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The Case of Colonial Mexico (1521-1821)

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**THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION
IN THE BUILDING OF NATIONAL IDENTITIES
THE CASE OF COLONIAL MEXICO (1521-1821)**

Candidate : Gertrudis Payàs Puigarnau
Director : Clara Foz

Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the PhD degree in Translation Studies

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Notes

- 1- The translators' bibliographical reference from Beristáin's *Biblioteca Hispano-Americana* appears under the abridged form: *BHA* in footnotes.
- 2- As far as possible, when dates of print did not coincide with the original print or manuscript date, I have put both in the reference.
- 3- In general, I have left citations in the original language, proposing an English translation only when I deemed it necessary.
- 4- The original spelling has been maintained in the citations.

Abstract

The purpose of this doctoral research is to demonstrate that translation, as a form of representation, is present in the elaboration of a discourse on the nation in colonial Mexico, or New Spain. To this end, a catalogue of 712 translational products is explored by means of a classification based on a conceptual framework provided by nationalism studies. This approach leads to see how, individually and collectively, one group of translations weave the canvass of an “imagined community” of faithful, on which three other groups intertwine narratives of foundational myths, instill a sense of belonging to a continuum of classical civilizations, and, lastly, incorporate New Spain to the concert of modern nations. Historiography is part of this evolution, and the presence of translation and subsequent rewritings are traced in the fixing of a national history.

Résumé

Cette recherche doctorale a pour objet de démontrer que la traduction, en tant que représentation, est présente dans l'élaboration d'un discours sur la nation dans le Mexique colonial, ou Nouvelle Espagne. Dans ce but, nous avons analysé un catalogue comptant 712 produits de traduction classés selon une grille conceptuelle empruntée aux études sur le nationalisme. Cette approche permet de voir comment, tant individuellement que collectivement, un groupe de traductions tisse la trame d'une « communauté imaginée » de croyants sur laquelle trois autres groupes entrelacent des discours de mythes fondateurs, instillent le sentiment d'appartenance à un continuum de civilisations classiques et incorporent la Nouvelle Espagne au concert des nations modernes. L'historiographie fait partie de cette évolution, et la présence de la traduction et ses successives réécritures sont soulignées dans l'établissement d'une histoire nationale.

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PREAMBLE

Introduction

Historical overview of the Spanish linguistic policy in New Spain

Introduction

This is a history of emerging identities as brought about and represented in translation, which is one of many ways of representation.

It is meant as a contribution of history of translation to the understanding of the transformation of the Mexicans, and to the way they saw themselves during the time in which they were under Spanish rule; that is, in the period of the New Spain. The time in which they were displaced and killed, forced to build churches and barns, learned new rituals and punishments; and in which they learned also ways of surviving, of detouring obstacles, of using the colonizer's religion and law to their benefit. In the process, they collectively forgot and remembered a lot, as said Ernest Renan in 1882, when defining what constitutes a nation; and in mixing (biologically and culturally) with other peoples, both European and African, and with other Mexican population, they also created new forms of life and thinking. This is the phenomenon for which we have been accustomed to use the words "mestizo" and "mestizaje".

Translation will be the point of entry to this complex process of transforming identities. I can use translations as the point of entry because they are consistently present in the period covered by this study, both in manuscripts and prints. In fact, during the first century after the Conquest, virtually all writing activity is represented by translations and other such interlingual products.

Two aspects pretend to be original from the point of view of intellectual history: to use translation to explain how a new subjectivity was born and to say that translation is present in the maintenance and defense of this new subjectivity up to the point in which it

can pretend to become part of a national discourse, in which the singular character of the nation and its cultural and material wealth are affirmed.

From the point of view of translation studies, my research aims at demonstrating that translation is an intellectual practice that contributes to the representation of the nation (in the sense of a group sharing ethnic or cultural traits), not only because, as a rewriting, it can re-present, but because, as a mirror of the Other, it is constitutive of the self.¹

I also wish to contribute to the description of colonial Hispano-American translation by advancing quantitative data on translations as well as on their authors. The classification method I devised, drawn from concepts of nationalism studies, may also be considered an innovative contribution to translation history, as well as the larger than usual historical scope. I am also proposing a translation-studies bias to look at translations and authors that had not been approached from this angle by general history.

These presumed contributions and the methods followed will be explained in the Theoretical Outline, that is, the First Part of the research. For context purposes, an informative section follows this introduction. It traces the general evolution of language policy in New Spain and sets the stage where the rest of the research will unfold.

Translation will be treated here in different ways, since we know that its definition and functions can vary along time. Two main domains will it cover: a large and seemingly diffuse field, in which translation could be best defined as language contact and fundamental negotiation of forms and contents between the European languages and the American languages, driven by religious zeal and having as final end the incorporation of the populations to a universal, Catholic, community. This domain I have called the

¹ Following Fernando Savater's works on ethics, in particular *Ética como amor propio* (1994)

Translational Canvass and it constitutes the Second Part of the research.

The Third Part covers the more strictly translational activity that is “interwoven” in the canvass and that helps in the construction of a cultural identity by conveying foundational myths, incorporating intellectual production to a continuum of Classical productions and forming a modern high culture in which a national discourse emerges. Each of these three aspects will be dealt with in detail in their respective sections.

This work is a large diachronic study in which translation spots are identified along three centuries (1521-1821) of colonial life. Although synchronicity is not possible in such a large span, I will try to show some particular links between contiguous texts and point to discursive coherences. Comparisons between originals and translations are not to be found here, since the aim is to understand what translations are doing there rather than how were they produced.

The role of polyglots as cultural brokers between peoples becomes particularly evident when new identities have to be transacted. This is the case of colonial situations, in the first attempts to gain social stability as well as when the emerging identities endeavor to endow themselves with a high, unified culture, able to compete with other identities. This realization has meant a necessary broadening of the definitions of translators and translation to include those individuals who have acted as linguistic and cultural agents even if their productions do not comply with modern definitions of translation. We could call them “transwriters”, and their products, “transwritings”. Whatever the denomination, the phenomenon, I hope, will become clear as the research progresses. And vice-versa, I have restricted the definition in the case of the diglossic Latin-Spanish authors, since their diglossia, a feature common in clerics in those times, does not make them automatically

translators. So, not all polyglots are translators, but there are more translators among the polyglots than is usually acknowledged, since I admit also what I call transwriters, grammarians and lexicographers.

Finally, in the graphs and tables, a number of items will be found undated. Unfortunately, at the conclusion of the research it was still not possible to obtain all chronological data. I hope to be able to fill in this and other biographical and bibliographical gaps in future research. In the same line, it may also be surprising that there are so few items in the nineteenth century, but it should be borne in mind that my translation register ends in 1821, and that the main source of data, Don Mariano de Beristáin y Souza, died in 1817, when only the first volume (letters A-C) of his *Biblioteca Hispano-Americana Septentrional* had been published.

Historical overview of the Spanish linguistic policy in New Spain

Unilingualism is undoubtedly the ideal situation for a national project to develop: one people, one territory, one language. As a patchwork of ethnic groups and languages, Mesoamerica, or Middle America, an anthropological denomination for the territory that covers today's Mexico, the Southern part of the United States and the Central American Istm, was, at the Spaniard's arrival, far from this ideal. There is not full agreement as to the number of languages spoken in the Middle American region before Columbus, mainly for lack of accurate data on the first decades of the Conquest, when population loss and forced relocations caused a significant number of languages or dialects to disappear. We have also disparities in estimates due to difficulties in establishing the divide between languages and dialects in extinct languages, and finally, because of imprecisions in the limits of the territories of reference. Bárbara Cifuentes, in her overview of multilingualism in Mexico, compares data from nineteenth-century historians and ethnographers (who estimated 182 languages) and linguists (108 languages) with more recent appraisals (147 languages or more), and suggests that some one hundred languages were lost by the end of the 16th century (Cifuentes 1998: 32-45).² According to Brice Heath there could be around 125 languages (Brice Heath 1970: 54). Another estimate, by Garza and Lastra (Garza y Lastra 2000: 141-143) suggests a larger number: 113 disappeared languages and 58 extant (there is, though, some ambiguity in this study due to a non coincidence in the territorial limits considered there as compared to Brice Heath's). Some of the disappeared languages, according to these authors, were already endangered by the expansion of Nahuatl in the 15th

² Cifuentes 1998 notes that, with variations due to dialect definitions, there are between 52 (1990 census) and 66 languages still in use (p. 47).

century. Indeed, Nahuatl, an agglutinative language belonging to the uto-aztec stock, a family of related languages with its several dialectal families, encompassed a very large area, from the Western United States to present day Nicaragua. The most important in this group, it coexisted sometimes with other languages, to the degree that even geographical names had two designations: in Nahuatl and in the local language. There had been migrations of Nahuatl-speaking peoples since long before the arrival of the Spaniards, but, more importantly, the main political force at the end of the 15th century, the Mexica, Nahuatl-speaking people who established themselves in the central valleys after a mythical journey around 1300 a.D., was exerting control over a large territory, going as far North as present states of Zacatecas and Sinaloa and as far South as the Isthm of Tehuantepec.³ This is why Fray Jerónimo de Mendieta, the Franciscan chronicler, could assert:

Esta lengua mexicana es la general que corre por todas las provincias de esta Nueva España, puesto que en ella hay muchas y diferentes lenguas particulares de cada provincia, y en partes de cada pueblo, porque son innumerables. Mas en todas partes hay intérpretes que entienden y hablan la mexicana, porque esta es la que por todas partes corre, como la latina por todos los reinos de Europa. Y puedo con verdad afirmar, que la mexicana no es menos galana y curiosa que la latina, y aun pienso que más artizada en composición y derivación de vocablos, y de metáforas. (Mendieta 1973:119)

The Mexica had expanded and promoted the use of Nahuatl for the benefit of the “Aztec’s own nation-building efforts” (Brice Heath 1970: 27). This is why the colonizers could associate Nahuatl (the Aztec’s Imperial language) with Latin, the European Imperial language, an association they quickly put to their advantage. Nahuatl, in its classical or upper form, was further disseminated by them, and its social prestige and political power

³ Nahuatl geographical names still existing in Guatemala and Nicaragua belong to the former migrations.

was reinforced. It became the official language of colonization. It was used extensively in doctrinal and administrative activities, and thus, appropriated by the Church and civil authorities, became the language of authority, but now in the hands of the new masters. The passage from upper Nahuatl to Spanish was facilitated by the frequent use of oral and written translation, with the ensuing transfer of the perceived virtues of the former to the latter, thanks to the symbolic and material nature of translation:

The missionaries appropriated the authority already encoded in the discursive practices of the nobility. This they accomplished by translating the literature necessary for the Christianization process using the rhetorical moves and vocabulary of the newly alphabetized Classical Nahuatl. The ritual language, by which the native leaders had long helped to shape the ideology of the masses of commoners, became both the language of instruction about the ways of the Europeans and the language by which the ideological speech of the native leadership was domesticated to serve the ends of colonial discourse. (Klor 1989: 147)

This *translatio auctoritas* was also rendered easier by the perception that Nahuatl was in New Spain what Latin was in Europe, since, as Mendieta said: “corre como la Latina por todos los reinos de Europa”. And this *translatio auctoritas* was not an empty concept. It found effective application, for instance, in the use of Nahuatl together with Latin as reference languages in some grammars of indigenous languages: in a 16th century grammar, Pedro de Cárceres’⁴ *Arte de la lengua othomi* (Cárceres 1905), for instance, through a complex system of cross-references between Latin, Nahuatl, Castilian and Otomi, Nahuatl and Latin are used as *canon* or exemplary languages; Castilian is the language in which the grammar is written, acting as the narrator, and Otomi becomes the object of the

⁴ BHA II, 43

narration.

We should not forget that in early 16th century, Castilian was a regionally confined language, still struggling for autonomy from Latin and, at the same time, competing with several other vernaculars, equally old and prestigious, like Galician and Catalan, as well as with Sephardic and Arabic (Cifuentes 1998: 99), which had been finally eradicated with the expulsion and forced conversion of Jews and Moors under the Catholic Kings Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492. Isabella in particular (Ferdinand was Aragonese, so actually Catalan-speaker) endeavored to impose Castilian to the rest of the country, which was unified for the first time now by her marriage to Ferdinand. At a time when grammars were only for Classical languages, that is, for languages which were mostly only written and which had to be learned through books (as opposed to the languages one learned naturally, as a speaker), humanist scholar Antonio de Nebrija published his *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1492). In its introduction, he states that “language has always been the partner of empire”, a quote that has been commonly interpreted as establishing the relationship between political supremacy and unilingualism and that I will have the opportunity to comment upon further in the course of the research. In fact, the grammar that appears regularly in the packing lists of virtually all shipments arriving to Veracruz during the sixteenth and seventeenth century (Fernández del Castillo 1982), named as “Arte del Antonio”, is not this Spanish grammar but a Latin one, the *Institutiones latinae*, that he wrote in 1481 especially for pious women and nuns who wanted to read in Latin. It is this grammar that would serve as a model for the grammars of the indigenous languages. Similarly, Nebrija’s Latin-Castilian and Castilian-Latin dictionaries, the *Lexicon ex sermone latino in hispaniensem*

(1492) and the *Dictionarium ex hispaniensi in latinum sermonem* (1495),⁵ arrived also to New Spain and served as models for the Castilian-vernacular bilingual lexicons.⁶ Frances Karttunen has traced the genealogy of several major early Spanish-based bilingual dictionaries of New Spain to the first Latin-Castilian dictionary. Even a trilingual lexicon (Nahuatl-Spanish-Otomi), written in 1605 by friar Alonso Urbano, has been identified as derived from Nebrija's Latin list of words (Karttunen 1995). We can, therefore, consider these lexicons as attesting to the will of their authors to demonstrate the capability of the Mexican vernaculars to compare themselves to the Latin canons, to be able to convey the "things of their nations". The vernaculars, soon *reduced* (at it was then said) to grammars, and deployed word lists that could be matched to European word lists, were thus armed to compete among them and with Castilian for the status of a national language.

Nevertheless, however strong the will to "castellanizar" its dominions, the Spanish Monarchy's language policy in New Spain was inconsistent and hesitant. The 1770 Royal ban on all vernacular languages and imposition of Spanish as the official language of the Spanish dominions (Cifuentes 1998: 284-89), was the corollary of over two hundred years of erratic language policy, which can be partly explained by the geographical and intellectual distance between the Spanish Monarch and its main colony, and partly characterized by the conflicts in the New Spain between civil and religious authorities, as well as between monastic and secular branches of the Church. As Brice Heath rightly says, "el programa de cristiano-castellanización en la patria reposaba sobre el ambiente exuberante y lleno de idealismo que predominaba en el reino de Isabel después de la Reconquista", but once in the New World, this program became too difficult to implement

⁵ It is worth noting that Castilian (*lingua castellana*) has become Spanish (*hispaniensem, hispaniensi*), in recognition of the national status of the language that would represent the first modern nation-state in Europe.

⁶ As well as for the first Latin-European vernaculars dictionaries (Kahane 1992).

(Brice Heath 1970: 27). From the beginning, the 1512 Leyes de Burgos gave the Spanish who possessed more than 50 Indians in *encomienda*⁷ the responsibility of their education in Spanish. However, it became soon evident that the *encomenderos* would not discharge this duty appropriately. In 1524, Hernán Cortés convinced King Charles V that the responsibility for the Indians education be transferred to the monastic orders. So, after a few years from the Royal decree stating that the indigenous peoples should learn Spanish under the tutelage of the *encomenderos*, a shift in the policy put indigenous peoples under the tutelage of the Church and allowed indoctrination to be carried out in the local languages. The pressing need of rapid indoctrination is obvious from the 1536 royal instructions to Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza that the missionaries should endeavor to write grammars (“Artes”) of the indigenous languages. This policy change, though, was explicitly provisional; it meant recognition that the tremendous disparity in the ratio Spanish to Indian made it impossible to pursue any Christianization unless the friars would learn the languages, transcribe them phonetically, write their grammars and lexicons, and indoctrinate in them. During approximately 50 years, that is, the period of influence of the Franciscan and other Mendicant Orders, local languages were whenever possible used and learnt. During Philip II rule, a certain hierarchy of languages was tacitly established, and in case of competing languages, the more general one was promoted in civil and justice administration, teaching, indoctrination and Church services. In 1580, a chair of Nahuatl at the University of Mexico was created by virtue of a Royal decree (Cifuentes 1998: 106-108), and other language chairs were opened later.

⁷ By the institution of the *Encomienda*, conquerors were entrusted with a number of Indians, that could amount to entire villages. In exchange for the Indians’ work and services, the conquerors had to provide doctrinal education and protection. The frequent abuses to which it gave origin lead to various Royal laws and its eventual cancellation, which was met with violent opposition.

Nevertheless, one can imagine that the day-to-day pressures compelled the missionary friars to take their own decisions without consulting each other or their principals, and the first decades witnessed the elaboration of grammars, lexicons, catechisms, sermon books and confessional manuals in many vernaculars. Beristáin de Souza's *Biblioteca Hispanoamericana Septentrional*, my main source, contains 83 vocabularies of 25 known languages (and some unknown to the author).⁸ Approximately half of this production belongs to the period 16th-17th century. Nahuatl alone concentrates 21 such lexicons.

Aside from the practical reasons, there were motivations of ideological nature in the first missionaries' inclination to learn the languages and to keep the Indians ignorant of Spanish. First of all, they established personal communication channels away from the *encomenderos*; indeed, the friars were deeply suspicious of the Conquistadores and first settler's good will, as they feared that the poor, humble Indians would be contaminated by the vices of the Spanish if they learned their language. The early policy of segregation of the indigenous population in a *República de Indios*, separate from the Spaniard's corrupt world of the *República de Españoles*, would be the materialization of the utopia of the first Christians. The friars would then be the only mediators between these two worlds (Moreno Toscano 1996: 356).

There seems to be no national project at this juncture. The missionaries' plan was to enlarge God's Kingdom rather than to add a new possession to the Spanish Crown. For them, as rightly said Fray Maturino Gilberti⁹ in his Purépecha Catechism, there existed only

⁸ Beristáin was writing his monumental bio-bibliography around 1815, and did not have access to or know of the existence of other manuscripts and books kept in private or remote libraries.

⁹ BHA II 357 - 358

two classes of men: “christianos y infieles” (Gilberti 1559: I). Even geographical frontiers were subordinated to the Great Frontier, that separating the Kingdom of God from the Kingdom of Darkness. Probably there lied the main misunderstanding between the first churchmen and civil authorities. For Brading, the common denominator in this new society “was rather Catholicism than a consciousness of nationality” (Brading 2000: 15).

In 1550, Charles V considered that the provisional period was over and ordered that all Indians must learn Castilian. In a letter to the King, a Fray Rodrigo de la Cruz expresses his opposition by arguing insufficient knowledge of Spanish by the Indians and proposes that Nahuatl become the official language of New Spain, because:

ya no hay pueblo que no haya muchos indios que no la sepan, y la deprendan sin ningún trabajo, sino de uso y muchos se confiesan en ella. Es lengua elegantísima, tanto como cuantas hay en el mundo, y hay hecho arte y vocabulario y muchas cosas de la Sagrada escritura vueltas en ella y muchos sermonarios y hay frailes grandes lenguas. (Cifuentes 1998: 105)

In 1558, Viceroy Luis de Velasco too, writes to the then new King, Philip II, and presents him with a plan of Nahuatl linguistic standardization. By then, the population had dropped to some 6 million (from an estimated 25.2 million in 1519) (Baudot 2002: 40) and since it had been concentrated in towns and villages, standardization may have seemed a feasible plan. Philip II, according to Georges Baudot, was hesitant to decide too radically in any direction: “hispanización matizada de América y la necesaria transculturación de raíces amerindias, o la erradicación de la identidad amerindia que recomendaba una eliminación definitiva del pasado amerindio, de sus idiomas y de sus distintivos lingüísticos y culturales” (Baudot 2002: 41). But the friars continued opposition to the forced castilianization must have fructified, and in 1570, the King recommends the general

dissemination and learning of Nahuatl, a move towards what Baudot calls a “transculturación de raíces Amerindias”. A sequence of ordinances and regulations ensues between 1579 and 1592 to further and reinforce this decision. With the creation, in 1580, of the chair of Nahuatl at the University of Mexico, orders are issued that only priests and friars with good knowledge of Nahuatl be appointed for missions, and those appointed should always bring with them a certificate of such knowledge, in case of inspection (Brice Heath 1970: 54). The rest of the languages were receding. Maya, Tarasco and Otomi would be still regionally important, but eventually only Nahuatl (or Mexicano) and Castilian (or Spanish) would be left to compete to become national languages.

New social strata were emerging in the colonial society: the loss in indigenous population (down to 1 million in 1605, according to some estimates) (Garza and Lastra 2000: 153) and the rapid *mestizaje* between European, Amerindian and African blood, implied also a change in balance between the languages, and favored Spanish as the common language particularly in urban centers and mining towns, where this mixing was stronger (Moreno Toscano 1996: 361). At the same time, the consolidation of a bureaucracy of civil servants who were transferred from Spain for relatively short periods and which had to communicate with the metropolis, favored also hispanization of their areas of influence.

In practice, for the Indians, it was bilingualism that could ensure social status and a vantage position from which land claims or official posts could be won. As agents and middlemen in this new society, interpreters (called *nahuatlato*s or *lenguas*), and escribanos, being close to the judiciary and the administrative, managed to carve niches in the Spanish society for them and their families. They were the main channel for communication

between Indians and non Indians throughout the Colonial period. Some members of this social stratum, educated by the friars in their convents, acculturated and more or less familiarized with the European cultural objects, will write the history of their ancestors or groups, in Spanish or in Nahuatl, and sometimes in both languages, reelaborating the past and creating archetypical figures that still prevail.

The general Indian population, in the meantime, however, was kept under the tutelage of the Church by segregationist practices and policies, meant no doubt to protect them from exploitation by the *encomenderos*, but also to prevent them from mixing with the Spanish, which they would do if they learned the language, according to a 17th century source: “aprenden la lengua castellana y se hacen ladinos (que es el primer paso para tener atrevimientos, porque mientras hablan en su lengua son más humildes)”,¹⁰ as well as with the growing mestizo population, which was considered unruly and rebellious. In 1554, Viceroy Luis de Velasco wrote King Philip II: “Los mestizos van en grande aumento, y todos salen tan mal inclinados y tan osados para las maldades que a éstos y a los negros se les ha de temer ... Los mestizos andan entre los indios, y como tienen la mitad de su parte, acógenlos y encúbrenlos y dánles de comer; los indios reciben de ellos muchos malos tratamientos y ruines ejemplos”.¹¹ In practice, the segregation established for the protection of the Indians turned counterproductive for them, since they found themselves **marginalized**, ignorant of Spanish and of the social codes that would enable them to function in the new society.

Against this background, general mistrust in Spain *vis-à-vis* all things Indian was fueled by the apparent failure to eradicate idolatries in the American colonies, and the

¹⁰ Cited in Brice Heath 1992: 75-76

¹¹ Cited in Lira y Muro 1996: 393.

emergence of rebellions, tainted by nationalistic undertones (both in Mexico and in Peru). This prepared the ground for radical shift in cultural and language policy for the colonies. In 1577, Philip II orders the seizure of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún¹² magnum opus: *Historia general de las Cosas de la Nueva España*, a sort of Encyclopaedia of Indian culture, written in Spanish and Nahuatl, and in the same royal order addressed to the Viceroy Martín Enríquez, he says: “y estaréis advertido de no consentir que por ninguna manera persona alguna escriba cosas que toquen a supersticiones y manera de vivir que estos indios tenían, en ninguna lengua...” (Baudot 2002: 51). Paradoxically, he also seizes and maintains in a secret place the books prepared under his own auspices by the crown scientist, Dr. Francisco Hernández, who had been sent to New Spain with the purpose of undertaking botanical and zoological research, in what is considered the first scientific expedition to America (Baudot 2002: 53). Philip III, his son, recalled the crown’s purpose to establish Spanish as the official language, but the reactions in New Spain were that it was almost impossible. There still was a gap between political and religious objectives: political ends needed Spanish while religious objectives could be only fulfilled by maintaining vernaculars; but these conflicting interests would gradually be reconciled. The influence of the Enlightenment meant, in this regard, that the monastic orders lost ground in favor of the seculars, who were less inclined to learn the languages and to live closer to the **Indian population**.

But the step towards effective hispanization was taken, and successive monarchs reinforced the move. In 1634, Philip IV, convinced that only Spanish as a general language would ensure the standardization needed for the consolidation of a bureaucracy,

¹² BHA IV, 275 - 277

administration and educational systems, required the priests in missions and Indian villages to urge the Indians to learn Spanish. In view of the reluctance to obey this order, his successor, Charles II, issued in 1686 a Royal decree (*Cédula Real*) with pressing instructions to both priesthood and State to immediately enforce the laws promoting Spanish and report back to him on the progress achieved. The opposition was tenacious, and in 1693 he entrusted the colonial administration to monitor the program of implementation of Spanish. The continued lack of progress is made evident by the fact that in 1728, descendants of noble Indians, faced with the impossibility of social and economic promotion for lack of adequate instruction and, in particular, for lack of Spanish, were asking for the reopening of the early Indian Colleges of Santa Cruz and San Gregorio (Brice Heath 1992: 78-79).¹³

The secular clergy, which played a secondary role in the Christianization of New Spain, confined as it was to the urban centers and, particularly, to the provision of religious services for the Spaniards, held strong feelings against the monastics. Priests seldom learned indigenous languages and could not therefore apply for posts in Indian communities. Religious authorities were also of the opinion that the unity of the language would entail a spiritual unity of the nation. In 1769, archbishop Lorenzana wrote a **comprehensive** pastoral letter reviewing the linguistic policy and concluding that for the **good of the *naturales*** as well as for the good of the nation, Spanish should be extensively disseminated (Brice Heath 1992: 81-83).

So, the push towards hispanization came from several fronts: the Monarchy and the

¹³ These *Colegios* were established around 1530 with the purpose of creating an educated Indian elite. It is there that, with the assistance of Indian scholars, important grammars, lexicons and translations were produced. Indian scholars were trained in translating Latin and Spanish.

administration, the secular clergy and the Indian elite. However, there were obstacles from the social and political side. Maybe the best illustration of it is the veiled opposition of the Viceroy, Antonio María de Bucareli (1771-1779) for whom this hispanization endangered social order, since it meant socializing education. In a period of intense intellectual activity, of innovation and exchange of ideas, as I will show in the course of this research, he deliberately ignored all Royal orders towards the opening of education to Indians. In fact, the confrontation prevailed at the eve of Independence.

In his overview of Mexican Nationalism, David Brading (1973) defines this period (from the Conquest to the 1770's) as the period of emergence of a national feeling, that he calls "patriotismo criollo", a sort of proto-nationalism, led by the elite of Spaniards born in Mexico who felt frustrated by their lack of access to political and administrative posts and humiliated by the permanent disdain from the Spanish born in the peninsula, but who felt no binding with the Indian population. Indeed, Brading uses as testimonies the works of prominent members of this elite, Spanish-speaking, Indian-despising, *criolla* society. He draws no correlation between the emergence of a national identity and the use of languages. We are thus led to think that only with the imposition of Spanish by the Crown these feelings emerged, or that nationalism in Mexico is of Spanish language, that only when multilingualism was abolished could a national feeling reveal itself, or that a national identity was only a minority feeling. I hope to be able to challenge this assumption in the course of this research.

FIRST PART

THEORETICAL OUTLINE

1.1. Translation studies

This work is very generally framed within translation studies. It is there where it was conceived and where it belongs. And, within translation studies, it is more narrowly framed by translation history. However, because I am tracing historical functions of translation and this is, therefore, a diachronical study, and because Spanish colonial translation is a relatively new field, I am using colonial history as a complementary frame; in particular, I have found coincidences of objects and methods with scholars linked to the history of representations. I have also looked for common ground in nationalism studies, since I am trying to establish the relationship between translation and national identity. These theoretical frames will be outlined in the following sections.

1.1.1. Descriptive translation studies, the cultural turn

This work is the product of readings and discussions of some authors who, during the last ten to fifteen years, have stretched the limits of the translation field, particularly those who introduced the idea that translation could be studied and described as a cultural phenomenon, irrespectively of the languages involved and the quality of the product (Gideon Toury, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere), those who exposed the relevance of translation in the many aspects of cultural life (Jean Delisle), the complicities of translation with power as well as its instrumentality to subvert power (Maria Tymoczko, Sherry Simon), the ability of translation to convey social discourses (Annie Brisset), the historicity of all translations, which means that translation can be studied both at macro historical and micro-historical levels (Paul Saint-Pierre, Anthony Pym, Clara Foz), the interlinkages

between translations and non-translations, those who have intimated a larger definition of translation (Gideon Toury), and those who have given visibility to translators (Anthony Pym, and Lawrence Venuti).

The idea that one could analyze translations as products of a culture was introduced and explained by Gideon Toury in his now classical work *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995), although he was already preparing the ground for it since the 1980's.¹⁴ In so doing, he established the theoretical basis for a large array of future studies, particularly in history and criticism. He presents a theoretical framework under which translated texts can be descriptively studied, irrespectively of the fidelity to their originals. Drawing from the polysystem theory of I. Even-Zohar, he questioned the traditional location of translation as the bridge between two cultures by arguing that translations are facts of the target culture, that they are governed by norms, which are collective constrictions internalized by the translator, and that they belong to the polysystem of the receiving culture. By including into the field of translation the production of pseudo-translations, he stretched the definition of translation up to a point in which it encompasses almost anything that the target culture considers as a translation. Further stretches to the identification of translation, now in the sense of ideological responsibilities, have come from "the cultural turn" in translation studies, as introduced by Mary Snell-Hornby and developed by comparatists Susan Bassnett and the late André Lefevere (1990), who stressed the lack of innocence of any translation, and the double historicity of the translation process: "translation as an activity is always doubly contextualized" (1990: 11); that is, texts written originally in one context, having particular functions, are called to

¹⁴ Cf. *In search of a Theory of Translation*, (1980) The Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics, Tel Aviv University.

exert functions, which may or not be different from the original ones, in other contexts. These functions of translation can be more or less consciously given by the translator himself, but they mostly (cor)respond to what can be said and thought at his/her time (couldn't we say, that even very individualistic post-colonial or gendered translations could be published because of a social acquiescence towards post-colonial and gender issues?) . Therefore, translations and their functions can be studied socially and historically, just as any text and the functions given to it. This feature makes possible to study translation from a sociocritical stand, as has been done by Annie Brisset.

The notion that translation can have as a function that of bringing about new identities is crucial in this thesis. The aspect of translation in the creation of national literary and aesthetic values was admirably explained by Antoine Berman (1984) in his work of the role of translation in German culture, particularly with regard to the notion of *Bildung*, and we are all acquainted with the role of translation in the constitution of modern Hebrew. A few examples can also be found in studies on Catalan translations and their role in advancing nationalistic ideas. These cases illustrate deliberate uses of translation in particular historical moments in which it is felt that a language could benefit from a foreign input. There are, however, other cases in which the identity is less a deliberate product of translation than an unintended effect of translation, although if its mechanisms can be elicited and generalized, it could be also deliberately used. This phenomenon, often referred to but rarely properly analyzed, is explained by Lawrence Venuti in his 1995 article *Translation and the Formation of Cultural Identities*. In it, he examines the fact that translation not only “constructs a domestic representation for a foreign text and culture”, but “simultaneously constructs a domestic subject, a position of intelligibility that is also an

ideological position” (Venuti 1995: 10), with several interesting examples of English translations of Classical Greek, English translations of modern Japanese literature and Bible translation. His main thrust is the formation of stereotypes in the receiving culture and his conclusion places the responsibility into the hands of the translator, thereby making him/her a true ethical subject.

Translation historical studies developed simultaneously to these innovative approaches, although they seem to have originally spun out of a need for recognition of the place and contribution of translation and translators to history in general. They seem not to echo the changes brought about by the cultural turn, but rather appear as a response to the invisibility of the translator topos, his/her ancillary condition, which encumbered the efforts to consolidate the discipline. The following section is devoted to a discussion of translation history development and its relationship with historiography.

1.1.2. Translation history and historiography

Let me start by making a brief allusion to last years’ Canadian Translation Studies Association (CATS) annual conference (May 2004), the theme of which was “Translation and the future of History” (“La traduction et l’histoire à venir” in French). Two prominent pioneers of the field were participating: Jean Delisle and Julio César Santoyo, both representing the approach of a “histoire totale”, concerned about covering as soon as possible as much field as possible and worried about the need to fill in the existing information gaps. Complementing this approach, a number of other participants, some of them, like myself, newcomers, were suggesting the need for “microhistory”, “localism”, case studies as well as the need for discussing methodologies, i.e.: what kind of history and

with what means and methods. In general, we were acknowledging the fact that there is a methodological indefinition in translation history, probably due to a status of the subdiscipline which is perceived as unclear.

The fact is that in translation history we seem to do many different things, with different approaches, in a very eclectic way. There are compilations, anthologies, biographies, short monographies, etc., etc., and nobody seems to care much about method. However, without any prescriptive intention, at least for the sake of the observation it seems to me pertinent to ask ourselves if the history of translations and translators does or should follow the methods and questions of general historiography (an idea that seems not to have occurred to the translation historians), or whether it does or should establish itself as a subdiscipline of translation studies, with questions and methods tied to the theoretical premises established roughly since the advent of descriptive translation studies (something that seems to be occurring, although not terribly consciously).

It is Anthony Pym who makes the link and endeavors to identify the place where Translation History could belong. He does so in *Method in Translation History* (1998), where he rightly starts by trying to locate the discipline within the field of Translation Studies, as charted by Holmes in 1972. He observes that Holmes did not envisage any particular heading or slot for Translation History. Pym devotes the following chapters to define several types of history-making, and explains the several specific difficulties historians of translation may encounter: how to deal with lists, catalogues, corpora, how to define translation, how to make sense of regularities, discern regimes, etc..., with the help of several examples. In his conclusion, Pym discusses the several options he thinks are possible to sponsor Translation History, only to discard them and to propose that a larger

field of Intercultural Studies, not yet defined, but clearly of a multidisciplinary profile, is the place where Translation History belongs. In any case, little attention is paid in translation history to questions of method, and nobody seems to have shown any intention to devise a general way to perform it.

But, in my opinion, the question of adscription is far from being irrelevant since it presupposes epistemologically different approaches: either we take translation history as belonging to translation studies, and we stress the translatory aspect, as could be the strict relationship between source text and target text, in a more “endogamic” move that can result in a reinforcement of our own translation field as an independent turf, or we take translation history as belonging to History (or one of its already established fields, i.e., intellectual history, cultural history, social history, history of “mentalities”, of representations...), and we make use of their tools for analysis, and incorporate to their trends and debate their issues, in a more “exogamic” move, that can result instead in **diluting** and mainstreaming translation issues.

If we take Pym’s idea to consider translation history into a new discipline, namely **intercultural studies**, arguing that translation is basically concerned with intercultural **exchanges** and that translators are intercultural subjects,¹⁵ we should start by asking **ourselves** if we need such a new field, and if we are convinced that interculturality has **more explanatory power** or is more encompassing than translation studies or History, we **will** have to devote some time to the definition of terms, identification of the objects, scoping, methods and questions that will distinguish our work from the one that we could undertake under the already known Translation Studies and History paradigms.

¹⁵ Never does Pym seem to think of the possibility of locating translation history anywhere close to History. Indeed, there is not a single item in his bibliography concerning history-making in general.

This is what Pym tried to do two years later, when he put his *Intercultures* to test in a second volume: *Negotiating the Frontier*, in 2000. It is a collection of essays on intercultural activity in different periods and places. Here, historical data are used as raw material to explain how cultures have negotiated through translation. No criticism is exerted on those data nor is any particular historical approach considered more relevant than any other to treat them. History is given there a secondary, instrumental role, the backdrop against which intercultural play. Pym puts the stress in the intercultural more than in the historical, and gives particular importance to the frontier societies, groups, entities or individuals who, by translating, bring about changes. And these frontier people constitute the intercultural. Since intercultural are universal and a-temporal, would this mean that our history of colonial translation (undeniably of an intercultural nature) could be studied with the same methods as present-day European Community translation (an intercultural if there is one)?

