Colonial Masca in motion: tactics of persistence of a Honduran indigenous community
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Chapter 8: Candelaria: Practices and Social Fields

The intermarriage of African descendant women from Omoa like Eugenia Gertrudis Andara and men from pueblos de indios brought the Indian communities of the northern Ulúa River valley together with Omoa in new social fields that can be traced in the documentary record. In addition, archaeological excavations carried out in the town of Omoa in 2008 and 2009, compared to the results from excavations at Ticamaya, provide material indications of the ways Ticamaya, Candelaria, and Omoa came together in practice to form a single social field, mediated by marriage, labor, and commerce.

In the 1780s there were Indian men from Candelaria residing in Omoa. The pages of the donativo register listing the collections from the town of Omoa list eight residents of Candelaria (Eugenio Alcantara, Bartolomé Talavera, Gerardo Alcantara, Bernardino de la Cruz, Anastacio Alvarado, Manuel Ancelmo, Josef Martinas Mesa, and Ignacio Valero) as having paid their donativo in Omoa. Their contribution to the donativo is credited back to their community, showing that their absence was temporary and their identity with the pueblo de indios continued.

Living and working in Omoa brought men from the pueblos de indios into day to day contact with African descendent people who made up the majority of the town's population. This day-to-day contact, in turn, resulted in marriages in which Indian men brought African descendent women back to the pueblos de indios as wives. Many family names in the censuses from this area are not found in Honduras at this time outside of Omoa and Candelaria. "Alcantara", a family name prominent in Candelaria, in Omoa is exclusively associated with African descendent people who are identified as either "pardo" or "negro libre". "De la Cruz" is another name associated with African descendent families at Omoa, and with families at Candelaria classified as indios.

But it is not just kinship that links these communities. Analysis of materials recovered during excavations in 2008 in the Fortaleza, and 2009 in the town of Omoa (Joyce et al. 2008), and comparison with eighteenth and early nineteenth century materials from Ticamaya (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006), show that Omoa and Ticamaya (and by inference Candelaria) participated in shared material practices, the material markers of other social fields. The people living in these settlements in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries consequently were part of overlapping "communities of practice" (Sheptak, Blaisdell-Sloan, and Joyce 2012).

The concept of a community of practice, drawn from studies of learning and reproduction of knowledge (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger et al. 2002), provides a framework for thinking about persistence and change of practices from the vantage point of everyday lives and learning. A community of practice is a web of relations among persons, activities and objects over time and in relation with other overlapping and tangential communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991:98). A community of practice shares a certain way of doing things, learned within the community and reproduced in action over time. Not simply an inherent aspect of a static identity, communities of practice produce the similarities in the appearance of everyday objects that archaeologists seize on to define past identities (Roddick 2009). Roddick (2009:71) cites the "long-term living relationship between persons and their place and participation in particular communities of practice" (Lave and Wenger 2005:152-153) as creating recognizable identities among different people, rather than merely reflecting identities that were already there.

The reproduction over many generations of specific ways of doing things were the products of a persistent community of practice in the colonial period that the pueblo de indios, Ticamaya and some residents whose material traces were recovered at Omoa (Sheptak, Blaisdell-Sloan and Joyce 2012). In the late eighteenth century members of the community of practice at Ticamaya relocated temporarily to fulfill labor obligations at Omoa, like their neighbors from Candelaria whose term of service coincided with the donativo. The material record at Ticamaya showed new ways of doing things during this period, the result of formation of a new hybrid "constellation of practice", a network of communities of practice that while related, are not identical.

Wenger (1998:127) identifies many situations that contribute to the formation of constellations of practice. Among the causes he enumerates are sharing common historical roots, facing similar conditions, having members in common, sharing particular artifacts, geographic proximity, overlapping styles or discourses, and competing for the same resources. Candelaria was also a part of these relationships, of relocation for labor, marriage, and relocation of spouses, and would likely have shown similar evidence of participation in this constellation of practice. In the case of Candelaria, Ticamaya, and Omoa, an especially relevant cause for the formation of constellations of practice defined by Wenger is the rupture of social interaction networks and consequent reformation of new or changed networks. The original movement inland by Masca to sites that changed the field of social relations to encompass San Pedro more strongly, and after the

second move, to place Candelaria in proximity to Ticamaya, would have started a process of reforming social networks. The establishment of Fort Omoa, with its new labor and payment demands on Candelaria, would have initiated another phase of reformulating social networks.

By taking the learning of cultural practices as a focus, we can identify likely archaeological traces of the new social relations suggested in historical documents. These parallel bodies of data provide evidence of the emergence of new social identities in communities like Candelaria and Ticamaya, where African-descendant and indigenous people married and lived.

Archaeology of the Late Colonial río de Ulúa

Archaeological research on the colonial period in this region is limited; only the pueblo de indios of Ticamaya and the fort and town of San Fernando de Omoa have been investigated in any depth. Hasemann (1986) worked within the fort of Omoa in 1979 with the goal of establishing a chronology. More recent work in the town of Omoa in 2009 located an assemblage from the second half of the eighteenth century that likely resulted from the actions of a group of indigenous people who owed labor to the fort, drawn from the northern Ulúa Valley pueblos de indios of Ticamaya and/or Candelaria (Joyce et al. 2008). Ticamaya was extensively excavated in 2001 and 2003 (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006). Candelaria/Masca, although located near Ticamaya according to colonial documents, has not been relocated precisely and has not been archaeologically investigated.

Excavations in an area of the colonial town of Omoa across from the main gate of the fort yielded indigenous tradition materials immediately below the floors of substantial Spanish tradition houses (Joyce, et. al. 2008). These Spanish houses were dated to 1780-1800 by the European tradition ceramics and household good their residents consumed and discarded. The houses had prepared brick floors, and wall foundations of several rows of brick laid without cement mortar, apparently supporting more perishable upper walls, whose tile roofs were indicated by broken tiles in the excavations. Just below the ground surface on which those houses were built we found an assemblage of indigenous tradition ceramics, obsidian, and fired clay artifacts comparable to those recovered from Ticamaya. These are most likely from a short term habitation in this area by indigenous workers brought to Omoa during the construction of the fort, before the construction of substantial houses of wealthy townsfolk along the side of the plaza opposite the fort visible in maps dating to 1779 (Davidson 2006:XLI B).

