholula to gain access to the hacienda lands they contested led in 1809 to peasant direct action. Possibly their readiness to override the law was motivated by the conditions of hunger in the Intendancy due to the dearth of 1809-10, and their pressure for further land a response to food shortages within the community.[12]

Hacienda pressure for village labor proved to be a repeated source of conflict in the localities. In the southern district of Izúcar (now Matamoros), labor relations degenerated to the point of open rebellion in 1781, when resistance to forced labour on private estates led to violence. As a result, the alcalde mayor remained wary of further recurrence throughout the decade. Even so, the pressure from the estates for a guaranteed labor force from the peasant villages continued unrelieved. Hacendados continually appealed to the alcalde to secure this for them during the harvest season, but their requests were blocked by the opposition of the Indian village authorities, who, according to the proprietors, remained totally indifferent to their interests. The alcalde feared to exert pressure on them, confining himself instead to complaining of the "laziness" of the working population, which in 1787, following the dearth of 1785-86, he blamed for the loss of the cereal crop.[13] The Izúcar district proved to be an insurgent stronghold in 1811 and 1812. The principal rebel force under Morelos made the town of Izúcar its forward base of operations, at the southern edge of Puebla's cereal valleys. This district was also Puebla's chief sugar producing zone, and in the late eighteenth century Izúcar contained even more tribute-paying negroes and mulattoes, often plantation and mill workers, than the comparable sugar zone of Cuautla. The wealthiest individual in the district appeared to be Mateo Musiti, owner of the Hacienda de San Juan Bautista Ravoso, one of the four sugar refining estates. A series of villages and *barrios* throughout the 1800's pressed law suits against him for encroachments on their lands by his cattle. Such disputes were of long duration: in suits with previous owners, the Audiencia had decided in favor of the villagers in 1743 and 1747. It proved to be Musiti who vainly tried to rally Royalist resistance to insurgent forces when in December 1811 they appeared in the district from the direction of Chiautla. Musiti was forced to flee, leaving his properties at the mercy of the rebel army.[14]

Artisans, Guilds, and Merchants

A direct connection existed between the cotton textile industry of the provincial capital and the Gulf and Pacific coast raw material-producing zones, especially in view of mercantile involvement in both processes. The transition from woolens to cotton from the 1740's encouraged the concentration of spinners and weavers in the city of Puebla. The rise of the Querétaro woolen industry probably helped to explain the decay of the woolen trade in Puebla and Tlaxcala. Altough many other types of industry existed in the city, Puebla tended to concentrate on cottons, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century produced textiles valued at more than one million pesos annually. Although a cotton weavers' guild had existed in the city since 1676, the merchant investors of the late colonial period preferred to operate outside the context of the guild structure. In any case, the guilds scarcely

[12]AGN, *Tierras*, vol. 1404, exp. 19 (1809), ff. 2-3, Flon to Viceroy Lizana, no. 33, Puebla, 2 September 1809.
[13]AGN, *Civil*, vol. 1418, exp. 15, ff. 208-209, alcalde mayor Lázaro Josef Figueroa Yáñez, Izúcar, 10 May 1787.
[14]AGN, *Tierras*, vol. 1385, exp. 2 (1806); AGN, *Tierras*, vol. 1404, exp. 6 (1809); AGI, *Mexico*, leg. 1141, Flon to Mangino, no. 3, Puebla, 20 December 1787; Enrique Florescano and Isabel Gil Sánchez, eds., *Descripciones económicas regionales de Nueva España. Provincias del Centro, Sudeste y Sur, 1766-1827* (Mexico City, 1976), pp. 166-169. The district produced 60,596 *fanegas* of sugar and more than 90,100 fanegas of maize yearly.

affected the rural artisan, especially since in the peasant villages cotton spinning and weaving generally remained the preserve of women. Villages in several areas engaged in specialized activities. In Santa Ana Chiautempan, near Tlaxcala, for instance, weavers accounted for more than 75% of the local artisans.[15]