And this is where History, and in particular intellectual history or history of ideas and representations, is missing. Pym's insistence on seeing translators as the main characters and to give translations an essential role in cultures makes him disregard the nuances brought to colonial history by some critical studies. To respond to some of the assertions Pym makes in the chapters devoted to Spanish colonial translation, there are grounds to believe that Antonio de Nebrija's grammar was not a textbook for linguistic colonialism; languages in America were seen by the missionaries in the context of their prejudices against local religion and not as an obstacle to imperialism; clearly, the imposition of Spanish was not a move to get rid of translators and interpreters and to suppress translation altogether. Bound up to the defense of translation and translators, Pym is also blind to

effect of the massive demographic shift in ratios of Spanish and *mestizo* to Indians during the period up to 1600, nor to the more natural acquisition of Spanish by mixed races, and by those populations forced to emigrate.

What I mean to say here is that if we try to look at colonial translation history only through the looking glass of today's translation studies paradigms, and we want it to become the clue to what happened there, we may fall prey to simplistic arguments. Because, first of all, translation was one among many ways to represent colonial power, second, and more importantly, it was a multifaceted activity, used also in many and contradictory ways. Hence, from the methodological point of view, it is imperative to admit the fact that many aspects of interest to translation historians have been touched upon by other disciplines, mostly well established disciplines, like plain history or literary history. They have been mostly blind to translation, true, and maybe we could give ourselves the role of correcting this bias, but if we want our history to be of any relevance outside our own field, it has to acknowledge other disciplines' inputs.

Another problem with Pym's intercultures is that they are understood as the spaces between cultures, as if cultures would be easy to define and delimit, given objects, rather than moving and changing constructions. For instance, the demythologizing of some pre-Hispanic customs done by anthropologist Alfredo López Austin (1996) has demonstrated that very early in the colonial life some Spanish folk traits were assimilated by the local Mexican populations, and today they are commonly considered as the purest of Mexican traditions. The very notion of interculture presupposes a certain essentialism of the cultures between which it locates itself. And even if, for practical purposes, we would talk about cultures as national products, we can only be sure of their existence in those two or two and

a half centuries (18th-20th) in which nationalism has been the predominant ideology of the State. What would all the mixing and migrations of the pre-state Middle-Ages be? Isn't mixing and migration, true intercultural, rather the rule than the exception in world history?

I agree with Pym in that intercultural are composed of people who bring about changes, who act as intermediaries, and these people are linked to some professions rather than others. In colonial Mexico we can talk undoubtedly about a class of "literate" ("letrados", to borrow the term consecrated by Ángel Rama (2004)), that is, people from both sides who master the written word and, in the translators case, more than one language, as drivers of certain changes. Indeed, this is what I have found in my research: a number of Churchmen and laymen (sorry, only two women), at the beginning Spanish and Indian, and later mixed raced, who were acquainted with the written word, and who were also close to centers of power and decisions (Indians who were bilingual got closer to power than those that were not. Interpreters, as auxiliaries in the administration of justice, were well placed to acquire power and influence). But we can also identify this class because its traces are visible. It is obvious that these people were not what we would call today marginal, similar to the frontier characters that Pym likes to depict. Whether we are thinking of the exiled Jesuits praising the Mexican antiquities, or the descendants of the Indian *caciques* turned interpreters for the administration of justice, they did have connections and a social status that made them absolutely visible, for good or bad, and their networks were large and well knit.

Moreover, one must acknowledge the fact that, aside from this class of intellectuals, there was a popular culture which became very early truly mixed. It is historian Solange Alberro (1999, 2002) who analyzes the cross-culturation of the two societies in early

colonial times, and stresses, for instance, the role of Indian servants in the upbringing of Spanish children. Most importantly, she identifies the religious factor as the matrix of the new identity, a notion that will be illustrated later in these pages.

Now, Pym's solution to locate translation history in intercultural studies, in addition to overstress the translation role, dissolves the historical aspect into the intercultural one, and leaves scope and methods too vaguely defined. And the defining restrictions he places upon the concept of interculturality (Pym 2000: 4-5) while making it workable in certain instances, do not seem applicable to the case of Spain's colonial endeavors, at least in its early phase, in which virtually everybody (professionals and non professionals on both sides, to retain Pym's link between interculturality and professional status) was engaged in the negotiation because it was simply a matter of life and death. In other words, interculturality in our colonial case would be far from derivative. It was everywhere. Not only so, but it seems to me that it was the intercultural negotiation which defined the sides: simplistically put, there was no self-conscience of Spain before the contact, and there was no self-conscience of the Indies before the contact. It was the Indians who made the Spanish and vice-versa.

Pym's work, however, helps us indeed to frame the questions and understand what is being done. Particularly, his tier approach: archaeology, explanation, criticism, seems to me quite pertinent to analyze the purpose and scope of the ways in which we write our history. In fact, the main thrust of translation history as it is published today, and which will necessarily continue to push in view of the information gaps we still have, is the one that puts names and dates, places and context to translators and translations. This is what Anthony Pym calls "archaeology". It still has a vindictive flavor, but its products have

become richer and sounder, and have taken distance from what could be termed “insider’s history”.¹⁶ Part of my research will follow this descriptive, quantitative approach, which has developed from within translation studies themselves. And I will also try to explain how some things were brought about by translation and will definitely try to derive lessons for the present in my conclusion, so I hope to cover the three facets (archaeology, explanation, criticism) of Pym’s translation history method.

The problem evolves, I think, around what Clara Foz suggested in the same conference¹⁷: the uneasiness felt by translation historians when confronted with the enormity and grandiosity of the History field, with its protracted tradition, its great moments, its names, currents, trends, schools... Should we, or do we, belong to that, and should consequently be tied to its methods? Or should we simply skip the whole thing, build our own methods, stop calling ourselves historians (as was suggested on that occasion) and find a different denomination, which could save us from the dangers of criticism for amateurism, or for making “militant history”?

It is true that some of the aspects that I intend to explore have already been analyzed by historians and anthropologists who belong to the post-structural movement and I think that much can be drawn from their methods and findings. This explains why, when dealing with the group of translations I have classified as the Translational Canvass, I have extensively drawn from post-structuralist specialists in middle American history and

¹⁶ Compare, for instance, *Translators Through History*, which was an introductory overview of the fields in which translators have born their influence (as lexicographers, diplomats, disseminators of religions,...) and the two collective collections of biographies: *Portraits de traductrices* and *Portraits de traducteurs*, which give us close-ups of some mostly unknown translators of influential works, revealing their thinking on translation and pointing at ways in which their translation strategies have had ideological consequences. I am also thinking, for the Spanish context, on the collection *El Tabaco que fumaba Plinio*, by Ana Catelli and Margarita Gargatagli.

¹⁷ «Translation, History and the Translation Scholar», in *Translation and the History to come*, in press, UOP

anthropology, most prominently Serge Gruzinski and Jorge Klor de Alva, Solange Alberro and, particularly, from anthropologist-translator Louise Burkhart. The common feature in these scholars is that while they all acknowledge the presence of a power differential between colonizers and colonized, they search precisely at the intersections to see the ways in which negotiations were made, and the moments and circumstances in which power was transferred, the creation of new identities out of the friction between the two cultures.

When dealing with other types of translation, namely the hybrid texts that help building a myth of the past, as well as the translation of classical authors and the ones that illustrate the desire to become a modern nation, I have also based my reflections upon Serge Gruzinski and Carmen Bernand.

In closing this section, I must admit that I have not yet been blessed with the answer or the inspiration with regards to this matter of where should Translation History belong, but the scope of this chapter does not allow for any further musings. I confess a clear preference for using history methods for history of translation here; it is clear to me that as long as it is the socio/historical functions of translation that we are trying to understand, our goals converge towards the goals of history making, and especially the goals of cultural history and history of representations. But I am also in favour of grounding the history of translation within translation studies, so that in its objects and scope it remains tied to our own *modus operandi*, and, in that particular matter, I align myself to the trend inaugurated by the Descriptive Translation Studies movement; this means that translation issues here will be examined in the historical context rather than by what has traditionally been done, that is to say, looking for the relationship translations entertain or should entertain with their originals. I would hope that my purpose and methodology reflects the desire that history of translation starts looking at ways of being relevant not only to ourselves but also to other disciplines, just as Art History or Urban History do.

1.2. Language and nation

In Western tradition, the relationship between language and nation seems to be deeply set: “Medieval ecclesiastics and scholars, with their biblically based belief in the common descent of mankind and their theory of an original community of language, found it natural to see post-Babel differentiation of languages as the first step in the formation of races or peoples” (Bartlett 1996: 128). The link is established as causal, which is: languages determine nations, and not vice versa.

Also, the quote Robert Collison chose for the first chapter of his *History of Foreign Language Dictionaries*: (Collison 1982) “Le premier livre d’une nation est le Dictionnaire de sa langue” symbolically illustrates the deep integration between language and nation. On the one hand, nations identify themselves, among other aspects, by the language they speak, but we could also interpret the statement as meaning that the wealth of words of a nation’s language may well be the measure for the wealth of the nation itself.

So, the language we speak is one of the ways by which we identify ourselves as nations (beyond gender, family, social class or religion). Such is the identification with our language that any of us, whatever our educational background, will feel that we have a full command of it. We all have views, so to speak, about how should things be said, and, as far as language is concerned, we may assert our opinions with more self-assurance than when talking about matters which we are objectively more familiar with. What we say in our nation as compared to what other nations say can be the subject of endless conversations, from brainy academic discussions to just small talk. It is a theme that suggests an immediate sense of belonging. In my ethnic group, the Catalans, there is pride in saying that a given word (take, for instance, “esparracat” (ragged), which phonetically suggests the

act of *torning*, *ragging*) has no exact equivalent in Spanish, the official national language (which would be the much softer-sounding “*harapiento*”). I myself, when translating from Catalan into Spanish, have felt an intimate resistance to the transfer. The resistance is fundamentally irrational, such as when we stubbornly deny equal status to some culinary delicacies present in both nations. But let’s not be mistaken: this symbolic linkage between Catalan language and nation is far from being trivial, judging by the portion of the budget that our local government allocates to the promotion of Catalan among both Catalans and immigrants, as well as to linguistic standardization efforts (creation of term banks and dictionaries) aimed to ensure that whatever linguistic innovations that may come from elsewhere are rapidly echoed by local linguistic products. So rapidly, in fact, that we may even believe that they were not prompted by the foreign language but spontaneously generated at home, which gives a boost to our national pride. Language and nation entertain, therefore, links that belong to the subjective, emotional spheres, and also to the collective, political spheres. Translation, in the largest linguistic sense, as both a frontier that sets the limits and a bridge that overcomes them, as well as a way of appropriation of other culture’s accomplishments, plays a role in this relationship. Also, in its proper, material, sense, translation contributes to this relationship by serving as a means of consolidation of a cultural identity, a function particularly visible in cases or at times (Catalonia or Québec during the last decades) where it is felt that the particular identity is in need of special protection (from threats that may be real or perceived, and expressed politically or otherwise). Sociocriticism analysis carried by Annie Brisset on the translations of Shakespearean drama into Quebec French in the period of the referendum for autonomy has shown how translation shifts consistently contribute to nourish national feelings (Brisset 1996). Another response to this need to nourish national identity feelings

through language is the development of the language industries (translation, interpretation, terminology) in Catalonia and Quebec, which is being fostered at the highest level of policy-making.

We also find translation playing an important role when new national identities are being created. Two cases distant in time come to mind: the rise of modern European nation-states during the Renaissance and, more recently, the creation of the State of Israel and the re-creation of Hebrew. The first European grammars and bilingual lexicons belong to the Renaissance; they establish a distance with respect to Latin, they outline the divide between linguistic communities as well as the material possibilities to bridge this divide. Significantly, their development runs parallel to that of cartography. From then on, it was possible to trace the frontiers of languages along the lines of the map. The first bilingual Latin-Romance lexicons, and at least the first Spanish grammar, were conceived to separate Latin from its dialects; indirectly they were also fixing the vernaculars and acknowledging equal status with them. They became then apt to be recognized as national languages.¹⁸ Translation into these languages and, in particular, Bible Renaissance translations, which can be considered as statements of dissidence against Rome and Latin in the same breadth, will accompany the constitution of French, German and English as national languages.¹⁹

But the role to which I will draw the attention to is that of creating new identities, particularly in the case of colonized nations. Exaggerated as they may seem, statements that have become cliché, such as “Like all new worlds, Canada came into existence by means of

¹⁸ It was not always a deliberate or clear move: Antonio de Nebrija, the author of the first Spanish grammar, arguing in favor of the Spanish language as a weapon of colonization (“compañera del imperio”), in fact wrote the grammar with the purpose of cleansing Latin from barbarisms incorporated through decades of mingling with the vernaculars (Kahane 1992).

¹⁹ See, in particular, chapter 2: “Translators and the Development of National Languages”, and chapter 6: “Translators and the Spread of Religion”, in Delisle and Woodsworth’s (eds.) *Translators through History*.

translation procedures”,²⁰ or “América es un continente traducido” suggest the instrumentality of translation (both figuratively and strictly speaking) in the formation of colonial entities, and this is the aspect to which I will devote my reflections.

Historians and nationalism specialists have not considered language interaction, not to say translation, as an aspect worthy of important consideration in the studies about the contacts between colonialist powers and their colonies. In particular, positive, essentialist history has been blind to translation, generally discarding it as a filter obstructing the way that leads to the truth. But even in historiographical approaches closer to literary studies, there seems to be little attention paid to the use of translation in power relationships. There are, however, noteworthy exceptions.

Some post-structuralist and post-colonial studies have observed that the symbolic and material aspects of translation, inasmuch as it is a particular way of representation, make it a significant tool for representing the colonial contact, the colonizer-colonized relationship and the negotiation of cultural differences. The general theoretical basis for this has been discussed by Tejaswini Niranjana (1992), whose work can be said to belong to the framework set by E. Said’s *Orientalism* (1994) as well as to the field opened by ethnographers and anthropologists such as Talal Asad (1973), James Clifford (1986) and Johannes Fabian (1983) who have questioned the transparency of cultural representations (or translations) and transferred anthropological issues to the field of alterity relationships. In the Hispanic context, Vicente L. Rafael (1993) has studied the particular case of colonial Philippines. Rafael uses the example of missionary translation to reveal the

²⁰ Blodgett, Edward, cited in José Lambert, “La Traduction dans les littératures. Pour une historiographie des traductions”, in Lambert, José and André Lefevere, *Translation in the Development of Literatures*, Leuven University Press, p. 11.

misunderstandings characterizing the communication between the Spanish friars and the Tagalog-speaking populations, suggesting, in the last analysis, the failure of the indoctrination efforts.

Post-structuralist anthropologist Jorge Klor de Alva has given us interesting insights, particularly in his works on Classical Nahuatl and colonial discourse (Klor 1989; 1992), where he observes the designation of Classical Nahuatl by the Spaniards as the national language, by which they appropriated its authority, nobility and prestige and transferred it to Spanish by means of translation.

In summing up, we can say at this juncture - that is, with reference to the particular relationship between nation and translation - , that the textual base of a new social, cultural, political entity born out of a colonial endeavor can be traced in the contractual gestures of translation, and that the self-image of the nation is fed by a large number of representations, one of which being translation.

Now, some consideration should be given to the conceptual framework that underpins the understanding of what we know as nation and its derivatives and qualifications, and suggest possible crossroads with the phenomenon of translation. To start with, some terminological precision is called for here, since throughout this work I will **refer to *national identity*, *nationalism* and *national discourse***, terms which can sometimes **be used as quasi-synonymous**. It is also important to be able to approach them from the viewpoint of translation, an approach that as far as I know, has no precedent, at least in the disciplines to which these terms belong.

The discussions devoted to the problem of defining a phenomenon such as nationalism exceed the scope of this doctoral research. At the risk of simplification,

therefore, I will not dwell on the point of definitions and will rather attempt to locate my translational approach with regard to the theoretical currents of nationalism thinking that have gained general consensus in the last decades, more precisely since E. Renan's seminal essay: *Qu'est-ce que c'est qu'une nation?*.²¹

1.2.1. Nationalism

According to Anthony D. Smith (1997: 73), nationalism is “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential “nation””. It is, Smith says more succinctly, a political ideology revolving around a cultural doctrine. At a more general level, though, he says, “nationalism must be seen as a form of historicist culture and civic education, one that overlays or replaces the older modes of religious culture and familial education. More than a style and doctrine of politics, nationalism is a *form of culture* – an ideology, a language, mythology, symbolism and consciousness [...] and the nation is a type of identity whose meaning and priority is presupposed by this form of culture” (Smith 1997: 92). Nationalism presents itself as territorial, religious, ethnic or linguistic, or as a combination of these elements, in differing emphasis. Dating the birth of nationalism is, largely, a matter of definition. The broader the definition, the earliest the date. With regard to its origins, two main approaches have developed during the 20th century. There is the theoretical current, known as modernism, which sustains that, as an ideology and movement, nationalism is European and relatively recent, having its origins in the 19th century, according to Ernest Gellner (Gellner 1964). Following Elie Kedourie's

²¹ Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? et autres essais politiques*. Paris: Presses Pocket, 1992.

categorical declaration: “Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century” (Kedourie 1960: I), Gellner argues that nations are largely a modern construction, or rather, invention, as summed up in his similarly radical statement: “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness. It invents nations where they do not exist” (Gellner 1964: 168). In general, nationalism is thought of as a European creation; only Benedict Anderson suggests American nationalisms could predate European (Anderson 1991: 191). Modernists highlight the construction aspect of the phenomenon, implied by the notions of “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991), “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm 1983), or “fictive ethnicity” (Balibar 1994). Although they recognize the importance of socio-cultural aspects such as identity and history in the formation of nations, they give them a lesser role than, for instance, the development of institutional structures or the incorporation of popular classes or women into the political life of the state.

A second theoretical approach is the one known as ethno-symbolism, sustained chiefly by Anthony D. Smith, for whom although nations are modern, their concern is primarily identity and history; therefore, their time is more protracted than the modernists claim to be (Hutchinson 1994: 40).

Hutchinson too, like Smith, in reviewing the current state of scholarship in the subject, stresses that nations are a “species of ethnic group”, and that they are “regulated by myths of common descent, a sense of shared history and a distinctive culture”, and argues that modernists “have failed to explore [...] the relationship of nationalism to other belief systems and the complex symbolic mediations and appropriations by which nationalists are able to canalize the past for their purposes” (Hutchinson 2001: 75-77).

In both currents, though, the linguistic aspect of nationalism is highlighted.²² In its 1977 *Nations and States, An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, Hugh Seton-Watson stresses the importance of language in the determination of national movements. Language-based national consciousness is a common feature in nation building, but in different manifestations: not all languages aspire to political autonomy for their nations, as it is the case in multilingual states, and others, like Arabic or Spanish, constitute the basis of larger, supranational, allegiances. Language preservation or decline are not a clear function of nationalist tendencies: in Spanish America, except for the case of Paraguay, where *guarani* is still considered an official language, all states determined at one point or another in their history that Spanish would be the official language, and dozens of local languages were and still are disappearing. In contrast, the white South-African government encouraged the development of local languages “with the undoubted aim”, according to Seton-Watson, “of dividing the Africans in order to better rule them” (Seton-Watson 1977 : 472). In a sense, one could interpret the imposition of Nahuatl over other indigenous languages by the colonial authorities in a similar way. The presence of grammarians and philologists in the constitution of this language-based national or cultural identity has been explained by Seton-Watson, particularly in relation to Central and Eastern European states, and later stressed by Anderson as a force shaping the “imagined community” constituting the nation (Anderson 1991). Indeed, grammars, dictionaries and histories of the languages create a representation of the nation who speaks them. Other representations are brought about historiography, art and museology, among the most documented ones, and translation, among the less documented ones.

²² We should not assume, though, that linguistic nationalism is equivalent to “one language = one nation”. In modern times, Canada and Switzerland, for instance, take pride in their multilingual status. It seems that language, in this sense, has to be taken less literally (Gellner 1964: 174).

Nationalism, as an ideology promoted by the State, makes use of these representations of the nation in order to establish an ideal community proud of its origins, potential and accomplishments. Translation, which traditionally purports to replace something said otherwise, elsewhere, in another language, is one of such representations. What is translated and when depends upon a consensus on what the nation needs to import.

Some texts or authors are translated because they are deemed necessary for the building of a national literature, or national culture in general. Most Western languages have regularly performed translations of Greco-Latin authors, or of literature classics. Within this context, this appropriation of other cultures accomplishments through translation amounts to a statement of equivalence with them. Translation, as a statement of relationship among equals, contributes to parallelisms with the original culture assets that are deemed essential for the nation.

Some texts carry information that is indeed necessary for the self-identification of the nation. Let's take, for example, the Mexican colonial texts written in Nahuatl during the 16th century, which contain most information we have on the pre-Hispanic past. Nowadays, very few people are knowledgeable about that particular register of this language and, in general, their contents seem to be encrypted. This puts an enormous responsibility upon the translators who have transmitted them to us. However, it is not recognized that the knowledge we have about the pre-Hispanic past is largely dependent on a few translations.

When a representation is successful enough, it becomes a stereotype. In his *Invented Traditions*, Hobsbawm has shown the mechanisms by which nationalism creates such stereotypes (Hobsbawm 1983), and Anderson contributes a selection of other representations: museums, census, maps (Anderson 1991) in the formation of the

“imagined community” that is fostered by nationalism. If we turn to Mexico, the representation brought about the afore-mentioned translations in the 20th century helped to consolidate the Aztec past as the emblem of the nation (Payàs 2004), a source of pride both internally and *vis à vis* other nations (Gamio 1960).

I concur with Natividad Gutiérrez (1999) in that the two approaches to nationalism need not be opposed. They can be taken as complementary in that they highlight different aspects of the complex and multifarious phenomenon, which is the constitution and continuity or dissolution of a nation.

1.2.2. National identity and discourse

The term “national identity”, on the other hand, refers to the collective feeling of belonging to which nationalism appeals and which it entertains. The emotional nature of this sentiment defies and goes beyond articulation in rational terms. To take an illustrious example, Freud expressed that he felt bonded to Jews and Jewishness by “many obscure and emotional forces, which were the more powerful the less they could be expressed in words, as well as by a clear consciousness of inner identity, a deep realization of sharing the same psychic structure”. It is the “non rational core of the nation [...] triggered through nationalist poetry [...], through music, [...], through use of familiar metaphors...”²³ Again, along the lines of discussion of the term “nationalism”, we have a dual theoretical approach: firstly, the modernist current, sustaining that a national consciousness is not older than the advent of “print-capitalism”. Anderson establishes the link between, on the one hand, the upsurge of vernaculars, their “assembly” or clustering as print-languages, and, on

²³ Cited in Walker Connor 1996: 72-74

the other, their territorialization ultimately creating the “embryo of a nationally imagined community” of speakers of a national language (Anderson 1991: 44). In other words, that there is no national identity before nationalism, *i.e.*, it is not a natural thing to “belong to a nation”, but that it is a construction derived from nationalism (Gellner 1964). Secondly, the ethno-symbolic current, which tracks this identity to an ethnic past (Smith 1984). For ethno-symbolists, ethnic legitimating is crucial for the survival of the nation. One important aspect of this approach, which has a bearing upon translation, is myth formation. Smith proposes in particular that the myths of descent, while being unique to each culture, possess myth components that are common to all nationalist movements: a myth of temporal origins, a myth of location and migration, a myth of ancestry, a myth of heroic age, a myth of decline and a myth of regeneration (Smith 1984). The formal presentation of these myths requires discursive transformations sometimes akin to translation (transwritings) and sometimes translation proper: in my catalogue, hybrid texts, partly interlinguistic translations, partly intersemiotic translations, partly extrapolations, written by *mestizo* chroniclers during the first hundred years after the Conquest belong to this myth-making tradition.

For Smith, the question central to identity: “who am I?” is intrinsically tied to the question the answer to which will establish my social and territorial location: “where do I come from?” And this is also true for the national identity. The quest of origins seems to be also universal and timeless, and it adopts different modes of ethnic myth-making, broadly classified in two categories: genealogical and ideological (or biological and cultural-ideological), not always necessarily separate but overlapping. The myths of common descent, temporal origins, location and migration, heroic age, decline and regeneration,

identified by Smith as some of the ethnic myths that support a national identity, are intensely tapped by nationalist movements (Smith 1984).

Let's take the case of the Aztec mythical arrival to the valley of Anahuac (present Mexico valley) at the beginning of the twelfth century. It is known (Bernardino de Sahagún,²⁴ the sixteenth century missionary ethnographer is the first to have signaled it) that in order to legitimate its dominance over the Toltec populations inhabiting the valley, the Aztec king Izcóatl (1427-1440) ordered the destruction of the Toltec books, which narrated their history, and the subsequent writing of the new history. But the new history could not be created totally anew. As Enrique Florescano says:

los aztecas echaron mano del prestigioso pasado tolteca [...] que exaltaron hasta volverlo una edad de oro [...] se apropiaron del aura cultural que le atribuía a Tula la creación del calendario, la astronomía, la agricultura, las ciencias y las artes. De este modo se hicieron de una genealogía de padres fundadores que los ligaba con los orígenes mismos del cosmos y los hacía partícipes de las hazañas más notables de los seres humanos. (Florescano 1999: 146-47)

The radical reelaboration of history declared that the Aztecs were predestined to rule the land and that they were the true heirs of the prestigious Toltecs: it is the myth of the splendor of the Aztec past, which has nourished national pride and has been invoked **whenever** it could serve nationalist purposes. In the 1940s, a period of intense nationalism, **when the eminent Nahuatl specialist Ángel María Garibay** translated texts related to the pre-Hispanic past, he too, by his choice of words in the translation, stressed the importance of the Toltec civilization (Payàs 2004). Confirming that slash and burn procedures in

²⁴ BHA IV, 275 - 276

history reinvention are widespread, in early colonial times, Diego de Landa,²⁵ the Dominican friar who was in charge of the indoctrination of the Maya peoples of Yucatán, led a public ceremony in which many books of the Indians where their histories were told were ritually burned. A new history had to be written, by which the nation could explain itself how it had all begun, where they came from and what their destiny was: translation was there again to assist in the selection of what would be of help in the new narrative: in his *Indios reales, indios imaginarios*, Guy Rozat examines how the translation and dramatic representation of the fall of Jerusalem furnished an *a posteriori* explanation for the fall of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital city, at the hands of the Spanish (Rozat 2002).

Although, given its collective nature, we could think of myth-making as a natural, anonymous endeavor, in fact the consolidation and dissemination of myths is the task of a class of intellectuals (priests, literati, grammarians and philologists, historians and wise men of different sorts). It is them who have access to the sources, and who are the interpreters and chief transmitters of myths, which can be then disseminated through several means, most prominently by collective rituals such as religious, political or school ceremonies. The sum of these collective rituals, and the textual devices sustaining them, that are geared to obtain a social consensus on identity, could be understood as subject to what Marc Angenot defined as “social discourse”: “les systèmes génériques, les répertoires topiques, les règles de dissémination d’énoncés qui, dans une société donnée, organisent le dicible –le narrable et l’opérable- et assurent la division du travail discursif » (Angenot 1988: I).

The notion of national discourse I am using in this work could therefore be defined

²⁵ BHA III, 86 - 88

as **the set of discursive strategies, choice of topics and means of dissemination that convey the notion of a national identity**. To study the national discourse means to trace the ideologemes²⁶ of national identity, common heritage, unity of destiny, within the “énorme masse des discours qui parlent, qui font parler le socius et viennent à l’oreille de l’homme en société » (Angenot 1988: II). Nationalism as an ideology resorts to a national discourse in order to reinforce these ideologemes. We can call it then nationalist propaganda, which is disseminated and redistributed by the intellectuals and the institutions of the State, chiefly through the educational system.

Along these lines, I am considering translated texts with their paratexts (prologues, commentaries, glosses) and production conditions (selection of authors, texts and languages to be translated), as constituting a *discursive practice* operating within the social discourse that may carry and disseminate elements of these ideologemes of national identity, common heritage, etc...

What is the place of translation as a discursive practice within the national discourse? It is worth emphasizing here the heterogeneity and interconnectedness of the discourses on the idea of nation. A nation is not only represented by the historiographic or political discourses, but is also represented in cinema, visual arts, urbanism and **architecture**, among other means, together with autonomous textual production (literary and **not literary**) and translations. All these discourses on the nation may be formally dissimilar (visual, textual, oral...), but there are connections between them. Echoing Bakhtine,

²⁶ According to Marc Angenot, an ideologue is a presupposition of discourse, a shared postulate, a common ground, or an ideological maxim “underlying an utterance whose subject/matter covers a particular field of relevance (be it “moral value”, “the Jew”, “the mission of France”, or “the maternal instinct”). Edmond Cros has extended the meaning of the ideologue to include networks of value systems that are reproduced and disseminated by the social discourse, such as “the heritage”. Jameson defines them as historically determined conceptual or semic complexes which can project themselves also as “philosophical concepts, or in the form of a protonarrative, a private or collective narrative fantasy” (Jameson 1981: 115).

Angenot talks about a general interaction among discourses, a marked interdiscursivity :

Les genres et les discours ne forment pas de complexes imperméables les uns aux autres. Les énoncés ne sont pas à traiter comme des « choses », mais comme des « maillons » de chaînes dialogiques ; ils ne se suffisent pas à eux-mêmes, ils sont le reflet les uns des autres « pleins d'échos et de rappels », pénétrés de « visions du monde », tendances, théories, d'une époque. (Angenot 1988: IV).

This translation discourse entertains therefore also intertextual relations with other discourses, namely with autonomous texts, just as there are connections between visual and textual discourses. Serge Gruzinski's works on the occidentalization of the colonial society through its visual productions, in linking textual and visual discourse show the usefulness of such intertextual analysis. An example from my research could be the portrait of Aztec God Tezcatlipoca, with the legend "Tezcatlipoca, otro Jupiter" (Fig. 2), in the *Códice Tovar*.



The *Tovar Codex* is an illustrated manuscript written by mestizo Jesuit Juan de Tovar²⁷ at the end of the 1580s. A later chronicle, the 1615 monumental *Monarquía Indiana*, by the Franciscan Juan de Torquemada,²⁸ shows intertextual relationships with the Tovar manuscript. Tovar translates Tezcatlipoca into Jupiter, and Torquemada elaborates, in a whole chapter: “Cap. XX. Que trata de el Dios Tezcatlipoca, y de los atributos que le aplicaban, y como fue este el que los antiguos Gentiles llamaron Jupiter” (Torquemada 1615/1975, I: 38-41)

1.3. Methodological questions

The specificities of this research demanding methodological attention are the following:

1. The research covers all translations (published and manuscripts, actual and presumed, extant and disappeared), in all languages (over 25) and all fields.
2. The research covers a long span (1521-1821), circumscribed by two historical facts: the Conquest and the Independence).
3. The purpose is to elicit historical functions of translations, in particular with reference to identity creation.

Therefore, the methodological approach should help dealing with a large number of translations, managing and classifying translations and translators lists, they should also help in the selection of representative items to be analyzed and, finally, they should assist in the analysis.

²⁷ BHA V, 52 - 53

²⁸ BHA V, 37 - 38

Two methodological models will be followed:

1. Anthony Pym's archaeological approach for the quantitative analysis.
2. History of representations and descriptive translation studies approach for the qualitative analysis.

As I explained in the chapter on language and nation, I am trying to force myself to see beyond our field, with the result, as it should become clear in the course of the following pages, that as we go back into Colonial times and as soon as we risk some interdisciplinarity our traditional categories for delimiting, identifying and classifying translation (source culture, receiving culture, text, author, reader) show their inadequacy: the parameters that were good to tell us what we, translators, are, and the kind of work we do, do not strictly apply, as I will show in the following pages. I have therefore found myself more than once away from familiar grounds, exposed to wind and weather.

I think, nonetheless, that this exercise is most useful. Tracing the occurrence of translation through history and trying to elucidate the functions that it has been called to perform, instead of looking at translation per se, I am trying to avoid an essentialist tendency to view translation as a unique, different phenomenon, for which we have to invent new tools of understanding. Translation is a form of representation and, as such, it produces meanings, but it is not the only form of representation and we can truly take advantage of other disciplines approaches to investigate into these meanings.

In my work, translation is considered as an intellectual practice capable of producing and reproducing collective representations, such as an idea of nation. As far as method is concerned, this means that although I will examine some translations in detail, it is the general picture that concerns the research. For this purpose, I have collected all types

of translation, both literary and non-literary, from and to indigenous, foreign and classical languages. The collection overlaps adjacent fields: grammar and dictionary-making, which coexist with translations during the missionary period (approximately the years of the “spiritual conquest”: 1520s to 1570s). I am also collecting borderline cases, such as versions or transformations of Spanish or Latin doctrinal works written in indigenous languages by Spanish friars, that can be presumed to be translations; and lost translations, such as the first translation, which, according to several authors, was also the first printed item in America: Juan de Estrada’s²⁹ Spanish translation of 7th century spiritual classic, St. John Climacus’ *Scala Paradisi*, printed in 1532 for the use of the Franciscans living in the convent of Mexico City.

A few words regarding the problem of obtaining data for translation history in Latin America: in general, we are talking about a new field, the objects of which have not been catalogued, and which are not always consistently identified in library catalogues, particularly for the Colonial period. We still depend therefore upon secondary sources belonging to other disciplines: in philology and anthropology we can find, *e.g.*, data on codices with annotated translations and, in general, on the situation of indigenous languages *vs.* Spanish; in history of literature we can also find references to literary translation, although the stress is always put in the original works and not in the translations themselves, which deserve the usual cursory treatment. With regard to non-literary translation, data are even more difficult to trace, and the sources that can be consulted for information are the histories of science and education and, of course, the hemerographic collections. Whatever the case, the dissemination of data makes the task of searching and selecting time-consuming. In spite of the wealth of scholarly work in Colonial studies, we

²⁹ BHA II, 250

cannot but recognize that as far as translation history is concerned, we are in the process of **creating information** by patiently gleaning in other disciplines' materials.

The history of Greco-Latin Classical texts seems to be the only aspect having been continuously explored.³⁰ The department of Classical Studies (Letras Clásicas) at the UNAM, as well as its *Instituto de Estudios Bibliográficos*, have for long studied the use of Latin as well as the re-edition, translation and reception of Classical works in Mexico. In the periodization presented by the late Ignacio Osorio Romero (1989), the best known specialist in this field, the first Mexican translation of a Classic, published in 1581, was Persio's *Satires*, the author of which was Bartolomé Melgarejo (a scholar from the University of Alcalá, who was appointed to occupy the first chair in canonical studies at the newly funded university of Mexico in 1553).³¹

Luckily, there exists a strong bibliographical and biographical tradition in Latin America since the 18th century (both religious and civil). This tradition is rooted in the patriotic desire to attest to the intellectual capability of the Hispanic overseas empire, at least in the Mexican two largest bibliographies: the *Bibliotheca mexicana*, by Eguiara y Eguren (1755), and Beristáin's *Biblioteca Hispano Americana septentrional* (1821/1947),³² my main source. Incidentally, in both cases, this patriotism is conservative, that is, not expressed as a will of political independence. Indeed, Beristáin's, bibliography was written as an argument against the movement for independence, which tenants claimed that Spain had held its colonies in intellectual neglect.

³⁰ Ignacio Osorio Romero, "La traducción de los autores grecolatinos en México", in *Lenguaje y tradición*, Herón Pérez Martínez (ed.) El Colegio de Michoacán, 1989. See also the bibliography listed in this article.

³¹ Beristáin, tomo III, p. 230. Osorio Romero notes that in the introduction to the translation, Melgarejo says that, as far as possible, he had « moralized » the text and adjusted it to the Holy Scriptures (*op.cit.* , p. 440).

³² These dates correspond to the first and last edition. The one I have consulted is the only complete edition, namely, the one published in Mexico by Editorial Navarro - Ediciones Fuente Cultural, in 1947.

Now, the New Spain translation catalogue extracted from the *Biblioteca Hispano-Americana Septentrional*, this bio-bibliography originally written in 1821 by José Mariano Beristáin de Souza, a prominent Mexican Catholic priest, is composed of 405 names of translators and transwriters, lexicographers and grammarians and over 700 titles. The extraction was done manually,³³ by reading the some 4,700 entries in search of New Spain translators and translations,³⁴ and transferring the data into a record in which name, dates, titles of the translations, some biographical data, and the location of the entry in the bio-bibliography, were registered. A control of the data was done by verification of each entry in a modern Mexican biographical dictionary,³⁵ and the location of each entry in this control dictionary was also incorporated into the register.