Indigenous people from Ticamaya were recorded as living temporarily at the site of Omoa as early as 1745, in their service in the coastal watch (1745 AGCA A1.20 Legajo 83 Expediente 972). The practice of importing indigenous labor to construct the fort ceased in 1760. While historical documents demonstrate that indigenous construction labor was drafted from far distant areas of Honduras as well as from the local pueblos de indios, the materials recovered from this area of Omoa closely match those from Ticamaya, and likely are similar to the kinds of materials used at the same time in the town of Candelaria.

Blaisdell-Sloan (2006:178-186) originally proposed that shallow deposits at Ticamaya, from around 20 to 40 cm deep, represented occupation spanning most of the 17th and 18th century, and extending into the 19th century. In three areas, these deposits incorporated European-tradition materials that are consistent with late eighteenth or early nineteenth century dates, although only in one location were these abundant. The latest known colonial houses from Ticamaya postdate the assemblage from the town of Omoa, dating between AD 1780 and 1820.

Blaisdell-Sloan (2006:122) identified traces of late colonial surfaces at depths of 29 to 30 cm. in Operation 1, Operation 2A, Operation 2B, Operation 3, Operation 4, and Operation 5. Earlier excavations performed by Wonderley in 1983 also yielded a late colonial assemblage with European tradition materials at the same depth below the surface (Wonderley 1984). In addition, the materials recovered from the top 35 cm. of Operations 2D and 2E were comparable, even though no surface was detected during excavation.

None of the late colonial materials at Ticamaya were associated with construction features. The assemblages of ceramics, lithics, other artifacts, and faunal remains (Table 17) are nonetheless clearly residential. They likely reflect dwelling in houses of indigenous tradition made of perishable materials. The largest proportion of late colonial assemblages from both Ticamaya and Omoa is made up of pottery, especially indigenous tradition ceramics.

"Indigenous tradition ceramics" is the term used in a comparative analysis of hand-built, low fired unslipped and red-slipped earthenware ceramics from late eighteenth century contexts at Omoa as described by Rosemary Joyce, and at Ticamaya, recorded by Kira Blaisdell-Sloan (2006). This phrase acknowledges continuities from earlier generations in local ceramic production. These include the use of firing techniques that produce soft porous vessel walls that can be used with slips but not glazes.

Table 17: Archaeological Remains from 18th to 19th Century Sites in the río Ulúa

Location	**indigenous tradition pottery**	**non-local micaceous non-local**	**other local materials**	**European tradition materials**	**fauna**
Ticamaya Operation 1	red slipped incised brushed burnished unslipped bowls jars tecomates	present			artiodactyl (deer, goat, sheep?) turtles
Ticamaya Operation 2A/2B	red slipped brushed unslipped new techniques				snails (jutes) turtles
Ticamaya Operation 2C/2D	red slipped burnished unslipped	present	spindle whorl obsidian blades		snails (jutes) turtles
Ticamaya Operation 3	red slipped brushed unslipped bowls jars		obsidian blades, flakes		snails (jutes) deer opossum rodents
Ticamaya Operation 4	burnished unslipped		obsidian	lead pieces	turtles
Ticamaya Operation 5	red slipped brushed plain new techniques	present	obsidian blades ceramic net weight	lead shot bottle glass	snails (jutes) turtles

Table 17 (continued)

Ticamaya 1983	red slipped brushed plain	present	quartzite flakes	majolica glass	pig cow turtles
Omoa Operation	red slipped brushed plain new techniques		obsidian blades ceramic net weight		fish

At the same time, indigenous tradition ceramics are not static replicas of prehispanic materials: their makers changed vessel sizes, details of vessel forms, and techniques of manufacture over the several centuries of the colonial period. Especially significant, in the late eighteenth century, some of the indigenous tradition pottery shows new techniques of manufacture that may result from interaction with the population of enslaved and free African-descendant peoples at Omoa.

The vessel forms used at the two sites entirely overlap, including the use of a sharply demarcated lip on some vessels, a trait described as "crisply finished" rims at Ticamaya. The thin red slip used is matte in texture, and ranges to the orange end of the spectrum. Many examples are blackened. The principal distinctive surface treatment on both unslipped and red slipped vessels is brushing, with a very small number of sherds showing individual shallow incised lines.

Blaisdell-Sloan (2006) described twelve distinctive ceramic groups that were present in late colonial contexts at Ticamaya (Table 18). Most of these continued from at least the early colonial period. Variation in their presence or absence consequently primarily reflects differences between households in local practices. When examined individually, the six late colonial locations excavated at Ticamaya, and the one excavated at Omoa, each can be seen to reflect particular, localized practices within a wider range of shared options in the practices of everyday life.

Table 18: Late Colonial Ceramic Types Reported from Ticamaya

	Burnished 1	Plain 4	Plain 3	Plain 2	Incised 2	Incised 1
1983						
Operation 5						x
Operation 1			x	x	x	
Operation 3		x			x	
Operation 2	x				x	
Operation 4	x					

	Brushed 1	Brushed 2	Red	Plain 1	Plain 5	Micaceous non-local
1983	x	x	x	x	x	x
Operation 5	x	x	x	x	x	x
Operation 1	x		x	x	x	x
Operation 3	x	x	x	x		
Operation 2			x	x		
Operation 4				x		

Based on Blaisdell-Sloan 2006, Table 6.7

Excavated Houses

Ticamaya Operation 1: The top 20 cm of material excavated included red slipped, incised, brushed, burnished, and plain ceramics of local manufacture. There is significant diversity in the paste and finish of the plain and brushed ceramics, sufficient to allow the definition of multiple types. A range of bowl and jar forms were present. These notably include incurved rim bowls (tecomates) which are typical of the late colonial occupation and which may be multipurpose transport vessels. A small number of sherds with a micaceous paste that likely is non-local were also recovered.