Two parallel processes were taking place in the late colonial period: mercantile penetration of the districts of raw material production, on the one hand, and mercantile penetration of the processes of textile production and distribution, on the other hand. The controversial role of the merchant who supplied capital or work instruments in the rural areas where a generally mulatto, pardo, or negro population produced cotton, had become a major political issue since at least the 1750's, when the royal authorities had sought to regulate private commercial monopolies in the localities. With the establishment of the Intendant system in New Spain in 1786, the Crown tried to prohibit *repartimientos de comercio*, through which royal administrators, financed by merchants, had used their authority in the districts to guarantee the merchants' monopoly of supply and extraction. As a parallel process, merchant investors in the textile producing zones increasingly financed artisan producers. This reduced the artisan's sphere of action, but it did not reduce him to the status of employee. Resentment of mercantile penetration seems to have raised political consciousness among artisans. According to Potash, some 28 cloth warehouses existed in the city of Puebla, into which went the greater part of the produce of the 1,200 looms of Puebla and those of Cholula, Tlaxcala, and Huejotzingo, their cloth handed over by the weavers to the merchants' commissioners.[16] The majority of the city population worked in the textile trade, with possibly some 20,000 individuals involved, as well as domestically employed female spinners.[17] The ordinary working people of Puebla consisted in the main of struggling artisan producers. The economic uncertainties of the 1790's and 1800's kept the city authorities wary of potential unruliness resulting from an artisan sense of grievance.

The city barrios, suburbs, subordinate districts, and areas within the tax district of the nearby town of Amozoc contained a large number or Indian and "caste" weavers producing popular clothing. The Puebla weavers' guild had little clear indication of the extent of production beyond its own organization.[18] When in 1803 the cotton-spinners' and weavers' guild called for full subjection of producers to the guild ordinances, poor artisans protested that their livelihood and that of their families would be endangered. They argued that they could never afford the cost of guild examination. Other artisans replied that, since they did not work for themselves, they could hardly subject themselves to the guild organizations, especially since some of them operated with funds supplied by the merchants. Although guild officials threatened to close down the workplaces of these artisans, they received no sympathy from the municipal authorities, who had already listened to reports of guild extortion and poor quality products.[19] The guilds sought constantly to secure the prohibition of all artisan activities that took place beyond the formal guild structure. In practical terms, the city council, aware of the social consequences, did not share this objective. The woolen guild pressed in 1807 for the banning of all activity beyond its supervision, and blamed poor sales of its own products on "free purchase and acquisition of woolen cloth". The Puebla municipality heard many such requests from guilds for a tightening of regulations. All were in themselves indications of the broad range of economic activities that took place in and around the city, and in

[15]Robert A. Potash, *El Banco de Avío de México. El Fomento de la industria, 1821-46* (Mexico City, 1959), pp. 17-25; Jan Bazant, "Evolución de la industria textil poblana", *Historia Mexicana*, 52 (April-June, 1964), pp. 473-516; Liehr, *Staatrat und Städtische Oberschicht*, pp. 17-23; Wolfgang Trautmann, *Las Transformaciones en el paisaje cultural de Tlaxcala durante la época colonial* (Wiesbaden, 1981), p. 102. See also Hugo Leicht, *Las Calles de Puebla* (Puebla, 1934), pp. 349-50, 385.

[16]Potash, *Banco de Avío*, p. 23.

[17]Liehr, *Stadtrat und Städtische Oberschicht*, p. 21.

[18]AGN, Alcabalas, vol. 37, Rafael Mangino to Agustín Pérez Quijano, Puebla, 24 June 1793.

[19]Archivo del Ayuntamiento de Puebla, Puebla (hereafter AAP), "Expedientes sobre gremios y oficiales (1744-1802)", vol. 234, libro 2699, ff. 269-270v, Manuel José Herrera, *escribano*, Puebla, 6 May 1803; f. 27v, *veedores*, Puebla, 11 May 1803.

which a complex structured group of artisans participated. For such reasons, the city council generally ignored guild pressures and remained unwilling to provoke the large number of small "illegal" traders. The city syndic argued in 1807 that a total ban threatened the livelihood of many poor artisans, who, "worthy as they are, cannot afford to sustain the cost of officially authorized operations".[20]

The presence of popular-based insurgent bands throughout the Puebla countryside in 1811-12 made the municipal authorities graphically aware of the potential danger of collusion between them and a numerous body of disgruntled artisans within the city itself. Furthermore, the rebel presence in the countryside aggravated social conditions in the city as a result of migration from the rural areas affected by the fighting.[21] No such collusion, however, actually occurred. An explanation may lie in the city council's unwillingness to support guild restrictions earlier in the 1800's.