Name: Arenas, Pedro
Category: lexicographer
Date: beg. 17th c.
Origin: unknown, could be Mexican but not Indian
Adscription: layman
Title: Vocabulario manual de las lenguas castellana y mexicana
Printed: Mexico, 1611
Other data: this vocabulary seems to have been very popular. It was reprinted 14 times (last: 1887). A facs. edition was published in 1982 (UNAM) with a preliminary study by Ascensión H. de León-Portilla.
Language: Spanish-Nahuatl /Nahuatl-Spanish
Source: Beristáin, vol. I, p. 164; and vol. V, p. 306
 Porrúa, vol. I, p. 164

In view of Beristáin's intention, we speculated at that time (2001-2002) that the bibliography was as complete as it could possibly be at the time and with the available resources. In fact, the author himself says in the introduction that he purports to have

³³ Under my direction, by Rosario Rueda, BA student at the Instituto Angloamericano de Puebla, Mexico.

³⁴ I am taking Mexico in its present geographical boundaries. The origin of the translators is immaterial for our purposes, as well as the place where the translations were published.

³⁵ Diccionario Porrúa. Historia, biografía y geografía de México, (3rd. ed.) Mexico: Porrúa, 1971.

registered everything, and not only a selection of the best authors.³⁶ He should not have missed the opportunity to include even translators and translations in the list. There were, however, omissions, some more obvious than others: the most obvious, and natural one, is the absence of pictographic or mixed (pictographic and alphabetical) texts, which at the time were little known and considered pre-historical (although most of them had been produced in post-Conquest times). These texts should be considered to belong to the translation field, since they were brought about by means of interlinguistic or intersemiotic³⁷ transfer, and they contain transcriptions in Nahuatl or translations into Castilian.³⁸

There is also a very large production of bureaucratic documents, of which a part could be said to be translations. I refer to the hundreds of texts related to civil and judicial administration that still exist in the Mexican archives.³⁹ I have decided nevertheless to concentrate on authorial texts that were registered by Beristáin in his patriotic bio-bibliographical apparatus. I have also thought it reasonable to include anonymous works only if I have been able to see them; Beristáin enlists a number of anonymous (by him or as products of later additions), but there are possibly repetitions and their status is difficult to determine unless one can examine each of them. I will analyze some individual anonymous that I have been able to examine, and they are included in my primary sources bibliography.

³⁶ “Qué, ¿sólo deben ponerse en una Biblioteca las obras de Newton, de Leibnitz, de Milton o de Shakespeare? Mi Biblioteca no es *selecta*, sino histórica y universal, y todo debe ponerse en ella...” (Beristáin 1947 : 32)

³⁷ R. Jakobson defines intersemiotic translation as the “interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” On Translation, Reuben Brower ed., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1966 [1959], p. 233.

³⁸ They have been explored, among others, by Serge Gruzinski (1988), as sources for understanding the gradual incorporation of western concepts into the indigenous societies. Because of the focus upon the contact between the two civilizations and its repercussions, his reading has been inspirational for my research.

³⁹ Anthropologists have been increasingly directing their attention to these documents, in particular since the 1976 publication of *Beyond the Codices*, a study of Nahua testaments and similar documents by James Lockhart and other scholars.

Finally, going back to Beristáin, further library and other research corrected the somewhat hastily assumption of exhaustiveness: there were more translations and translators (I found 35 more translators and a number of anonymous translations in the Fondo José Toribio Medina of Chile's National Library)⁴⁰ that Beristáin did not know of or omitted, and that I included in the register. It has been also drawn to my attention⁴¹ that D. Miguel Hidalgo (1753-1811), Father of the Mexican Independence movement, who had translated Voltaire, Molière and others (his "tertulia" was known as "la pequeña Francia") is conspicuously absent. For all these reasons, the initial register could only be considered as a preliminary catalogue; its size and coverage, however, made it a very valuable tool.

Turning back to its original structure, the following categories were devised:

- ❖ translators proper (translations duly identified, sometimes with information on the originals)
- ❖ transwriters (authors of versions, paraphrases, hybrid texts, intersemiotic translations)
- ❖ lexicographers (authors of bilingual lexicons, regardless of size)
- ❖ grammarians (authors of grammars of languages other than Spanish: indigenous and Classical languages)
- ❖ combinations thereof (translator-lexicographer; grammarian -lexicographer, ...)

This organization allowed me to see the corpus from a biographical point of view: who did what, who the person was and what combinations of translation work did he performed. Once transferred to a computer database,⁴² it became easy to attempt some groupings and statistical exercises. The potential of such a work is quite impressive, when,

40 José Toribio Medina (1852-1930), eminent Chilean bibliographer. He donated his large collection of to Chile's National Library. According to his biographers, the Fund bearing his name contains one of the largest collections of Latin-American colonial material (see page 65).

⁴¹ By Luis Hachim, from the Universidad de Santiago de Chile, a specialist in Beristáin.

⁴² Microsoft Access 2002 was used here

for instance, we can draw smaller *corpora*⁴³ as the basis for further research, such as this one showing Franciscans having written lexicons in the 16th century.

Table 1. Sixteenth-century Franciscan lexicographers

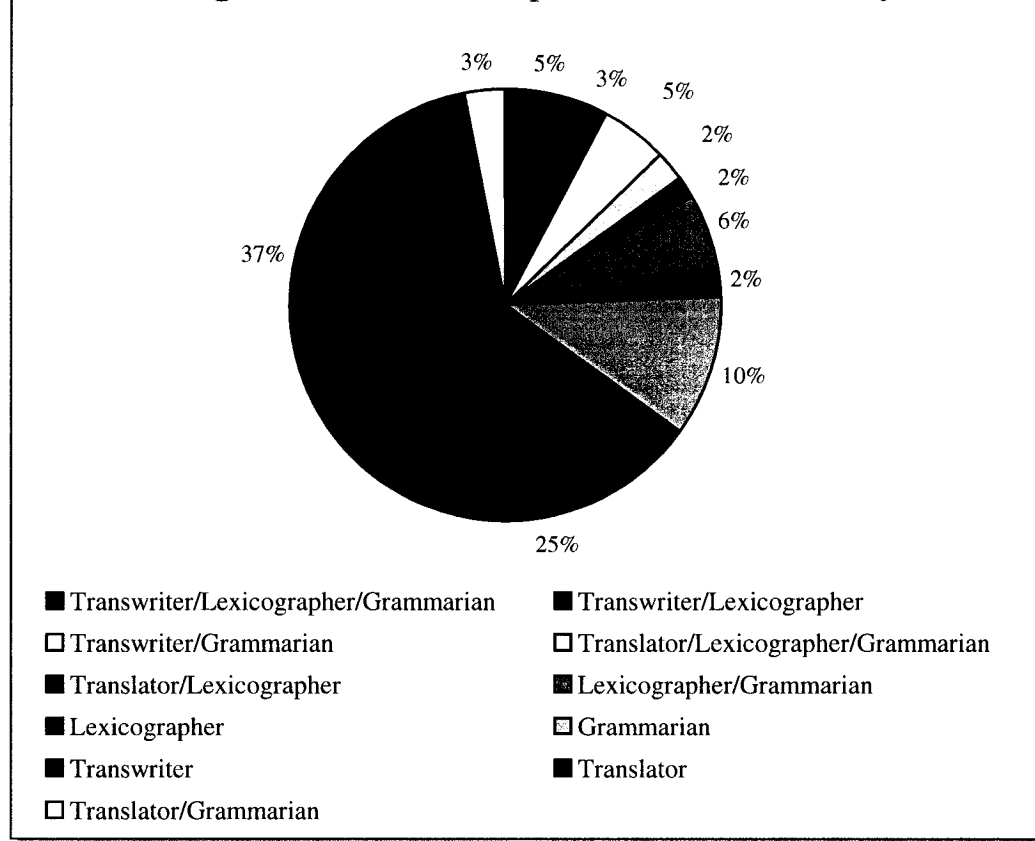
Name	Century	Adscription	Source 1	Source 2
Ayora, Juan	XVI	Franciscan	BER: I, 195 – 196	POR: I, 185
Castro, Andrés	XVI	Franciscan	BER: II, 89	POR: I, 405
Espinareda, Pedro	XVI	Franciscan	BER: II, 238	
Landa, Diego de	XVI	Franciscan	BER: III, 86 – 88	POR: I, 1154
Molina, Alonso	XVI	Franciscan	BER: III, 257. V, 396	POR: I, 1374
Olmos, Andrés de	XVI	Franciscan	BER: IV, 45	POR: I, 1514
Palacios, Pedro	XVI	Franciscan	BER: IV, 82	
Sahagún, Bernardino de	XVI	Franciscan	BER: IV 275 – 277	POR: II, 1829
Solana, Alonso	XVI	Franciscan	BER: IV, 362	POR: II, 2003
Toral, Francisco	XVI	Franciscan	BER: V, 34	POR: II, 2046
Villalpando, Luis	XVI	Franciscan	BER: V, 154	POR: II, 2271

But the kind of analysis I could derive from the database as it originally was could not take me to my purpose of monitoring the long-span presence of translations, with selected close-ups into examples from the register. In fact, the closest parallel to the kind of work I intend would be remote sensing. As with satellite imaging, I wanted a general picture in which I could spot different clusters and movements of translation along the three centuries of colonial rule.

When I started to work on the catalogue I was so thrilled by the discovery that, in a way, I was mechanically following Beristáin's vindication: he was challenging those who

⁴³ For a discussion on the difference between catalogues and corpora, see Pym 1998, p. 42.

Fig. 3. Translators and parallel fields of activity



doubted the existence of an intellectual life in the colony, and I was asking: “who said there were no translators in New Spain?”, so I directed the first extraction with this mindset. This essentialist way of appraising the field, counting individuals, listing the titles of their translations, and noting a few biographical features first, was quite a blind digging, which **proved** good enough to grasp a general idea of the magnitude of the field but didn’t help **much to understand** the articulation of translation to other aspects of the New Spain cultural system. It did not lend itself to establishing relationships with other texts and locating translations within the general discursive formation. It gave lots of data but little information, thus leading rather to antiquarianism, collector’s history. It became obvious that, however illustrative and fruitful, the register had to be reshaped.

It became clear to me that the structure of the register had to be tested against the

purpose of the research: a structure that would reflect an approach to the functions of the works rather than the personalities of the translators, where translation could be seen as a historically meaningful discourse, related to other discursive formations. For this purpose, first should come translations; translators as individuals, with their lives and personal stories, should come after. Again, the importance of the translator as an individual, so dear to Pym, should be relativized here. If we are looking at functions, persons may be secondary. So, the database was reshuffled by shifting the position of the fields. Instead of biographical, it would be bibliographical, and the result was a list of about 712 titles of translations, which could give the reader a rather immediate idea of their contents, an important breakthrough from my point of view, since this could lead to a classification of some sort.

Now, how could the data base be classified so as to expose the hypothetic relationship with a national identity?

1.3.1. Classification approaches

Different ways of classifying could stress either the conceptual or the temporal aspects, or a combination of both. I explored the following options:

As a **conceptual classification**, I could resort to the “classical” genres in translation studies (scientific, religious, general, literary, to which I could add some subdivisions). These categories have traditionally served to establish different ways of translating. They could give an immediate sense of the kinds of works that were predominant at different times, but could I prove that national discourse building had anything to do with them? Could any meaning be derived from the intersection between times and concepts? I

discarded also contemporary classifications devised primarily for evaluation or pedagogical purposes, namely the functionalist's typologies: informative, expressive, and operative translation (Reiss and Vermeer 1984/1991).⁴⁴ Although I am searching into functions of translations, the perspective is larger (*i.e.*, *translation* as a collective endeavour and its ideological functions) than the one provided by functionalist approaches to translation (translation as an individual gesture and its contextual functions).

As a classification stressing the temporal aspect, I could attempt a periodization derived from the *date* field in the original database. In fact, two translation periods could be clearly distinguished: a period of activity related to the indigenous languages and to the conversion endeavor, from the 1520s until 1770 (year of the Royal decree banning all indigenous languages), and a second period from that year on, when we see more translations from European languages, and the subjects are also more diverse (science, enlightened thought, literature). Coincidences are attractive, the first period corresponding approximately to the Habsburg dynasty, concerned above all with battling reformed ideas, while the second period is related to the Bourbon's monarchy and the emergence of Enlightenment.

David Brading's periodization (Brading 1973) in his seminal study on Mexican nationalism, is roughly coincidental with this periodization, and has the advantage of taking us directly into the field of nationalism: a period of "patriotismo criollo" (1520-1769), characterized by a revival of the Aztec past (neo-aztecism), stirring of anti-Spanish sentiments, and the cult to the Virgin of Guadalupe; and a second period, of "indigenismo histórico" (1760-1855), in which these traits become fixed in a nationalistic rhetoric.

⁴⁴ For a quick reference to functionalist theories, see Baker 1998, pp. 29-33.

James Lockhart (1991), also from the historical point of view, proposes three stages for the hispanization of Indian Nahuatl-speaking society based upon the language contact: 1519-1540/50 (virtually no change in Nahuatl), 1540/50-ca1640 (massive borrowing of Spanish nouns only), ca1640-1800 (broader Spanish influence). In that he traces the acculturation of Nahuatl-speaking populations in language, he has some bearing on translation as well as on identity. But Lockhart's research is unidirectional, showing one side of the acculturation. There was, however, acculturation on both sides: I am not trying here to understand only how Indians were progressively hispanized (although hispanization is part of the functions of colonial translation), but also how Spaniards were indianized, and how other languages, both dead and alive, were brought into the picture.

Temporal classifications are teleological per se: they reflect evolutions towards a moment which is considered an end of something. In Brading, the end was contemporary nationalism, the official ideology that prevailed in 20th century Mexico. In Lockhart (1991), the stages show progressive acculturation of Indian society. But my purpose is not to determine any evolution from a particular date towards either a state of national consciousness or the emergence of *métissage* through translation. Incidentally, nothing happened in translation in 1821, final date of my list, just as nothing had happened either in translation in 1521, first date on my list. They just happen to be the date of the fall of Tenochtitlan, Mexico's capital, to the Spanish, and the date in which Independence was proclaimed, but I could have chosen the previous year or the next one. So far they seem to me immaterial for translation. I have kept the first date for the sake of coherence with my main source (although there are also hesitations in Beristáin's *Biblioteca*: in volume I the dates included in the title are 1521-1850, and in volumes II to V, 1521-1825). Since neither

1850 nor 1825 are meaningful with regards to intellectual history, and Beristáin did not explain them, I have preferred to take as the final date the year of Independence. I intend however, to be flexible on that end, since some authors, such as Beristáin himself, were born before Independence and some of their works were published past that date.

After careful analysis, therefore, I discarded both translation genres and temporal-historical frameworks, and looked elsewhere.

The next thoughts put me on a new track: if translation had anything to do with the emergence and upholding of a national identity, if I could say that translation production belonged to that aspect of social discourse that reinforces belonging to a national entity, it had to be because it shared some conceptual base with national identity. In other words, if I could understand how the national discourse is constructed, what its ingredients are, maybe I would be able to see the relationship with translation.

1.3.2. Nationalism studies as the general framework

There is agreement in modern scholarship on nationalism that nations are complex phenomena, sometimes older than it was traditionally supposed, and that they derive their strength from a continuous revitalization of myths of ethnic descent, and from drawing **upon other** nations (past and present) cultural accomplishments in order to build a high culture for themselves. It is in this sense that nationalism has been characterized by the nationalism theoretician Tom Nairn (1977) as Janus-faced: looking at the past, deepening its origins in the roots of tradition and looking at the present and the future for the building of a modern culture, able to compete with other nations. It is particularly true for non-western nationalism, *i.e.*, in nations formerly under colonial rule, considered to be

culturally not equipped to become fully-fledged nations, unless they imitate other cultures (Chatterjee, 1986).

These two aspects of national identity: belief in a common, prestigious past, and a drive towards innovation, can be directly related to translation, in so far as it is particularly suited to perform the kind of arrangements needed for myth - making (Smith, 1984) and “invention of traditions” (Hobsbawm, 1994), and because it is the means by which a culture appropriates foreign model products, thereby helping to create and consolidate a modern “high culture” (Gellner, 1994). A number of Mexican Colonial translations fall in these conceptual categories, namely the historical works by Indian and *mestizo* scholars who helped reconstruct the past, the translation of Greco-Latin classics and the translation of European contemporary intellectual works (science, literature, philosophical, political and religious essay). The register shows that from one third to a half of the translations registered can be safely related to these categories, once duly defined.

But the largest part of the register consists of a hotchpotch of materials dealing with indigenous languages and catechization. As a common denominator, they were produced by missionaries, they appear very early in the period, they thrive particularly during the first hundred years, and they decline afterwards, without, however, disappearing. Another characteristic is that a large proportion of doctrinal translations come in combination with lexicons and grammars, so they are physically related, for the simple historical reason that sometimes it was the same friar who, in the same breath, prepared the grammar, the lexicon and appended a *Doctrina Christiana* to the whole. For a while I took this part of the register to belong to what in historical linguistics is known as “missionary linguistics”, an object of

some recent independent attention.⁴⁵ However, missionary linguistics has devoted its attention to the description of the languages by the missionaries; its focus is mainly philological and, therefore, it is grammars and lexicons that constitute its main documentary field, without including translations per se. Instead, in my register, grammars, lexicons and translations have a common ground, and belong to a same logic. Aside from the quantitative importance of the field (461 out of 712 items in the database could be said to belong to it), and the characteristics just mentioned, other observations prompted me to differentiate it from the rest: first, the large amount of languages covered (25 if we include Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Spanish), a characteristic of the first missionary years, which disappeared gradually with the loss of influence of the monastic orders, the rise of the secular branch of the Church and the subsequent imposition of Spanish as the general language. Second, a number of these works (in particular the earlier ones) are the fruit of collaboration between the natives and the friars, as acknowledged by the friars themselves.⁴⁶

Now, if we leave history and turn to translation studies, these works also share various interesting features, namely, 1) that translations into the indigenous languages were mostly prompted by the source culture, 2) that it is normally difficult to know the original text and author, 3) that they are frequently collaborative translations, that is, assisted by **indigenous** intermediaries, and 4) that the intended readers are probably not the potential readers of the target culture but the agents of the source culture themselves.

These historical characteristics and translational features, which will be discussed

⁴⁵ There have been several annual international conferences organized by the Oslo Project on Missionary Linguistics (OsProMil), a research group at the University of Oslo.

⁴⁶ Schools for training noble Indian boys were soon established, notably the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco (1536) by the Franciscan friars and the names of some of these Indian scholars appear in the friars chronicles.

and illustrated with examples in due time, seem to me to justify a separate treatment for this large corpus of linguistic and doctrinal material linked to catechization.

In summing up, it seems that Greco-Latin translations can be linked to a discourse on civilization, and that translations of science, arts and humanities can be also linked to a discourse on a Modern High Culture, and that intersemiotic translations, hybrid texts that tell the Mexicans who their ancestors were, can be related to the foundation myths. What would the role of the last group of translations, namely the linguistic and doctrinal materials be in the construction of a national identity and how to define it?

The notion of “imagined community” introduced by Benedict Anderson (1991) refers to the different means by which a group of people come to imagine themselves as a community and stresses the importance of print capitalism as part of the basis for this collective formation: a common language, common readings, common religion, census, maps and museums: all elements, as I discussed in the previous chapter, of a national discourse. In Mexican colonial history, translation intervenes at least in some of these constructions: it is chiefly present in the fate of the different indigenous languages and in the subsequent imposition of a national language. Translation is also the means by which a new religion is imposed upon the colonized peoples. These two aspects, language and **religion** are tightly interwoven and constitute the canvass of an imagined community in **which other discourses will be embroidered**. This canvass of an imagined community is by no means a terse, homogenous fabric; the concept of community itself will prove problematic. But something is clear to me: this canvass is of a translational nature because it is the product of the earliest transactions between two or more cultures, with their respective languages. It will be woven from the first contacts, and it will remain there,

sustaining other productions. Its dynamics and construction will be discussed in Part 2.

So, after the general functions of the translations have been hypothesized on the basis of *prima facie* evidence provided by the titles, presumed contents of the books and historical context in which the translations were produced, I can propose the following categories for my catalogue:

- ❖ The Translational Canvass, which contains 1) transwritings that transformed the structure of the indigenous languages so that they could receive the outpour of European cultural materials (grammars and lexicons) and 2) translations of doctrinal material (bilingual confession manuals, catechisms and sermons). This Translational Canvass served as the groundwork for an « imagined community », and contains 461 titles.
- ❖ The Classical Continuity, which contains the translations from the prestigious Greco-Latin tradition that placed the colony in the continuum of European civilization. This category contains 64 titles.
- ❖ The Foundation Myths, which contains transwritings that helped reformulate past narratives (pre-Hispanic history, genealogies, calendars...) directed to establish a mythical common origin, linked both to the venerable domestic traditions and to the origins of Christianity. This category contains 27 titles.
- ❖ The Modern High Culture, containing translations that incorporated new narratives useful to build a high culture (European literature, essay, medicine and other sciences...), and to place New Spain among the modern civilized nations. I have located 150 in this category.

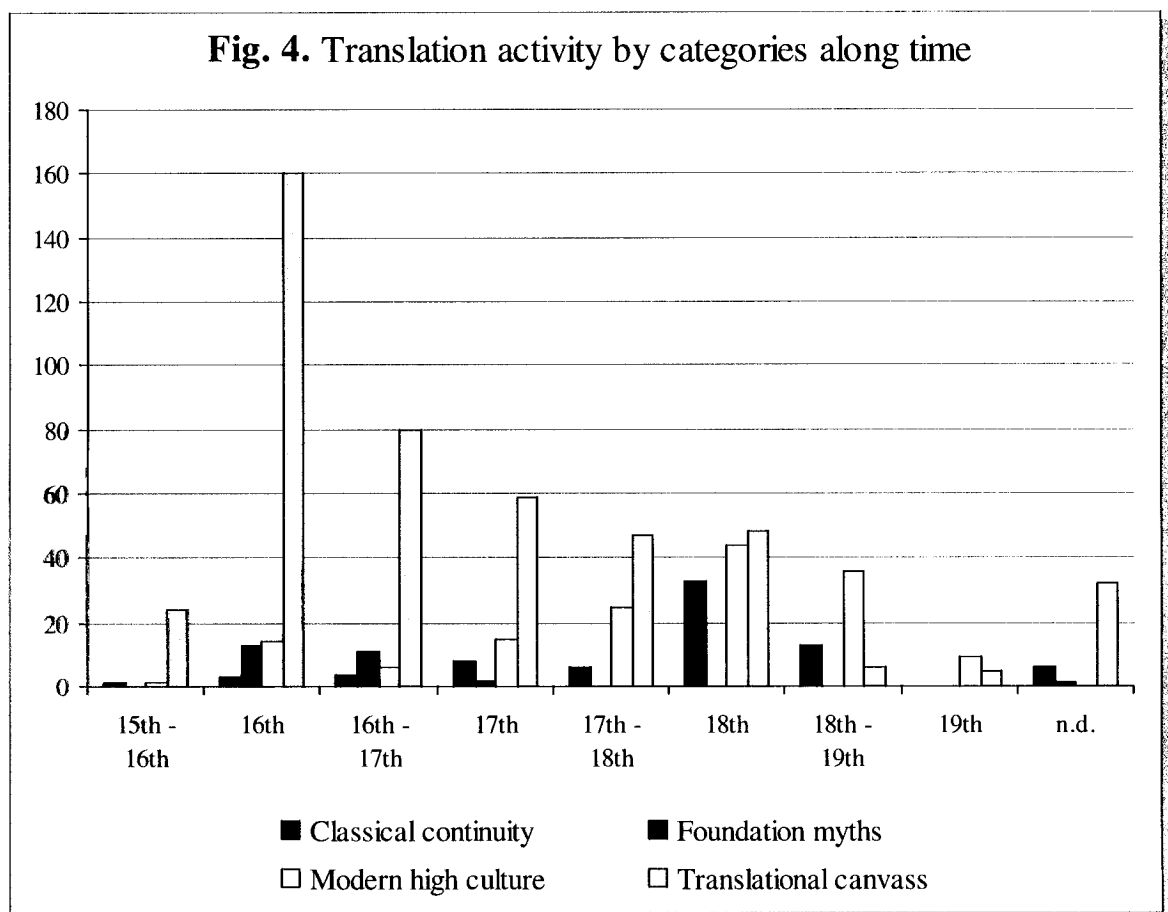
Now, this classification, in being more conceptual than time- or country-specific,

would seem to aspire to certain universality. Is this legitimate? Can it be sustained that all translations everywhere could be classified according to this model because they always fulfill these roles? Would it be possible to argue that there are no translations outside it? I propose to leave the question open. Nevertheless, supposing that national discourse is an embodiment, an avatar, of social discourse, which is an overarching phenomenon, there would be no translations outside; the only possibility being that some translations would show less or more their relationship with the national discourse than others, or that some translations could resist the determination of the discourse. But of course these circumstances would not leave them out since they would still belong to the discourse by virtue of their resistance. Translations, as any other discourses, are not indifferent to the collective feeling of identity, which goes beyond ideological and political allegiances. A translation may have contributed to change in its time, or it may have contributed to the *statu quo*. Whatever the case, translations are there to contribute to the ideologemes sustaining the enunciation “we, the Mexicans”. So, a certain degree of universality can be claimed; but only a certain degree. It cannot claim temporal or spatial universality. This specific classification model serves my purpose because its tenets allow explaining the birth and conservation of identity feelings that materialized in the creation of a nation-state in 1821.

It becomes evident on a second reading that these four categories I propose do not share the same traits. Being conceived as a canvass, the first category entertains a causal link with the others; it also represents a great deal more activity than the others. After all, it is the ground where culture was transacted. Others could be said to be more of a passive representation of a national discourse: the translations linked to the classical western

tradition, the ones linked to the Modern High Culture. The translations that conveyed founding myths, hybrid texts composed by acculturated mestizo, are more of a *sui generis* class.

Some final considerations as to the analysis of the works themselves: I have been fortunate to be able to explore one of the largest colonial libraries in the world, the one known as the Fondo José Toribio Medina at the Chile National Library, in Santiago. José Toribio Medina (1852-1930) a prolific Chilean bibliographer, was the author of many Latin-American national bibliographies, particularly on the history of print and of the Inquisition. His colonial library is composed of some twenty-two thousand titles, of which approximately eight thousand belong to Mexico. It is there that I have been able to consult most of the works that constitute my primary sources bibliography.



Of the 712 titles in the register, I have examined 90. I have not always followed the rule of the best known writers, but of the text that could best illustrate the functions of translation. A certain degree of opportunism has to be acknowledged: the Fondo Medina did not have every work I had wished to examine, but the works available were many more than I could possibly consult.

SECOND PART

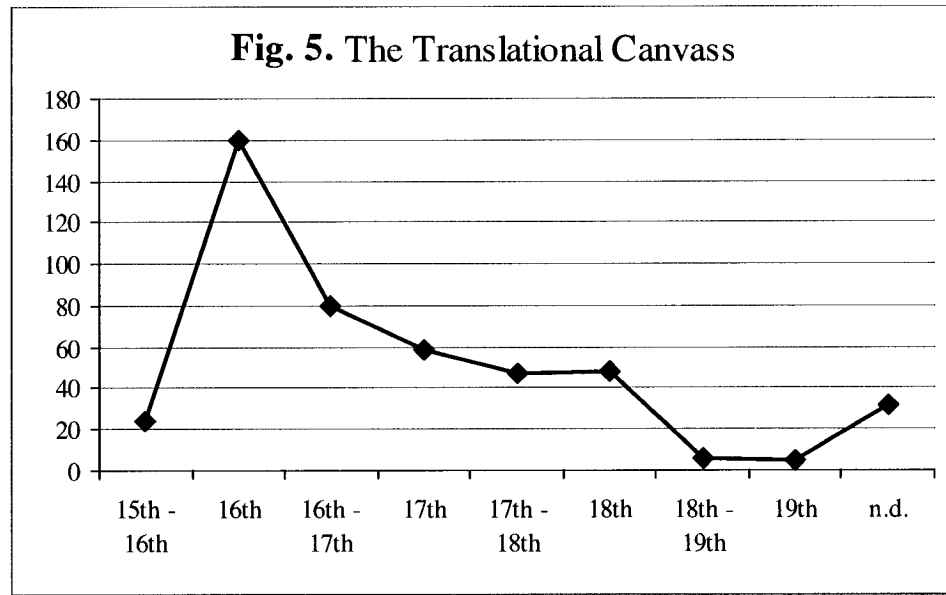
UNIVERSAL IDENTITY: THE CATHOLIC DISCOURSE

2.1. The Translational Canvass

In this category, that I have chosen to call Translational Canvass, I have compiled the following products, regardless of size and importance, and regardless of whether their existence can be actually verified: grammars of indigenous languages, bilingual or trilingual lexicons, catechisms, sermons, doctrines, prayer books, Saints' lives, confession manuals and manuals for liturgy written for the indoctrination of Indians or the *mestizo* population speaking indigenous languages. And here there is an important distinction to be made between the religious materials intended for the indoctrination of the non-Christian population and the ones produced for the catechesis and promotion of piety among the Spanish and *criollo* classes as well as for conventual and scholarly use. The materials belonging to this latter have a different genesis and functions, and will be studied under the Modern High Culture category. Lastly, I am only recording first appearance of texts, and not subsequent reeditions, an important caveat that has to be borne in mind since this is not a study on reception.

There is a total of 461 titles in the database which I consider belonging to the Translational Canvass, plus eight, two of them anonymous, that were unknown to Beristáin, **but that** I have found and consulted in the Fondo Medina. As shown in the following graph, **this production is unevenly** distributed, with a peak during the period of intensive catechization.

I have disaggregated the 461 texts into the four main types: grammars, lexicons, translations and the combinations among them. The continued presence of grammars and lexicons and combined texts along the whole period is a noticeable trait, as if they were the



weft and warp of the canvass. Stemming from this fabric, an upsurge of translations thrusts during the segment beginning virtually at the Conquest, loses ground rapidly one century later, and then slowly continues its decline until its virtual disappearance past the second half of the 18th century.

The chronological distribution of these four types of texts can be seen in the following graph. Again, there are a number of undated texts, probably attributable to the period 16th to 17th century, and an empty slot in the 19th century, only partly due to the fact that the register stops in 1821. While, on the one hand, it is certainly true that the production of texts in indigenous languages (mostly translations) was curtailed by the 1770 royal ban on these languages, it didn't totally disappear and, in particular, some dictionaries were reedited past that date. On the other hand, as I observed before, the production of religious materials in translation was no longer meant for conversion but for the promotion of piety among a population which was mostly of mixed race. These translations are either from Latin or modern European languages into Spanish, and I located them in the Modern High Culture category.

Most of these products are bilingual (lexicons, confessional manuals, catechisms and doctrines), written in two columns side by side; some are unilingual (such as doctrines written only in the indigenous language), and some are multilingual texts, that is, drafted in more than two languages, such as some grammars, in which the descriptions are written in Spanish, but Latin is the main referent both for the structure of the text (titles of sections) and for the specific examples illustrating the points of grammar, that is, for comparison with the indigenous language being described in them. There are also some trilingual dictionaries (v.g., Alonso Urbano's⁴⁷ *Arte breve de la lengua otomi y Vocabulario trilingüe español-mexicano-otomi*, 1605)

Indigenous languages description and Christian doctrine are the two domains covered by these transwritings, the religious impulse being in the vast majority of the cases what drives the grammatical interest. In turn, without this language groundwork, the religious goals cannot be met, so these two domains are not separated but intrinsically linked together. Again, I am using the term transwritings because most of the documents I have ascribed to the field of translation do not fit into the "traditional" definition of translation, (*i.e.*, texts pretending to be the full equivalent in one language of other texts written in another language). Then I also include grammars of indigenous languages, which have not traditionally been considered as part of the translation field, lexicons, as side products of translation, as well as a variety of transfers, versions, mixed compositions, etc..., the originals of which are not always known and could be difficult to identify.

To start with, there is a lack of definition of the translational status in the documents themselves (not to say in Beristáin's *Biblioteca*). Sometimes translation is not

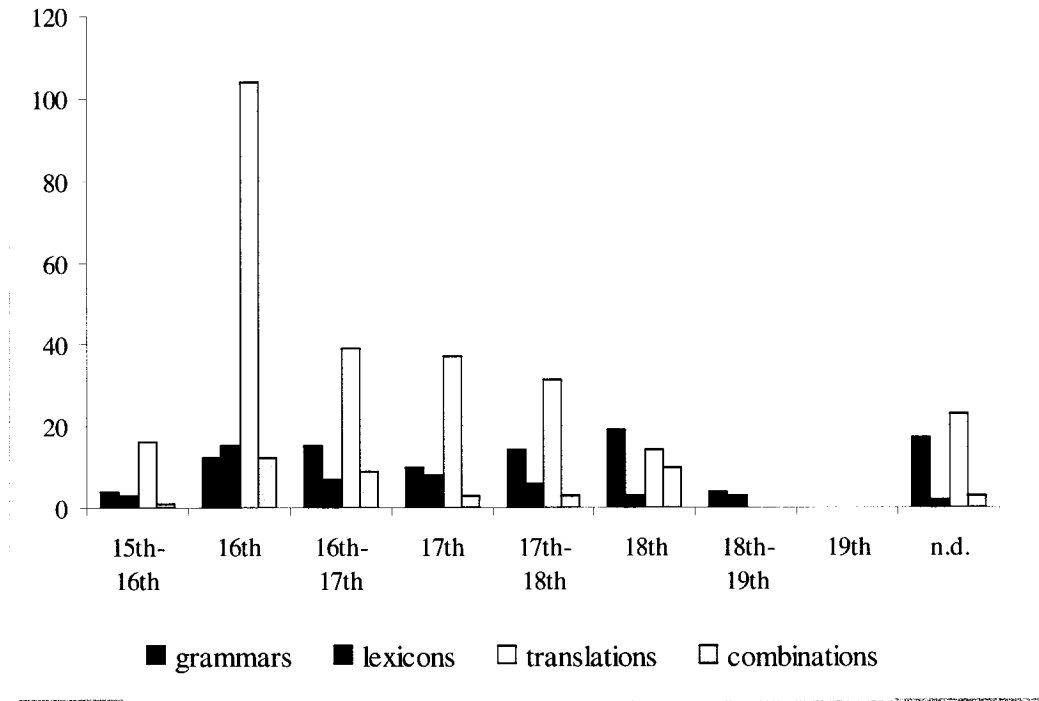
⁴⁷ BHA V, 65

acknowledged in any way: no mention of a source text (catechisms as well as other doctrinal works must have been translated from authorized sources, but here we do not always find a reference to their originals), so it becomes very difficult to determine to what extent were they transferred into the indigenous languages. What parts were translated and what parts were actually added by the translator? Can reasons for these changes be explained? These difficulties are not exclusive of colonial translation. They are common to all European medieval translation practices. Clara Foz analyses translational lack of definition in the European Middle Ages: translations were largely rearrangements of previous materials, and the distinction between original and translation cannot be easily determined. Moreover, whatever the translator's national language, as far as the written tradition he belonged to the Latin context (Foz 1998: 145-146), since vernaculars had not yet acquired the status of national languages.

Here, in the Translational Canvass, we are faced with colonial translation, which, as part of colonial discourse, constitutes a set of interlingual practices that, according to Klor de Alva, "permitted ideas to pass from one discourse (or bounded register of signs, codes and meanings) to another in order to authorize and make possible the ends of colonial control and the strategies of resistance and accommodation to it" (Klor de Alva 1992: 16). The circumstances outlined by Klor in this definition, however, make colonial translation a **specific cultural and historial practice**, the characteristics of which can be seen in the following aspects:

1. **It is instigated by the source culture:** contrary to the common assumption that translations are prompted by the receiving culture, in other words, that it is the target culture that decides what texts and authors will be imported, most colonial

Fig. 6. The Translational Canvass (contents)



translations were made at the instigation of the culture of origin; they were forced into the target language and the target culture.

2. **The readers are the source culture agents**, located in the target culture and acting upon it: not only were the indigenous languages not the instigators of these translations but also they became the unwilling recipients of this enormous task of cultural downloading. Since most speakers of the indigenous languages could not read and even were not allowed to have books, the recipients of the translations were Spanish friars or indigenous intermediaries who, in turn, would read and interpret the texts for the general population.
3. **Target culture subjects were recruited as intermediaries**: early grammars, lexicons and translations were undoubtedly done with the assistance of native intermediaries, the presence of which is sometimes acknowledged.