Ticamaya Operation 2A/2B: Traces of a late colonial surface were detected at 30 cm (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:182). Ceramics from the upper levels here include a mixture of earlier types and typical red slipped, unslipped, and brushed types of the late colonial period. Notable among unslipped sherds recovered here are some that were "formed using a different, much more precise forming technique" than previously, and had rims that were described by Blaisdell-Sloan (2006) as "crisply formed, with distinctive hard edges". These characteristics match the assemblage of pottery from Omoa excavated in 2008 and 2009.

Ticamaya Operation 2C/2D: Late colonial ceramics here are comparable to those from Operation 2A/2B, including multiple plain types, red slipped, and rarer burnished and probably non-local micaceous wares. A single fired clay spindle whorl came from this operation (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:243-244).

Ticamaya Operation 3: A late colonial surface was identified at 30 cm. The upper 20 cm of deposits included the same range of red-slipped, unslipped, and brushed bowls and jars seen in late colonial deposits elsewhere on the site. An uncommon but distinctive burnished ceramic type diagnostic of the late colonial period appears to be absent. The late colonial residents in this area of the site left a distinctive collection of remains of hunted land animals, including both deer and opossum.

Ticamaya Operation 4: Late colonial materials were recovered in the upper 20 cm of deposits, above a surface at 29 cm. An early nineteenth-century date is suggested by the presence of lead fragments (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:242). While late colonial plain and burnished ceramics were reported, the distinctive micaceous ceramics likely imported to the region, present in other late colonial deposits at the site, were not recovered, nor were any of the most common red slipped and brushed types.

Ticamaya Operation 5: A late colonial surface was identified at 30 cm (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:183). Excavations recovered a number of items of

European tradition, including a piece of lead shot. The top 20 cm of deposits yielded historic bottle glass, at least one piece made in a three-part mold, a technology in use by about 1814 in England (source of much of the imported European material in late colonial deposits at Omoa), and patented by 1821. The European tradition glass from this deposit was found alongside worked obsidian (in the form of blades, with ground and striated platforms both represented). Also present were indigenous tradition ceramics comparable to those recovered from Omoa. They included apparent local plain, brushed, red slipped, and probably non-local micaceous types found in other late colonial deposits at Ticamaya. One unslipped type included examples of a distinctive smoothing technique leaving crisp marks that was innovative in late colonial assemblages. A notched fishing net weight made of fired clay came from this operation as well (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:243).

Ticamaya 1983 excavations: Anthony Wonderley (1984) excavated no more than 35 cm of sediments in his 1983 excavations, but recovered European-tradition majolica ceramics dating to the 1780s or later, fragments of glass, and pig and cow bones, the only evidence of European domesticates from the site. Blaisdell-Sloan (2006:248) notes that even beyond being the sole area with European domesticates, the fauna from this excavation "is distinctive...While the contexts [Wonderley] excavated were middenlike, they contained no Pachychilus (jute) shell, a species present in all of the other midden contexts at the site." The glass recovered included at least one piece from the base of a bottle. Despite their distinctive culinary practices, the residents in this area also used typical late colonial indigenous tradition ceramics, including local red slipped, brushed, and plain wares, and a possible non-local micaceous type.

Omoa Operation 61A and 62A: Below a surface defined at the point where the earliest brick-floored house was built along the edge of the plaza of Omoa, in waterlogged soil that flooded too much to allow clear delineation of any features present, excavations in 2009 recovered an assemblage of indigenous tradition pottery, obsidian blades, and one notched ceramic net weight, executed in the same clay body as the indigenous tradition ceramics. Also included in this context were a few very small, weathered fragments of European tradition glazed ceramics, too small for precise identification of origin and category. While it is possible that these tiny fragments moved downward into much earlier deposits, the simplest explanation for this assemblage is that it represents occupation immediately prior to the construction of the brick floored houses. We know from documentary sources that indigenous workers were relocated to Omoa in the 1750s to work on the construction of the fort. The identification as 18th

century is reinforced by the identical nature of the indigenous ceramics and notched net weight recovered here, and material from late colonial contexts at Ticamaya.

Hybridity of Practice in Late Colonial Omoa and Ticamaya

The main roots of variation between households at Ticamaya, and between the Ticamaya households and the one sampled at Omoa, most likely lie in the pragmatic activities carried out by each family. At the same time, there is a wider pattern that distinguishes the archaeology of the late eighteenth century from earlier colonial remains: innovations in how certain practices were carried out that demonstrate a new hybridity in the pueblo de indios. There is considerably more variation between late colonial households than was evident in the early colonial period.

The best evidence of this new hybridity comes from the most abundant material, ceramics. On some burnished, brushed, and plain vessels, there are traces of forming techniques that leave areas of vessel walls of uneven thickness. In the Omoa assemblage, several examples clearly show a central impact zone in the thinner part of sherds consistent with paddle and anvil techniques of forming also noted at Ticamaya (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006: 205-206). These same vessels often have distinctive "crisp" smoothing lines. Some plain sherds at Ticamaya were described as slab built, while at Omoa, piecing together of overlapping segments of adjacent clay slabs were noted.

The late colonial assemblages from Ticamaya and Omoa continue to employ surface treatment techniques popular as early as the Late Postclassic period (1250-1536 AD) at Ticamaya, and vessel forms do not vary greatly from the repertoire of bowls and jars already in use at Ticamaya when it came under Spanish colonial administration in the sixteenth century. Innovations in the late colonial period at both Ticamaya and Omoa instead reflect changes in fundamental techniques for forming vessels: how to do things, not what to do. These include the use of new forming methods and of new ways of smoothing vessels and terminating vessel rims, best described as evidence of efforts to make vessels that looked proper by people not immersed in the local tradition of ceramic production.