The Insurgency in the Puebla Districts

By 1811 and 1812, the Intendancy of Puebla had become the "principal theater of the war".[22] Grievances of long duration in several districts on and beyond the Puebla borders provided recruitment for rebel bands operating under José Francisco Osorno. The Osorno clan, like the Villagrans of Huichapan, were already well known before the insurgency as criminals of long standing. Thieves before 1810, they became insurgents thereafter.The Osornos came to exercise a predominant influence across the Llanos de Apam and in the north Puebla sierra. This ranchero clan held Zacatlán as its operational base from 30 August 1811 until its capture by the Royalists on 23 August 1813. Members of the family owned or leased ranchos or haciendas in these areas, and commanded a wide clientéle which supported them with their material requirements. The insurrection enabled rancheros to become masters of entire haciendas. Osorno formed a group of rancheros into a well-mounted, well-armed band in the Zacatlán district, and operated throughout the Llanos and the north from August 1811; in total some 700 men were under his command.[23] Zacatlán had been a district in which *repartimientos de comercio* were the means by which outside merchants conducted their business, usually with credit from Mexico City, Puebla, or Veracruz merchants.[24] A disturbance had already broken out in 1802.[25] Hostility to creditors, whether merchants or shopkeepers, whose properties were frequently looted, may well have accounted for insurgency support in these districts.[26]

Royalist counter-insurgency operations, which involved the burning of scattered settlements or *rancherías* throughout the disputed zones, only served to increase rebel support. Osorno gained recruits among hacienda workers, rancheros, shepherds, and peons, and had sympathetic contacts within the city of Puebla itself who supplied him with information. The pulque hacendados of the arid northern districts paid him protection money with which he financed his activities.[27]

[20]AAP, "Expedientes sobre obrajes y talleres (1621-1809)", vol. 224, ff. 234-235, *síndico personero del común*, Puebla, 1 August 1807.
[21]AAP, "Expedientes sobre servicio militar, 1810-11", libro 1288, ff. 240-256, Puebla, 21 June 1811; AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 81 (1812), ff. 79-83, Puebla, 18 April 1812.
[22]AGN, *Virreyes*, vol. 268A, ff. 1-7v, Calleja to Minister of War, Mexico City, 15 March 1813.
[23]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 285, ff. 50-51, Ciriaco de Llano to Viceroy Venegas, Puebla, 14 September 1811; ff. 100-101, Llano to Venegas, Tulancingo, 24 September 1811. See also Antonio Carrión, *Historia de la ciudad de Puebla de los Angeles*, 2 vols. (Puebla 1896-97; 1970 ed.), vol. 2, pp. 86-89.
[24]AGN,*Civil*, vol. 896, Mexico City, 18 and 21 June 1804. See also Horst Pietschmann, "Der Repartimiento-Handel der Distriksbeamten im Raum Puebla im 18 Jahrhundert", *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, 10 (1973), pp. 236-250.
[25]Carrión, *Historia de la ciudad*, vol. 2, pp. 82-89; René Cuéllar Bernal, *Tlaxcala a través de los siglos* (Mexico City, 1968), pp. 184-187.
[26]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 285, ff. 125-126v, Manuel Aráoz to Llano, Tlaxco, 30 September 1811; AGN, *Historia*, vol. 103, no. 22, Interim Subdelegate Juan Torquemada y Veristáin to Dávila, Tetela, 3 September 1811; no. 493, Dávila to Venegas, Puebla, 7 September 1811.
[27]Carrión, *Historia de la ciudad*, vol. 2, pp. 87-91.