What is the genesis and progression of this production? Where does it start and are there any discernible stages in this progression? Let's attempt an intuitive approach: what we can see is that there was a driving force, namely Christianization. A main obstacle to it was the diversity of languages, and the fact that they were predominantly oral. The overwhelming ratio of Indians to Spanish forced a search for efficiency; this is why there was first a selection of the receiving languages, which was done following geopolitical directions: namely, the largest languages in their more prestigious registers. This does not mean that there was a clear language policy, or that this selection was in any way masterminded; it was rather the result of a pragmatic recognition by the friars who found themselves often overwhelmed by the task. It could be too that an effort to transcribe a particular language would turn useless because of the rapid disappearance or migration of its speakers.⁴⁸ We cannot forget that, according to some calculations (Cifuentes 1998: 45),⁴⁹ some one hundred languages or dialects were wiped out during the first century after the conquest, that is, between the 1520s and the end of that century, due, among other circumstances, to massive depopulation. But, following our imaginary plot, a number of important languages were "selected" and alphabetically transcribed. Then, an appraisal of their assets was performed by listing their lexical capacity in bilingual and sometimes trilingual lexicons. The construction of their corresponding grammars was also performed, by comparing their perceived language constituents to the constituents of the Latin

⁴⁸ Jesuit Father Adam Gilg's letter of 1692 illustrates the vulnerability of languages spoken by nomadic populations. He was sent to the territory of the Seri Indians, in the actual state of Sonora (northwest Mexico) and trove to settle them in *pueblos*. As he painfully recounts, people would die of unknown diseases or they would abandon the settlement as soon as conditions became difficult for them to bear (rains destroying the first crops, or attacks by other still nomadic tribes). According to Father Gilg's estimates, the Seri population was of 3.000 individuals. A. Gilg is known to have written a dictionary of three languages of the state of Sonora: Eudeve, Pima, and Seri. Of the three, Eudeve is extinct and Pima and Seri are seriously endangered.

⁴⁹ Garza and Lastra (1991: 143) give a total of 114 from the 17th century to the present day.

grammar.⁵⁰ Once the carrying capacity of the indigenous languages was assured, translation could perform its main task of “pouring” the contents of the dominating culture into these new reservoirs.

In summing up: after undertaking the transcription of selected languages, the grammarian missionaries proceeded to what was called at the time “subjecting” (*sujetar*) or “reducing” (*reducir*) the language to a grammar or “art” (*arte*), and to elaborate a vocabulary of the language. They prepared therefore the description and listing of grammatical and lexical capabilities of these languages by comparing them with Spanish or Latin (and sometimes too with Nahuatl, as the *lingua franca*). To speak of “subjecting” and “reducing” seems now to be charged with pejorative connotations, as in subjecting or reducing an enemy.⁵¹ In their context, however, these words meant simply that languages that were used loosely (and in this sense it is quite proper to talk about subjecting them) would be fixed by giving them rules and an organization. Castilian, as Nebrija says to justify the need for a Spanish grammar, “*anduvo suelta y fuera de regla*” while Latin and Greek “*todavía quedan en una uniformidad [...] por haber estado debaxo de arte*”, meaning literally that they were put under grammar.⁵² Then their lexical capabilities would be compared. These are the two concepts I want to stress here: fixing and comparing, both at the basis of translation. Translation helps fixing both the receiving language and, indirectly too, the emitting language, and, at the same time, it performs a linguistic and cultural

⁵⁰ Although the first Spanish grammar was published in 1492, it seems clear that it was not the one that served as a model in America, but the Latin grammar, by the same author, published in 1481, and reprinted in 1484 as a bilingual Latin-Spanish grammar. Cf. *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Historiografía Lingüística. Nebrija V Centenario*, vol. II., Murcia, 1994.

⁵¹ In his interesting study on colonial discourse in the Philippines, in my opinion, Vicente L. Rafael (1993) makes a biased use of the dictionary in discussing Spanish terms like “dominar”, “sujetar”, “arte”, “traducir”, when speaking about the link between conversion and translation (see in particular Chapter 1: *The Politics of Translation*). According to him, these terms are charged with connotations of colonial domination.

⁵² Prologue to the Spanish Grammar, dedicated to Queen Isabella. Electronic version: <http://www.antoniodenebrija.org/prologo.html>

comparison. Fixing and comparing will also be illustrated in this Translational Canvass in their associated types of texts: grammars and lexicons.

This fixing and comparing their capabilities will enable, on the one hand, the production of texts in the indigenous languages for the governing of the colonial territories by the civil authorities (administrative and legal texts), and, on the other hand, the translations of doctrinal materials: catechism, confession manual, passages of the Scriptures and Saint's lives.

The colonial nature of the whole endeavor carried mostly during the first decades becomes clearer if we pause for a moment to consider that the downloading of cultural contents was only possible because the source culture agents were located in the target culture, creating the conditions of its reception, by installing and maintaining the coercive/incitative apparatus for the reception and by co-opting local intermediaries from the target culture.

Soon too, young Indians brought up by the friars, will master this new narrative method and put it to their benefit (Gruzinski 1988), particularly during the years in which the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco was active.

Now, never in these textual materials, which were meant to produce a radical **change** in the subjectivities of the Indians, will we find a mention of Spain as an entity to which they will now belong to. The purpose of this fixing, comparing, and downloading, the writing of Catechisms, Doctrines, and Confessional manuals, the translations of Scriptures and Saint's lives was not to obtain allegiance to a Spanish emperor but to a universal ruler, a ruler who could express Himself through his agents, the friars, not in the language of the Conqueror (the friars' rival in the rule over the Indians) but in the very

languages the Indians spoke. Translation was used by the friars to expand the frontier of Christianity, not necessarily the Spanish frontiers, although it was clearly understood that it was His Catholic Majesty who had been entrusted with this divine design.

The Translational Canvass, as I will attempt to show, is the one where the new identity is negotiated and woven. It is not produced in Spanish and it does not have Spanish as its main axis. It fluctuates among languages; it creates superpositions, transfers and syncretisms. It draws an unstable, frontier, hybrid identity. The emerging cultural, and later, national identity is less clear and less a product of an elite group's will, such as the one manifesting itself as a political force at the end of the eighteenth century with the movement for independence, than the result of a widespread loss in all fronts: demographic, material and spiritual, and the emergence of new generations of mixed populations in which a synthesis of cultural traits was unequally achieved. Tracking these changes in translation will bring me to point out the places in which the impositions, resistances and negotiations occurred: events like short yarn slubs forming in the weft, such as Alonso de Molina's⁵³ slip when in his 1555 great dictionary he places the Nahuatl word *tameme* in the Spanish column (meaning that one generation after the fall of Tenochtitlan the Spanish were not only adopting Indian words, which they did from the very beginning, but that they "mistook" them as being their own). Another case would be that of Bernardino de Sahagún's⁵⁴ syncretic Psalms, describing Saint James clad in *chalchihuites* (jades), as if it were one of the hated Indian idols. Translation is present too in the crude attempts to extirpate what was conceived as evil and to implant a new paradigm to understand self, nature and gods through the appropriation of the Indians' language of authority in doctrines

⁵³ BHA III, 257

⁵⁴ BHA IV, 275

and the confessional practice; and also in the fast disappearance of the nobility and the concomitant emergence of a class of “pobrecitos indios”, who had become alien to their own languages.

Meanwhile, the line tracing the language policy in colonial Mexico, with its swings and hesitations to which I have referred in the preamble, was intersected by translations casting doubts upon it. While Charles V ruled that Castilian must be the language spoken in the colony, Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún⁵⁵ worked with his Indian assistants in the elaboration of the Psalms and, at the same time, other friars were translating catechisms in indigenous languages. An Indian scholar, Esteban Bravo,⁵⁶ could “translate anything from Latin into Nahuatl”. Grammars describing indigenous languages were written in Spanish, but using Latin and Nahuatl as references, such as Pedro de Cárceles,⁵⁷ *Arte de la lengua othomi*. The linguistic imperial policy seemed to flow in one level, divorced from common people realities, while in other directions, at other levels, society engaged in linguistic practices dictated by the extra-imperial need to adjust and survive and, most obviously, the need to define itself as a new identity. The translational discourse in the Translational Canvass, universalist in scope as it was conceived as millenarist, acts as a counterpoint to the Crown’s more down to earth linguistic policy. And even then, we cannot forget, as Serge Gruzinski points out, that “ce ne sont pas des “cultures” qui se rencontraient, mais des fragments d’Europe, d’Amérique et d’Afrique. Des fragments et des éclats qui au contact les uns des autres ne restaient pas longtemps intacts” (1999: 81). Indian and European, not to say Blacks, who were captured from different African regions, were far from stable, monolithic entities, and rivalries within their own groups were the rule rather than the exception.

⁵⁵ BHA IV, 275 - 277

⁵⁶ BHA I, 288

⁵⁷ BHA II, 43

This is why I can say that this Translational Canvass constitutes maybe the table upon which New Spain's culture was transacted and where we can trace the beginnings of a new identity (the one that later became known as *mestizo*). It is in this canvass where the textual production, both translational and non translational will be intertwined. I am therefore speaking of linguistic translation proper, as a tangible element of the construction of this new identity, but I am also speaking about cultural translation, which could have implied acts of transaction, imposition and resistance. I am looking at this canvass as a negotiating table, in which translations bring about a "displacement" and "relocation" between negotiators. I refer here directly, not at all metaphorically, to the texts such as lexicons and grammars, that meant for the cultures involved a departure from their "centers", a deep shaking of structures, as well as to the translations of doctrinal materials, which meant the imposition of a whole new worldview upon the American cultures: a worldview carrying a mixed ballast not only of peninsular cultures and histories, but of the European past, its cultural, political and religious histories.

While it is important to understand these productions from the Spanish imperial point of view, the purpose with which they were made, the intentionalities and contents they were infused with, the prejudices that helped some sort of understanding as well as the ones that hindered understanding, we should, however, also see this evolution from the other side, however badly equipped we may be to place ourselves in that side: a number of natives who survived through the disasters of the first years of the Conquest, learned very quickly how to write and read not only their own languages but Spanish and Latin, and became participants in the process of transcription and description of their own languages. They also participated in the translation of doctrinal materials, either as collaborators of the

friars⁵⁸ or as authors proper. In fact, none of the steps of the evolution I will sketch in the following pages could ever have been taken without some degree of exchange, of transaction, of tension between the two sides, represented by the two groups of “exiles” (friars and Indians). This is not to say, of course, that this exchange was in any way symmetrical, or that the Indians had the slightest chance to overcome the terms of it. The Spanish conquered, and the Indians were conquered with immense suffering and injustice. What I am trying to say is that within the conditions created by the Conquest and colonization, the indigenous peoples were also able, by different means, to insert, modify, adapt, and adjust some of the elements of their own civilization. And coming closer to the Spanish, and learning their ways and language, and making themselves indispensable for them, being their interpreters and translators, was one of these means. The period in which this happened is mostly circumscribed to the first decades after the Conquest, roughly speaking, between 1524, the date of the arrival of the Franciscan friars, and the 1576-1579 great epidemics, where probably some two million people died. But other dates are also illustrative of the decay of this dialogue: already in 1555, the first Council of the Mexican Church Province forbids the ordainment of Indians, *mestizos* and blacks, and in 1560, the Council of Trent, in which the Counter-Reformation strategies were established, inaugurates a period of suspicion and censorship that will curtail the freedom enjoyed by monastic orders in New Spain.

However, the social circumstances and the geographical constraints made it difficult for whatever central policy to be effectively disseminated, and thus the Translational Canvass stretches beyond the sixteenth century and thus extends the dialogue longer than we would expect.

⁵⁸ For a discussion on collaborative translation and hybrid translation, see S. Simon (1999)

In saying that this Translational Canvass is the table upon which was negotiated a new identity I am following a path I found suggested first by the Mexican Inquisition specialist Solange Alberro, who said that religion could be the matrix for the national identity in Mexico (Alberro, 1999). She has studied the way in which Spanish were progressively transformed by the colonial system and, in adopting ways of their colonized subjects, departed from their own ways and became also acculturated. It is Klor de Alva also who suggests that the search for mutual intelligibility in the spiritual level was key to the emergence of the new identity (Klor 1997). Louise Burkhart has extensively studied what she calls the “Nahua-Christian moral dialogue” (Burkhart 1989) and has translated many examples of this dialogue herself.

Within the translation studies field, Lawrence Venuti wrote in 1995 that “As translation constructs a domestic representation for a foreign text and culture, it simultaneously constructs a domestic subject” (Venuti 1995: 10). Although his examples are contemporary, analogies can be drawn with the colonial situation. When he argues that Japanese modern literature as translated into English creates a new representation of Japanness, which in turn impacts on Japan’s self-image, we can also see how translating Christian doctrine into the indigenous languages created a new representation of these languages and their cultures for their peoples.⁵⁹

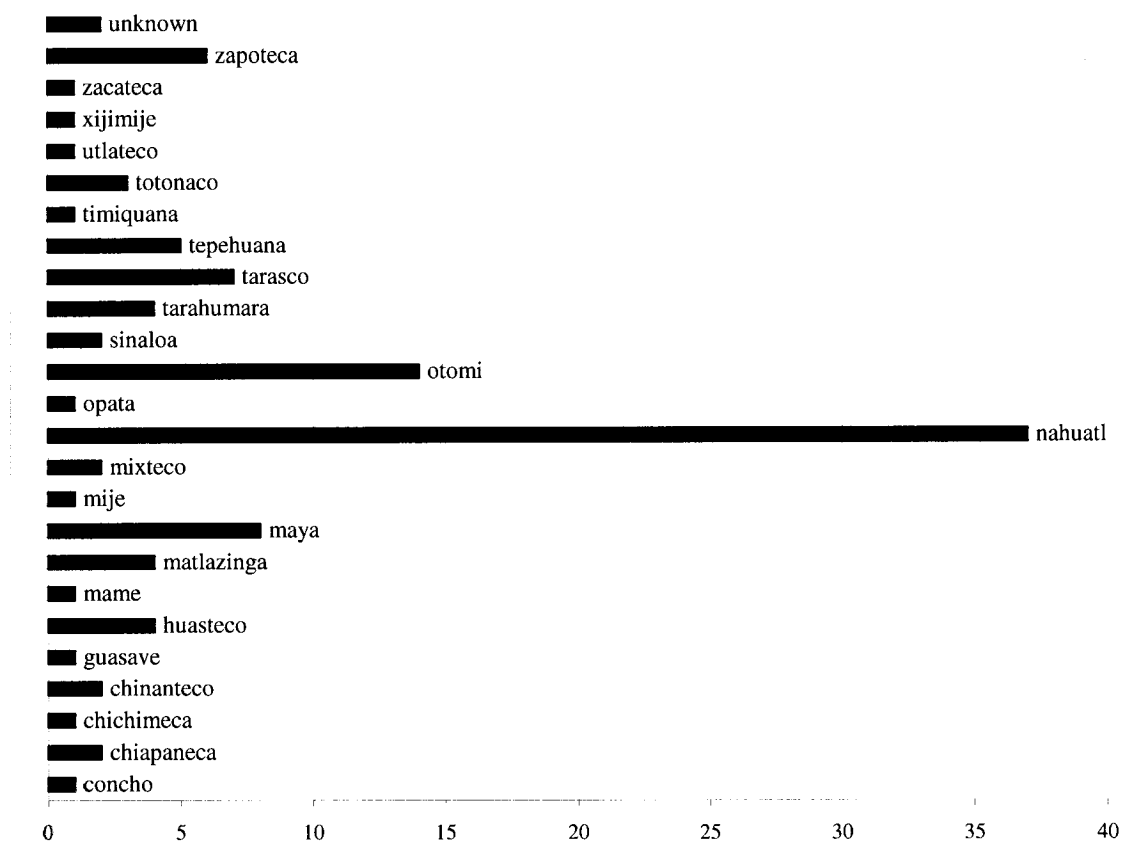
Significantly too, and this is an aspect that has not been considered so far in the literature, the Spanish language owes much of its consolidation and fixing to the repeated effort of comparison with indigenous languages of which translation is the best illustration.

⁵⁹ A. López Austin (1996) has ably dissected some aspects of the supposedly genuine indigenous lore to conclude that they were the product of early infiltrations of Spanish customs into the Indian society .

2.1.1. Fixing native languages: grammars

For the period 1521-1821 I have found 76 stand-alone grammars, 22 grammars with vocabularies appended, 8 grammars with translated texts (mostly doctrinal) appended, and 10 grammars with both vocabularies and (mostly) doctrinal translations appended, which gives a total of 116 items. Of the total, 110 were elicited in Beristáin, and 6 more were found in the Fondo Medina.

Fig. 7. Grammars



They represent 24 languages: Concho (1), Chiapaneca (2), Chichimeca(1), Chinanteco (2), Guasave (1), Huasteco (4), Mame (1), Matlazinga (pirinda) (4), Maya (8), Mije (1), Mixteco (2), Nahuatl (37), Opata (tequima) (1), Otomi (14), Sinaloa (2),

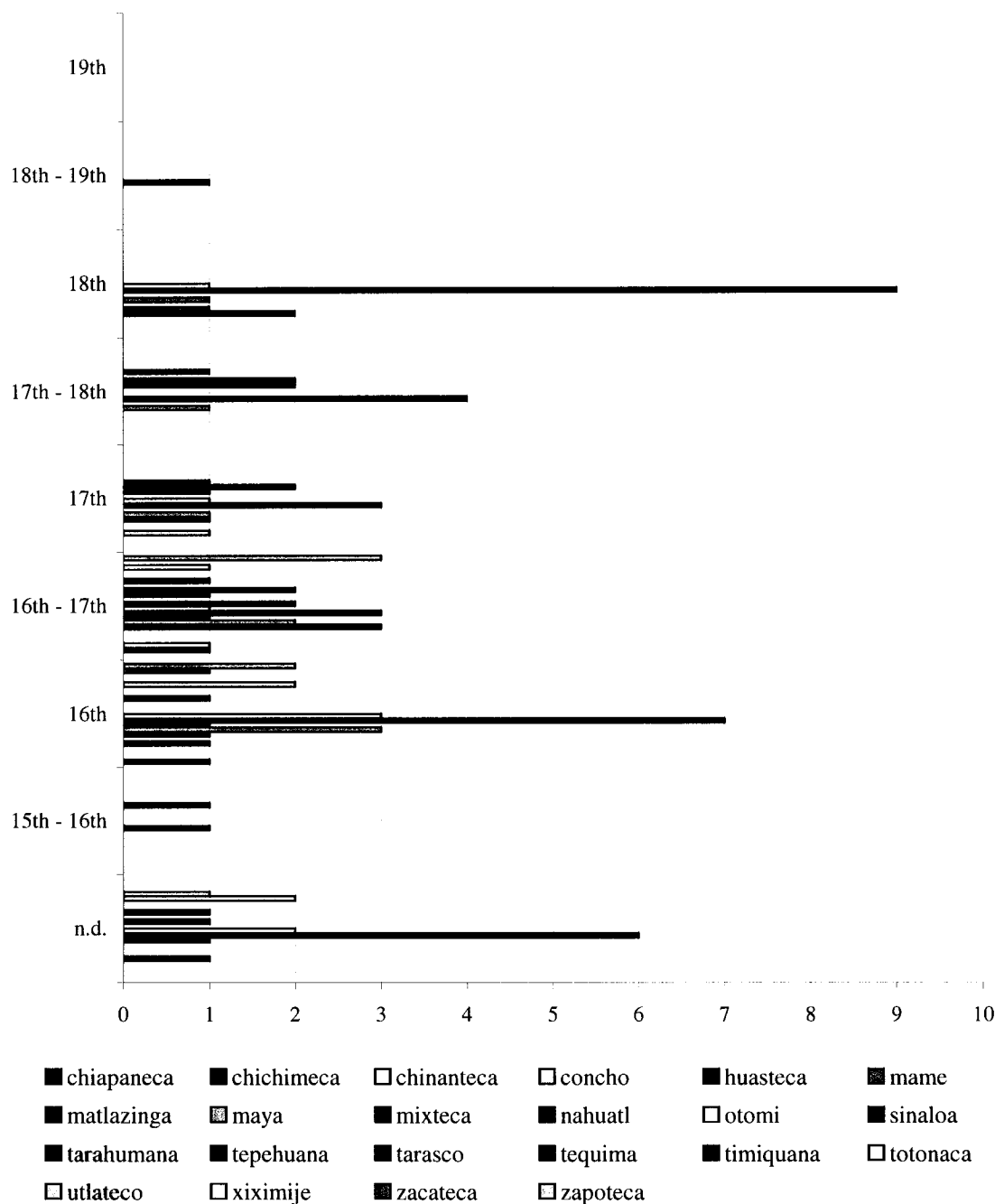
Tarahumara (4), Tarasco (7), Tepehuana (5), Timiquana (1), Totonaco (3), Utlateco (1), Xiximije (1), Zacateca (1) and Zapoteca (6), plus “Dos libros de los diferentes idiomas que se usan en la provincia de Sonora”, which I have not been able to identify. Other grammars of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, which were also produced during the colonial time, have not been considered here. They will be studied under either the Classical Continuity or Modern High Culture categories, essentially because they are not missionary oriented.

The distribution and concentration of these grammars along the Colonial period can be seen in the following chart (Figure 8), in which we can observe two concentrations: the first during the peak of missionary work by the Mendicant orders (sixteen- to seventeenth-century) where most of the languages are represented, and then, a second impulse to some selected languages, notably Nahuatl, during the latter part of the period. A non negligible number of grammars could not be dated. We could assume that they belong to the first period, since they are mostly manuscripts that never made it to print.

The alphabetical transcription and description of the indigenous languages was virtually equivalent to a re-creation. Sieved through the filters of European religious and linguistic paradigms, and assessed according to their measuring stick, it has been always questioned whether the resulting written languages were an accurate representation of their oral counterparts.

To be able to make a critical assessment of this allegation, one has to keep in mind the overarching importance of grammar in the intellectual sphere of the middle ages and the belief that God spoke one only truth, which could be expressed in all languages through a

Fig. 8. Concentration of grammars



single ideal grammar.⁶⁰ In Christendom, Latin was this model and this is the reason why we find it in all indigenous grammars. It would thus be an anachronism to pretend that the

⁶⁰ V. E. Hanzeli (1969) traced the genesis of these ideas in his *Missionary Linguistics in New France*. See in particular, chapter III: "The grammatical training of the Jesuit Missionaries", pp. 32-44.

missionaries were equipped to confront the Indian Other on his own terms. Moreover, the same religious beliefs and doxological constraints that made the missionaries blind to certain aspects of the cultures they were discovering meant that the Indian could be approached, if not as an equal (after all, they were infidels), certainly as a commensurate Other. This paradox can be explained as follows: the Spanish missionaries went to great lengths to find an explanation of the existence of these territories and populations. Indians were creatures of God since God was the Creator of all things on Earth, but then how was it that they had been hidden from Christianity? Where did they come from? A large array of explanations were to be elaborated along the whole Colonial period, suffice to say that the most common interpretation was that these vast domains were conquered from the beginnings of time by Satan and his armies of fallen angels. These populations had been induced into error by them. They were not sinners like the Jews, who had killed Jesus, or infidels like the Moors, who had conquered the Holy Land. They were poor peoples, deceived by the demons, and they had to be convinced of that, and brought back to the right road. This was the logic in which the Indians, their admirable civilization contradicted by their idolatric practices, were understood: ultimately they were the vivid proof of God's existence since they were also the illustration of the works of Satan.

These theological constructions can be thus analyzed as prejudices having a double effect, and the following reflection is inspired by an analysis of Friar Bernardino de Sahagún's⁶¹ intellectual framework proposed by John Keber (1988) in a short and illuminating article based on Hans Georg Gadamer's thinking on prejudices. The missionaries prejudice (or *pre-judgement*) that Indians could have not escaped God's

⁶¹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

project for Man on Earth, that they were, by opposition, a proof of God's existence, gave a measure of intelligibility to their presence and justified at the same time the Spanish intervention to convert them. The final goal of a truly Catholic, that is, universal, Ecclesia, the dream of the first Franciscans who thought that God had reserved these immense territories for them, so that they could fulfill the Apocalypses's prophecies, could be achieved here.⁶² It was therefore a double-side prejudice: one that cancelled the possibility of understanding the Indian fully in its own terms, and one that allowed for a misunderstanding of the Indian in a way that allowed for a degree of intelligibility. If this degree of intelligibility was at any moment mutual, I am unable to say. However, several studies seem to point at this possibility,⁶³ and I hope the next sections will shed some light into the matter.

The case of New Spain's grammars of indigenous languages lends itself also to be analyzed within Gadamer's conception of prejudices: prejudices opening up horizons, ways of understanding and prejudices cancelling them. One of such prejudices is the medieval conviction that all languages can be traced back to one single, pre-Babelian so to say, grammar; that God spoke one only truth in that *Ur-sprache*, and that this truth remains encoded in every language.⁶⁴ Therefore, the study of grammar was at the basis of all knowledge.⁶⁵ Only a few languages could aspire to the honor of being models or ideals for

⁶² Cf. Jacques Lafaye 1985, esp. pp. 75-84.

⁶³ See Klor 1997 for the mutual intelligibility question, Burkhardt 1992 for the appropriation of missionary contents by the scribes. See also Rafael 1993 and Seed 1995 for Indian reception of colonial discourses.

⁶⁴ See Steiner 1975, in particular Chapter II: *Language and Gnosis*.

⁶⁵ In order to fully understand the significance of these vernacular grammars (and in this sense, Spanish was also a vernacular), and the consequences of this innovation, one has to keep in mind that only dead languages, because they were not spoken but only written, needed to be learnt through grammars. A change in paradigm was needed to conceive even of such a thing as a grammar of a language which was in full use (both written and spoken). This fact was already observed at the time by Queen Isabel herself, when she learned about Nebrija's work. To make a grammar of an indigenous language (which was only spoken), then, was indeed a bold decision.

this universal grammar. Latin was that language in Medieval Europe and was, therefore, exported to the Spanish American colonies.

Indeed, most of the New Spain grammars follow the model set up by Spanish humanist Antonio de Nebrija in his Latin grammar, the *Institutiones in latinam grammaticam* (1481) or in the Spanish version he made of it: *Introducciones Latinas* (1486),⁶⁶ which once and for all would set the distinction between Latin and its former dialect, the vulgar *Romance*, or Castilian, and, indirectly, between Castilian and the other romance languages used in the peninsula, namely Catalan and Galician. Literally hundreds of copies of the “Arte del Antonio”, as it was commonly known, crossed the Atlantic and landed in the port of Veracruz. Fernández del Castillo transcribed the booklist registered as freight in a sixteenth-century shipment from Spain: this 1584 ship contained 356 “Artes del Antonio” packed in 40 boxes (Fernández del Castillo 1982: 263-281). The grammars largely outnumbered the other titles registered in the booklist; in fact, their circulation was wider than that of certain religious books, among them the Bible.⁶⁷ The late Ignacio Osorio Romero, Mexican latinist, observes that, although there are no data available for book imports for the first 50 years of the colony, the shipments of Nebrija’s grammars were constant: “el 21 de julio de 1576 llegaron seis ejemplares; el 22 de diciembre del mismo año, otros veintiocho”, and then, “todos los años, por ejemplo, 1619, 1634, 1655, 1660, 1661 y 1689, las tiendas de la ciudad las tenían en venta y estaban pendientes de la flota

⁶⁶ This was a bilingual Latin-Castilian edition, as the title reads; for the use of nuns and pious women who did not know enough Latin to be able to read and understand religious books. His now famous Spanish grammar, published in 1492, had in fact a mild reception, and was not reedited until 1744. For a general panorama of the impact of these grammars in Latin America, see Escavy, R, *et al.* (eds.) *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Historiografía Lingüística. Nebrija, V Centenario*, vol II, Murcia, 1994.

⁶⁷ Next in numbers in the same shipment came Vatable’s Bible: 200 copies. Benito Boyer, the book merchant who owned the Bibles, was planning to get a good prize for them in New Spain. Unfortunately for him, in their way to Veracruz, the Inquisition included Vatable’s Bible in the Index and the business was lost. The correspondence regarding this matter can be consulted in Fernández del Castillo 1982, pp. 260- 317.

que surtía tan solicitado texto” (Osorio Romero 1980: 29). Nevertheless, the demand was higher than the offer, and in 1709, Gertrudis de Vera, a printer in Mexico, was asking for authorization to print Nebrija’s grammar:

por la inopia que hay de Artes de gramática, cuya falta ha llegado a ser total, respecto a que en esta presente flota no se ha hecho remisión de ellas, como se prueba con el informe de los padres maestros de la gramática de la sagrada Compañía de Jesús, que con la solemnidad necesaria presento y con las cartas del reino de Castilla, de que hago demostración, en que se refiere no hacerse en la presente flota remisión de libros por las causas que en ellas se expresan. (Osorio Romero 1980: 22)

What was the relative importance of other European grammars in New Spain? It seems that it was significant: aside from Nebrija’s grammatical works, by far the most widespread, Osorio Romero mentions the Latin grammars by Lorenzo della Valle (1407-1457), Ian van Pauteren (1460-1520) and Manuel Álvarez (1526-1583) as well as works intended for teaching Latin by Erasmus (1469-1536) and Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540). He observed that “almost all sixteenth and seventeenth-century philologists were known and studied in New Spain” (Osorio Romero 1980: 48). European rhetoric and poetic manuals were also imported all along the Colonial period. None of these grammars and manuals was ever translated into any indigenous languages, but Nebrija’s grammar structure can be traced in many indigenous languages grammars, both in Middle and in South America, and in Japan and the Philippines as well.

For without grammars, nothing else could be achieved. Grammar held the key to the house of wisdom, as the plate from the sixteenth-century classic *Margarita Philosophica* (see Figure 9) illustrates. Nebrija’s grammar was used not only for the new schools where Latin and Spanish was taught, but served, as I said before, as a model for the New Spain

grammars, which follow its Latin-based structure and exemplifications, as stated in the prologue to *Arte de la lengua mixteca*, by the Dominican friar Antonio de los Reyes⁶⁸:

"Con toda la imperfeccion de esta lengua mixteca y defectos que en ella se pueden notar como de lengua barbara, se puede reduzir lo mas de ella a reglas y poner en orden de arte que es lo que aqui se pretende. Ansi dezimos que se hallan en ella todas las ocho partes de la oracion como en el latin y en las de mas lenguas perfectas, las cuales son...." (Reyes, A. 1593/198?: 4)



Fig. 9. Gregor Reisch's *Margarita philosophica*.

⁶⁸ BHA IV, 206

In 1875, French eminent middle-americanist Rémi Siméon strongly criticized this analogy in his prologue to the modern edition of Andrés de Olmos⁶⁹ *Arte para aprender la lengua mexicana* : "cette assimilation des formes simples et parfois rudimentaires du Nahuatl aux formes plus complexes et plus savantes du latin est, selon nous, une faute capitale, commune, du reste, au plus grand nombre des travaux qui ont paru jusqu'ici sur les langues anciennes du nouveau continent" (Olmos 1547/1875 : VIII). Recent scholarship however tends to stress the deviations *vis a vis* the Latin structures and concludes that the grammar's authors may rather have been paying lip service to the *Introductiones latinae*, which was the canon for the grammars. Accusations of ethnocentrism have been frequently made against this fact.⁷⁰ It has been argued that in following the Latin model, the languages were forced into a foreign mould and that their physiognomy might have been totally altered. This has been a quite common criticism, opposed by some linguistic historians who are suggesting that, in opposition to the colonialist attitudes of the conquerors, who saw the New World through the looking glass of the Old one, the grammarian friars' description of the indigenous languages is quite adapted to their peculiarities (López García 1995), and that one cannot say that the friars would be imposing the Latin grid out of obscurantism and ignorance when in fact they had acquired a thorough knowledge of the languages in question before writing their grammars. They had, according to some scholars, a pre-theoretical knowledge of these languages and, therefore, the analogy did not go beyond the more general levels (Hernández Sacristán 1994: 129). It can be argued that some of the New Spain grammarians were quite aware of the challenge and seemed to have preempted

⁶⁹ BHA IV, 45

⁷⁰ Just as Nebrija's Spanish grammar was criticized by his contemporaries for being a too literal a copy of his own Latin grammar, the *Introductiones latinae* (1481).

these criticisms. In this regard, let's read grammarian Antonio del Rincón⁷¹ in the preface to his 1595 *Arte mexicana*:

"No es possible guardarse en todo un mismo methodo y arte, en enseñar todas las lenguas, siendo ellas (como lo son) tan distantes y diferentes entre si [...] Mas con todo esso no se puede negar sino que el camino mas llano y breue para aprovechar en cualquiera de las lenguas es el que an hallado la latina y la griega [...] en aquello que me e podido aprovuechar de la grammatica latina siempre me yre arrimando a ella pero en las demas cosas, en questa lengua se diferencia de la latina, a sido forçoso reducirlas a nuevas reglas" (Rincón 1595/1885: 11)

He was not alone in formulating this caveat. Andrés de Olmos,⁷² the first Nahuatl grammarian, acknowledges also his debt to the Latin grammar but,

"porque en esta lengua no quadrara el orden que el lleva por faltar muchas cosas de las quales en el arte de gramatica se haze gran caudal como son declinaciones, supinos, y las especies de los verbos para denotar la diversidad de ellos, [...] no sere reprehensible si en todo no siguiere la orden del arte de Antonio" (Olmos 1547/1875: 13)

There was therefore a clear consciousness that the Latin model had its limits. While it is true that the grammars are organized very much in the same order we find in Nebrija (grammar: nouns, pronouns, verbs...syntax...) this analogy disappears easily as we get to the details. In general, the descriptions reveal a lot more differences than similarities. I do not mean that the Latin mould was of little consequence in the fate of the languages. But the main disruption did not take place here,⁷³ but in the actual writing of these languages, in the passage from orality to writing, in the phonetic transcription of the spoken languages, in

⁷¹ *BHA* IV, 230

⁷² *BHA* IV, 45

⁷³ The first European vernacular's grammars were also written in Latin (Percival 1994: 69), a fact that doesn't seem to have raised any criticism.

the translation from paintings to written words, a translation that had repercussions far more significant, as suggested by Serge Gruzinski:

Les “peintures” sont des images autant que des textes et les mots ne sauraient d’une image offrir l’exact équivalent. Il semble, en d’autres termes, que l’exploitation écrite de l’information pictographique impliqua obligatoirement une perte de substance, perte d’autant plus inquiétante qu’elle était irrémédiable et non verbalisable. Elle débordait le domaine des catégories intellectuelles ou esthétiques pour relever de celui des fondements implicites de toute représentation du réel. (Gruzinski 1988: 77)

Once alphabetized, their fate was sealed: substantives and prepositions, pronouns and syntactic rules would manifest themselves replacing the previous codes. While Olmos⁷⁴ and Rincón⁷⁵ were aware of the distortions in the representation of the indigenous languages that the use of the Latin model could entail, the alphabetization and phonetic transcription of these languages seems not to have been explicitly problematized at that time.