Foodways also testify to both continuity and innovation of hybrid practices. While analysis of the large assemblage of fish bones recovered from Omoa has not been completed, net fishing is attested by the presence of a fired clay net weight, a form already present at the Ticamaya before colonization. The late colonial net weight recovered at Omoa is remarkably similar to one from Ticamaya Operation 5, recovered from a mixed deposit

dating sometime after 1814. While fish bones were poorly represented at Ticamaya, coming only from a pre-Columbian context, fishing technologies show the practice of net fishing began before colonization, and continued in the late colonial period.

Variation in evidence for foodways at Ticamaya suggests practices that would have divided the townsfolk, even as some of them shared approaches to meals with some residents of Omoa. A wide array of river resources were used by the community at Ticamaya from the Late Postclassic to late colonial period, including turtles, fish, and jutes, or river snails (Table 17). But where river snails were consumed by most households of Ticamaya throughout the late colonial period, three households, in Operation 1, Operation 4, and the area sampled in 1983, did not consume these. The late colonial household in Operation 3 apparently relied more on hunting of land mammals than was true of its contemporaries, including hunting a species not consumed earlier in the history of the site, opossum. The greatest divergence from uniform practices related to food is represented by the household excavated in 1983, which is the only one in Ticamaya with confirmed evidence of consumption of European domesticates, both pig and cow. Elements from artiodactyls from late colonial Operation 1 are interpreted as more likely from deer than from goats or sheep. If so, this evidence of reliance on hunting land animals would align the residents of Operation 1 with those of Operation 3 in terms of subsistence practices.

The most distinctive material from what otherwise would be recognized as a uniform pueblo de indios comes from the house sampled in 1983, that not only consumed European domesticated animals, but served food on imported majolica pottery, likely made in the highlands near Antigua Guatemala, or possibly, in an offshoot ceramic workshop in the colonial capital at Comayagua. Yet two other households at Ticamaya, using only indigenous tradition ceramics, employed lead shot and some glass containers. A third household, while having no evident European-tradition materials, engaged in distinctive hunting practices, including consumption of a small mammal not previously identified in trash at the site. All three households with European tradition goods primarily employed indigenous tradition earthenware for storage and cooking, and two of these households must have used these local wares for food serving as well.

Access to European-tradition goods implies that some households were able to obtain goods through long distance exchange or other means. That cattle were being raised locally is evident in the 1711 petition by the people of Masca against the destruction of their fields by the cattle of their

neighbors. Whether the residents of the house sampled in 1983 kept their own cattle, or obtained meat from others who did, might have been assessed from a full zooarchaeological analysis, but unfortunately, the 1983 fauna have not been professionally studied.

The majolica found in the 1983 excavations at Ticamaya is of the same ware and likely origin as majolica from the substantial Spanish houses in the town of Omoa, dated there between 1780 and 1810. This ware could consequently index local access to glazed ceramics through rotation in work at Omoa. Lead shot and bottle glass consumed by three of the Ticamaya households could reflect the same route of acquisition. It is also worth noting the long history of contraband seized from ships trading in indigenous towns in the valley, with inventories of commodities stored in glass bottles, like wine and vinegar. One such boat was brought to Ticamaya in 1744 for an inventory of its contents, which also included small arms (1744 AGCA A1.60 Legajo 384 Expediente 3500). Such seizures might have provided other opportunities for residents of the pueblos de indios to see and acquire European-made goods.

Separate from this evidence of access to Spanish goods both on the part of strongly Spanish-identified residents and the population of the pueblo de indios at large, there is also evidence, albeit more controversial, for continued exchange of a commodity valued only by the indigenous population: obsidian, the black volcanic glass used for stone tools. At Ticamaya, four of Blaisdell-Sloan's late colonial operations produced worked obsidian (Table 17; Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:234-242). This contrasted with the 1983 excavations, where no obsidian was recorded. Yet chipped stone technology was in use in the Spanish-identified household sampled in 1983, where three chipped quartzite flakes were recorded. This contrasts with an almost complete lack of chipped stone material other than obsidian in Blaisdell-Sloan's excavations (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:233).

While earlier in the site's history there is a wider range of objects made of obsidian, including evidence for production from cores on site, in late colonial contexts in Operations 2, 3, and 4 the primary obsidian artifact type was a prismatic blade struck from a polyhedral core. The same form was found in Operation 5, but here the late colonial material was mixed with earlier material.

The late presence of segments of obsidian blades, apparently being used as tools, raised the issue of how long, and through what means, the technological expertise and access to source materials continued into the colonial period. Blaisdell-Sloan (2006:241-242) recorded the presence of reworked blades with patination in prehispanic contexts at the site, but this

form of evidence of recycling obsidian was absent from the late colonial assemblage. She noted greater heterogeneity in the preparation of striking platforms for blades at Ticamaya than at the late prehispanic site of Naco, and variation between households in the finish of small points on blades that reached their highest frequencies in the early colonial period (Blaisdell-Sloan 2006:238-239). Both observations would be consistent with a shift from more centrally controlled technology just prior to Spanish colonization to more diverse technologies at colonial Ticamaya. Her evidence also shows that people of Ticamaya were practiced in the craft, and continued its practice at least into the early colonial period.

Results of chemical compositional analysis of a sample of blades from late colonial contexts (Table 19) shows that while the majority come from the distant Ixtepeque source, near the El Salvadoran border of Guatemala, at least some of the late colonial obsidian in use was from a near-by source, El Venado, located about 40 km southwest of Ticamaya. The unresolved question remains: were Ticamaya's residents simply reusing obsidian they found discarded in deposits created by their predecessors there? Blaisdell-Sloan (2006) adopted a conservative approach, treating the late colonial obsidian as most likely recycled.