The main rebel army of 2,000 men (though with only 530 rifles) reached the southern town of Chilapa in August 1811. From this relatively fertile area, which produced both cereals and tropical crops, Morelos opened his first major compaign in November against Royalist positions on the populated plateau. The insurgent progress through the Puebla southern districts disrupted the trading activities and financial connections of outlying merchants. Those operating between Chilapa and Izúcar suffered first. Spanish peninsular merchants usually had to flee for their lives, leaving their investments behind them, losing what credit was owing to them and thereby compounding their own obligations to their creditors. Ramón Medrano, for instance, an importer of Spanish cloth, had contracted in 1808 with a Chilapa trader, Manuel Castrejón, for the distribution of his textiles in the district to the value of 1,612 pesos. The insurgent occupation of Chilapa interrupted his trade and Castrejón fled to Puebla for safety. Already late in repaying his debt, which was due by April 1809, he agreed to pay five per cent interest from February 1810 until its liquidation. The insurgency in Izúcar similarly disrupted the affairs of a Basque merchant, Domingo Aguirrisábal, who had formed a company with Francisco Torres, sub-lieutenant of the town militia. The rebel occupation, however, cost him his 1,600 pesos of investments. Aguirrisábal also fled to Puebla, owing the value of his house in Izúcar (2,300 pesos) to his Mexico City creditor, the merchant Capitain José de Iraeta.[28]

Effective control of Royalist operations fell to Brigadier Ciriaco de Llano, second-in-command in the province from 1 November 1811. In 1811-13, Llano played a major part in preventing the establishment of insurgent control on the plateau. During the autumn of 1811, rebel bands began to converge from different directions on the Puebla cereal valleys. The town of San Juan de los Llanos fell to them on 11 September. Other rebel bands threatened to cut off communications with Veracruz and caused alarm among the landed proprietors of Orizaba and Córdoba. Morelos himself took Izúcar on 10 December, his first major gain in fourteen months of activity. This town became his forward base of operations on the Puebla plateau, with the city of Puebla his declared objective.[29] Llano at that time considered the city defences useless. A volunteer force of 1,300 men was not fully equipped. The Company of Patriot Nobles, a cavalry section of the Volunteers of Ferdinand VII, consisted in the main of young men in their twenties, *poblano* and Castilian, almost entirely drawn from the families of landowners and merchants. Among them was the 20-year old Vicente Furlong, who had volunteered with 32 others in December 1810, before the insurgent threat to the city had materialized. Vicente Furlong was the son of José Sebastián Furlong, who held municipal office in 1811 and 1812, and who was listed in 1813 among the merchants as the owner of a bakery and eligible for donations required to sustain the counter-insurgency.[30] A veteran militia officer, Captain Gabriel Bringas, a member of one of Puebla's principal landowning and mercantile families, took command of the Urban Corps of Distinguished Patriots of Ferdinand VII in March 1811.[31] Frequent conflicts took place between the civil and military authorities within the city concerning the financing of the counter-insurgency from February 1811

[28]AGNP, leg. 152, caja 1 (1811-12), notaría 2, "Registro de instrumentos públicos (1812)", Puebla, January 1812; 22 February 1812. The authorities in Tlapa suspected Indian cooperation with the approaching insurgents. This was a district with a longstanding land dispute (since 1716) between private proprietors and communities; AJP, Rollo 2 (Independencia, 1811-35), "Procesos a sospechos de insurgencia, Tlapa (1811)". See also Leticia Reina, *Las Rebeliones campesinas en México (1819-1906)* (Mexico City, 1980), pp. 348-349.

[29]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 286, ff. 245-246, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 11 December 1811; AGN, *Historia*, vol. 103, no. 24, Juan Valdés to Venegas, Real Fuerte de San Carlos de Perote, 12 September 1811.

[30]AAP, "Expedientes sobre servicio militar (1810-11)", vol. 117, libro 1281, ff. 168-174; AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 81 (1812), ff. 36-43v; AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 82 (1813), ff. 231-233v. See also Eduardo Gómez Haro, *La Ciudad de Puebla y la guerra de independencia* (Puebla, 1910), pp. 139, 146. Patricio and Cosmé Furlong, prominent merchants and industrialists, both became governors of the State of Puebla, the former in 1829 and 1833, and the latter in 1834 and 1853.