Nevertheless, prefaces and other paratexts can be misleading, and correspondences between these discourses and the actual method followed in the grammars themselves are not easy to establish. We should rather ask ourselves how were these texts constructed and try to catch a glimpse into the presumed relationship or lack of it between Latin and the indigenous languages. Let’s take as an example Antonio de Ágreda’s⁷⁶ *Arte breve para aprender con alguna facilidad la dificultosa lengua otomi*. This is a manuscript dated 1769, which apparently was never printed, although it sought the sponsorship of a Count of Aranda. Its subtitle reads: *Contiene algunas reglas, la doctrina, ministracion de*

⁷⁴ BHA IV, 45

⁷⁵ BHA IV, 230

⁷⁶ Not included in BHA.

sacramentos, un vocabulario y otras cosas curiosas. Consequently, we expect a short grammar followed by some doctrinal texts, a vocabulary and miscellaneous matters. It begins indeed with a grammar written in Spanish but referring to the Latin grammatical categories (“pronombre iste, ista, istud...”, p. 17) to explain the corresponding Otomi features; then comes the doctrine, in two columns: Spanish and Otomi, containing the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Credo, Salve, the Ten Commandments, the Sacraments, Articles of Faith, Works of Mercy, Capital Sins, Enemies of the Soul, Powers of the Soul, Bodily Senses, act of Contrition, administration of Baptism, Eucharist and Marriage, with the questioning to which man and woman were submitted as a requisite prior to being married, a confession manual and, lastly, a vocabulary of about 600 words. This is the kind of material where we find grammar, lexicography and translation in combination. These combined volumes, of which I have found ten, were intended for the friars themselves. They helped them communicate with the Indians and indoctrinate them at the same time. In their schools, they could teach them how to read and write their own language, and learn the prayers by heart. But more importantly, a text like this would be used extensively in the religious acts where Latin was not used. We shall not forget that, since confession was the main weapon against idolatry, it was imperative to be able to confess in the different languages. The administration of the sacrament of confession was not haphazard but **subject to a strict order**. A very precise questioning, following the order of the **Ten Commandments** and focusing on the Indian customs and practices, was necessary in order to extirpate evil from the Indian’s souls. For instance, in this appended confession manual, the priest will ask the Indian under the First Commandment: “You shall have no other gods before me” (Dt 5:7), whether he or she believes in the owl (called not only by the Spanish name: “búho”, but also by the Nahuatl name: **tecolote**). It was also very important to

question the people who were asking to be married. Questions would be put therefore to establish whether they had the legal age (14 years for the boy)⁷⁷ or if the bride had had relationships with any men of the boy's family.

So, for the learning and teaching of the indigenous languages in their new, alphabetic, form, grammars were produced based on a double standard: Latin as the supreme paradigm, the noble language; and Spanish, as the means of transfer, the vehicle, as this excerpt of Antonio del Rincón's⁷⁸ 1595 *Arte mexicana* illustrates:

en lugar de *hic, haec, hoc*, usan, **inin**, v.g. **inincalli**, *haec domus*, en lugar de *iste*, usan **inon**, v.g. **inoncalli**, *ista domus*. *Ille, illa, illud*, no le tienen propiamente, usan de circumlocucion, diziendo, **in nehcaca**, lo que esta alli. (1595/1885: 19) [my emphasis: Latin in italics, Nahuatl in boldface]

Spanish, which will first displace Latin to become a model itself, and then, in a second movement, will impose itself as the national language. Just as we have seen in the previous example, in Horacio Carochi's⁷⁹ *Arte de la lengua mexicana* (1645) , the description of the language is made in Spanish, but in the examples, Nahuatl is placed next to Latin: "Tloc [=] iuxta, apud".

The widespread use of Nahuatl since the days before the Conquest, its intellectual prestige and political importance as the language of the Aztec Empire caused it to be equated to Latin by the missionaries. Fray Jerónimo de Mendieta⁸⁰ (1525-1604), the Franciscan chronicler, was the first to acknowledge this fact:

⁷⁷ Legal age was not a fixed standard. It could be lowered if marriages needed to be promoted, such as after periods of pests. This manuscript could be evidence of such a maneuver, since the digit 4 in number 14 seems to have been superimposed over a smudge.

⁷⁸ BHA IV, 230

⁷⁹ BHA II, 50 - 51

⁸⁰ BHA III, 235

Esta lengua mexicana es la general que corre por todas las provincias de esta Nueva España, puesto que hay muchas y diferentes lenguas particulares de cada provincial, y en partes de cada pueblo, porque son innumerables. Mas en todas partes hay interpretes que entienden y hablan la mexicana, porque ésta es la que por todas partes corre, como la Latina por todos los reinos de Europa. (Mendieta 1870: III, 552).

This is the reason why in grammars of less predominant languages, Nahuatl appears to have been used as a *tertium comparationis*, a third standard together with Latin, and placed next to Spanish. Pedro de Cárceres'⁸¹ *Arte de la lengua othomi* (?1500/1905) is a unique case of such a three-way comparatism: the Otomi language is described in Spanish but with references to Latin and Nahuatl, such as in this example, concerning possessive or undetermined pronouns, “que los mexicanos usan que dicen **teaxca**, **tetlalqui**, &c., que quiere decir cosa o hazienda de alguno... Estos [the Otomi Indians] no lo tienen pero en su lugar dizen **matzaxoonimmeti**, **matzachonimeti**...” (p. 53). In Cárceres' grammar this feature is particularly evident; nevertheless, other grammars of minor languages, as well as bilingual texts of doctrine, show frequent interferences of Nahuatl, most visibly in the vocabulary, but possibly too in deeper structures.

In fact, it can be said that Spanish reinforced the nahuatlization of the territory. Nahuatl was indeed the more widespread language before the Conquest, having been imposed upon other groups, but it was the colonial policies of forced displacement of populations, renaming of towns and alliances with the central highlands local authorities, among other factors, which determined the dissemination of classical Nahuatl. Klor de Alva has described how classical Nahuatl, the *Mexicano* used by the Indian elites, was used by the colonial powers as a channel through which their objectives could be better accepted and assimilated by the population (Klor 1989).

⁸¹ BHA II, 43

Of course the religious spirit permeates through all intellectual endeavors in this period; in other words, nothing is thinkable or sayable outside the sphere of God. But, going back to the discussion on prejudices above, part of the translational material of the canvass shows some degree of detachment from the indoctrination purposes which unquestionably motivate them. In many grammars we find a spirit of intellectual inquiry which has been equated to an ethnolinguistic interest *avant la lettre*. Consideration is given, for instance, to the facts that in Mixteca, men's and women's language are different: "hermano, los hombres dizen: **ñani**, las mujeres, **cuha**....",⁸² and that in Zapoteca there is not one only way of counting, but different ways for blankets, for long things, for pans, for corn ears, for slashes, piles, markets, Castile bread, tortillas, cocoa bundles, etc...,⁸³ in which "the verbs of removing and putting, bringing and carrying are different according to the things that are removed and put and brought and carried, and according to the places whereto they are removed, or put, or brought or carried, and according to the places wherefrom they are removed, put, brought or carried".⁸⁴ In Carochi's⁸⁵ 1645 *Arte de la lengua mexicana*, examples of turns of phrases are taken from ancient Nahuatl texts just as from Christian texts. In Juan de Córdova's⁸⁶ 1578 *Arte del idioma zapoteco*, the calendars and omens of the Indians are explained without any moral judgments nor derogatory comments, as well as the ways the Indians had to marry and get divorced. Gaspar de los Reyes, who acknowledges his debt to Juan de Córdova, wrote a *Gramática de las lenguas zapoteca-serrana y zapoteca del valle* (1700) in which he explains how verbs in Zapoteca can combine different aspects:

⁸² Fr. Antonio de los Reyes' *Arte de la lengua mixteca*, 1593, p. 87

⁸³ Juan de Córdova's *Arte del idioma zapoteco*, 1578, pp. 197-198

⁸⁴ Pedro de Cárceres' *Arte de la lengua othomi*, 16th c., p. 14 (page 103 of Nicolás León's 1905 edition, my translation)

⁸⁵ BHA II, 50 - 51

⁸⁶ BHA II, 146 - 147

Tienen terminos propios y modos tan irregulares que ni en la latinidad ni en lo castellano tenemos tales voces: Preguntanle a un Indio que hace su amo? Y responde con un solo termino, diziendo no solo que esta en la selda y loque esta haciendo, sino tambien el modo con que esta si sentado, si en pie, si acostado (p. 24)

Juan de Córdova is particularly interesting in that he explains how certain grammatical traits of this language could be interpreted as suggesting heresy. With regard to the use of the pronoun “we” he says:

ni se ha de entender con tal rigor que cuando digo Señor perdonad nuestras culpas se trate tambien de las culpas de El [...] . Los Caxones dizen en el persignum crucis: **Becilaci reho xana Dios he?** Que quiere decir libranos señor; luego en el nos, le comprehendieran haziendole pecador; no, no son tan metaphisicos los Indios; ni son tan brutos que no sepan que Dios es impecable.

In other words, they might be Indians but they know that God has no fault. Oscillations between the like and the different, examples of analogy and of divergence are frequent in the grammars texts. I would venture to say, however, that bridges of mutual intelligibility are more common than not. Latin was the model, but the displacement of the grammarians with respect to Latin and Spanish was evident. Comparisons with the mother language were only possible to a certain extent. Beyond, a large horizon of difference deployed and was acknowledged, but it does not seem to have posed an insurmountable obstacle.

Without making value judgments with regards to their allegiance to the colonial goals and motivations, we can nevertheless observe in a significant number of grammars the same spirit of curiosity and intellectual inquiry that was cultivated in the two main Spanish universities of the time: Salamanca and Alcalá. Nebrija himself was quite an

unorthodox scholar. Grammars such as Cárceres'⁸⁷ are probably the best examples of this spirit.

Other grammars, however, show more openly the kind of discourse that would be expected from colonial agents. Francisco Ávila's⁸⁸ 1717 *Arte de la lengua mexicana y breves pláticas de los misterios de Nuestra Santa Fee Catholica* is a telling example of the adherence of some grammarians to the colonial purposes. In a long prologue dedicated to the "pious reader", this Franciscan friar justifies his mingling with non-linguistic matters: "También quise, ya que al escribir este Arte es para los que se han de dar a la administración, notar algunas cosas, que sirvan de avisos, en orden al conocimiento, natural inclinación y obrar de los Indios". A description of the Indians' character follows:

Todo esto [the chores they perform] lo hacen como forzados, y porque son de animo servil y no se avergüençan de exercitarse en officios viles, aunque sean bien nacidos. Comen sin asco y viven sin vergüença. No sienten agravio ni agradecen beneficio [...] Para hacer una delacion y falsa acusacion hazen junta de principales, nombran testigos y los instruyen en lo que han de jurar, juntan dineros, y gallinas; vistense de la ropa mas rota para parecer antes los Juezes, lloran, se lamentan, y assi hazen creibles sus imposturas, porque se compadesce de ellos el Juez (unnumbered page).

Since they are so vile and hypocritical, here are some indications as to how they should be treated:

Hableles con imperio, nieguenles assiento, haganlos hablar en voz baja [...] con la manta amarrada sobre el ombro y no suelta. No les consienta tomar polvos, ni chupar en su presencia; y sobre todo cuyde y vele que sepan la Doctrina Christiana, que se confiessen bien; y para que lo hagan mude la aspereza conque sin confessarlos les habla, en blandura, no los riña... [...]

⁸⁷ BHA II, 43

⁸⁸ BHA I, 185

Son abiles, discurren muy delgado en materia de su negocio. Saben poner la ocasion de la culpa para dar un tapavoca. Con una poca de fruta, o una gallina engañan al mas avil; y assi no es bueno recibir sus agasajos porque traen consigo embuelto un veneno para el alma, y cuerpo; y meten en empeños, que no es facil salir con bien de ellos. Procuran que el Cura y las Justicias anden encontrados para vivir mas sueltos (unnumbered page).

Pending analysis of more such texts, two general modes seem to emerge here; on the one hand, the grammars such as Cárceres⁸⁹ grammar, which exudes the optimism of the first decades,⁹⁰ when everything seemed possible to these friars, who considered themselves as the new apostles, infused with the Pentecostal gift of tongues: every word of any language has its equivalent in Latin and, therefore, has its equivalent in other languages: the preface by the Mexico University holder of the chair of Otomi language to Luis Neve y Molina's⁹¹ grammar says that his grammar "acredita, y manifiesta claramente no haver Idioma alguno incapaz de ceñirse a los numeros, y reglas del Arte" (Neve y Molina 1767: unnumbered page). These languages and these peoples could therefore not escape God's designs. However erroneous their beliefs, they were still commensurable since they were within God's reach. The friars' *pre-judgements* regarding the origins of these peoples and regarding the fate of humanity were not an obstacle to entertain a dialogue with them. After all, if we remember, as Horacio Carochi⁹² had said in the prologue to his grammar, men could only be either Christians or infidels. This simplicity of **classification** minimized differences: Christians were the Pope and the Spanish king and his vassals. Unfaithful were the Moors and Indians. Everything was to be gained in the contact. Translation could and should be performed.

⁸⁹ BHA II, 43

⁹⁰ Solange Alberro, following Mendieta, locates the end of that "golden age" in 1564, the year in which Viceroy Luis de Velasco died (Alberro 1999: 77)

⁹¹ BHA IV, 24

⁹² BHA II, 50 - 51

At the opposed pole we have Ávila's grammar, a product of a different time, the years of depopulation and mixing of races, the shift in population ratios. Pessimism has gradually grown among the religious class: news are commonplace that Indians go back to their idolatries clandestinely, or cynically, as soon as they are out of sight of the missionary; no more masses of adults to be baptized; competition among the monastic orders and between them and the secular branch of the Church has poisoned the atmosphere. Indians will no more be taught Latin and will not be ordained. These Indians, the ones so callously depicted by Ávila, have nothing in common with the noble Aztecs, the sons of *caciques* that were taught at Tlatelolco. Occasionally, these Indians would be dressed up as Aztecs and hung off the triumphal arches that were built in different ceremonies.⁹³

Fixing the language by comparison to Spanish, Latin, or Nahuatl, meant a confirmation of the existence of the language and its importance. Grammars of Nahuatl will be produced during the whole period, and they will adjust themselves to the evolution of the language.⁹⁴ In 1713 the Augustinian friar Manuel Pérez⁹⁵ publishes another *Arte del idioma mexicano*. According to common practice, the text is preceded by a number of letters of approval by distinguished scholars or church officials. One of them is Fr. Joseph de Padilla, who was head of the Augustinian's convent of Xanenetla. He states that he **knows the author** "que es mi amigo y mi semejante: nostlazomahuiz teopixcapotzin, se dice con elegancia en mexicano", an expression of respect and admiration towards Nahuatl as well as a very personal commentary contrasting with the common rhetoric found in

⁹³ Alberro 1999: 83-96

⁹⁴ In the preface of an early 19th c. anonymous Nahuatl catechism the author says he is writing in a language "de este siglo, y no en el siglo de la conquista, que por sublime les seria desconocido". *Clara y sucinta exposición del pequeño catecismo...*, Oratorio de S. Felipe Neri: Puebla, 1891

⁹⁵ BHA IV, 136

approvals. In some way, these two men (who were not Indians but probably mestizo) would identify themselves too in the Mexican language. Was this the kind of fusion of horizons Gadamer talks about? Could it have meant the beginning of something different, a reformulation of categories? Whatever the case, this chance aborted. But for a fleeting moment it seemed that the prejudices could be overcome.

2.1.2. Comparing: vocabularies⁹⁶ and the like

At the outset, I must emphasize that all lexicographic productions of New Spain were either bilingual or trilingual. The vast majority served the purpose of comparing Spanish with indigenous languages. A few products relate Classical languages with Spanish, and have not been included in this category; instead, they will be found under the Modern High Culture or Classical Continuity categories.

In addressing the question of the magnitude of the vocabularies category, I have found some partial quantifications,⁹⁷ studies on the genealogy of the main colonial dictionaries,⁹⁸ and a number of articles assessing the importance of these dictionaries in the historical context.⁹⁹ I have not come across any study venturing the number of such lexicographic products, just as there seems to be no overall quantification of grammars. One has to acknowledge the methodological and practical difficulties of these compilations: the existence of some texts is only known by reference; when we have the author's name,

⁹⁶ They are all entitled "vocabularios", regardless of size and ambition. Some are no more than short bilingual wordlists, and others come closer to a modern definition of dictionaries. The ones I have been able to consult are alphabetical, except for Pedro de Arenas' 1611 thematic conversation guide: *Vocabulario manual de las lenguas castellana y mexicana*.

⁹⁷ Carmen Val-Julián 1998 limits her study to the 16th century,

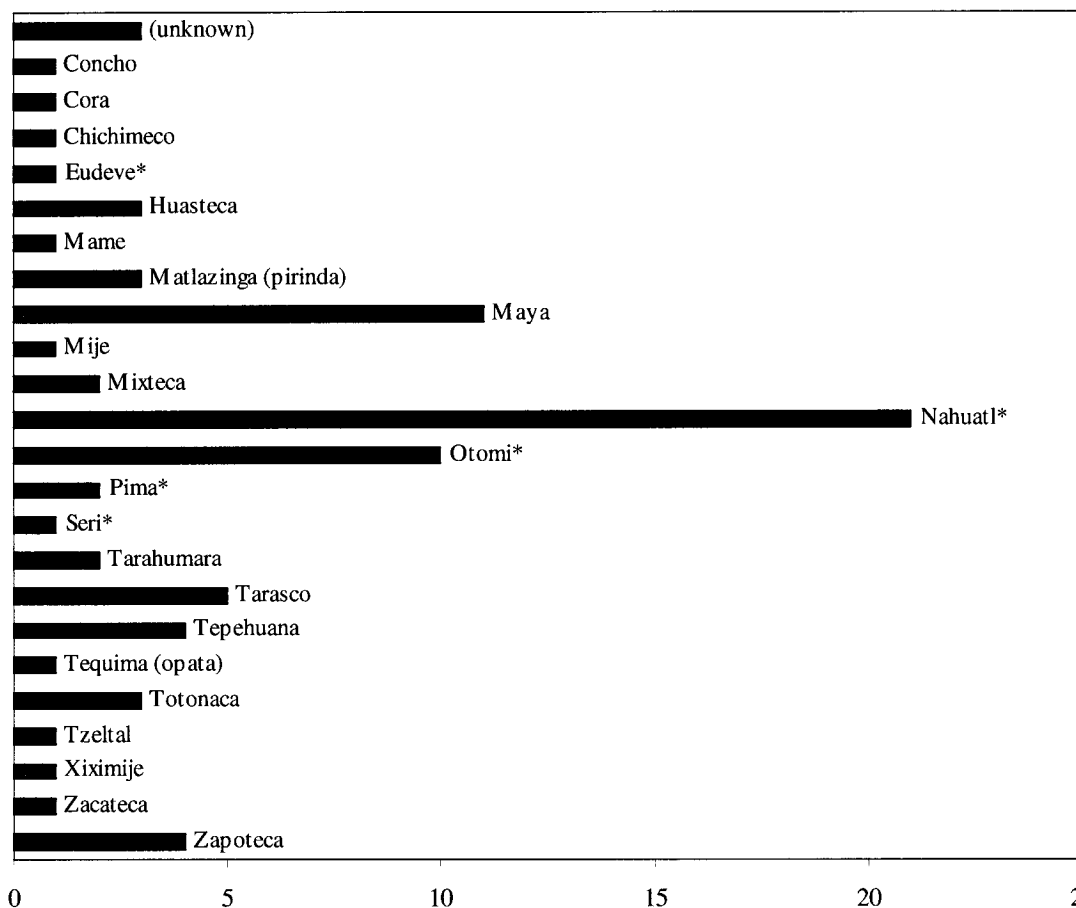
⁹⁸ Karttunen 1995, Alvar 1992, 1997, López García 1995.

⁹⁹ Hernández de León - Portilla 1977, 1996.

there is at least some assurance of identification, but among these lexicons there are a number of anonymous works, which makes the identification and register very problematic. Furthermore, whether anonymous or not, if known and traceable, they are scattered in libraries of different countries, and while often there are specific catalogues for such materials, nobody seems to have attempted to merge them in order to arrive at a final compilation. Now, why would this be a shortcoming? In pointing out this lack of a complete panorama I do not mean to give an excessive importance to quantifications; but to signal that by studying these materials in a piecemeal manner, there has been a tendency to view them as separate, both from each other and, as a group, from the lexicographical production elsewhere, and this trend has, in my view, made scholarship blind to or insufficiently aware of important facts, one of which is the concentration of materials and languages, and another one the simultaneity of this production with regards to European lexicography. If we could arrive at a complete and carefully designed database we could probably correct some historical assumptions as well as propose new avenues for study.

Although arriving at a final assessment of the vocabularies is not my purpose here, I prepared, just as in the case of grammars, a compilation containing the ones mentioned in Beristáin plus the ones that are not mentioned there, but that I have been able to consult, or that I have found mentioned in reliable sources. Among them, there are again some **anonymous** works, and some works that are available in modern editions. This compilation gives a total of 79 lexicons of the following languages: Concho (1), Cora (1), Chichimeca (1), Eudeve (1), Huasteca (3), Mame (1), Matlazinga (3), Maya (10), Mije (1), Mixteca (2), Nahuatl (21), Otomi (7), Pima (1), Seri (1), Tarahumara (3), Tarasco (5), Tepehuana (4),

Fig. 10. Lexicons and languages



* Apparently these three languages: Eudeve, Pima and Seri, are contained in one volume (Adam Gilg's vocabulary); there is also a Nahuatl-Otomi vocabulary (Pedro Palacios' vocabulary) and a trilingual Spanish-Nahuatl-Otomi (Urbano's). In this table they are individualized as independent lexicons, i.e., separate languages.

Tequima (1), Totonaca (3), Tzeltal (1), Xiximije (1), Zacateca (1) and Zapoteca (3).¹⁰⁰ In the entries corresponding to three vocabularies¹⁰¹ Beristáin does not specify the languages concerned. Reference is made only to “vocabularios en diversas lenguas de indios”, or similar.

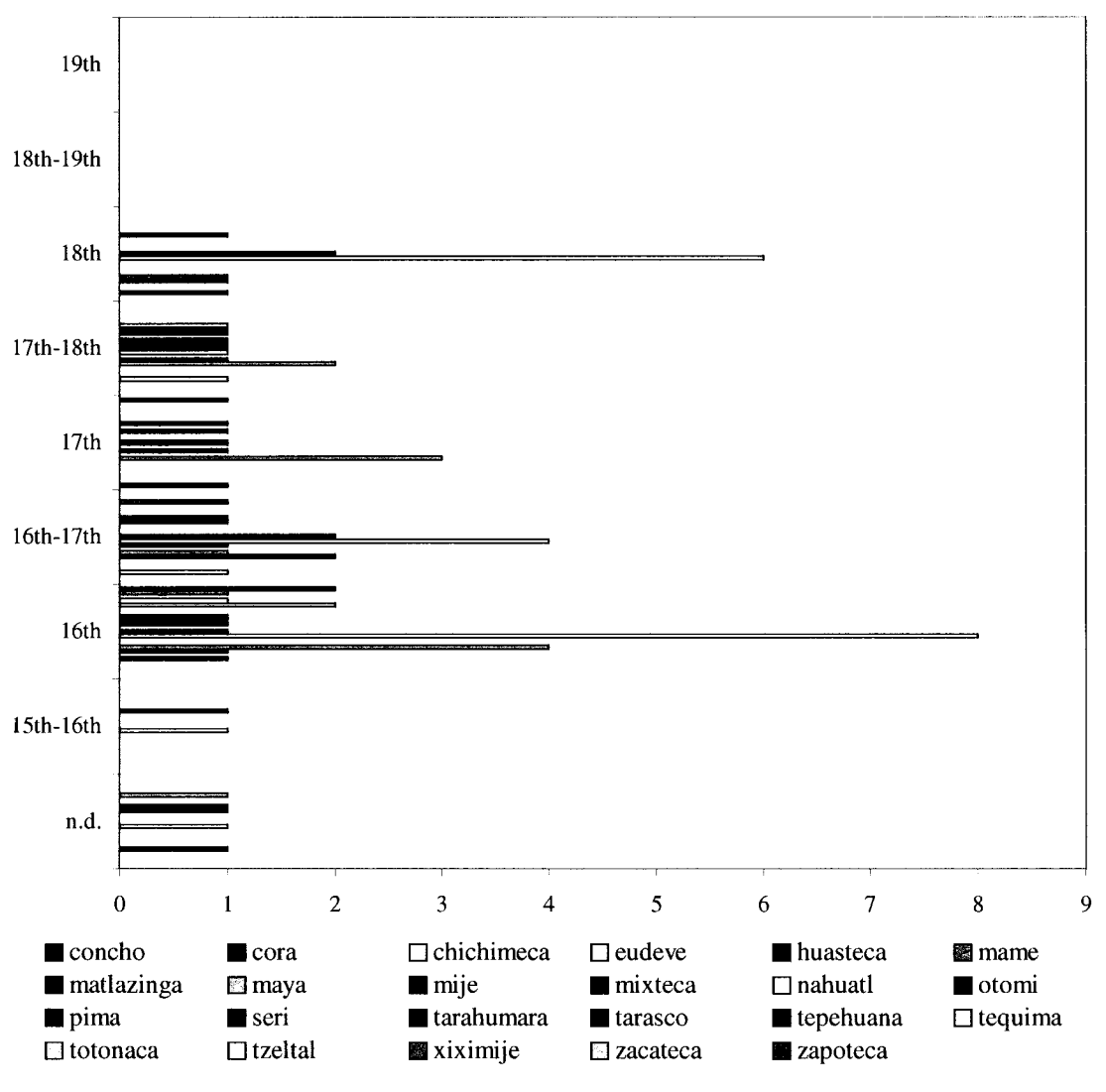
In Figure 11 I have plotted the number of vocabularies against time. As we can see,

¹⁰⁰ See linguistic map in page XXX

¹⁰¹ Vicente Águila (Beristáin 1947, I: 81), Pedro Calvo (Beristáin 1947, II: 22-23), and Domingo Lara (Beristáin 1947, III: 91)

they are scattered quite evenly along the whole period, and they disappear with the eighteenth century. Just as we have observed in the case of grammars, Nahuatl, Maya and Otomi were (and still are) the more widespread languages and, therefore, they were the object of lexicographic attention for a longer period. More vocabularies of these latter languages have survived, and we know also that some were reedited. This table does not show re-editions but only first editions. Another important observation to be made is that only a handful of these dictionaries were actually printed and survived to this date. Most

Fig. 11. Concentration of lexicons



vocabularies seem to have been compiled by the friars for use in their catechetical activities. They might have circulated in the convent, and hand copies might have been made of it, but they were not meant for print. This is one of the reasons why only a few have survived, and, of some languages, only one. Religious orders chronicles do not fail to mention the names of the friars who wrote vocabularies or grammars, but if the actual text is not found, we cannot go further.

This production of vocabularies is far from homogeneous: some of them are fully fledged dictionaries, like Juan de Córdova's¹⁰² *Vocabulario de la lengua zapoteca* and Alonso de Molina's¹⁰³ *Vocabulario de la lengua mexicana*, both published in mid sixteenth-century; others are more or less sizeable bilingual lists of words, appended sometimes to grammars or inserted between a grammar and a doctrinal text in the same volume, like 1769's Antonio de Agreda *Arte breve para aprender con alguna facilidad la dificultosa lengua otomi [...] ministracion de sacramentos, un bocabulario y otras cosas curiosas*. As was mentioned before the vocabulary is a list of some 600 words. Neve y Molina's¹⁰⁴ 1767 *Reglas de orthographia, diccionario y arte del idioma otomi...* contains also a brief wordlist as well as a bilingual Otomi-Nahuatl list of geographical names. One would tend to see the larger, standing alone, dictionaries as the most important ones. However, the mere presence of this variety of shorter vocabularies can give us important indications as to their functions and uses. After all, they seem to have been the antecessors of the largest ones. Franciscan chronicler Jerónimo de Mendieta explains: "Y tenían siempre papel y tinta en las manos, y en oyendo el vocablo al indio, escribíanlo, y al propósito que lo dijo. Y a la tarde juntábanse los religiosos y comunicaban los unos a los

¹⁰² BHA II, 146 - 147

¹⁰³ BHA III, 257 - V, 396

¹⁰⁴ BHA IV, 24

otros sus escriptos, y lo mejor que podian conformaban a aquellos vocablos el romance que les parecia más convenir” (Mendieta 1596/1973, I: 134). It seems thus natural that this was a common method of compilation, and that these lists, hand copied once and again, would be extensively used in the apostolic task. Later, once the study centers were established and some time could be devoted to a more thorough exploration of the languages, the larger vocabularies could be prepared.

To put these vocabularies in their proper general context requires a brief aside: let’s recall that at the time of the Conquest, Castilian, like other Romance languages, had taken a big enough distance from Latin for both to become quite strange to each other, at least for the layman. This coming of age of the vernacular is exemplified in the flourishing of bilingual Latin-vernacular dictionaries in Europe. The symbolic nature of these lists by which the “daughter language” would dare compare itself to the “mother language”, and, in turn, the mother language would condescend to be compared to the language aspiring for legitimacy, would result in bilingual texts that can be considered as representations of a sought after *inter pares* relationship, as well as declarations of independence: in becoming equal to the prestigious language, the young one was affirming its sovereignty and, in the same breadth, asserting its potential to become, in turn, a model for new aspirant languages: Antonio de Nebrija’s Spanish/Latin dictionary was published in Spain shortly after Columbus arrived to America,¹⁰⁵ and copies of it crossed regularly the Atlantic thereafter.¹⁰⁶

Specialists agree that Nebrija’s lexicographical works were the prototype for the

¹⁰⁵ Nebrija’s *Lexicon hoc est dictionarium ex sermone latino in hispanensem interprete* (Latin-Spanish) was first published in 1492, and around 1493-95 his *Dictionarium ex hispaniensi in latinum sermonem* (Spanish-Latin), both in Salamanca.

¹⁰⁶ Seven such dictionaries came in the same shipment already mentioned (Fernández del Castillo 1982: 263-281).

main known Mexican dictionaries written during the sixteenth century. Their genealogy has been explored by Frances Karttunen (1995: 75-88) and her findings are conclusive. On the other hand, it is a fact in lexicographical history that Nebrija's Latin-Castilian dictionary served as the model for other Latin-vernacular European dictionaries, as well as for the first bilingual dictionaries between vernaculars. The impact of Nebrija's work, according to Kahane (in Kachru 1995: 39), encompasses the whole of Western linguistic history.

On the basis of both Karttunen's and Kahane's findings, we can conclude that Nebrija's influence spans East and West in an almost synchronic axis. A list of the main dates and products until the 17th century, as established separately by Karttunen for Mesoamerican languages and by Kahane for European languages, may help illustrating two things: the most obvious one is, as I was saying, Nebrija's influence East and West. A less obvious fact is, though, the coevalness between the New Spain and the European dictionaries (in Table 2, dictionaries based on that of Nebrija appear in bold; for context purposes, I have included in italics other important contemporary dictionaries)¹⁰⁷:

Similarly to my observations with respect to grammars, this contemporaneity of New Spain and European lexicographical production allows for a better integrated, non-Eurocentric picture of the rich Renaissance-rooted lexicography. We can therefore posit that, at least from the macrostructural, historical point of view, New Spain dictionaries belong to the same period and were produced in the same ideological context than the European ones. However, there are aspects that undoubtedly distinguish these two productions. And these aspects have to do with the particular circumstances in

Table 2. Nebrija's influence in European and American lexicography*:

¹⁰⁷ Taken from J. Delisle 1995, p. 232, and R. L. Collison, 1982, p. 70.

1492- Nebrija's Latin-Spanish

1493/95- Nebrija's Spanish-Latin

1482- French-English

1505- Arabic- Spanish

1507- Latin-Catalan

1511- Latin- French

1520- Latin-Sicilian

1539- French-Latin

1547- Welsh-English

1555- Spanish - Náhuatl

1565- French-Spanish

1559- Spanish – Tarasco

1570- Italian-Spanish

1578- Spanish- Zapoteca

1584- French-Italian

1593- Spanish –Mixteca

1599- Spanish-English

1599- English-Russian

1599-Italian-English

1605- Spanish –Nahuatl- Otomi

*In bold the vocabularies based on Nebrija.

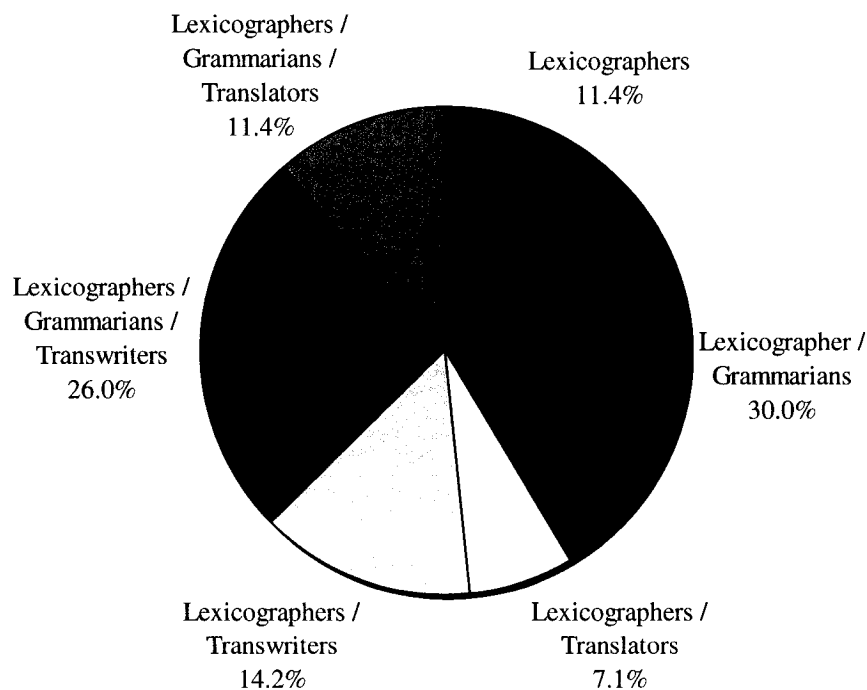
which colonial dictionaries were produced, the functions they were entrusted with and the use they were put to. While, in Europe, dictionaries were considered as symbols of emancipation from Latin and the rise of the vernaculars, in America they have been primarily associated with imperial power, language imposition and forced conversion. Spanish was affirming its potential against Latin in Europe and simultaneously putting it to test with the New World languages. This dual movement of Spanish is at the origin of its growth and spread.

Let us take a closer look at them:

Out of a total of 70 lexicographers, only 8 were not churchmen. The rest belonged

either to the monastic orders or to the secular branch of the Church. While the number of those who only wrote lexicons is modest (8, against 38 grammarians),¹⁰⁸ the number of lexicographers who at the same time translated, or seem to have translated, and who also wrote grammars is striking (62), following the general trend of combined activities that we discussed in the methodology chapter. This means that for each lone lexicographer, there were eight or nine engaged in at least another linguistic activity involving a second language, as shown in Figure 12. Confirming the analysis I have proposed of grammars in the previous section, this simultaneity between religious and linguistic aims is one of the distinctive traits of our textual production during the first decades following the Conquest.

Fig. 12. Lexicographers and parallel activities



From the point of view of the Christianization efforts, the evangelical passage

¹⁰⁸ See Figure 3.

explaining the gift of tongues given to Jesus' Apostles after His death served as an inspiration for the friars setting out to convert the Indian populations. Friar Jerónimo de Mendieta, an early chronicler, explains in his *Historia eclesiástica indiana* (1596) the mortifications of the Franciscans who were unable to teach the doctrine to the Indians for lack of a common language, and how, by the Lord's inspiration, they made themselves "like children" and, playing with the Indian children, they compiled lists of words that were later to become the first dictionaries with which they could translate the catechisms and doctrinal texts.¹⁰⁹

Thus, with a few exceptions, these vocabularies were compiled by the users themselves, with the help of natives, within the context of the dissemination of the Christian faith. Although it is unquestionable that the vocabularies were written with the collaboration of Indians, especially the first ones, they were, just as the grammars, not intended for the Indians but for the Spaniards. In his justification for the Nahuatl-Spanish version of his dictionary, the Franciscan Alonso de Molina¹¹⁰ indicates that this version will be useful for those who want to study Nahuatl "por arte y muy de veras", and those who want to know the meanings of words either spoken or written¹¹¹ : so, even the Nahuatl-to-Spanish version was not conceived to help Indians in general to communicate with Spanish. It could be, as López Austin pointedly notes in his seminal work on the pre-Hispanic lexicon of the human body, that Molina's first dictionary (1555), as well as other missionary dictionaries, were not meant for dialogue (López Austin 1996: 50). This would be the reason why at the beginning they are mostly (or firstly) unidirectional: Spanish-

¹⁰⁹ Mendieta, vol. I, chapter XVI; and vol. II, chapter XLV. Anthony Pym gives interesting comments on the subject in his *Negotiating the Frontier*, esp. p. 151.