Table 19: Sources of Obsidian Used in Late Colonial Ticamaya

Operation	**Source: Ixtepeque**	**Source: El Venado**	**total**
Operation 3	19	1	20
Operation 4	2	0	2
Operation 5	8	0	8

Source: Blaisdell-Sloan 2006: Appendix D

Excavations at Omoa, however, raise the question again. The deposit excavated there included a large number of obsidian blades. Because there is no evidence of an *in situ* indigenous village with a long depositional history at the location occupied by the town of Omoa, it is harder to claim that the blades deposited there were produced by recycling. Unfortunately, political events in Honduras made it impossible to borrow the obsidian for either detailed study of manufacture, or chemical compositional analysis. This leaves open the possibility that, as was the case in Spanish colonial California (Silliman 2001), obsidian continued to be obtained by indigenous people from traditional, sources, even, potentially, through persisting exchange relations between pueblos de indios in the eighteenth century.

At colonial Conchagua Vieja in the Gulf of Fonseca, Gomez (2010:128, 129) demonstrated the persistence of obsidian acquisition from "a wide range of obsidian sources at a time when social networks were greatly altered during the colonial period", concluding that "indigenous actors did not change their practices dramatically during the colonial period" despite missionization of the island. While Conchagua Vieja was abandoned in 1672, when the population was relocated to the mainland, the basic principle involved may apply even more strongly in the Ulúa valley. There is more evidence for access to metal tools at Conchagua Vieja than at Ticamaya, implying a greater pragmatic need for continued stone tool technology, and/or a cultural preference for stone tools, in the Ulúa valley. It would be premature to rule out continued access to obsidian during the colonial period, and it certainly is appropriate to note at least a preference for obsidian as part of the cultural repertoire of all but the Spanish-identified household at Ticamaya.

Excavated materials from Ticamaya suggest a complex situation in what might otherwise be thought of as a homogeneous pueblo de indios. Excavations at Omoa demonstrate material participation by residents at both towns in a single community of practice related to production of indigenous tradition ceramics, and some overlap in practices related to food acquisition and consumption. One household at Ticamaya can practically be described as Spanish-identified, through the use of imported majolica and the consumption of beef and pork. Three other households show evidence of innovative practices, two in ceramic production, one in hunting. The material evidence of archaeology is consistent with documentary evidence suggesting that the indigenous population of the northern Ulúa valley was engaged in new social relations that brought into the community people with different traditions, leading to the emergence of hybrid practices and identities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In the colonial period at Ticamaya we can see the reproduction over generations of specific ways of doing things that are the products of persistence of a viable community of practice. In the late eighteenth century members of this community of practice relocated temporarily to fulfill labor obligations at Omoa. After this, the material record at Ticamaya shows that some of the residents did things in new ways, forming a new hybrid community of practice. Documentary evidence helps identify how different actors in the northern Ulúa valley took up positions in new social fields centered on Omoa in the late eighteenth century.

Commerce as a Social Field

Once the town was established, shopkeepers in Omoa saw their market as including the Indian towns around San Pedro Sula. Doña Casilda de Arada, a wealthy African-descendant merchant, left a will attesting to her two stores, one in Omoa and the other in Tehuma (today San Manuel), an Indian town south of San Pedro (1797 AGCA A1.15 Legajo 69 Expediente 839). In both locations her goal was to trade for sarsaparilla, indigo, cacao, and other local products. Sarsaparilla and cacao were products primarily gathered (sarsaparilla) or cultivated (cacao) by indigenous people. Both were prized at this time in Europe, sarsaparilla as a cure for syphilis, and chocolate as a hot drink.

Both the shopkeepers in Omoa and at least some residents of the pueblos de indios around San Pedro Sula conspired to promote and engage in contraband trade, both with other colonies like Cuba, and with the "enemy", the British. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the documentary record of ships seized along the Ulúa River suspected of illicit commerce includes records involving multiple indigenous communities.

In the seventeenth century, a ship was actually seized at the pueblo de indios of Tehuma, and the contents were stored at another pueblo de indios, Lemoa, across the river, while administrative processes continued (1685 AGCA A3.2 Legajo 129 Expediente 1061). A later ship was brought to Ticamaya for official inventory of its contents (1744 AGCA A1.60 Legajo 384 Expediente 3500). Both ships were carrying wine, vinegar, and oil, in the 1680s coming from Cuba, and in the 18th century incident, from the British colony at Roatan. Members of a variety of pueblos de indios took up a diversity of positions in these events, come reporting the incursions in their role as members of the coastal watch, others assisting Spanish officials in seizure and control of the contents of the ships, some acting as customers for trade from the contraband, and, in the case of the ship seized at Tehuma, serving as willing or unwilling hosts for residents of the city of San Pedro who came to trade for goods. As part of the proceedings in the earlier incident, a Spanish petty officer was actually stationed for six months in Lemoa, using the house of the regidor as a storeroom.

With the establishment of the Fort at Omoa in the mid-eighteenth century, the location of contraband trade shifted more towards the coast, instead of at pueblos de indios along the Ulúa River. One commander of the Fort of Omoa was dismissed for his role in contraband trade (1770 AGCA A3 Legajo 496 Expediente 5200). Another commander of the Fort kept

Doña Casilda de Arada and the other merchants confined to the town for over six months, in an attempt to keep them from engaging in illicit trade with the French and English (1791 AGCA A1.15 Legajo 66 Expediente 810).

The documentary record demonstrates that the commercial and labor relationships of the Fort of Omoa created a fluid social field that united residents of Omoa, Candelaria, Ticamaya, and other pueblos de indios, and created links across casta lines. Practices required for military defense had the same effect, and here we can see the role of the people of Candelaria as it changed in the late eighteenth century with greatest clarity.