[31]AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 80 (1811), ff. 158-159v.

onwards. They did not cease with Independence in 1821, but continued through the period of Puebla's radical federalist stance in the second half of 1823.[32]

Llano took the decision to make a stand at Atlixco. However, the expected attack on the city of Puebla in December 1811 did not materialize in spite of superior insurgent force. Morelos, instead of striking at Atlixco, withdrew towards Cuautla outside the cereal valleys of Puebla, largely because of news of the advance of the main Royalist army under Brigadier Félix Calleja. In this way, Morelos lost the opportunity of a swift advance on the poorly defended city of Puebla, which, if it had been taken, would have represented the most significant insurgent gain since Hidlago's entry into Guadalajara in December 1810. The rebel force, while superior to defence forces within the city, could not, however, risk an action with Calleja's army in view of its own shortage of men and firearms. The insurgent position was, in any case, overstretched, since Morelos was attempting to secure control of a vast territory between the Pacific Ocean and the plateau. Nevertheless, his failure to seize Puebla allowed the Royalists to fortify the city and train its defence forces. Calleja caught Morelos in Cuautla between 19 February and 2 May 1812 while Puebla remained for the duration of the war in Royalist hands.[33]

The long-term significance of Morelos' failure was highlighted by the activities of the other insurgent bands. The province of Tlaxcala lay largely under their control, with bands operating from Apisaco and seizing Texmelucan, which controlled communications between Puebla and Mexico City, on 1 January 1812. Other bands struck at Tepeaca and recruited among the "indiada" of the nearby villages, but they could not penetrate beyond Llano's strong postion at Amozoc. Rebel activity, however, was intense in Cholula and Huejotzingo, but without the support of the main rebel army came to nothing in the long run. The Royalist siege of Cuautla enabled Royalist commanders in Puebla to recover the initiative: they retook Tepeaca on 30 May 1812, but were still not strong enough to take Izúcar. In the meantime, Spanish peninsular troops had been landed at Veracruz earlier in the year and had made their way inland to Puebla.[34]

The second rebel threat began when Morelos entered Tehuacán with 3,500 men on 10 August 1812. This town, situated at the southeastern edge of the cereal valleys, became the principal insurgent base of operations. Other bands had already established a land blockade around the port of Veracruz from July in an attempt to cut the Viceroyalty off from Spain. Morelos' failures in the Veracruz uplands, however, had forced him back into Tehuacán and thence into Oaxaca, further away from the main centres of colonial power. A Royalist counter-offensive took Izúcar and Tehuacán in November 1812. After the end of the year, no major rebel force remained on the Puebla plateau. The insurgents had lost the year-long battle for the control of the cereal valleys of Puebla. By the winter of 1812-13, Morelos had abandoned the cities of Puebla and Veracruz as feasible objectives. By the time the Conde de Castro Terreño took command as General-in-Chief of Puebla's División del Sur on 9 March 1813, Royalist forces in the province totalled 7,498 men. The disintegration of the insurgent encirclement strategy in 1813-14 enabled the Royalists to advance into the heartlands of the insurgency. Particularly effective were their *divisiones volantes* after 1815.[35]

[32]AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 80, ff. 200-211, Venegas to Ayuntamiento, Mexico, 16 April 1811; ff. 326-329, Dávila to Ayuntamiento, Puebla, 26 April 1811; ff. 151-156, sala capitular to Venegas, Puebla, 16 March 1811; AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 82, ff. 441-442v, Dávila to Ayuntamiento Constitucional, Puebla, 5 August 1813; AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 83, f. 60, Calleja to Ayuntamiento, Mexico, 20 January 1814.

[33]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 286, ff. 123-123v, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 23 November 1811; ff. 162-163, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 27 November 1811; ff. 194-195, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 3 December 1811; AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 289, ff. 158-159v, no. 43, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 10 February 1812.

[34]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 289, ff. 74-78v, Lieutenant Diego Ruiz Herrera to Llano, San Martin Texmelucan, 1 January 1812; Carrión, *Historia de la ciudad*, vol. 2, pp. 119-120.

[35]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 290, ff. 139-140v, Llano to Venegas, no. 71, Puebla, 28 June 1812; ff. 148-167v, no. 77, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 2 July 1812; AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 292, ff. 306-315v, no. 84, Llano to Venegas, Jalapa, 10 August 1812; AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 463, Captain Antonio Zubieta to Calleja, Cuautla, 21 November 1814; AAP, Libros de Cabildo, vol. 81, sala capitular to Ayuntamiento of Puebla, Veracruz, 14 July 1812.