¹¹⁰ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹¹¹ Cf. *Vocabulario mexicano y castellano*, "Prologo al lector", unnumbered page.

indigenous language. It was the Spanish who wished to be understood first. They would care later about understanding the Indians. A less ideological and more technical reason, led by pragmatic considerations, is proposed by René Acuña in his introduction to a modern edition of a Mayan vocabulary (2001: 19): since the model was Nebrija's Spanish-Latin dictionary, the method the missionaries followed consisted in removing the Latin wordlist and simply noting the equivalents from the Spanish wordlist in the indigenous language.¹¹²

Whatever the reasons for this preference, bilingual dictionaries are always comparisons, and even if the Spanish column came first, it would build a bridge upon which the communication would not always flow only in the Spanish to Nahuatl direction, as I will show in the examples explored here forth. In her book on the gradual acculturation of Spaniards during the Colonial period in Mexico, historian Solange Alberro expands on the importance of the notion of comparison for understanding the attitudes towards the Other in the colonial encounter (Alberro 2002: 18-26). Comparison was the way to approach things different from the ones already known, and she cites the many witnesses who wrote that New Spain cities and markets were similar, or better, than those of Spain or Italy. This mental attitude of acknowledging similarities with previous experiences or knowledge, she says, "could explain why certain surreptitious and unconscious exchanges and certain involuntary deviations could have happened among the Spaniards" (2002: 26, my translation). The other side of comparison is rivalry (2002: 22-23), that is, the dynamics by which one of the two sides eventually overcomes the other in the comparison. If we take as an example the Renaissance Latin-vernacular dictionaries, this dynamics is made

¹¹² Karttunen (1995: 77) identifies in six New Spain vocabularies a single "elicitation list" stemming from the Nebrija's dictionary.

obvious by the fact that in comparing themselves to Latin, the vernaculars were showing their superiority, something that, in my analysis of the dictionaries, I translate with the terms “engaging” and “enduring”. In the context of European Renaissance lexicography, the “engaging” languages were the ones which were considered inferior. It was them that prompted the comparison in their search for an equal relationship with Latin. In this comparison, Latin was the “enduring” language. In early New Spain bilingual dictionaries, instead, of the two languages compared, the “engaging” one was not the language that was considered inferior, but Castilian, the colonizer’s language, presenting itself as the model language, and the “enduring” languages were those of the colonized.

We could say that eventually Castilian, in fact, was engaging in both fronts: in the comparison with Latin and in the comparison with the indigenous languages. However, even then, Castilian could not escape the dynamics of comparison-rivalry. In admitting the possibility of comparison, Spanish was implicitly recognizing the likelihood of *inter pares* relationship, something that for a short while seemed possible in New Spain, at the time when Franciscan friars were harnessing the new intellectual elite composed by the sons of the caciques, when the Spanish monarchs ruled that doctrine should be taught in the indigenous languages or even when Nahuatl was pronounced the official language of New Spain. This was a moment in history which can be compared (and analogy comes again as a tool to understand new things) with those extraordinary years of Toledo, as a place where ideological and religious rivalries were momentarily held in abeyance.

Unfortunately, other factors aborted this possibility in New Spain, the indigenous languages hopelessly lost ground while Spanish was increasingly reinforced. I will expand on that matter later.

In view of the variety of vocabularies, I thought it could be useful to attempt some taxonomy. In fact, several typologies seem possible here: directionality is one of them. Some vocabularies are unidirectional Spanish-indigenous language. In some cases, the other direction was added later, such as in the case of the best known Nahuatl dictionary: Alonso de Molina's¹¹³. We also find very early vocabularies in the direction indigenous language-Spanish (Fray Domingo de Ara,¹¹⁴ Antonio de Ciudad Real¹¹⁵), which could indicate that maybe Lopez Austin's assertion above was too hasty.

We can also distinguish between stand-alone vocabularies and appended vocabularies, and discover that the former are more general in scope than the latter, which are more religious in nature, although they were all produced for indoctrination purposes (with the notable exception of Pedro de Arenas,¹¹⁶ *Vocabulario manual de la lengua castellana y mexicana*).

There are vocabularies that simply give equivalents, and there are more explanatory vocabularies, which include also examples of word usage, going as far as reproducing sample dialogues.

However useful these taxonomies can be, for the purpose of understanding the functions of these vocabularies and answer the questions pertinent to our research, I suggest classifying the dictionaries in two groups:

- i. Translation dictionaries; namely, the scholarly works which ambited to assess the lexical wealth of the language. They are mostly stand-alone works, of large size, following more or less closely the Latin-Spanish model established by Nebrija.

¹¹³ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹¹⁴ Not included in BHA

¹¹⁵ BHA II, 117

¹¹⁶ BHA I, 134 V, 306

2. Conversational dictionaries; namely, the ones produced seemingly mainly for oral communication purposes. Generally they are more modest in size, sometimes limited to short lists appended to a grammar or a doctrine.

Dictionaries, we all know, are tremendously entertaining to read. They are never dull lists of words and can be studied and analyzed as narratives. The more ambitious ones attempt at covering the wealth of physical and abstract concepts of a language-culture; they are vehicles, therefore, of their potentialities. They always pretend some degree of encyclopedic scope. Bilingual dictionaries, moreover, not only exhibit these traits, but they do it in comparison with the other culture and language. They are a way in which the “enduring” language may appraise its potential, and a way of legitimizing itself in front of

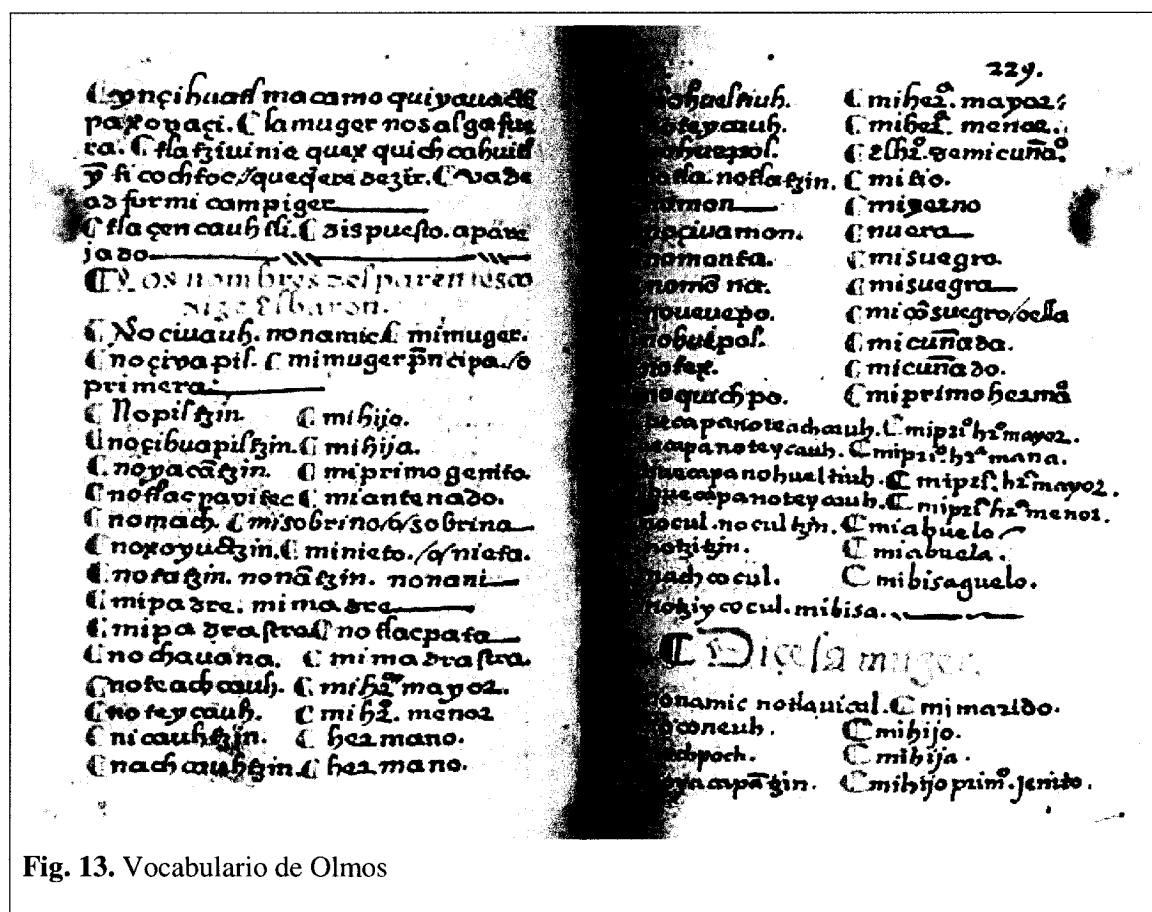


Fig. 13. Vocabulario de Olmos

the “engaging” language. The potentialities of the two languages are confronting each other, recognizing each other as in a mirror, dialoguing.

I have also found that dictionaries are easier to read than grammars, which are the other powerful means of legitimizing languages. After all, bilingual dictionaries are condensed translations, and evaluating translations and reading in between their lines is what we, as translators, have been trained to do. These vocabularies are usually introduced by prefaces, prologues, dedications and other paratexts illuminating the purposes with which they were prepared and the circumstances of their production.

2.1.2.1. Translational dictionaries

Some extracts from the preface of Antonio de Molina¹¹⁷ *Vocabulario de la lengua castellana y mexicana* will illustrate this notion of translational dictionaries.¹¹⁸ In it, Molina starts recalling the topos of Babel and God’s punishment against the arrogance of man to conclude that indeed, the punishment was very rigorous:

y esta fue la confusion y division de las lenguas, para que donde antes era la lengua una, fuese tanta la variedad y diversidad de los lenguajes, que los unos no se entendiesen con los otros. Pues si a un pecado que Dios con tanto rigor quiso castigar, se dio por pena y castigo la confusion de las lenguas, señal es, que este no es pequeño mal (1555/1970, *Prologo*, unnumbered page).

But, after all, a seemingly pragmatic man, Molina thinks that not knowing the language may result in not being able to profit materially and spiritually from the Indians:

¹¹⁷ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹¹⁸ Alonso de Molina’s first dictionary was Castilian-Mexican, published in 1555. The Mexican-Castilian was published in 1571, together with the Castilian-Mexican. The edition I am consulting is the one prepared by M. León-Portilla (Porrúa, Mexico, 1970), which is preceded by a comprehensive introduction by the same author.

puesto caso que la piedad Christiana nos incline a aprovechar a estos naturales assi en lo temporal como en lo spiritual, la falta de lengua nos estorba. (1555/1970, *Prologo*, unnumbered page)

He also ponders that the dictionary may help dispense with the not always reliable interpreters, on whose good or bad intentions reason and justice depends (*sic*), and recalls that Habsburg Charles V, the then King of Spain, could not communicate with his Spanish subjects at the beginning of his reign,¹¹⁹ and that:

por el contrario, fue muy grande el contentamiento y alegria que se tuvo quando entendio y hablo nuestra lengua sin medio de interpretes. Porque muchas veces, aunque el agua sea limpia y clara, los arcaduzes por donde pasa la hace turbia. (1555/1970, *Prologo*, unnumbered page)

Consequently, the vocabulary fulfills many needs. The prologue claims a combination of spiritual and earthly motivations: the reversal of the divine punishment in Babel, facilitating the material and spiritual dealings with the Indians (to which the Spanish are inclined by Christian piety), dispensing of intermediaries who can contaminate the clean and clear communication between Spanish and Indians, especially, as he says, in judicial matters.

Molina¹²⁰ expands then on the difficulties he has encountered: the fact that he was not born in that language but that he learned it, the difficulty of becoming acquainted with its wealth of words and elegant metaphors, and the fact that Castilian lacks words for things of the Indians, and vice versa. He specifies the varieties of Nahuatl he is relying upon, namely the elegant, classical Nahuatl of Texcoco, a city some miles East of Mexico Tenochtitlan, and acknowledges the fact that there exists a diversity of forms throughout the territory.

¹¹⁹ The fact that he was a foreigner made Charles V Spanish reign (1517-1556) very unpopular at the beginning. He was only 17, couldn't speak Spanish and had appointed Flemish ministers.

¹²⁰ BHA III, 257 V, 396

Molina places list of notes or “avisos” at the beginning of each of the two vocabularies to help the reader in using them. These notes, which are reflections of grammatical and semantic nature, as well as practical indications on how the entries are to be read (v.g.: “Aviso quinto: todos los vocablos que oviere diferentes para significar una misma cosa, que en el latin llamamos sinonimos, se distinguiran con un punto”,¹²¹ illustrate the limits and possibilities of the comparison, and allow us a glimpse into the author’s approach.

In Molina’s¹²² Spanish-Nahuatl vocabulary sometimes Spanish yields to Nahuatl because the author explicitly wants to stress the particularities of Nahuatl: “en este vocabulario se ponen algunos romances, que en nuestro castellano no quadran, ni se usan mucho: y esto se haze por dar a entender mejor la propiedad de la lengua de los Yndios”.¹²³ Thus, to be able to account for certain morphological characteristics of Nahuatl he must create new words in Spanish, such as the form “abaxador” (the one who lowers, *lowerer*), mentioned as an example in the above mentioned first “aviso”. Other cases of Spanish neologisms created in response to the Nahuatl lexical wealth are to be found in the body of the vocabulary, for instance, “lebruno” (thing having to do with hares), or “comprehendedor” (the one who understands).

In the Nahuatl-Spanish dictionary, these characteristics are also noted and explained, quite irrespectively of whether they might ever be used in Spanish: from the root word **pal**, comes **tlapaloani** = the one who leaks something; **tlapapalolli** = leaked thing; **tlapapaloliztli** = the place where the leaking has taken place. In reading this, one cannot

¹²¹ Molina (1555/1970), *Prologo*, unnumbered page.

¹²² *BHA* III, 257 V, 396

¹²³ Molina (1555/1970), *Prologo*, “Aviso primero”, unnumbered page.

but imagine that in the world which is narrated to us there were things, events, experiences which could only be rejoined by an abstract science such as grammar. Translation was possible not because there could be an equivalent in the other language but because the grammatical bridge, placed above the differences, allowed for such an interchange. *Grammatica* (that is, the Latin grammar) thus can be seen not as the straight jacket in which all languages are forced but the site where commensurability can take place. And not only a commensurability as could be expressed by the colonizer since the grammar is a device imposed by the colonizer, but also under the terms of the colonized. That is, the colonized interferes with the colonizer by appropriating the colonizer's grammar. Let me introduce here an important nuance which has to do with the author's biography: Alonso de Molina¹²⁴ was a little Spanish boy of no more than six when the Franciscan friars of Mexico noticed him. He was bilingual Spanish-Nahuatl because he mingled with the Indian boys in the neighborhood. The friars thought they could put Alonso's skills to a better use and asked his mother to give him to the convent so that he could assist the older friars in the conversion efforts. He lived ever since in the Franciscan convent of Mexico. Among his writings are a Mexican grammar and this dictionary, and a confession manual. He did not however work alone. As most other missionaries, he was assisted by an Indian scholar ("perito"). His colleague was Hernando (o Fernando) de Ribas,¹²⁵ an Indian boy educated in the Colegio Imperial de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, and able in the three languages: his own (Nahuatl), Spanish and Latin. Ribas, according to Frances Karttunen (1995), would be the author of a manuscript vocabulary deposited in the Newberry Library.

The fact that he introduces an entry in the Spanish column to give the Nahuatl

¹²⁴ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹²⁵ BHA IV, 214

equivalent of “a pedazos sacar el niño del vientre de su madre” (removing an unborn child in pieces from the mothers womb) (Spanish-Nahuatl, p. 11), an idea alien to the Spanish idiom but which is lexicalized in Nahuatl, demonstrates (if there is any need of further demonstration by now) that it is the Nahuatl that engages the conversation when dictating the lexemes that the vocabulary should contain. Such a reversal of the situation between engaging and enduring languages is not exceptional but rather frequent in Molina’s¹²⁶ dictionary.

In general, it would seem that Molina purposefully stresses the richness and variety of Nahuatl over Spanish. For instance, in the entry “araña” he gives several precise equivalents in Nahuatl, which are simply rendered in Spanish as: “araña grande no ponzoñosa”, “araña negra y ponzoñosa”, “araña otra ponzoñosa”, “araña otra mala” (Spanish-Nahuatl, p. 13). Similarly, he includes four entries for “víbora”: “víbora generalmente”, “víbora muy ponzoñosa y grande”, “víbora larga y blanca”, “víbora otra pestilencial y de gran ponzoña”, “víbora negra”, “víboras otras”, which are not equivalents but explanations of the more specific Nahuatl words (Spanish-Nahuatl, p. 20). One must, however, recall that although he was born in Spain, Molina¹²⁷ was brought to America at an early age with his parents and he never traveled back. Therefore, he probably knew more of the different varieties of Nahuatl than of Spanish, particularly about things of the land.¹²⁸

I must signal that the word **tameme** (Nahuatl for porter, or cargador, in Spanish) appears in the Spanish column of the Spanish-Nahuatl section. Similarly, the Nahuatl word **mecapalli** found its way into the Spanish column in the Nahuatl-Spanish section as the

¹²⁶ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹²⁷ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹²⁸ The seventeen entries for games are reminiscent of his childhood among Indian children (Molina 1555/1977, Spanish-Nahuatl, p. 73).

naturalized form “mecapal”.¹²⁹ “Aguacate” appears in “Azeite de aguacate” as a Spanish word. Another Nahuatl word, **tlamatini** (wise person, or sage) takes up the Spanish diminutive form of “**tlamatinito**” (small sage) in the Nahuatl column of the Nahuatl-Spanish section. These cases, which could be the only ones, cannot be considered exemplary, but they are nevertheless an indication of the early incorporation of Nahuatl words into the Spanish lexis. Lastly, Antillianisms brought by the first conquerors are also included in the Spanish column. This is the case of the words “ají”, “canao”, “maguey”, “maiz”, “tuna”, and “naguas”.

Illustrating that Molina¹³⁰ was very well acquainted with the Nahua culture and language are the entries belonging to aspects of pre-Hispanic rites and customs.¹³¹ In the Spanish-Nahuatl section he includes, for instance, “comedor de hombres” (man-eater, p. 27), “traspasar el cuchillo el coraçon de la virgen” (the knife to pierce the virgin’s heart, p. 114), “chupar canutos de sahumero” , a ritual performed by medicine men over sick people, or “agua con que lavavan los pedernales, que eran como cuchillos con que sacrificaban y matavan los hombres ante los idolos, la qual tenian en lugar de agua bendita, y en mucha veneracion” (Spanish-Nahuatl, p. 6). The interest of these inclusions resides not only in the fact that Spanish is forced to explain indigenous materials and situations, as a counterpoint to the cases in which Nahuatl is forced to explain Spanish materials and situations. It also helps understanding the way in which Nahuatl discourse of authority was used to convey Christian contents: the entry “atar” (to tie), for example, contains a full explanation: “Atar plumas ricas, juntandolas para ponerlas en algún plumaje, o en alguna

¹²⁹ The “mecapal” case is mentioned by Ascensión H. de León-Portilla (1995-96: 486).

¹³⁰ *BHA* III, 257 V, 396

¹³¹ I do not agree with M. León-Portilla’s opinion in his *Estudio Preliminar* to the 1977 edition of Molina’s *Vocabulario* (p. LIV) that Nahuatl words about rites and ancient customs are hardly present. I hope the examples I give here will suffice to demonstrate it.

imagen que se hace de pluma **nic.tziniychotia. vel. nitla, tzinichotia**. Et *per metaphoram*, se toma o significa, el fundamento, o el fundar la platica o sermon sobre alguna auctoridad de escriptura, etc.” (Spanish-Nahuatl , p. 16). The elegance of Nahuatl metaphors, praised by Molina and other authors, provided not only models for the figurative speech that doctrinal texts needed, but ensured a continuity between the sacred pre-Hispanic past and the new religious and civil *statu quo*.

So far I have discussed the cases in which I see Nahuatl as the engaging language in the vocabulary. We should not, however, forget that the overall purpose of these vocabularies was to extirpate idolatries and whatever was not useful for the missionary purposes in the local cultures, and replace it with the new paradigm of Christianity. However attractive the previous discussion may seem, in the sense that it could suggest important nuances, resistances or reversals, Spanish was the empire and New Spain its richest possession, both in material wealth and in souls to be converted. This leads me to discuss the fields in which it is Spanish that engages the conversation: the field composed of the host of new things that the Spanish brought with them, and the field of the new religious and world vision that they imposed upon the Indians.

In general, Molina’s¹³² vocabulary shows that the new concepts were introduced into Nahuatl through loan words, either pure (**semana** for week, **tocino**, for pork, and **tijeras**, for scissors), or naturalized (**hicox**, for figs, “higos” in Spanish).

However, the agglutinant nature of Nahuatl allows for an efficient use of calques as a means of rendering the new meanings (**iudiocayotl**: Jewish thing or **cuentaxtli**: prayer beads, **tepuztlacuillo**: printed matter, etc). In all, Hernández de León-Portilla (1995-96:

¹³² BHA III, 257 V, 396

485) has counted 660 neologisms through calques, plus 62 loan words and 122 occurrences of what she calls “hybrid” loanwords, whereby the Spanish word is inserted in the Nahuatl word-syntagm (**tlā-silla-tlalilili**, to saddle). To this category we could ascribe the incorporation of the Spanish diminutive suffix: “ito” to Nahuatl words, such as the above mentioned case of **tlamatinito**, or the Nahuatl equivalent for “maravedí” (type of currency) as **tepuz-tlacoual-onito** (literally, a small piece of iron which buys things).

Molina¹³³ stresses the particular traits of semantic variability in certain Nahuatl words: to the Spanish entry “ancho” (wide) two semantic fields correspond: the field of flat objects, such as roads, mats, planks; and the field of openings, such as windows, holes, cannons, or containers such as clothing or houses, thus showing that in Nahuatl different adjectives will be used according to the form and function of the qualified object.

But nowhere the magnitude of the gap between the two languages is better represented than in the explanation regarding the use of numerals. Appended to this dictionary there is a “Cuenta numeral en lengua castellana y mexicana, segun la lengua mexicana”. Two main differences distinguish our way of counting from theirs: firstly, the count base in Nahuatl is 20-400-8000, instead of our 10-100-1000; and secondly, numerals are not generic, but variable according to the things to be counted. Molina¹³⁴ specifies the following types: 1) “para contar cosas animadas, maderos, mantas, chili, papel, esteras, tablas, tortillas, sogas o cordeles, hilo, pieles, canoas, barcas o navios, cielos, cuchillos, candelas o cosas semejantes”; 2) “para contar gallinas, huevos, cacao, tunas, tamales, panes de Castilla, cerezas, vasijas, asentaderos, frutas, frijoles, calabazas, nabos, xicamas, melones, libros o cosas redondas y rollizas”; 3) “para contar platicas, sermones, pares de

¹³³ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹³⁴ BHA III, 257 V, 396

zapatos o cacles, papel, platos, escudillas, troxes o cielos, cuando esta una cosa sobre otra doblada, o cuando una cosa es diversa o diferente de otra”; 4) “para contar papel, esteras, tortillas, mantas, pellejos, contando de veinte en veinte”; 5) “para contar mazorcas de maiz o piñas de cacao, y unas flores que se llaman yeluxuchitl, y pilares de piedra, platanos, y cierto pan de semillas, como bollos que llaman **tzoualli**. Y otros de maiz largos como cañutos, que se llaman **tlaxcalmimilli**” (pp. 118-121).

Aside from the host of new objects and materials to be translated into the indigenous languages, there was a wealth of concepts and ideas that needed to be conveyed: the administrative and judicial lexical corpus had to be transferred as well as the religious lexical corpus. Words for civil authorities, social classes and professions were transacted, and, at the same time, indigenous rites and customs were dissected and conceptualized by the missionaries. The colonizer’s baggage of centuries of philosophy and theology was also “poured over” the indigenous knowledge. Terms such as “cisma”, “gloria vana”, “gloria verdadera”, “amor propio” and “libre arbitrio” had to have also a place in Molina’s vocabulary, which was used for teaching and preaching.

One of the chief uses of indigenous languages dictionaries was to help in the sacrament of confession. It was important for the missionary to be able to ask the right questions, the ones that would help him to identify and eradicate idolatry from the souls of the Indians. And only by knowing the precise rites and their exact vocabulary could this purpose be achieved. Lexemes for sins, such as “cohechar al juez”, “matar sacrificando hombres a los ydolos”, “mirar las partes vergonçosas”, “mentir a sabiendas”, “mentira grande” and “mentira pequeña”, constitute an important part of the vocabulary, as well as

the lexemes related to penance (“cargo de conciencia”, “culpa”, “pecado”, “arrepentirse”) and punishment (“penitencia”, “absolver”).

This complex and foreignizing dictionary provided the model for other indigenous languages dictionaries at the time, but aside from the 1555 and 1571 editions, it was not reprinted until the nineteenth-century. It is nowadays still in full use by the specialists and has been the basis for later French-Nahuatl (Rémi Siméon) and English-Nahuatl (Frances Karttunen) dictionaries.

2.1.2.2. *Conversational dictionaries*

Quite a different example of dictionary is the *Calepino maya de Motul*, a Maya-Spanish dictionary, manuscript, apparently unfinished, attributed to another Franciscan friar: Antonio de Ciudad Real.¹³⁵ This dictionary was composed more as a phrasebook than a list of words. It fulfills also some grammatical purposes. There is a general entry in which the word is explained and, when it is the case, there are sub-entries in which the word appears as used in a complete sentence:¹³⁶

- i) **“Cochom, cuchom.** Partículas para futuro perfecto de indicativo, pero puestas al cabo de una oración, denotan cierta imperfección que significa “pero”, “si no”, “mas no”, “por sí o por no”, o “quizá”.

Benel in cah ichil in col, cochom a mi milpa voy, pero no sé, mas no sé si llegaré allá, etc. De aquí:

Bix cochom va bin cemic ech ichil a kebane? ¿qué será de ti, si murieras en tu pecado?”

... (Ciudad Real 2001: 116)

¹³⁵ BHA II, 117

¹³⁶ For ease of reference, I have numbered the examples.

We can see that the first example is a phrase that only an Indian would say: “I am going to my corn field (and the word for corn field is the Nahuatl word *milpa*, which by then had entered the lexis of Spanish and other local languages), but I do not know if I will get there”. The second example is a phrase that only a missionary or priest could say; it is an admonition from the Father to the Indian either in confession or in a similar circumstance: “What will it happen to you if you die in a state of sin?”, meaning that he should confess and make penance before dying. Sometimes the examples do not show any semantic connection, and their dialogical form is only figurative. But in other cases the examples are presented as simulating a real dialogue between the Father and the Indian. The following case corresponds to the entry that means “to take or take away, to bring, to take away from life or to kill as in illness”. In the first example given, the missionary asks what illness caused the Indian’s father death; in the second example, the question suggests that not only that person was dying but that there were many dying at the same time. In the third example the Indian tells the cause of these deaths: hunger:

- ii) **“Chha.ah.ab** tomar, llevar o traer. Item, llevar desta vida, o matar propio de las enfermedades.
Bal chhai a yum? ¿qué mató a tu padre? ¿qué enfermedad le llevó?
Bal chhaicex? ¿qué os mata? ¿qué es la causa de moriros?
Vijh chhaicon el hambre nos mata” (p. 207)

In this same dialogical form we find this small piece of “gossiping” between the missionary and the Indian, which serves as an example of the use of the word **ppizaan be:** order, habit or custom:

- iii) **“Lic va v matel batab tu pach beel?** ¿ha mudado por ventura el cacique el orden de bivar que tenía?

Ma, yuma; tu ppizan v beel yan no, Padre, assí se está, con su orden de vida o de bivar que tenía

V ppizaani a beelex, v ppizaani v paz a cabex; ma chaan than teex en vuestro orden y modo de bivar os estáis; no aprovechan razones con vosotros”.
(p. 509)

In many examples admonishments or advice is given (by the friar or maybe another authority):

- iv) **“Chhab tan kin tanenex** sed continentes y abstinentes; hazed penitencia” (p. 207).
- v) **“Chhaex a ba a kambex v beel halach** aparejaos, aprestaos para recibir al gobernador” (p. 207).
- vi) **“Ma a chhaicex in kinam ta talelx ti confessar vicnal** no os espantéis de mi cuando os viniéredes a confessar” (p. 209).

Other examples constitute precise questions to be put to the Indians while confessing their sins:

- vii) **“A uohel va v cunal can, ceh, chhuplal?** Etc. ¿sabes el encanto o hechizería para coger las culebras o venados, o para que acuda alguna mujer a hazer la voluntad de algún varón?” (p.128).
- viii) **“Yan xin v thanic ech a xiblil ti cuch pach ech?** ¿hate, por bentura, conocido tu marido versa facie?” (p.124).

Or the precise answers elicited from the Indians:

- ix) **“Ma bahun in yalte** confessar nunca he provado la confession; nunca me he confessado” (p. 286).
- x) **“Mai to na cemic in yum ca oci cristianoil vay tac luumil loe** joh, si no se hubiera muerto mi padre quando entró la cristiandad en esta tierra, porque se tornara cristiano!” (p. 386).

The dictionary reveals also a wealth of information on habits and customs, for example on:

The payment of tributes by Indians:

- xi) **“Ppix lim cib** cierta derrama o contribución de pelotillas de cera que dan los indios, cada uno la suya de valor de veinte cacaos, para candelas para la yglesia, etc.
- xii) **Ppix lim cib teex v boolil casulla v patan ah kayob** contribuid cera assí para pagar la casulla, para pagar el tributo de los cantores” (p. 510).

The way women distributed among themselves the cotton to be spun:

- xiii) **“Max** partir una india entre muchas su algodón en copo, dando a cada una como media braça, para que lo hilen y, acabado aquello, hila ella con las demás el algodón de otra, hasta que passe la rueda” (p. 403)

The Maya tradition of a universal flood:

- xiv) **“Huy ye cijl** diluvio general, en que dezían los indios que no avía faltado sino una punta de maguey (que es el cáñamo de esta tierra) para llegar el agua al cielo” (p. 266)

As for other relevant information on this dictionary, René Acuña, who prepared its modern edition and a previous facsimilar edition, states that there are different handwritings in the manuscript, and he believes that the calligraphs might have not been Spanish but **Mayan** and unacquainted with the Maya grammar (2001: 23). Unfortunately, Acuña’s study does not shed any light on how the dictionary was used, and by whom.¹³⁷ The fact that the *Calepino Maya de Motul* was never finished prevents us from making further conjectures, but the traits I have underlined here seem to suggest primarily a pastoral use by men already conversant with the language. No Spanish newcomer could use a dictionary such as

¹³⁷ In general, introductory studies of these dictionaries are mostly of lexicographical nature.

this, because of its directionality, and we do not know whether Father Antonio de Ciudad Real¹³⁸ planned a Spanish-Maya version of it.

It is an ethnocentric dictionary, in which the Mayan phrases seem to have been dictated by the Friar, and the values and customs represented are undoubtedly Christian. In its phraseological, dialogical form, however, we can trace the nature of the exchanges, the prejudices that dictated them. Spanish engages and Maya endures, and when the examples are taken from native discourse, the contents is invariably what the Friar wanted to hear (as in examples ix) and, especially, x).

The terminology difficulties posed by the main religious concepts will be the object of a more detailed analysis in section 2.1.3. In the meantime, let us look at what Serge Gruzinski says about different lexicographic approaches:

comment donner à comprendre et à voir des êtres, des figures divines, des au-delà sans aucun équivalent dans les langues indigènes ou dans les représentations locales. Sinon par des approximations qui en trahissaient la substance et la forme? Tout portait à confusion et à malentendu [...] fallait-il employer une terminologie occidentale parfaitement hermétique aux Indiens ou lancer des ponts, en dégageant des équivalents, sources d'infinis malentendus? L'apprentissage des prières en latin illustre parfaitement les écueils de la première voie. Les travaux linguistiques du franciscain Alonso de Molina, ceux de la seconde. (Gruzinski 1988: 241)

We can sense in the choice of terms in the different vocabularies this tension between religious prejudice and apostolic efficiency: a tension that will coexist until the eventual imposition/adoption of Spanish as the national language.

¹³⁸ BHA II, 117

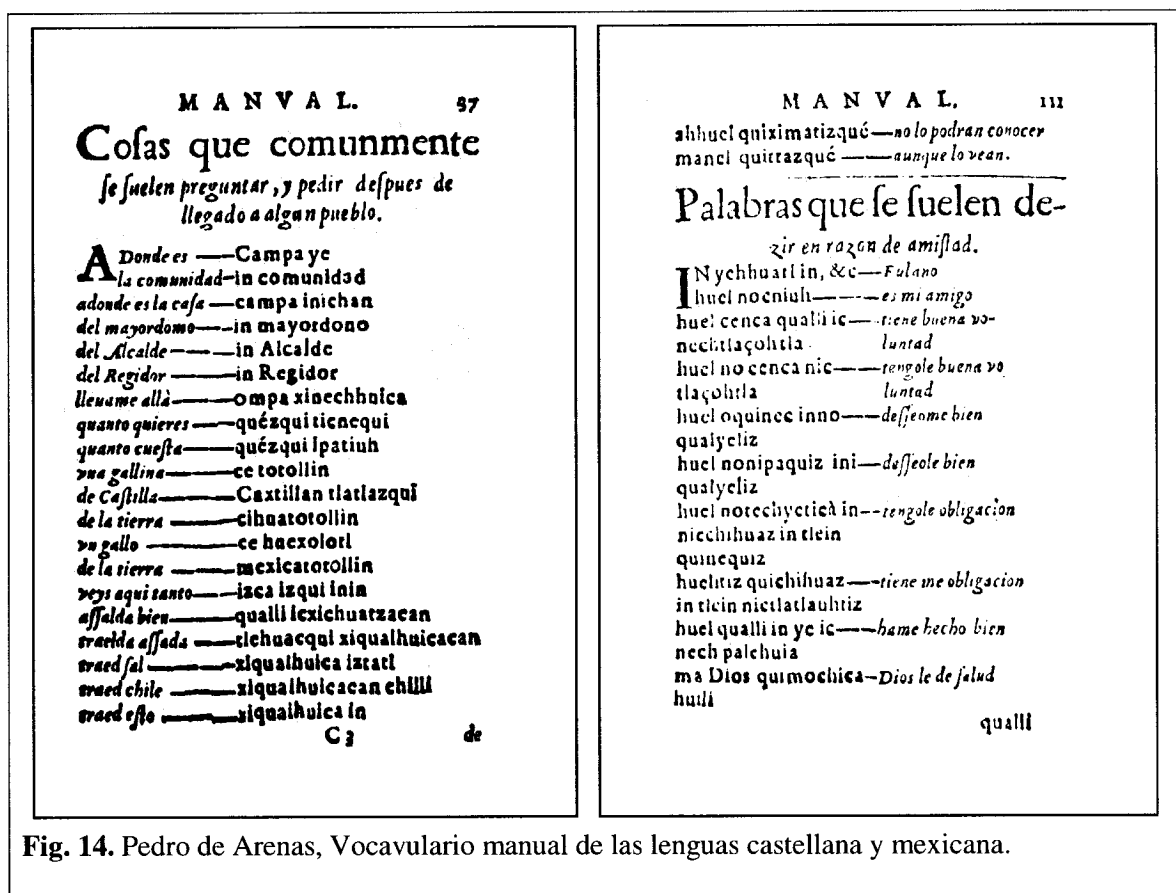


Fig. 14. Pedro de Arenas, Vocabulario manual de las lenguas castellana y mexicana.

Pedro de Arenas,¹³⁹ *Vocabulario Manual de las lenguas Castellana y Mexicana*, en que se contienen las palabras, preguntas y respouestas mas comunes y ordinarias que se suelen ofrecer en el trato y comunicaci3n entre espa1oles e indios (see Figure 14). Printed for the first time in 1611, this vocabulary is an amazing case of a best-selling dictionary. It was reprinted twelve times in Mexico, the last one in 1887,¹⁴⁰ and there exists also a 1862 French edition, entitled *Guide de la conversation en trois langues, franais, espagnol et mexicain, contenant un petit abrg de la grammaire mexicaine, un vocabulaire des mots les plus usuels et des dialogues familiers, revu et traduit en franais par M. Charles Romey*.

¹³⁹ BHA I, 134 V, 306

¹⁴⁰ Other prints: 1668, 1683, 1683b, 1690, 1700?, 1728, 1728b, 1793, 1831, 1885, 1887. (Arenas 1982).

This bi-directional dictionary is, as the title suggests, a conversation manual, with questions and answers, divided in sections corresponding to the situations that presented themselves in which a Spanish and an Indian would engage in conversation.