The Coastal Watch as a Social Field

Contraband in the eighteenth century brought the indigenous people of Candelaria and the Spanish merchants in Omoa into conflict as well as into collaborative positions. Candelaria's residents had been members of the coastal watch since its inception in the late sixteenth century. According to a 1605 paybook this practice originally involved pairing Spaniards (who were paid) with Indians (who were not paid) to stand watch on the coast and report back to the nearest Spanish town if any ships were sighted and their nationality identified (1610 AGCA A3.13 Legajo 527 Expediente 5505). Such a watch served as a distant early warning system for pirate attacks as well as notice of the approach of Spanish ships for trade.

However, after the Spanish stopped paying for the coastal watch, the Indian communities involved in it continued the service. As we saw in Chapter 4, in 1675 Blas Cuculí made the town’s participation in the coastal watch the essence of their service to the colony, and the reason they should not be required to provide labor for households in San Pedro Sula. The claim of service in the coastal watch was ignored in resolving Blas Cuculi’s petition in the seventeenth century, but by the eighteenth century such service proved to be a claim that would resonate in the Audiencia of Guatemala.

Until the establishment of a military fort at Omoa, and its annexation of the control of northwestern Honduras in the late eighteenth century, indigenous people in the coastal watch from as far west as Manabique reported ship sightings to San Pedro Sula. Puerto Caballos was unoccupied for much of this period due to pirate activity and the transfer of port activities to Santo Tomas de Castilla in Guatemala in 1605 (Milla 1879, Vol. 2:225-226). Notice of ship sightings by the coastal watch would allow the residents of San Pedro to go up to the coast to receive ships from Spain.

The participation of Candelaria in the coastal watch played a part in the petitions discussed in Chapter 6 about moving the pueblo away from the coast to its final location near Ticamaya. Because the pueblo was located on the Royal road from Puerto Caballos to San Pedro, pirates occupied the town at least twice, forcing people of the town who were working in the coastal watch to sneak around their own town to alert the residents of San Pedro to the presence of pirates.

With the establishment of the military Fort of Omoa, the focus of the coastal watch changed from reporting to San Pedro Sula to reporting to the Fort of Omoa. Work for the coastal watch was dispatched from Omoa. With the construction of the fort, the job of the watch grew to include seeing and reporting contraband. Also at this time formal watch stations were established, with lookouts at named but unoccupied places on the landscape such as Barrancas and Puerto Caballos. The people of the town of Candelaria were intimately involved in this reorganized watch.

In March 1770, an English ship anchored off the coastal watch station at Barrancas, a few kilometers east of Omoa (1770 AGCA A3 Legajo 496 Expediente 5200). According to testimony from three witnesses, once the ship had anchored, the English Captain put ashore in a canoe and handed a sheaf of papers to an indigenous man named Lucas. Lucas then took the letters to Omoa, to the fort's commander, Pedro Toll. In testimony from Carlos Martinez, Francisco Rivera, and Marcelo Talavera, all men from Candelaria who were all part of the coastal watch at Barrancas and at Puerto Caballos, we learn that the ship unloaded barrels of wine and cane alcohol at Tulian Rio, and that those barrels of alcohol were later transported by a small ship from there to Omoa, where they were reportedly seen in the house(s) of Lorenzo Chavez and Jacoba de Paz. The ship also sold clothing to a Joseph Vivina while anchored for six days at Punta de Castilla, next to Puerto Caballos.

Aside from the narrative it provides, the section of this document containing the testimony of the indios from Candelaria is particularly informative about the positions taken up both by the people giving testimony, and those they gave testimony to, as well as others they interacted with as part of this particular incident.

The taking up of positions begins with the account by the Governor of Honduras, Don Antonio Fernandiz, and his order to bring indios from Candelaria who know something about an English ship calling at Omoa the previous June:

> I, the said Governor, in light of the declaration or report which comes before this, in order to proceed in the form to justice, had

to send and command to appear before me all the Indians of the town of Candelaria to examine which had been, in the month of June of last year, part of the watch, to take their statement about the business and what it was about.
[Yo el dicho Governador en vista de la declaración o denuncia que antecede para proceder en forme a justicia devia de mandar y mande comparezcan ante mi los indios del Pueblo de Candelaria para examinar quales fueron los que en el mes de Junio próximo pasado estaban de Vixias para tomarles la expresada declaración sobre el negocio de que se trata.]
(1770 AGCA A3 Legajo 496 Expediente 5200: page 23)

Here Governor Fernandiz is positioning the people of Candelaria as citizens of Honduras whom he can order to appear before him to give testimony. This is also apparent in the way they are sworn in, affirming they will tell only the truth and making the sign of the cross (page 24). These are the same actions performed by other citizens in later parts of the testimony when they are sworn in. While the residents of Candelaria have claimed the position of citizen in earlier documents, Spanish officials often contested it. By 1770, in jural proceedings, at least the members of the coastal watch are not being distinguished from people of other statuses.

The first Candelaria resident to present testimony is Carlos Martinez, age 30, and married. His answers to the questions put to him by the Governor are recorded by the scribe in the third person (e. g. "he said...."). Martinez positions himself as a member of the community of Candelaria ("dixo es natural del pueblo de Candelaria y casado en dicho pueblo [he said he is born in the town of Candelaria and is married there]" (page 24), but he positions, Lucas, also indigenous, as different:

an Indian who was in the watch location [Barrancas] named Lucas, also of the town of Candelaria but not born there.
[un Yndio que estaba en dicha vigía llamado Lucas también del Pueblo de Candelaria aunque no esta Natural.]
(page 24)

Lucas is by Carlos Martinez's positioning a forastero, someone who lives in the community but is not from it by birth. Martinez does not state whether Lucas was married and hence in marrying, or not, but that is the principal explanation in other documents for forasteros in pueblos de indios.

Carlos Martinez testifies that he spoke with the captain of the English ship, and questioned the blacks who disembarked from it to sell clothing in Puerto Caballos. Martinez uses no language that would make such

conversations seem either unusual or uncomfortable. Later testimony by another Candelaria resident, Marcelo Talavera, discussed below, leads us to conclude that those conversations took place in Spanish.