Osorno's operations, particularly across Tlaxcala, still acted as a pole of attraction in the northeast. Although forced out of Zacatlán in August 1813, Osorno's bands continued to operate in the Llanos de Apam, a region that was not under Royalist control until September 1816. Government forces left garrisons in key positions in the Puebla northeast and in Tlaxcala, such as San Juan de los Llanos and Huamantla, by late October 1816, and established field guards (*guardacampos*) in several important haciendas.[36] To some extent members of these Royalist defence organizations were amnestied insurgents, who had sometimes been only recently hacienda workers. In other words, a considerable transfer of allegiances was taking place at the local level. It may have been motivated by villagers' and estate-workers' disillusionment with the insurgency and particularly with the rapid transformation of rebel bands into marauding bandit groups that preyed off the country people. The government was able to take advantage of such sentiments through its amnesty policy, which was designed to win back population to the official power. The terms of amnesty were lenient, and usually provided for return to place of origin and work. Since disruption of the network of investment and communications, however, had plunged the province into recession, there was little prospect of work for amnestied rebels, many of whom were letf idle in the villages, susceptible to further insurgency recruitment, to banditry, or to commonplace crime. The amnesty lists suggest that individuals frequently took part in the insurgency for only short periods of time. Most of those who applied for amnesty in several Puebla districts in 1816 were young villagers in their late teens or in their twenties, who may have been attracted to insurgency participation through sheer frustration at the lack of any other possibilities for self-advancement. Many were described as "indios". They included hacienda workers from Atlixco, artisans such as weavers from Tlaxcala, muleteers, and army deserters. In the Puebla districts of Huejotzingo, Cholula, Atlixco, and Texmelucan there were weavers, tailors, barbers, carpenters, bakers, blacksmiths, button-makers, saddle-makers, tradesmen, muleteers, farm workers, and even mine workers. They represented, then, a cross-section of the artisan population of the district villages, as well as estate workers and small farmers. Unfortunately, the documents do not tell us what their motives for joining--or leaving--the insurgency were. Impressive, however, was popular willingness to change sides in the period 1815-18, a phenomenon evident also in the southern districts which in 1811-13 had been the principal areas of Morelos' support.[37]

The Impact of Insurgency: Damage and Recovery

In the short term, the insurgency took a drastic toll in some of the areas affected, though the degree of recovery varied in accordance with the predominant economic activity. The long-term effects, however, are difficult to determine, since other factors of significance also enter the picture. The insurgency must be placed within its historical context and not treated in isolation from these other factors. The province of Puebla was already in economic difficulties before the insurgency broke out in its country districts. It is probably best to view the insurgency as a short-term aggravation of other trends, which much of post-Independence policy sought to rectify. There is a long catalogue of damaged properties and lost investments, but the insurgency did not break the power of the Puebla merchants, textile-operators, and landowners. Nevertheless, many smaller

[36]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 462, no. 2, Villaldea to Calleja, Pachuca, 4 September 1813; AGN, *Historia*, vol. 152, ff. 111-116v, Viceroy Apodaca to Minister of War, no. 1 (*reservada*), Mexico, 31 October 1816.

[37]AGN, *Virreyes*, vol. 273, ff. 255-263v, Venadito to Minister of War, no. 761 (*reservada*), Mexico, 31 December 1818; AGN, *Historia*, vol. 152, ff. 334-348, Apodaca to Minister of War, no. 57, México, 30 June 1818; AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 296, ff. 106-113v, Captain Rafael de la Luz Segura, Tochimilco, 7 April 1816; ff. 136-145, José Montero, Puebla, 31 May 1816; ff. 165-172, José Montero, Puebla, 14 April 1816; ff. 193-201v, José Montero, Puebla, 19 November 1816; ff. 203-208v, Llano, Puebla, 3 December 1816.

merchants, shop-keepers, and outlying landowners suffered further hardships from the insurgency to compound those already experienced before 1810.[38]

Many factors enter the picture: the impact of changing patterns of trade in the trans-Atlantic world after 1740, the recovery and subsequent decline of silver-mining, the effects of warfare and blockade after 1796, the impact of neutral concessions on the textile trades, the effects of the *consolidación de vales reales* after 1804, and the impact of two dearths in 1785-86 and 1809-10. These were all factors which deeply affected the economy and society of late colonial New Spain, of which the Intendancy of Puebla was an integral part. Except in terms of fiscal pressures, it is virtually impossible to quantify the relative impact of these factors, especially when we try to ascertain the impact of insurgency as well. The archival documentation on the insurgency refers largely to individual cases. Statements that haciendas were "devastated" fail to specify for the most part the degree of damage and do not take into account capacity for recovery. A few concrete instances should illustrate this point.