The author, of whose life, origin and occupation, unbelievable at it may seem, nothing is known, says in the preface that he has been dealing with the “Naturales de este Reyno” for some time, both on the roads and in their villages, and that he has tried to avail himself of the “vocabulario grande [as Alonso de Molina’s¹⁴¹ dictionary was known at the time] que anda impresso”. But not finding it adapted to what a layman, who is not a scholar (“romancista”), might need in order to simply speak and understand the Indians, he decided to make a list in Spanish of the words, names, questions and answers that were more usual in these conversations. He gave the list to a Indian interpreter who translated them into Mexican. The vocabulary is preceded by an index of the sections and has, as a second part, a shorter Nahuatl-Spanish version. Ascensión Hernández de León-Portilla, in her introductory study, suggests that Pedro de Arenas¹⁴² might have been a merchant, probably based upon the frequent references to travel in the vocabulary. Another factor would support her opinion: the abundance of situations in which the enunciator engages in “small talk”, the kind of benevolence-seeking prelude to the sale (asking about the other person’s health, consoling him for a loss, weather-talk, etc. ...). But I would dare say that there are as much references to situations in which the enunciator is placed as a middleman between Spanish masters and Indian servants or as a master himself, although apparently not of a high position.

¹⁴¹ BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹⁴² BHA I, 134 V, 306

If Molina's¹⁴³ dictionary is the scholarly dictionary, in which all the wealth of Nahuatl is revealed, and Antonio de Ciudad Real¹⁴⁴ is an illustration of the missionary dictionary, in which it is the voice of the Friar that imposes itself, Arena's dictionary is unique (because of its originality and its diffusion) in giving us a glimpse of what the common exchanges might have been out of the church, schools, and administrative or judicial settings. It was meant for the Spanish, of course, but the kind of colonizer depicted in these conversations is far from the portrait we have been accustomed to: a feeling of closeness, of a certain intimacy even, transpires in these faked dialogues.

What are the subjects touched upon in the dictionary?. It will be useful to copy here the first sections enlisted in the Spanish-Nahuatl index:

- ❖ Palabras de salucion (pag. 1)
- ❖ Lo que se suele dezir, y preguntar a los enfermos (pag. 2)
- ❖ Lo que se suele dezir consolando a una persona (pag. 3)
- ❖ Preguntas que se suelen hazer buscando alguna persona en su casa (pag. 4)
- ❖ Quando se va a casa de un Indio en busca suya (pag. 5)
- ❖ Palabras que se suelen dezir preguntando por alguna cosa perdida (pag. 7)
- ❖ Preguntas que se suelen hazer del estado y temporales de algun lugar (pag. 8)
- ❖ Palabras que comunmente se suelen dezir preguntando por alguna persona ausente (pag. 10)
- ❖ Palabras que se suelen dezir, preguntado a una persona por diversas cosas, y a el en particular por las suyas y si quiere servir (pag. 10)

Saluting, visiting a sick person, consoling somebody, looking for somebody at his home, going to an Indian's home to see him, asking for a lost object, asking about the wheather, asking about an absent person, or engaging in small talk with somebody to

¹⁴³ *BHA* III, 257 V, 396

¹⁴⁴ *BHA* II, 117

eventually ask him whether he would like to work. These and many other similar subjects make up the Spanish-Nahuatl vocabulary.

The Nahuatl-Spanish vocabulary is not exactly the reverse of the Spanish-Nahuatl one. But the subject matters are similar: talking to a servant who does not work diligently, common sentences in funerals and burials, questions about knowing somebody and where this person is, words related to friendship, and words related to enmity:

- ❖ Palabras que comunmente se suelen dezir a un moço, quando acude de mala gana a lo que le dizen o mandan (pag. 102)
- ❖ Lo que comunmente se suele preguntar, y dezir en razon de diffuntos, y de entierros (pag. 106)
- ❖ Lo que comunmente se suele preguntar, y dezir en razon de conocer una persona y saber donde está (pag. 108)
- ❖ Palabras que se suelen dezir en razon de amistad (pag. 111)
- ❖ Palabras que se suelen dezir acerca de enemistad (pag. 113)

A few sections are the same in the two versions, but I cannot find any particular reason for the differences in section subjects in the two versions.

Words, questions and answers are listed in the order they would appear in a normal conversation, separated in more or less aleatory phrasal units, in the following manner:

Palabras de ofrecimiento

Mira	<i>Xiquitta</i>
si has menester	<i>ahço</i>
algo	<i>monequi</i>
ya sabes	<i>ye ticmáti</i>
la voluntad	<i>in notlanéquiliz</i>
que te tengo	<i>in motehcopa</i>
no seas corto	<i>macámo ximomamati</i>
para conmigo	<i>in nohuicpa</i>
siempre	<i>ca mochipa</i>
me hallaras	<i>notechpatiquittaz</i>

para lo que
uvieres menester
acudirte he
con todas veras
toda mi hazienda
está a tu mandar
aquí estoy
para lo que
me quisieres
mandar
(Arenas 1982: 50)

*in tlein
motech monequiz
mohuicpa nicchihuaz
mochiica notlanéquiliz
móchi in notlatqui
icca in tlein ticnequiz
ca nican nica
inipan tlein
notecochpa ticnequiz
tinechtequiuhitiz*

In reading a monologue like this, one cannot but wonder in what particular circumstances would it be pronounced and by whom. The enunciator seems to be a Spanish person, but the words do not seem to belong to what a Spanish would say to an Indian (I am at your disposal. If you need me, I will assist you with all my possessions...)

Other dialogues are, however, clear in their intent, such as this one in which the Spanish is trying to convince an Indian father to bring his boy so that he can learn a trade:

Quieres entregarme
a tu hijo
yo le enseñare
oficio
de esto, o esto
por que tiempo
me lo quieres dar
es poco que no deprendera
tan presto
yo lo llevaré
y estese conmigo
agunos dias
y despues
si quisieres
haremos
escritura
por el tiempo
que tu quisieres
y yo le dare
tanto, a tanto
cada mes

cada año
y lo trataré
como si fuera
mi propio hijo ... (p. 74-75)

One can read between the lines the Indian father's replies: "I only want to leave him to you for a short time", "how much will you pay?", "will you treat him well?"...

In the Nahuatl-Spanish section there is this particularly moving monologue in which the Spanish bades good-bye to an Indian, who could be a servant, but who could also be an acquaintance, a neighbour, a customer. The additional, gratuitous piece of information that appears in bold ("So and so wants me to go; I don't know what for; he must know") suggests the straightforwardness, casual nature of the exchange:

Ya me voy
nuestro Señor quede
contigo
otra vez bolveré
a verte
quando pudiere
no te he de ver mas
me quiero llegar
a mi casa
a mi tierra
a ver
a mis parientes
que me aguardan allá
ha mucho tiempo
que no los veo
esta malo
mi padre
mi madre
mi hijo
mi hija &c.
voy a cierto negocio
que me importa mucho
me llama fulano &c.
no se para que me llama
el lo sabe
voy con pena
hasta llegar allá.

In concluding this part, I deem it necessary to return to the first paragraph and expand on the implications of the fact that they are bilingual or trilingual vocabularies instead of being monolingual, like most first dictionaries are.

Benedict Anderson (1991: 67-82) stresses the importance of lexicography in nation building, but the kind of dictionary he has in mind is the monolingual dictionary, the encyclopaedic wordbook of each language, in the sense of the quote “the first book of a nation is its dictionary” that I introduced before. Moreover, Anderson’s lexicographic references belong to the 19th century, and we are talking about a production of vocabularies stretching from mid-sixteenth to end of eighteenth century, and disappearing precisely then.

It seems to me that the bilingual dictionary illustrates the contact, the power relationships at play. Its mirror-effect whereby each column sees-seeks the reflection of itself in the other, creates as side events:

- ❖ An ideal fixation of the equivalences (for ever more *this* will be equivalent to *that*),
- ❖ A cross-legitimation of the lexical assets and languages (since they are equivalent, they can acknowledge each other’s right to exist)
- ❖ A consolidation of identities in both languages.

So, the weight Anderson (following Seton-Watson 1977) gives to the monolingual dictionary, I am transferring here to the bilingual dictionary. The Latin-European vernacular dictionaries in Europe were promoted by the vernaculars (not by Latin, of course) and fostered feelings of linguistic-national identity. The Spanish-American vernacular dictionaries were instead promoted by the “imperial” language (Spanish) and fostered a certain functional bilingualism among the colonisers and their agents which served the colonial ends.

2.1.3. The intelligibility question

If my previous discussions on grammars and lexicons are convincing enough, it should not be difficult to envisage the material possibilities of translation. Once the languages were fixed and their lexical potential assessed and compared, some real exchanges could take place, and, in fact, some of the vocabularies already show patterns of dialogue, as I have shown in the last two examples.

In showing this evolution as a temporal progression towards translation proper, I would not like to mislead the reader, though. While it is certainly correct to assume that translation was not possible unless the languages were first codified and their vocabulary was assessed (which could only be done by comparison), oral communication, which was the immediate need, was performed by whatever means possible and with disregard of grammar and syntax. The efforts were concentrated on the lexis, and phonetically transcribed lists of key words would be drawn before thinking of a grammatical organization (Mendieta 1973: I, XVI). Obviously, these key words could not take communication very far. The passage from lists of words to lists of phrases and sample dialogues, as we have seen in some dictionaries, should improve communication with the Indians, not only in day-to-day matters, but, most importantly for the friars, in religious indoctrination.

Although by the Laws of Burgos (1512) the *encomenderos* were entrusted with the indoctrination of the Indians, it was soon manifest that their interests were not compatible with this role. In 1523 the institution of the *Encomienda* is abolished, and in 1524, in his fourth *Carta de Relación* Hernán Cortés suggests that the education of the Indians be entrusted to the missionary friars. Twelve years later, Charles V issues a law by which

Indians come under the tutelage of the Crown who, in turn, transfers them to the religious orders. The year 1536 is also the year in which the Franciscan Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, the institution devoted to the education of the Nahua indigenous elites, is inaugurated. In its short life (some twenty years) it will be the spawning ground for the Indian scholars, young men who became soon able to write and read not only their own language and Spanish but also Latin. Originally conceived as a seminary where they could be trained to become the future priests of the Indies and the Church's translators and interpreters, it was also the place where for a short while an intercultural exchange seemed possible. Similar dialogues were entertained, at a smaller scale, in other regions and languages (Gruzinski 1988: 84-86), resulting in an impressive translation activity, from Latin and Spanish into the indigenous languages, and viceversa. Aside from grammars and lexicons, which we have examined so far, a significant number of doctrinal texts were transferred, but also science, literature and Classical thought.

Indoctrination was performed at two levels: publicly, by having the Indians participate in collective rituals, such as processions and other religious celebrations, in which the priest would address them by pronouncing sermons and reading passages of the Scriptures and Saint's lives; and personally, by engaging into a face-to-face dialogue with each of them, to make sure that the doctrinal principles were understood and that non-Christian beliefs were eradicated. The texts upon which these activities were based, which are part and parcel of the Catholic Church doctrinal work, will be the subject of this section. I will explore the possibilities of commensurability between the two cultures and then I will focus upon a particular genre which contains the most developed bilingual lists

of phrases and sample dialogues: the questioning guides for confessors, called *Manuales de confession* or *Confessionarios*.

In general, the texts used for indoctrination are derived from originals in Spanish or Latin and the degree of derivation is not always known, as was already explained in the methodological section. The relationship between source text and translated text can be direct or more or less indirect, and in general, source texts are not identified. Here the translator is the colonial agent, the target reader is also him, the intended recipient is the Indian, in whom the reading, as filtered by the missionary, should impact, promoting the eradication of old beliefs and its replacement by the new religion.

Translatability and reception of Christian contents depended upon the degree of intelligibility between the two cultures in contact. It relied, therefore, on finding common denominators. In this section I will start by analyzing this intelligibility in its largest sense, and then, I will narrow the focus to deal with the particular aspects of translation in which negotiating this commensurability may manifest itself. The examples cited are from Nahuatl texts, since they are the ones mostly studied and access to which has been easier.

At the very basis of it, an evident common denominator must have been, if not verbalized or intellectualized, for sure felt and experienced: the overall presence of the sacred, both in the Spanish and in the American universe of social and individual life. The Spanish did not fail to notice the esteem in which the Indians held their gods and the importance they attributed to the observance of rituals and ceremonies. They also found similarities between the Indian gods and pagan Old World deities. Many chapters in the

second volume of Juan de Torquemada's¹⁴⁵ *Monarquía Indiana* illustrate this systematic intercultural comparison:

Cap. XX. Del Dios Tezcatlipuca, y de los atributos que le davan, y como fue este el que los Gentiles llamaron Júpiter,

Cap. XXI. Del Dios Huitziloputchli, llamado de los Gentiles, Marte, muy estimado de los Mexicanos, y de sus embustes,

Cap. XXIII. Del Dios Tlalocatecuhtli, que es Neptuno Cap XXV. De las penitencias y aiunos que alguna vez hacia el Sumo Sacerdote,

Cap. XXXIII. De la pena con que los Sacerdotes castigavan a los inobedientes, que es muy semejante a la que en este estado de Gracia vía la Iglesia, que se llama escomunión” (Torquemada 1615/1975, I: Index).

From the more obvious comparison between pagan deities to the more forced analogies between practices and rites, reflecting similar spiritual needs and imaginaries, the intelligibility from the Christian point of view seemed possible. Fray Juan de Torquemada¹⁴⁶ (whose work is a synthesis and rewriting of several earlier chronicles) sees no impediment in placing the whole Indian corpus of social practices in parallel to those of other peoples. Fully convinced, as man of the Renaissance, of the universality of thought, he refers to Aristototele not only to locate the New World genteels among the categories of barbarian nations (Torquemada 1615/1975, II: 587-594), but also to explain the similarities between the way women deliver their children in Genoa and in the island of Santo Domingo (Torquemada 1615/1975. II: 446).

Although we have much less testimonies to understand the colonized' view, we can also infer that most Indians interpreted the arrival of the Spanish as something that could only be connected to the sacred. One will recall Motecuzoma's prophetic dreams that told

¹⁴⁵ BHA V, 37 - 38

¹⁴⁶ BHA V, 37 - 38

him of the arrival of the bearded men from the East and also how the Indians soon realized that those foreigners, whom they called **teules**, that is, gods, and the dreadful animals they rode, were mortal. More telling, and probably, authentic, though, are the accounts of Christian images and crosses being put by the Indians next to their own images, as well as the account by a Franciscan friar who was indoctrinating the Lacandon peoples (present Chiapas) in 1695, who says that he had seen some statuettes wrapped in a piece of liturgical cloth that may have belonged to a Fray Domingo de Vico who was killed by those Indians one century before (de Vos 1990: 155). Serge Gruzinski, after analyzing a variety of syncretic operations similar to this, concludes that in many cases Christianity was “*totalement soumis à l’idôlatrie*” (Gruzinski 1988: 236).

So, from both sides, the experience of the sacred was somewhat acknowledged. But for the dualist Christian tradition, based upon the Good / Evil dichotomy, the sacred as experienced by the Indians belonged to Evil, and had thus to be eradicated. For the monist Indian tradition, in which gods could be good and evil, the sacred brought by the Spanish could eventually, as in the Lacandon account, reinforce their own sacred. And that difference was indeed insurmountable. For a genuine, “free” conversion to take place, some degree of negotiation had to be allowed. Ironically, as we will see later, the arguments used **by the Spanish** in the negotiation were not very different from the ones the Indians were **proposing when wrapping their idols with the missionary’s altar cloth.**

Because, in general, the problem the missionaries faced was how to uproot the previous beliefs and simultaneously replace them by the new beliefs, but then, how to retain from the previous beliefs the ones that could be useful either for their intrinsic values or because they were opportunistically similar to the new ones. While the commitment of

the Franciscan Fray Bernardino de Sahagún¹⁴⁷ to the extirpation was relentless, his admiration for Aztec culture was nonetheless notorious. In devotion to their gods, in knowledge and mastery of arts, the Indians were to be commended, but it was the Devil, (“la sinagoga de Satanás”, as he says), who had benefited from all these rich fruits during centuries. If they had been such good servants of their gods, they would surely also be good Christians:

Es cierto, cosa de grande admiración, que haya nuestro señor Dios tantos siglos ocultad o una silva de tantas gentes idólatras, cuyos frutos ubérrimos solo el Demonio los ha cogido, y en el fuego infernal los tiene atesorados; ni puedo creer que la iglesia de Dios no sea próspera donde la sinagoga de Satanás tanta prosperidad ha tenido ... Del saber o sabiduría desta gente hay fama que fue mucha [...] perfectos filósofos y astrólogos y muy diestros en todas las artes mecánicas... En lo que toca a la religion y cultural de sus dioses, no creo ha habido en el mundo idólatras tan reverenciadores de sus dioses, ni tan a su costa, como éstos desta Nueva España. (Sahagún 1986: 34).

This kind of argumentation must have been topical in doctrinal discussions, since Martínez de Araujo,¹⁴⁸ a secular priest in Michoacán at the end of the seventeenth century, that is, over a hundred years after Sahagún,¹⁴⁹ tells the story of a priest who asked an Indian why were the Indians not as good Christians as they had been good idolaters. However, by **then** the Indians were not as naïve as they are depicted in early Franciscan chronicles, and **replied**: “Sean los ministros de la Ley de Dios tan solícitos y zelosos de la honra de su Dios

¹⁴⁷ BHA IV, 275 – 277. Franciscan Friar Bernardino de Sahagún arrived in 1529 in New Spain and devoted most of his life to the compilation of what has become the first encyclopaedia of the Nahua culture, his bilingual *Historia General de las cosas de Nueva España*, known also as the *Códice Florentino*, which remained unprinted and lost until the twentieth century. He is the author of the *Colloquios*, an account of the presumed first conference between Franciscans and Aztec priests, in Nahuatl and Spanish, which remained also as a manuscript.

¹⁴⁸ Not included in BHA

¹⁴⁹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

como lo fueron los Ministros Idolatras, y entonces seremos Buenos Christianos como fuymos Buenos idolatras” (Martínez 1690: 84v)

Probably for the first generations of indoctrinated Indians, the question posed itself too in terms of negotiation: how to incorporate new beliefs which were inescapably imposed upon them without having to totally abandon the old ones. Testimonies of the way they faced this dilemma would be hard to find, but even through the missionary filter, we may recognize the bewilderment of the Indians who were told to abandon their gods:

Aueisnos dicho que no conocemos a aquel por quien tenemos ser y vida y que es Señor del cielo y de la tierra. Ansi mismo dezis que los que adoramos no son dioses. Esta manera de hablar hácesenos muy nueva y esnos muy escandalosa; espantámonos del tal dezir como este, porque los padres antepasados que nos engendraron y regieron no nos dixeron tal cosa, mas antes ellos nos dexaron esta costumbre que tenemos de adorar nuestros dioses, y ellos los creyeron y adoraron todo el tiempo que bivuieron sobre esta tierra.... [...] Cosa de gran desatino y liuiandad sería destruir nosotros las antiquissimas leyes y costumbres que dexaron los primeros pobladores desta tierra. (Sahagún 1986: 88-89)

If their gods had been good to them, it would be foolish to renounce them and abandon the ancient laws and customs handed over by their forefathers. This is the reaction registered by Sahagún¹⁵⁰ in an text that allegedly registered the conversations between Christian and Aztec priests in a “summit conference” held at the initiative of Cortés.¹⁵¹ The result is well known: they were indeed forced to destroy their gods and abandon their

¹⁵⁰ BHA IV, 275 - 277

¹⁵¹ Jorge Klor de Alva has analyzed the presumed historicity of these *Colloquios* and concluded that the text is a re-elaboration of accounts of more or less formal discussions held at different moments and with different actors (Klor 1982)

rituals and beliefs. The process however shows that not everything was abandoned. The efforts of intelligibility from the missionaries' side prompted all sorts of analogies:

C'est le rite, en l'occurrence (...) qui commande le déploiement de la grille en fournissant des repères de lecture, en introduisant une terminologie, en proposant d'audacieux rapprochements qui assimilent les fêtes indigènes au Carême ou à la Pâque. Le *sumo pontifice* indigène *bénit* et *consacre* la statue du dieu Huitzilopochtli tandis que l'ancienne statue est mise en pièces et que ses restes deviennent de précieuses *reliques* que tous se disputent. Ailleurs, la consommation du corps de dieu est conçue comme une forme de *communion*. Les anciens Péruviens se livraient à des pénitences quand ils avaient *péché*... (Gruzinski 1998: 82).

And it was these analogies that became the channel through which some aspects of the ancient culture would eventually survive. Indeed, according to L. Burkhart, a new type of religiosity would result from this cross-referencing, a Nahua-Christian religiosity:

Within a decade of the 1524 arrival of the first official Franciscan evangelizers, the parameters of Nahua-Christian devotional practices had been laid via the incorporation of song and dance, musical instruments, processions and dramatic performances into the new cultus. The Nahuatl texts were based on Christian teachings, crucifixes and saint's images were the principal cult objects. Most of the music played upon them were of European style. New rules of sexual property excluded women from the dances and dramas (though not from the processions). Human and animal sacrifices were, of course, forbidden; self mortification took the form of self-flagellation rather than bloodletting. Yet even in these new and modified forms of devotion we can see the continuity with the pre-Columbian ceremonial cycle: collective, public performances conducted by social groups within a calendarically-determined ceremonial period, during which temporary manifestations of a divine presence were effected through the ritualized investment and divestment of personas, images, and spaces with

sacred regalia. (Burkhart 1998: 364)

The recently translated manuscript of the *Anales de Juan Bautista*, a sort of log book in which the presumably Indian *alguacil* Juan Bautista¹⁵² registered in Nahuatl the main civic and religious events covering the period 1564 to 1569, specify each and every kind of chant and performance represented at these events. In this example the Christian wedding is celebrated with Christian and Indian chants (the chant of the Chichimecas: **chichimecayotl** and the chant of sprinkling water: **atequilizcuicatl**), Indian rituals (painting of the drum), representations of the old warriors, called “old eagles”: **quahuehuetque**, and dancing of Otomi warriors:

Domingo a 4 de junio de 1564, entonces se hizo procesión con el Sacramento Sador en el atrio de Santo Domingo. En ese entonces se casó el gobernador don Luis de Santa María, con la que se casó se llama doña Magdalena Chichimecaçihuatl hija del difunto don Diego; por ellos se predicó y los bendijeron dos veces, arriba y abajo. Al traer a la señora le tocaron música de ciento en el templo y en el camino, al llegar le venían tocando música de viento. Y al llegar al palacio, al pie de las escaleras se colocaron la gente de la iglesia [*teopantlaca*], los cantores, allí le cantaron. Y una vez que entró, luego empezaron a danzar, primero se interpretó el *chichimecayotl*, y luego empezó el *atequilizcuicatl* y el señor [*tlatohuani*] en persona danzó. Y en ese entonces se pintó su tambor [*ihuehueuh*], se doró. Habían venido los señores [*tlatoque*] y principales [*pipiltin*] de los pueblos. Y en los jacales de las afueras del palacio, assí estaban colocados los militares antiguos [*quahuehuetque*] y en su casa, dos noches danzaron los otomíes. (Bautista/Reyes 2001: 197)

A certain trafficking of words, representations and symbols sustained, therefore, this presumed commensurability. Within the Christian Renaissance paradigms and humanist

¹⁵² BHA I, 230 - 231

traditions the existence of barbarian peoples who had attained a degree of civilization and policy, as well as a religious spirit represented in ways similar to the Christians', however wrong to their eyes, was acknowledged. The Indians, in turn, recognized in the Christian rites and ceremonies some traits that were similar to theirs. In Figure 15, the ancient rite of the "palo volador", we can see Indians disguised with angel's wings performing a clearly idolatric ceremony, before the very eyes of the good Franciscans.



But, for the true conversion to take place, a general or abstract commensurability was not enough. There had to be found some common ground, both conceptually (similar practices with similar connotations) and **grammatically**, in the primordial sense of grammar as a universal (*ergo*, Catholic) code for all wisdom, and in the secondary sense of finding or constructing signifiers the signified of which could be considered equivalent to

Spanish. Bridging differences implied finding equivalences for crucial terms such as “good” and “evil” as basic principles, “sin”, “hell” and “heaven”, and for the dozens of words that were essential in doctrine.

The spiritual stakes were high on both sides. The priest was co-responsible of the penitent’s salvation. An incomplete confession because of the priest’s lack of linguistic knowledge, a baptism formula not reproduced exactly in the approved wording meant damnation for him as well as for the newly convert. As for the Indians, in their universe of the sacred the Christian God could be accommodated, but how could they still be faithful to their own gods, if the Christian God demanded exclusive devotion? We must not forget that the missionaries were also colonial agents. Therefore, the stakes were also high in material, very earthly aspects: survival in the case of the colonized (accommodation to the colonial situation was only possible by meeting the Church’s terms), and making the colonial endeavour prosper in the case of the colonizers: more Christians meant more working hands.

Translation was one of the sites of this negotiation, which has been defined by Louise Burkhart as a Nahuatl-Christian “moral dialogue”: the exchanges between missionaries and Nahuas directed at “introducing in Nahua ideology Christian moral **precepts**” (Burkhart 1989: 10). James Lockhart, based on the mutual misunderstanding that characterised this dialogue, has chosen the term “double mistaken identity” (Lockhart 1992). Both notions: moral dialogue and double mistaken identity are appropriate to explain our Translational Canvass materials.

Although the issue for the missionaries seems to develop as a two-step process: uprooting and replacing, it was a unified process, in which the eradication and

indoctrination were simultaneous and interlinked: at the pulpit, the friar would teach the Indians the new precepts while insisting on the need to abandon the old gods and beliefs, and at the confessional, the Indian was asked to recall all his sins while being admonished on how to become a good Christian.

However, some tools were used chiefly by the friars to introduce the Christian precepts in the Indian minds, and others helped them mostly in the eradication of ancient beliefs. Translated Doctrines and catechisms were especially used in *catechesis*,¹⁵³ sermons, Saint's lives and passages of the Scriptures were read and preached at the pulpit. They all constitute a body of texts guiding the priest in this indoctrination mission. Confession manuals helped him in the precise extirpation of the roots of Evil. Both types of texts, themselves transwritings, sometimes derived from Latin devotional literature, were adapted to the situation and translated into the indigenous languages. They are either bilingual, with the indigenous language on the right column, and the Spanish on the left, or monolingual texts, in the indigenous language, sometimes with the index in Spanish for ease of reference. In either case, the texts were not meant to be read by the Indians but as auxiliary instruments for the missionary, although some of them could be circulated and did circulate until the order issued at the second and third Church Councils (1565 and 1588) prohibiting Indians to possess books.

I have registered seventy-three catechisms and doctrines in the *Biblioteca*

¹⁵³ The Greek word *catechesis* means instruction through questions and answers. Catechisms were basic texts, which were learned by heart at schools and churches. If the child was baptized at birth, he would learn them later to be prepared to receive the sacrament of Eucharist. If it was an adult, he would have to learn them first in order to be admitted into the Church by the sacrament of Baptism. This learning is done by memorizing a set of answers to questions posed by the priest or catechizer, starting by the standard: "What are you, my son?" "I am a Christian".

Hispanoamericana,¹⁵⁴ fifty-nine books of sermons in various indigenous languages, as well as six books of Saints lives, ten compilations of passages from the Scriptures and sixty-six diverse doctrinal works, such as devotional manual and works belonging to the colloquia genre: Juan de Gaona's¹⁵⁵ *Colloquios de Paz y tranquilidad Christiana en lengua mexicana* (1582), Maturino Gilberti's¹⁵⁶ *Dialogo de doctrina Christiana* (1559). Among these diverse doctrinal works we also find translations of pious books, such as Saint John's Chrisostomos homilies, translated into Nahuatl by the same Juan de Gaona, Thomas a Kempis' *Contemptus Mundi*, and Diego de Estella's *Tratado de la Vanidad del Mundo*, both translated into Nahuatl by Fray Juan Bautista¹⁵⁷ around 1600.

In the case of catechisms and doctrines, Church Councils approved official texts in Latin, and they were then translated into vernaculars. National churches could also approve the drafting of catechisms and doctrines in the vernaculars. This relative freedom of print was curtailed after the council of Trent¹⁵⁸, which established the rules and principles for the battle against the Reformation, set up a fierce control of the trade of books and their holding, as well as the censorship of all printed matter, be it texts or images.¹⁵⁹ All texts had to be submitted to the approval of several authorities, and the approvals duly printed in the first pages of the books. Even with the approvals, once printed, a book could later become suspect. An order would be issued to recall all copies to be censored.¹⁶⁰ The establishment of the Inquisition (1571) reinforced the control over all printed matter, and in this context a consultation was organized in 1572 among the friars most competent in

¹⁵⁴ In the Fondo Medina I have been able to consult 15, of which 7 were unknown to Beristáin.

¹⁵⁵ BHA II 339 - 340

¹⁵⁶ BHA II 357 - 358

¹⁵⁷ BHA I, 230 - 231

¹⁵⁸ After years of negotiations between the Pope and the European monarchs, the XIX Ecumenical Council, known as the Council of Trent, that had to address the division caused in Christendom by the upsurge of Protestantism, opened in 1545.

¹⁵⁹ For the full text of the *Edicto de la Inquisición sobre libros*, see Fernández del Castillo (1982), p. 459-463.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

indigenous languages in order to determine whether the Indians should be allowed to have translations of sacred books (Fernández del Castillo 1982: 81-85).¹⁶¹

It is not easy to establish the difference between New Spain *cartillas*, *doctrinas* and *catecismos* since they all designate the basic doctrinal texts in Christian faith and their composition is sometimes similar.¹⁶² Generally speaking, though, *catechisms* would explain the doctrine in the form of questions and answers and contain the most common prayers: Paternoster, Credo, Ave Maria, etc., *cartillas* were simpler versions of catechisms, while *doctrinas* would rather be expositions of doctrinal principles taking the form of sermons or speeches. In the *doctrinas*, the subject matters would follow in general a same order: an introduction, articles of faith, commandments, sacraments, capital sins, acts of mercy, bodily senses, powers of the soul, theologal, cardinal and moral virtues. (Zumárraga¹⁶³: 1543). Others, like the anonymous doctrine of the Dominican Order (1548), a bilingual Nahuatl/Spanish text, with Latin references, would begin with the confession prayer and proceed with various explanations on the articles of faith under the form of sermons. These sermons have some generic traits, since they were a genre in doctrinal literature,¹⁶⁴ but they seem to have been mostly devised for the particular situation of the Indians. As an illustration, in the first article on the divinity, that is, on the nature of God, we can read in the Spanish column:

Aquellos malvados demonios os andavan engañando tantos tiempos ha: y ellos os hazian creer y os dezian que ellos eran verdaderos dioses assi mismo

¹⁶¹ Franciscans, influenced by Erasmist ideas, were in favour, whereas Dominicans, more purist and orthodox, were against.

¹⁶² They were drafted in different versions according to the capacity of the reader: short versions (*cartilla breve*, *catecismo breve* or *menor*, *doctrina breve*) were for children and adults “gente ruda y simple, como indios y negros, mulatos y españoles si hubiere”, and long versions (*cartilla mayor*, *catecismo grande* or *mayor*, *doctrina mayor*) for those who had already some knowledge of the Christian precepts (Gonzalbo 1988/1999: 17)

¹⁶³ BHA V, 199 - 201

¹⁶⁴ I will mention sermons again in the Modern High Culture category, since sermonaries are also part of the promotion of a nationalist piety.

os induzian e induzian a vuestros padres y aguelos a que les hizieredes y a que les edificaredeis casas y edificios y sus templos y cues que les haziades. Y tambien os persuadian a que les obedeciessedes con aquella reverencia y acatamiento y obediencia ... gran rey y señor dios y con que a el solo aviades de reverenciar y obedecer. Y aquesto hazían los malditos demonios vellacos para que vosotros ofendiessedes gravissimamente a Dios para que por ellos fuessedes muy atormentados y terriblemente castigados con ellos alla en los infiernos. Y porque os tenian odio y malquerencia aquellos malditos y abominables demonios holgavanse mucho de vuestros tormentos y de vuestras fatigas y miserias. Y por esto os induzian que os cortassedes las lenguas y que os cortassedes y sangrassedes las orejas y vuestros [...] braços, y vuestros muslos y piernas que os cortays, vos sacrificavades vuestros cuerpos, por lo cual erades muy atormentados y afligidos. A otros persuadian a que ofreciessen y a que matassen sus hijos o sus esclavos o sus captivos tomados en guerra y comian sus carnes, y davanlas a otros que las comiessen, y todo esto os persuadia e induzia el demonio para que aquí en esta vida ofendiessedes mucho a Dios nuestro señor y que despues en la otra vida fuessedes por ello muy atormentados. Todo aquesto mandavan los malditos demonios y a ello os persuadian lo qual haziades contra la voluntad de nuestro gran rey y señor y contra los sus mandamientos. Después os declararé quales sean estos sus mandamientos.

Por tanto conviene que sepays que todos aquellos a quienes serviades y a quien adoravades, todos eran demonios malditos engañadores y falsos, que os andavan engañando. Y por esto aquellos que llamavades Uchilobos, y Tezcatlipoca, y Quetçalcoatl, y Titlacauan, y Mitalntecutli, y Tlaloc, y Xiuhtecutli, con todos los otros a los quales adoravades, y a los quales ofreciades sacrificios, agora los haveis de aborrecer y para siempre los aveis de olvidar pues os tenian odio y os engañavan y escarnecian de vosotros, y ...agora... aveys de quebrar y hazer pedaços sus figuras y aveys de derrocar o desvaratar las casas y templos de los demonios, y aveys de quemar todas sus casas y haciendas, y todos sus sacrificios todo lo aveys de destruir poque

todas eran obras hechas del demonio, porque todo lo aborrece el nuestro dios y assi mismo aborrece a los que eso o cosas semejantes hazen en esta vida. Y a todos los ha de echar alla al infierno para que alla para siempre jamas ardan con los demonios a quien sirvieron y a quien ellos adoraron si en esta vida no hazen penitencia entre tanto que en ella biven. (Anonymous 1548: fol. Tr-rtj)

This fragment was written one generation after the Conquest, so it addresses the people whose “padres y aguelos” worshipped these “demonios”, just in case they should be tempted to continue to serve and adore them. All their gods are referred to as demons who are liars and deceitful, who demand sacrifices and self-punishment, who hate people and mock them by making them believe that they are true gods and lead them to damnation. Indians must stop serving and adoring them, must destroy their temples, images and objects, lest they will burn in hell with the demons themselves.

Although the text is considered as Spanish, or Christian, the contents are already biased towards the Nahuatl audience by its perlocutory function: to provoke fear and induce a change in conduct, by recalling the times of human sacrifices and depicting the horrors of eventual hell. Now, the Nahuatl version, in the right column, was undoubtedly written by a native, since he straightens up the name of god Uitzilopochtli in the Nahuatl column (misspelled Uichilobos in the Spanish one). Then, the names for the Christian concepts of demon, God, hell, and possibly the notion of offending God, which is the notion of sin, had to be accommodated. In a way, thus, it is a Christian-Nahuatl text, both decentered with respect to each source culture.

This decentering is always present in doctrinal texts; they were largely fruit of collaborative translation and therefore, both in the choice of words as well in the stylistics,

they reveal the tensions of negotiation: for example, many doctrinal texts, especially sermons and songs adopt the Nahua metaphorical, reverential speech.