Martinez positions himself with respect to the Captain of the Fort of Omoa, Don Pedro Toll, in two pieces of testimony. First, he indicates that it was Pedro Toll who had centralized the communications of the coastal watch, ordering that all communications about incoming ships be delivered to him, not to the Honduran Governor's official in San Pedro Sula:

> the reason that he did not advise the Lieutenant [of the colony] of this partido was because commander Pedro Toll gave them the order that when they saw some ship, to pass the word watch station by watch station until it gets to Omoa.
> [El motivo de no haver venido a avisar al Theniente de este Partido fue por que el Comandante Don Pedro Toll les tiene dada derecho que quando vean alguna embarcación, pase la palabra de vigia en vigia hasta darle parte a Omoa.] (page 28)

Martinez here is positioning himself as part of the hierarchy of the coastal watch that reports through a foreman to the Commander of the fort at Omoa. His description demonstrates that this positioning disrupted the previous hierarchy which had the members of the coastal watch reporting through their foreman in San Pedro Sula to a representative of the Colonial Governor in San Pedro Sula, the chain of communication described in 1745 (1745 AGCA A1.20 Legajo 83 Expediente 972).

The background significance of church practice in community identity is echoed in Martinez' testimony. He expressed no condemnation of his fellow Candelaria resident, Marcelo Talavera, for burying the body of Lucas, who died unexpectedly, in the woods near the watch station of Barrancas. Instead, Martinez reserves his condemnation for Omoa Commander Pedro Toll, who failed to provide a Christian burial for Lucas after being notified of his death:

> that it was the Indian Marcelo who buried [Lucas] because he was alone and after burying him they advised the Commander of the event and he did not take any measure to bring the body to give it burial, and that up to this moment it is in the brush without being given burial in holy ground.
> [que esta el Yndio Marcelo lo que enterró por estar solo y que después de enterrado avisaren al Comandante de lo acaecido y que este no dio providencia alguna para llevar a darle sepultura al cadáver y que hasta la hora de esta [testimonio] esta en el monte sin darle sepultura sagrada.] (page 28).

Martinez positioned Toll as not treating Indians as citizens or Christians, who deserve burial in a cemetery. He is doubly condemning of Toll's lack of action because Lucas served Toll as an intermediary and died as a result of his labor.

Like Martinez, Francisco Rivera positions himself, and is in turn positioned by the Governor, as a citizen and Christian. Francisco identifies himself as born in Candelaria, and married there (p. 29). He identifies his boss, the foreman of the watch at Barrancas, Alberto Guerra, as a "pardo libre, casado en el proprio Omoa [free pardo, married in the same Omoa]". He says that Guerra was the one who employed the Indian Lucas as his employee to run messages. Francisco also criticizes Pedro Toll for not retrieving the body of Lucas buried in the woods. When asked why Lucas did not receive a Christian burial

> he responded that the Indian who buried him [Lucas] is named Marcelo and he was at the time a Watchman and because he was alone he made a hole and buried [Lucas] but later they made known to the commander of the said Port Don Pedro Toll what happened, and despite this news, he did not give nor has he given providence to move the cadaver to sacred ground. [responde que el indio que lo enterro se llama Marcelo que se hallava en aquel entonces de Vigiero y que para estar solo hize un oyo, y lo entierro pero que despues dierron parte al Comandante de dicho Puerto Don Pedro Toll de lo acaecido y sin embargo de esta noticia, no dio ni ha dado providencia de darle tierra sagrada al cadaver.] (p. 31)

In responding to the question about why the Governor's agent in San Pedro Sula wasn't notified of the presence of the English ship, Francisco replied "corresponde al Comandante el mando de la vigia [it falls to the Commander to order the watch]" (p. 31). Francisco also testifies that in 1769, when he was Alcalde of Candelaria, he heard about another English ship on the coast.

Marcelo Talavera testified next. His testimony indicates that he spoke with no one from the English ship, but did see the foreman, Alberto Guerra, speak with the Captain in Barrancas, "y en especial con un negro Paysano al expresado Mayoral [and expecially with a black countryman of the foreman]" (p. 34). In his own testimony, Guerra identifies himself as being born in Santa Ines Cumana, today in Venezuela (page 53). Thus, a black countryman of Guerra's would be from Venezuela, then part of the Vice Royalty of New Granada. Again the Governor positions Marcelo as a citizen and Christian, requiring him to swear to tell the truth and make the sign of the cross.

Participation in the coastal watch expanded the social fields that residents of Candelaria took up. The coastal watch itself, a field that was loosely hierarchical, was structured at this time with Pedro Toll at the top. In turn, he appointed a resident of Omoa, Alberto Guerra, an Afrodescendent described in testimony as a "pardo libre", as the foreman ("mayoral") of the group. Everyone in the coastal watch organized out of Omoa reported to Alberto Guerra, who made the work assignments. Reporting of ship sightings and activities were passed along from coastal watch station to coastal watch station until they reached Pedro Toll in the fort.

A criollo Spaniard named Don Gabriel Gonzalez Perdomo, who acted as a witness during the testimony of the indios of Candelaria, was also asked to testify about what he knew about the English ship. Gonzalez Perdomo, the representative of the Governor in San Pedro Sula, was originally from Gracias a Dios. He testified that he was away chasing deserters from the fort when the English ship arrived, but heard about it when he got back:

> I heard about it from the Indians who had been on watch, and those that were in this city publicly [speaking about it], and given the statement I went to punish the Indians who had been on watch, as Justice of this partido, but the Alcalde replied that they were not at fault, that the foreman.... had given his consent. [lo oyo decir a los Yndios que estavan de vigias, y los que estavan de esta ciudad publicamente y pasando el declarante a castigar a los yndios que estavan en la vigia, como Juez de este partido, le respondio el Alcalde que ellos no tienen la culpa, que el mayoral....havia dado el consentimiento.] (p. 40).