Wealthy proprietors were able in several cases to pay off their outstanding mortgage obligations in spite of recent insurgent activity in the countyside. The business connection between the Spanish peninsular merchant Tiburcio de Uriarte, a Royalist Volunteer Captain, and the Huejotzingo landowner José Mariano Tisier had begun in 1765. Uriarte belonged to a family of merchants which administered grain estates, lent to private proprietors, and maintained business contacts in both Veracruz and Spain. Members of the family held municipal office in Puebla. Tisier owned the Haciendas of San Pedro Coxtoca, San Luis Coyotzingo, and San Pedro Calputetlán. In 1765, Uriarte had secured on Tisier's behalf a mortgage of 3,000 pesos on Coxtoca from a city chantry. This mortgage was finally paid off in March 1820. In June 1812, in spite of continued insurgent activity throughout the main cereal zones, Uriarte provided a short-term loan of 21,000 pesos for Tisier to refurbish his properties damaged by insurgent depredations. Evidently confident of Tisier's solvency, Uriarte gave him the loan for a five-year period at the low annual interest rate of four percent, against the guarantee of three haciendas.[39] In another case, the opposite happened. Insurgent activity in Atlixco brought about the failure of one proprietor at least, though it is significant that this owner's debts had mounted initially because of the years of poor harvests which had preceded the insurgency. José Antonio Morales, who owned the Hacienda de San Alejo and rented the Hacienda de Zapotitlán, had frequently borrowed from his sisters and from his late brother without interest, beginning in 1812, in order to repair damage to his estates. The debts mounted to such an extent that he could no longer pay his 16,000 pesos in obligations and mortgaged his estates to his creditors.[40]

Government fiscal pressure combined with insurgent activity in the countryside to restrict the commercial prospects of city merchants and shopkeepers. In March 1814, for instance, the authorities imposed fresh tax burdens on Puebla's 73 general stores (*tiendas mestizas*) and 36 bakeries (*casas de panadería*) in order to finance counter-insurgency policies. These pressures affected prominent merchants, professional men, and small traders equally. Several store proprietors appealed for reduction of the tax quota and argued that interruption of communications and trade in the countryside had disrupted their activities and reduced their capacity to pay. One Puebla merchant, Ramón de Rivera, owned two bakeries, one in the Calle de Torreblanca. He applied to the Municipal Finance Committee in 1816 for a rebate of 46 pesos levied on both shops.

[38]For further discussion, see Brian R. Hamnett, "The Economic and Social Dimension of the Revolution of Independence in Mexico, 1800-1824", *Ibero-Amerikanisches Archiv*, Neue Folge, Jg. 6, H. 1 (1980), pp. 1-27.

[39]AGNP, leg. 145, caja 1, registro, Puebla, 30 December 1806; AGNP, leg. 146, caja 2, registro, Puebla, 28 July 1807; Archivo del Registro Público de la Propiedad, Puebla (hereafter ARPP), Libro de Censos, no. 40, ff. 130-130v, Uriarte to Ayuntamiento, Puebla, 11 December 1810; ARPP, Libro de Censos, no. 41, f. 365, Puebla, 11 March 1820.

[40]AGNP, leg. 171, caja 2, registro, Atlixco, 13 January 1821.