Here Gonzalez Perdomo is taking up a position as the Governor's representative, which positions himself as the local head of the coastal watch. As supervisor of the people of Candelaria in their service in the coastal watch, he sought to punish them for not notifying him of the English ship, but changed his mind on finding out that Alberto Guerra had countermanded informing him. Also evident in this testimony is a third social field, that in which the alcalde of Candelaria has authority to respond for the people of the pueblo de indios.

The statements in this testimony show that the coastal watch formed two different social fields, one in which Pedro Toll positioned others as his subordinates, and the other in which the governor of Honduras, through his local representative, expected participants to follow his instructions. The conflicting demands of these two different fields, representing a single institution, placed the people of Candelaria at risk depending on which field they chose to step into. Indigenous members of the coastal watch were

exercising their own choice in enacting the coastal watch position, choosing between a position in a local field of power (centered on Omoa), and a more distant one (based in Comayagua). As the sideways glance to the alcalde of Candelaria suggests, the coastal watch was simultaneously a third field, one in which the residents of the pueblos de indios positioned themselves, as they had in previous generations, as serving a vital role in the defense of the colony, not as subordinates either of Pedro Toll (who they feel free to criticize) or of the governor's representative (whose interpretation of events the alcalde rejects, successfully).

While the precise details are different, the disjunction between the two views of the coastal watch as a field on the part of the Spanish authorities is the same structural gap that Blas Cuculí drew on in his 1675 petition on behalf of Masca. There, however, the interests of the pueblo de indios were advanced more by aligning the town with the ultimate colonial authorities in Guatemala, for whom Masca formed part of an encomienda. A century later, the people of Candelaria switched positions from a local hierarchy to a colonial one as needed during legal proceedings. Where Blas Cuculí's petition is not explicit in drawing out the two different fields of power that shaped the experiences of people of Masca as framing choices the people could make, testimony in the contraband case of 1770 clearly and deliberately shifts fields in such a way as to remove blame from the people of the town.

Fields Crossing the Caribbean

Employment in the coastal watch brought some of the men of Candelaria into face to face contact with English and Spanish individuals engaged in contraband in the Caribbean, broadening their network of connections and increasing their knowledge of the cosmopolitan world in which Candelaria had always been embedded. The English ship in the 1770 incident was crewed, apart from its Captain, by African-descendant people described as blacks (negros). At least one of its black crewmembers was identified as a countryman of Alberto Guerra, presumably from New Granada (present-day Venezuela).

The ship in the 1770 case is described as being a single masted sloop (balandra). Twenty years later, similar ships captained by a British slave owner with a crew of enslaved blacks came from Belize, and called at Omoa and Trujillo, trying to convince the commanders of these Honduran forts to return escaped slaves who had taken up residence in the region (1800 AGI Estado 49 N. 74 Cuaderno 1). Given the identification of the captain in 1770

as English speaking, and the known use of single-mast balandras primarily for local voyages in the Caribbean, it is more likely that the balandra from 1770 was of similar origin in the nearby Belize colony than that the 1770 contraband ship was a primary British trading ship.

The engagment of the people of Candelaria in the coastal watch also brought them into social fields that extended east into territory that remained under indigenous control by the Miskito people. The coastal watch was intended to provide early warning to the fort of Omoa of land attacks by English and their Miskito allies. At times, this exposed participants to the risk of being captured and carried away to the Mosquitia. In 1725, the Honduran colonial authorities investigated a group of eight such captives who escaped and made their way back to the colony (1725 AGCA A1.12 Legajo 50 Expediente 496). Included were two members of the coastal watch who had been captured while on duty.

Originally from Jetegua or Quelequele and Tehuma (different documents include contradictory information), these repatriated watch members were viewed with suspicion because they were found in the company of British escapees, so they were sent to give testimony about their experiences in the colonial city, San Jorge de Olancho. Also part of their party was an indigenous person from Campeche, who had been working in the Belize colony when taken as a captive. Returning to their communities, these individuals and perhaps others like them would already, in the early eighteenth century, have begun to shape a view of a wider world of which Candelaria was part, not limited by colonial political boundaries.

The coastal watch constituted a field in which people from the pueblos de indios could take up positions that gave them a degree of autonomy, access to paid labor and, at least in the eighteenth century, to contraband goods. It involved them in negotiations with the military leaders of the fort of Omoa. Developing out of a service on which successive generations of the people of Candelaria had already based claims for specific recognition by colonial authorities, the latest phase of participation in the coastal watch became a focus of new emerging social fields that linked pueblos de indios with each other, with the population of African-descendant workers at Fort Omoa, and with places and peoples far beyond Honduras. In a sense, this was a return to the kind of cosmopolitan engagement through the Gulf of Honduras that was typical of indigenous towns in the Río Ulúa in the sixteenth century.

New engagements mediated by the presence of Fort Omoa brought with them increased and innovative forms of cultural hybridity that challenged the existing Spanish colonial definitions of the pueblo de indios

as a bounded, racially distinct enclave at the bottom of a defined economic order. While service in the coastal watch was now definitively recognized as a public good, the credit for this service accrued less to the community as a whole, and more to individual participants, who represented themselves in proceedings as individuals, without the kinds of deliberate positioning with respect to the community, as principales or "los demas", typical in earlier generations.

In this individualization of agency, perhaps, we can see the roots of forces that in the course of the nineteenth century would lead to the disappearance of Candelaria as a distinct pueblo de indios, a corporate actor, and its transformation into a neighborhood within the city of Choloma (Bobadilla 1944:233). It should be clear by now that pueblos de indios like Candelaria that survived the sixteenth century decimation of indigenous population developed a variety of tactics through which they not only successfully persisted in what had been their ancestral homeland, but also remade the Honduran colony into fields of practices in which they were able to rebuild population and gain recognition for their contributions to building colonial society.