Trade recession had forced the Torreblanca store to close down. Like Rivera, several other storekeepers secured a reduced tax quota or a rebate.[41] However, it would be unwise to generalize concerning the impact of the insurgency on the city economy. Just as the initial thrust of Morelos' campaign of 1811-12 petered out, two Puebla merchants apparently felt sufficiently optimistic to form a company in February 1813 for the purpose of managing a general store in the Calle Segunda de Mercaderes, with capital of 10,897 pesos. Manuel Pérez de Oropeza and Cristóbal Ramírez contracted for a five year period. The latter became a city councillor in 1823.[42] Later in the 1810s, as the dangers of insurgency receded, three city residents--José María Nava, Ignacio de la Baza, and Marcelino Cano--formed a company in September 1819. Cano also resided in the village of Cuautinchán, where the company shop was to open. Cautiously venturing back into the countryside, the partners provided only for an initial one-year agreement with the option of a further year. Cano and Nava both invested the relatively small sum of 1,000 pesos in the shop.[43] Three other Puebla merchants agreed in August 1822 to dissolve the company they had formed in August 1819 after realizing profits of 9,661 pesos, which they divided among themselves. All three were members of the Puebla city council. One of them, Juan González Núñez, had initially invested 6,000 pesos in the company. The enterprise became his sole responsability in 1822. At the time of dissolution, the company assets reached 32,289 pesos, with 12,628 pesos in liabilities.[44]

The insurgency was primarily directed against merchant-investors, particularly those of Spanish peninsular origin, their intermediaries, and local shopkeepers. During the fighting, landed proprietors not already resident in the city took refuge there if their estates were threatened with rebel attack. Even so, the great proprietors and merchants continued much as before, though on a reduced scale. Although the insurgency did not bring about the independence of Mexico from Spanish rule, it did help to undermine in many provinces the hitherto predominant economic position of the Spanish peninsular merchants. For those who were already principally based in New Spain, the insurgency did not undermine their position, but caused them temporary inconveniences. The Escandón family interests, for instance, had originated in Orizaba and then had been transferred to Puebla. Pablo Escandón, born in Asturias in the 1770s, had moved to New Spain in the 1790s. In Orizaba he married into the Garmendia family, part of the landed elite of upland Veracruz. During the insurgency in the Veracruz coastal districts of Acayucan, Tlalixcoyán, and Cosamaloapan, all cotton-producing districts traditionally connected with the Puebla textile industry, Escandón saw his investments there wither away during the summer of 1812. By the late 1810s, however, the Escandón family were an established part of the Puebla mercantile elite. Pablo Escandón's sons, Manuel and Antonio, the former born in Orizaba and the latter in Puebla, became by the 1840s "the best-known businesmen of the time", men who had moved well beyond their original Puebla milieu to function at the national level.[45]

It seems probable that the impact of the events of 1800-1824 contributed towards the transformation of Puebla's economy from one heavily oriented in the colonial period towards Veracruz and Spain, to one more regionally based, though with strong interregional relationships to the provinces of Mexico and Veracruz, after the creation of the Mexican sovereign state. The former Spanish peninsular merchants had already been subtly

[41]AAP, Expedientes sobre servicio militar (1812-1820), vol. 118, ff. 123-135, Puebla, 28 March 1814; f. 201, Puebla, 6 February 1816.
[42]AGNP, leg. 152, caja 1, Puebla, 22 February 1812.
[43]AGNP, leg. 152, caja 1, Puebla, 9 September 1819.
[44]AGNP, leg. 171, caja 2, Puebla, 27 August 1822.
[45]AGN, *Operaciones de Guerra*, vol. 296, ff. 53-54v, Escandón to Llano, Puebla, 17 November 1812; ff. 55-55v, Llano to Venegas, Puebla, 20 January 1813. See also Margarita Urías Hermosillo, "Manuel Escandón: De las diligencias al Ferrocarril, 1833-1862", in Ciro F.S. Cardoso, ed., *Formación y desarrollo de la burguesía en México, Siglo XIX* (Mexico City, 1978), p. 33; and Moisés González Navarro, *Anatomía del poder en México (1848-1853)* (Mexico City, 1977), pp. 178, 218, 240, 406-408, 422.

absorbed into the Puebla regional elite and their descendants continued to hold such a position after Independence. An effort was made by Puebla industrialists under the leaderhip of Esteban de Antuñano, who had originated from Veracruz, to develop the colonial textile industry during the period 1836-1846 by means of a process of mechanization. However, problems of capital and technology, combined with inadequate national supplies of raw material, delayed this process until late in the century. Consequently agriculture, interregional commerce, and importing of manufactures from northern Europe remained Puebla's principal economic activities.[46]

[46]See Potash, *Banco de Avío,* passim.