In fact, it is difficult to determine to what extent the syncretic character of these texts was known and tolerated by the missionaries. It is presumed that, in the atmosphere of urgency and optimism that reigned during the first decades, the incorporation of indigenous elements into the Christian devotion was interpreted as a sign of assimilation and positive appropriation of the new religion. Flemish Friar Pedro de Gante¹⁶⁵ (1480?-1572), one of the first Franciscans, who arrived in 1522-23, says :

por la gracia de Dios, empecélos a conocer y entender sus condiciones y quilates, y cómo me había de haber con ellos, y que toda su adoración de ellos a sus dioses era cantar y bailar delante de ellos, porque cuando habían de sacrificar algunos por alguna cosa, así como para alcanzar victoria de sus enemigos o por temporales necesidades, antes que los matasen, habían de cantar delante del ídolo; y como yo vi esto y que todos sus cantares son dedicados a sus dioses, compuse metros muy solemnes sobre la ley de Dios y su fe, y cómo Dios se hizo hombre por salvar al linaje humano,... y también les di libreas para pintar en sus mantas y para bailar con ellas, porque así se usaba entre ellos conforme a los bailes y a los cantares que ellos cantaban.
(cited in Alberro 1999: 43)

It was evident to the missionaries that in order to be able to eradicate without alienating the population, concessions had to be made to some aspects of the old religiosity, and these concessions were symbolic, like the authorization to dance in a church context, but also inscribed in the canvass of texts. Translation could help materializing the new products, in which old forms would wrap new contents, something that could not satisfy completely neither side but which had to be accepted as the best possible alternative to

¹⁶⁵ BHA II, 338 - 339

complete failure. The missionaries may also have considered that, after all, adding was better than subtracting sacredness. Somehow, they must have learned the Lacandon lesson. A delicate balance of calculated misunderstandings was therefore woven in the canvass in the form of mixed, hybrid or syncretic texts. The best known examples of such texts, composed in Nahuatl but with Christian contents, belong to Bernardino de Sahagún.¹⁶⁶ The text I will examine here, in fact the only one that was printed during his lifetime, is the *Psalmodia Christiana*. Written originally in 1558-60, this bold experiment of the possibilities of translation circulated as a manuscript and was finally published in 1583. Fray Bernardino had noted, just as Pedro de Gante, that the Indians were particularly fond of music and dances, and that all rituals to their gods were accompanied by chants and performances. He set up therefore, with the help of four of his Indian students and collaborators, to write songs, or psalms, in Nahuatl, dedicated to the Saints and the Virgin Mary, to be sung at Church. In fact, he says in the prologue that he “dictated” the songs to the Indian scribes, whose names are not mentioned there but who might have been the same who appear in other works: Antonio Valeriano,¹⁶⁷ Martín Jacobita, Alonso Vegerano y Pedro de San Buenaventura (Burkhart 1992).

Now, Louise Burkhart, who has studied and translated some of these songs, sustains that the Indian “amanuenses”, or scribes, far from taking dictation, took up control of the situation and incorporated Nahua style, choice of words, symbols and metaphors into the texts, and, in so doing, they “had considerable control over how the Nahua populace understood and responded to the friars teachings” (Burkhart 1992: 340). Whether they had such a degree of effective control or not is difficult to ascertain, but indeed, that is what

¹⁶⁶ BHA IV, 275 - 277

¹⁶⁷ BHA V, 83 - 85

they meant. And Sahagún¹⁶⁸ could not have been blind to these manipulations. His knowledge of Nahuatl language and culture was excellent. One cannot but think that he may have even encouraged them. After all, the missionaries took advantage of the reverential style of Nahua speech in their own preaching. Appended to a *Sermonario*, published in 1624, there is a list of “phrases y modos de hablar elegantes y metaphoricos de los Yndios Mexicanos” (Mijangos 1624). Friars Juan Bautista¹⁶⁹ and Andrés de Olmos¹⁷⁰ also translated the Nahua repertoire of “elders speeches” (**huehuetlatolli**), which helped establishing a continuity with the ancient moral practices. The authority embodied in these speeches, both in their contents and in the rhetoric forms used in them could be transferred through translation into the new texts (Klor 1989). It would have been just natural that, in turn, the scribes would reinsert these features into the doctrinal texts, when given the opportunity to do it. However, according to Burkhart (1992), who is a careful translator, fully aware of the difficulties of finding the Nahua voice in a Christian text written under the surveillance of the friar, and aware also that it was common in Christian texts to yield to indigenous forms in order to naturalize the text and made it more acceptable to the Indians. In this case the scribes went far in their creation. There seems to be in these psalms a confiscation of Saint James for the Nahua cause, a cause in which Nahuas are not equated with Evil but with Christianity, in Louise Burkhart’s translation:

First psalm

*May it issue forth, may it resound forth, may it reach far and wide, the fame,
the honor of God’s precious one, Saint James the Apostle!*

*May they be recognized, may they be heard, may they be marveled at, the
deeds, the valor of the great warrior, our Captain!*

¹⁶⁸ BHA IV, 275 - 277

¹⁶⁹ BHA I, 230 - 231

¹⁷⁰ BHA IV, 45

*May it be seen, may it be placed before people, how they **shimmer**, the vestments of the white horse! It is covered with **precious vestments**, it is very **wondrous**!*

*May his precious Sword be praised! It goes **glimmering** greatly! With it he goes trashing things, he goes smashing our enemies!*

Truly, fear is cast down upon the Moors, the Turks, the confused ones! As they flee from his presence, saddles are cast down!

*Greatly it goes **shining**, it goes **jingling**, his **skin of gold**, his **skin of metal**! It goes covered with **bracelets**, it goes covered with **jades**!*

Second Psalm

*He, our **great speaker**, Jesus, he called him. He chose Saint James as his soldier!*

*It was when he was about to begin the war, by which war was made on the great **were-owl** and all his fellows were-owls. Then he called him – the **great warrior** Saint James, and his younger brother Saint John!*

*He, Saint James, he became our **great speaker** Jesus's Captain. And he also made him a magistrate!*

Twelve are the war commanders who Jesus chose, but his magistrates are only three!

*Saint Peter, Saint James and Saint John – Jesus made them **magistrates**. Likewise, it was the three of them, it was in their presence that he revealed his realm, there at Tabor.*

Likewise, it was in their presence that he prayed to his father, God, and he sweated with blood, there at the garden, Gethsemane.” (Burkhart 1992: 343-344)

In this translation (in which I have underlined some Nahuatl traits), Luise Burkhart shows how Santiago, that is, Saint James, also known as Matamoros, because he lead the fight to expell the Moors from the Spanish Peninsula, and who was also chosen to lead the Conquest in America, becomes “a numen of the Nahua sacred world”. He, qualified here as

a “precious stone”, “great warrior” is one of the twelve commanders of **our** (not the, not their, but our) great speaker (**tlatoani**: the one who speaks, a ruler), a warrior recognizable by his apparel and regalia, just as if he was a Nahua god, covered with jades and shining skin, who comes to make war to the **tlacatecolo**, or were-owls. In a language that is more metonymical than metaphorical, the symbolism evoked belongs not to Christian transcendentalism, which “was meaningless to the Nahuas and was lost in translation” (1992: 345) but to Nahua models, which instrumentalized the Christian metaphors for divinity and afterlife and infused them with their own cosmovision. The choice of the episode of mount Tabor must have been intelligible for the Nahuas: it is the Transfiguration of the Lord. Here the supernatural revealed itself with particular pregnancy: the vision, the massive burst of light and the stupor of the apostles who offer to build tabernacles right there for Him, Moses and Elijah, as if dream-talking (Matthew 16:24). Burkhart notes the fact that the apostles are depicted here as warriors and no mention is made of them as fishermen, a role incompatible with that of a soldier. Saint James, who, according to the legend, went to Spain to convert idolaters (“to make war on the were-owls there in Spain”, says Third Psalm, 1992: 344) was sent now to New Spain with the same mission, and “people of New Spain are equated with the people of Spain as subjects of the saint’s work, and the non-Christian deities of ancient Spain are equated with those of Mexico – “our enemies the were-owls”” (1992: 350).

These transwritings by which both sides tried to push their own interests as far as possible into each other’s territory, were probably very common. The displacement that we can see here thanks to the clear intromission of the scribes into what should have been a Christian canonical text cannot be considered an illusion nor a punctual phenomenon. It

was already present in the first grammars and lexicons, where we could see that the cultural and linguistic frontiers became diffuse by the effort of comparison and decentering. It was less evident because of the invisibility of the scribes, but as soon as they were given the chance to write independently, they invested themselves in it.

In fact, these four scribes were highly praised individuals (by contemporary standards of credit given to Indians), who became themselves professors at the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco. Others, like Fernando de Ribas,¹⁷¹ not only helped Alonso de Molina¹⁷² in the completion of his Vocabulario, but participated in the writing of the *Dialogos de la paz y tranquilidad del alma*, by Juan de Gaona.¹⁷³ Fray Juan Bautista¹⁷⁴ was also helped by Indian scholars in his translation of *Contemptus Mundi*. In the *Biblioteca Hispanoamericana* there are 24 authors whose Indian origin is highlighted. They were mostly of noble origin, young men who were taken by the friars to be educated in their schools: Diego Adriano,¹⁷⁵ “Indio noble, de los primeros educados por los franciscanos, excelente en lengua latina, que poseyó con la castellana como su idioma patrio ... tradujo muchos tratados del latín al nahuatl”, Antonio Gaspar,¹⁷⁶ “intérprete regio de los tribunales”, Gabriel Ayala,¹⁷⁷ “escribano de su república”, Esteban Bravo,¹⁷⁸ “traducía cualquier cosa del romance y del latín a la lengua mexicana y de ésta a aquellas lenguas con tanta abundancia de vocablos que causaba admiración” (Beristáin I: 288). Pablo Nazareo,¹⁷⁹ in 1566, begging for material help from King Philip II, argued in his letter, written by the

¹⁷¹ BHA IV, 214

¹⁷² BHA III, 257 V, 396

¹⁷³ BHA II, 339 - 340

¹⁷⁴ BHA I, 230 - 231

¹⁷⁵ BHA I: 73

¹⁷⁶ BHA I: 147

¹⁷⁷ BHA I: 193

¹⁷⁸ BHA I, 288

¹⁷⁹ Not included in BHA

way in Latin, that his family had collaborated with Hernán Cortés during the Conquest, that many Indians like himself had helped with the indoctrination of the population, and, finally, that he had translated everything that is read in all the world's churches (*sic*):

Para actuar mejor y más eficazmente entre los indios traduje del latin a nuestro idioma, laborando sin dormir noche y día, todo lo que durante el transcurso del año se lee en las iglesias del orbe de la tierra, o sea, evangelios, dominincas, santorales, cuaresmales, feriales y epístolas sagradas, y no sólo estos, sino muchos libros análogos e innumerables sermonarios, que cuidé de traducir con gran diligencia, trabajos que por juicio y aprobación de varones doctos en Sagrada Teología y peritos en nuestra lengua, andan por doquiera en manos de predicadores regulares y seculares, los cuales, disfrutando de nuestra obra y gustando del fruto de nuestro sudor, son de gran utilidad a todos los habitantes de las Indias. (Méndez Plancarte 1946: 165).

Pablo Nazareo is one of the many Indian scholars who served as cultural brokers between colonizers and colonized, and, who, not only became familiar with Christian doctrinal texts and helped in their dissemination, but were put in contact with parts of European culture which came also in the friars' luggage. They helped thus in the introduction to New Spain of Greco-Latin literature, science, medicine, and arts, that is, helped in the building of a high culture which must have created a widespread sentiment of self-importance that we will find, years later, generalized and consolidated as a national identity feeling.

But, in the meantime, the spirit of Trent was dissipating the climate of openness. Fear of heresy hampered movements that could be considered suspect of heterodoxy. Bishop Juan de Zumárraga sends the cacique of Yanhuatlán to be burned at the stake for idolatry in 1545, and in 1547 forbids dances and representations (**mitotes**) at church. The

diversity of languages becomes a threat, and in 1550, the Emperor issues an order that all Indians must learn Castilian. The first Church Council, held in 1555, closes the door to priesthood to Indians, *mestizo* and blacks, and Archbishop Montúfar forbids the holding of theater representations in Churches. Restrictions to the participation of the Indian elite in colonial life as well as to the dissemination of texts having to do with the Indian past are enacted, as the atmosphere of suspicion becomes generalized. Some fifty years after Friar Pedro de Gante's exultant words, the lay scholar Francisco Cervantes de Salazar¹⁸⁰ (1514?-1575) , whom we will find again in these pages, will pronounce:

[los Indios] son tan inclinados a su antigua idolatría que si no hay quien entiende muy bien su lengua, entre las sacras oraciones que cantan, mezclan cantares de su gentilidad, y para cubrir mejor su dañada obra, comienzan y acaban con palabras de Dios, interponiendo las demás gentílicas, abaxando la voz para no ser entendidos y levantándola en los principios y fines, cuando dicen "Dios". Ciertamente, sería mejor desnudarlos del todo de las reliquias y rastros de su gentilidad, porque ha contescido, según dicen religiosos de mucho crédito, estar haciendo el baile alrededor de una cruz, y tener debajo della soterrados los ídolos, y parecer que sus cantares los enderezaban a la cruz, dirigiéndolos con el corazón a los ídolos. (cited in Alberro 1999: 42).

Everything having to do with the Indian past was to be for ever abolished: "sepultarles en perpetuo olvido", proclaimed Antonio de los Reyes in the prologue to his 1593 *Arte de la lengua Mixteca* (Reyes 188?: I). Even Bernardino de Sahagún,¹⁸¹ who had allowed the intromission of Indian elements into Christian devotion as a means of indoctrination, became later in his life suspicious also. In fact, he denounced the cult to the Virgin of Guadalupe as being a disguised cult to Tonanzin, the mother goddess (Noguez

¹⁸⁰ BHA II, 97 - 100

¹⁸¹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

1993: 94-96). Paradoxically, in this matter, although he was obviously right, his criticism did not take hold; quite on the contrary, as we know, the cult to Guadalupe proliferated and prospered to become the symbol of the new nation.

Previously acclaimed similarities became “diabolic parodies” (Moreno Toscano 1976: 337): the devil imitating God in everything in order to deceive the faithful and divert them from the true path.¹⁸² Consequently, if it was the devil that inspired the similarities, it was indeed dangerous to let the indigenous words carry the signifiers of Christian terminology. Conflicts and hesitations with regards to the proper use of words ensued.

The approaches followed in the translation of words usual in doctrinal activities are an illustration of the difficulties encountered by the missionaries:

If the word was completely new in the indigenous language, or if there was danger of serious misunderstanding, the Spanish word was used, either as a loan word or as a naturalized borrowing: this is the case of the word Christian (**cristiano**, **cristianome** in plural), angel (**angel**, **angelosme**), saint (**sancto**, **sanctome**), and **Spiritu Sancto**, **Santo Sacramento**, etc... There were however hesitations and differing approaches: in the case of the word God, I have found in the same catechism the Nahuatl equivalent: **teotl**, or **totecuio teotl** (lit.: our lord god) alternating with the Spanish “Dios”, **totecuio Dios** (Anonymous 1819). Dominicans insisted on differentiating between the two kinds of gods, and kept Dios as a loan word in their translations (Galarza 1992). The Indians, in turn, seemed to have preferred using the word Dios in their songs as a ruse to fool the friars, as we read in Cervantes de Salazar’s passage just cited.

¹⁸² Cf. *Monarquía Indiana*, vol. II, and, in particular, Chapter XXXIII, about ways in which the devil fools poor humans into adoring him, and how idolatric practices mock Christian ones.

Evil and its personification, Satan, posed also considerable translation problems in all Mesoamerican indigenous languages, because of the monist character of their religiosity, in which gods could be both good and bad, bring fortune or misfortune. Of all the Mesoamerican pantheon gods, Tezcatlipoca, “the Smoking Mirror”, who showed parallelisms with the devil (sorcerer, master of disguises), was chosen as Satan, and its devilish features were stressed (Burkhart 1989: 92). But still, it was a god, and making devils out of gods was not an easy operation. To facilitate the task of identification, demons were called with a generic **tlatltecólo**, which was a sort of were-owl, associated with the night and the underworld, also a sorcerer, who could mysteriously appear and disappear, and bring all sorts of misfortunes. The **tlatltecólo** had the advantage of not being a god in Nahua culture, so the misunderstanding could be avoided (Burkhart 1989: 41).

If there were practices considered equivalent in the local tradition and carrying no idolatric meanings, they were borrowed and recycled. **Neyolmelahualitzli**, meaning “straightening of one’s heart”, a purification rite that restored internal order, would be used as the equivalent of confession. For the sacrament of Baptism, a neologism was used: **quaatequitzli**, meaning literally, to throw water upon one’s head. These parallelisms were naturally often flimsy and the dialogue that could be built upon them was plagued of misunderstandings. **Quaatequitzli** was problematic because of the precise nature of the sacramental ritual: would a person be baptized if water was poured over another part of the body, and not the head? but also because of the formula: “Ego te baptizo in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti, amen”, which could not be translated literally into Nahuatl because of the ambiguity of the preposition “in” in that language. This translation problem, to which he adds the argument that because Indians are usually drunk, they cannot administer the

sacrament of Baptism,¹⁸³ prompted Manuel Pérez,¹⁸⁴ an eminent eighteenth-century Augustin scholar, to dictate that “el bautismo en lengua mexicana es muy dudoso” (Pérez 1713: 9) and that, when in doubt, one should not hesitate to administer it again.

The translation of “hell” is another case in point: in Nahua beliefs there were a variety of places where the dead could go (López Austin 1994: 183-84) and no place for eternal damnation, since one’s destiny was unrelated to the manner of life one had lead. The friars found as closest equivalent **mictlan** (lit.: among the dead) the place of destination of those having died a natural death (that is, not warriors, not pregnant women, not people having drowned or having died of illnesses related to water). It was the underworld, a permanently dark place, but these facts were not connoted negatively among the Nahuas. The appropriation of the word **mictlan**, which was unrelated to fault in Nahuatl, had to be accompanied by an effort of resignification in order to add a new meaning. Burkhart stresses the horrendous descriptions of tortures that are often found in sermons and doctrines (Burkhart 1989: 50-55)

If there was no punishment for the way a person had lived, there was naturally nor reward either, and therefore finding an equivalence for heaven was also problematic: the word **Tlalocan** (place of Tlaloc, the rain’s god, a place of wellbeing and plenty, where people having died of drowning, hydropesy, paralysis, thunder strike, would go) was re-signified also to mean strictly the Christian paradise. However, we must note that there was not a single approach used, and both in the case of hell as in the case of heaven, we find

¹⁸³ Baptism can be administered by lay people, a church rule that preempts those cases in which a non-baptized person may be in danger of death and no priest may be available. In New Spain, this was of particular significance at a time when there were few missionaries and crowds to be baptized. The urgency of baptism to ensure salvation made it the most important sacrament and attention was paid to make sure that the formulae and rituals were properly performed.

¹⁸⁴ *BHA* IV, 136

also Spanish borrowings: “Infierno” and “Parayso terrenal”.

The translation of the word “sin” and its derivatives is of particular significance. Since this concept had no exact equivalent in Nahua thinking (nor in other indigenous languages), the first missionaries attributed the equivalence to the Nahuatl word **tlatlacolli**, which meant twisted or crooked thing, or something that has gone wrong, or has failed to function.¹⁸⁵ Again, an effort of resignification was called for, and the practice of confession, to which I will devote the next section, must have helped in it.

Not only was it absolutely essential that sin and sinning were fully assimilated, with its subtle preconditions of attrition and contrition, so complex to translate that the Spanish word was appended to the Nahua closest equivalent: "**neyoltequipacholitzli itoca contricion**", "**neyoltequipacholitzli itoca atricion**" (Anonymous 1819: 53v-66r), but that the differences between types and gravity of sins were understood. Efforts of translation are particularly visible in dictionaries, such as in an anonymous mid-eighteenth century Castilian-Zapotec vocabulary, which, under the verb “pecar”, shows the variety of ways of sinning that had to be taken into account: “generalmente”, “desvergonzadamente”, “de pura malicia”, “por yerro o engaño”, “por negligencia”, “sólo interiormente”, “con las palabras”, “con los ojos”, “con los oídos”, “con las manos”, “con los pies”, “con todas las partes del cuerpo”, “contra natura”, “con mujer, forzándola o engañándola con persuaciones o promesas”, “sin persuadir sino que ella quiera libremente”, “con mujer forzándola con violencia física”, “contra el prójimo, como es hurto, muerte, lujuria y falso testimonio” (Anonymous 1893).

¹⁸⁵ Personal communication with Prof. John Sullivan, from the Universidad de Zacatecas.

2.1.4. The shift of subjectivity

In general, confession manuals are an important part of the doctrinal literature in Catholic liturgy, both for new and for old Christians. Here I will talk about the bilingual confession manuals as tools for the modelisation of the new colonial subjectivity, but I must also mention that there were other confession manuals printed in New Spain which are not bilingual and were concerned with the confession either of the Spanish population or of the general population. Although I will not dwell upon it further, I cannot omit here a reference to a curious 1552 document entitled “Avisos y reglas para los confesores que oyeren confesiones de los españoles que son o han sido en cargo a los Indios de las Indias del mar océano” written by the controversial Dominican Bishop of Chiapas, Fray Bartolomé de las Casas. In this manual he is using confession as a tool to redress the situation of the many Indians unjustly subjected to the Spanish. He appeals to Canonic Law and to Natural and Divine Law to compel the Spanish *encomenderos*, that is, the ones who held the privilege of having numbers of Indians to their full service, an institution close to slavery, to free their Indians. Preempting criticism for his radical views, he annexes a chapter of “Adiziones” with scholarly arguments of justification.

New Spain’s confession manuals are bilingual texts, written in two columns: the left one in Spanish, and the right one in the indigenous language. They were meant as instruments to help the priests in the orderly questioning of the penitents. They are, therefore, sample dialogues in which the priest asks the penitent about his or her sins in the

indigenous language, and the penitent answers. The answers are not there, however.¹⁸⁶ In this sense, the confessional manuals resemble the vocabularies we have analysed: they help leading the conversation, but they are of limited use for listening. These texts were produced by friars and priests and were meant only for them. However, the answers are sometimes implicit in the questions:

The questions usually follow the order of the Ten Commandments and they are drafted so as to elicit as much detail as possible from the sinner, such as in this fragment from a Nahuatl-Spanish confession manual, related to the First Commandment (“Thou shall not strange gods before me”), in which the confessor elicits the many ways in which the penitent may have committed the sin of idolatry:

[Confessor] Por ventura creyste en sueños o creyste que te habia de venir algun mal, quando te temblaron las pestañas o cuando rechina el fuego?

[Confessor] Creyste o tuviste por mal agüero quando oyste llorar al buho o cantar la lechuza, o hazer ruydo con las uñas, o quando encontraste con aquella savandixilla que se llama pinahuiztli?

[Confessor] Por ventura tuviste por mal agüero quando la culebra paso delante de ti, o quando en el camino tropezaste, o quando la mosca hace ruido, o quando oyste cruxir los maderos de casa. (Bautista 1599: 42v-43r)

Sinful practices against the Sixth Commandment (“Thou shall not commit adultery”) were particularly sought. It was important to determine not only the exact nature of the sexual relationship but the degree of consanguinity between the persons involved, since endogamy was quite common:

¹⁸⁶ With some exceptions: a small *Confesionario breve, activo y pasivo, en lengua mexicana*, by Marcos de Saavedra (1746), is composed in two sections: the first one containing the answers, and the second one the questions. Agustín de Quintana’s *Confesionario en lengua mixe* (1733) contains questions with some answers in consecutive order.

[Confessor] "Estas mujeres con quienes pecaste, son casadas, viudas, solteras o doncellas?, cuántas veces pecaste con cada una?, esfloraste a esa doncella? alguna de esas mujeres con quienes pecaste es tu pariente o es parienta de tu esposa, o es tu comadre?, esas mujeres eran parientes unas de otras? qué parentesco había?

Pecaste con tu cuñada? cuando pecaste con tu cuñada, fue acto consumado? Has tenido tocamientos con alguna mujer? tú solo palpaste el cuerpo de esa mujer o ella sola palpó el tuyo, o juntamente palpaste el suyo y ella el tuyo?
(Vellón 1877/1887: 105-106)

It was essential to obtain from the penitent the conscience of fault, which was not an easy task. The method consisted in forcing the Indian penitent to see himself as an entity having two parts, flesh and soul, which were divorced from each other. Flesh was unruly, and had to be permanently checked by the soul. The first part (flesh) tended towards sin, and the second part (soul), once properly trained, would bring control over the flesh. This method implied the utilization of carefully drafted sets of questions, which often entered into gruesome detail. Confessing masturbation is an illustrative example of it. Here the confessor forces the penitent to say that he took pleasure in his sinful thoughts, and that he knew that in taking this pleasure he was sinning. The object of the desires is then inquired, and the eventuality of it not being a woman is also considered. The ways and frequency of masturbation are then scrutinized, and information about previous confessions of the same sin is elicited:

[Confessor] Quando solo pensaste el pecado, te deleitastes en lo que pensabas?

[Penitent] Me deleité, Padre.

[Confessor] Tuvistes por pecado alegrarte del mal pensamiento.

[Penitent] Tuvelo por pecado.

[Confessor] Y entonces tuvistes movimientos carnales?

[Penitent] Tuvelos.

[Confessor] Te provocastes polución?

[Penitent] Me la provoque.

[Confessor] Tuvistes polucion entonces ?

[Penitent] La tuve.

[Confessor] Y entonces desseastes pecar con mujer?

[Penitent] Algunas veces lo he deseado, algunas veces no lo he deseado.

[Confessor] Quando lo desseastes, qué mujer desseastes, casada o soltera?

[Confessor] Quantas vezes te has provocado la polución, y la has tenido a tus solas? [Penitent] Muchas vezes, innumerables; porque algunas vezes he jugado mis partes, y tenido polución todos los dias; algunas vezes, cada dos días, al dia, y algunas vezes como tres vezes en un dia.

[Confessor] Quantos meses (o años) has cometido esse pecado frequentemente, como dices?

[Confessor] Que tanto ha que no cometes esse pecado?

[Penitent] Tres dias ha que lo dexé de hazer.

[Confessor] Quantas vezes has confessado esse mesmo pecado?

[Penitent] Cinco o seis vezes...

(Quintana¹⁸⁷ 188?: 238-239)

Other confession manuals, especially of general nature, caution however against being too detailed in the questioning, in particular with regard to the Sixth Commandment, and call for discretion since it was common opinion that Indians learned sins in the confessional (Venegas 1766: 101-02).

I have registered nine bilingual manuals for the administration of the Sacraments in general and twenty-four bilingual confession manuals¹⁸⁸:

¹⁸⁷ BHA IV, 178

¹⁸⁸ J. F. Schwaller (1994) mentions the existence of only six confession manuals (and nine editions) for the whole Colonial period.

Table 3. Confession manuals.

	Author	Title	Date
1	Alva Ixtlixóchitl, Bartolomé	Confesionario mayor y menor en lengua mexicana	1634
2	Barreda, Nicolás	El Manual de sacramentos, el arte y las oraciones y la explicación de los misterios en idioma chinanteco	17th-18th
3	Bautista, Juan	Confessionario en lengua mexicana y castellana, con muchas advertencias para los confesores	1599
4	Bravo de Lagunas, Juan Bautista	Arte de la lengua de Michoacán que contiene: Confesionario, Preparación para bien morir, Explicación del Salmo Miserere, Explicación del Salmo Beati qui Audiunt, Explicación de las Letanías	1574
5	Cárdenas, Carlos	Práctica y régimen del Confesionario de indios, en lenguas castellana y mexicana para uso de los seminaristas	1761
6	Contreras, Pedro	Manual de administrar los Santos Sacramentos á los españoles u a los Indios de la Nueva España conforme á la reforma de Paulo V, Pontífice Máximo, en latín y en Mexicano	1737
7	Córdova, Juan de	Confesionario breve o modo de confesarse en lengua Zapoteca	157?
8	Cortés y Zedeño, Gerónimo	Arte, Vocabulario y Confesionario en el idioma mexicano, como se usa en el Obispado de Guadalajara	1765
9	Feria, Pedro	Confesionario en lengua Zapoteca	15??
10	Figueroa, Jerónimo	Catecismo y confesionario en lengua Tepehuana y Tarahumara	16??
11	Gilberti, Maturino	Confesionario en tarasco	15??
12	Haedo, Francisco	Gramática de la lengua otomí y método para confesar a los indios en ella	1731
13	Lorra, Francisco	Manual mexicano para la administración de los Santos Sacramentos, conforme al manual Toledano	1663
14	González, Diego Pablo	Manual de la administración de sacramentos en lengua caita, con un apéndice en el mismo idioma del método de hacer una buena confesión	1740
15	Cortezaro (Cortecero), Diego	Manual para la administración de los santos sacramentos a los indios mexicanos	1669
16	Martínez de Araujo	Manual de los santos sacramentos en el idioma de Michuacan	1690
17	Molina, Alonso	Confesionario mayor, en lengua mexicana y castellana	1565
18	Molina, Alonso	Confesionario breve en lengua mexicana y castellana	1565
19	Nájera, Diego	Manual para administrar los Santos Sacramentos en la lengua Mazahuatl	16??
20	Olmos, Andrés	Arte, Vocabulario, Catecismo, Confesionario y Sermones Huastecos	15??

21	Olmos, Andrés	Tratado de los pecados capitales en Mexicano	15??
22	Olmos, Andrés	Tratado de los Santos Sacramentos en mexicano	15??
23	Ortega, José	Confesionario manual en lengua Cora	1732
24	Páez, Bernabé	Método de confesión sacramental en mexicano	¿
25	Palacios, Pedro	Catecismo y Confesionario	¿
26	Pareja, Francisco	Confesionario en Lengua Timiquana de la Florida	1612
27	Pinelo, Bernardino	Manual mexicano para la administración recta de los Sacramentos	1650
28	Saavedra, Marcos	Confessionario breve activo y passivo, en lengua mexicana con el qual los que comienzan (sabiendolo bien de memoria)	1746
29	Santoyo, Antonio	Catecismo y confesionario	¿
30	Quintana, Agustín	Confesionario de la lengua mije	1733
31	Vásquez Gastelu, Antonio	Arte de la lengua mexicana, Confessionario y Catecismo	1716
32	Velázquez, Carlos Celedonio	Breve práctica y régimen del confesionario de indios en mexicano y castellano	1761
33	Vellón, Antonio	Confessionario de zapoteco del Valle	18??

In 1661, the bishop of Quito, Alonso de la Peña Montenegro, wrote an *Itinerario para párrocos de Indios*, which would be subsequently reprinted many times. It was, as the title suggests, a guideline for the secular clergy that was replacing the missionary friars in their apostolic activities among the Indians, with insistence on the cases of New Spain and Peru. This *Itinerario* contains a large section devoted to the sacrament of Confession, and served as the basis of bilingual confession manuals in New Spain.¹⁸⁹

According to Peña, although the role of the confessor “non est interrogare poenitentem, sed audire confitentem”, when confessing Indians a detailed inquiry was called for as they were very reluctant to confess and ignorant of what was to be confessed (Peña 1661, lib. IV, trat. IV, sec. XIII). The sacrament of Confession as administered in New Spain was the only Sacrament that required a full dialogue and collaboration between

¹⁸⁹ Martínez de Araujo (1690) draws extensively from him.

the priest and the faithful. All other Sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony) could be administered to a more or less passive subject, but confession was essentially a dialogue in which the priest used a ritualized questioning that evolved in the following way:

1. Contrition or examination of conscience, in which the penitent is made to recall his or her sins in the minute details: when, how, with whom, how many times? The confessor directs the examination of conscience with his questions. The order found in most manuals is the order of the Ten Commandments, and there we can see the areas in which confession laid its stress: sins of idolatry and sins of the flesh.
2. In Fray Juan Bautista's¹⁹⁰ 1599 *Confessionario*, however, we find an interesting complement in the confessional inquiry. After the questions regarding the Ten Commandments (a "top-down" approach, so to say), the author proposes a questioning adapted to the particular conditions of the penitent. The confessor's questions are directed to extract the sins proper to different trades and conditions of the penitents: "Preguntas para los gobernadores, caciques, principales, tequitatos, y mayordomos" (Bautista 1599: 60r), "Preguntas para los alguaciles de cohuatequil" (61v), "Preguntas para los medicos" (62v), "Preguntas para las parteras" (63r), "Preguntas para los mercaderes" with subsections for "cacahuateras" (cocoa merchants), "cereros" (candle makers), "los que venden algodón" (cotton merchants), "tintoreros" (dyers), "carniceros" (butchers), "pintores" (painters), "padres y madres" (fathers and mothers), "mercaderes de sartas" (bead merchants) (62v-66v).

¹⁹⁰ BHA I, 230 - 231

3. Confession or revelation of these sins. The precondition is that there would be sorrow for the sins committed. This mechanism is meant to infuse a sense of shame and guilt on the sinner, who is then required to abhor from his sinful practices. While we know what the questions were, we do not have many clues as to what the answers may have been. The ones included in the manuals are limited to “yes, Father”, “no, Father”, “once”, or “many times”, as I will illustrate later with examples. We know too, from the missionaries accounts, that they were sometimes drawn to despair by the answers they received, possibly because of the gulf of incomprehension that was conceptualized as diabolical by them. We will see this in later examples.
4. Satisfaction or absolution: once the penitent has stated his willingness not to commit these sins again, the priest can proceed to absolve him, on the condition that he pays a penance, or penitence: prayers, fasting, retributions, etc.

Because its purpose is to extract the truth about the person’s sins so that God can forgive them through the intermission of the priest, and because failure to confess properly may imply eternal damnation if the person dies, it was of paramount important for the confessors that all sins were properly recalled and confessed. This is why the confessors received specific preparation for administering this Sacrament, and confession manuals were of such significance in doctrinal literature.

Now, for a confession to be efficient, it was imperative that the confessor should know about the rites, practices and idolatries of his penitents in order to fully scrutinize them and understand their answers. This prior information of the sins more common in the population would come from personal experience, but also from information gathered

elsewhere. In this sense, books about ancient Indian history and practices, religious or otherwise, were an important source of information which fed these manuals.

This is the first rationale given in 1569 by Bernardino de Sahagún¹⁹¹ in the prologue to his *Historia General de las cosas de Nueva España*, a monumental account, in Nahuatl and Spanish, of the history and customs of pre-Hispanic Nahua peoples:

“El médico no puede acertadamente aplicar las medicinas al enfermo sin que primero conozca de qué humor o de qué causa procede la enfermedad, de manera que el buen médico conviene sea docto en el conocimiento de las medicinas y en el de las enfermedades, para aplicar convenientemente a cada enfermedad la medicina contraria. Los predicadores y confesores, médicos son de las ánimas; para curar las enfermedades espirituales conviene tengan esperitia de las medicinas y de las enfermedades espirituales, el predicador de los vicios de la república, para enderezar contra ellos su doctrina, y el confesor, para saber preguntar lo que conviene y entender lo que dixeran tocante a su oficio, conviene mucho que sepan lo necesario para ejercitar sus oficios. Ni conviene se descuiden los ministros desta conversion con decir que entre esta gente no hay más pecados de borrachera, hurto y carnalidad, porque otros muchos pecados hay entre ellos muy más graves, y que tienen gran necesidad de remedio: los pecados de la idolatría y ritos idolátricos, y supersticiones idolátricas y agüeros y abusiones y cerimonias idolátricas no son aún perdidas del todo. Para predicar contra estas cosas, y aun para saber si las hay, menester es de saber cómo las usaban en tiempo de su idolatría, que por falta de no saber esto en nuestra presencia hacen muchas cosas idolátricas sin que lo entendamos. [...] y los confesores ni se las preguntan ni piensan que hay tal cosa, ni saben lenguaje para se lo preguntar, ni aun lo entenderán aunque se lo digan” (Sahagún 1569/1986)

¹⁹¹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

Other early writings by the missionaries were allegedly prepared with the same design: knowing as much as possible about the spiritual and earthly life of the Indians in order to improve the efficiency of confession (Torquemada 1615, Benavente “Motolinía” 1524, Olmos 1539, Acosta 1590). It is important to stress precisely that, as Sahagún¹⁹² says, if the priest did not know what to ask and understood fully what was being answered, little success could be expected from confession. In writing, these early historians and ethnographers were also preserving and, therefore, legitimizing in a way, part of these alien traditions, sometimes defying instructions of their religious or civil authorities who saw all sorts of perils in the compilation and publication of what were called “cosas de Indios”.¹⁹³

In the context of indoctrination of New Spain’s infidels, aside from its role of converting the individual, confession played moreover a very important role in monitoring the religious loyalty of the newly baptized. By the sacrament of Baptism their past sins had been forgiven, but it was imperative that they would not slide back to their “antiguas idolatrías” (something that they seemed to be prone to), since then they would not be saved, and, consequently, all the efforts to convert them would have been in vain. Confession was thus strongly promoted, apparently with great success. Franciscan chronicler Juan de Torquemada,¹⁹⁴ drawing from earlier writer Jerónimo de Mendieta, recalls in his 1615 *Monarquía Indiana* that:

en aquellos tiempos, de que agora tratamos, como avia muchos Indios, y pocos Ministros, era cosa de admiracion y grima la priesa que avia y el fervor con que venian a buscar los confesores. Acaecia por los Caminos, montes y despoblados, seguir a los religiosos mil y dos mil indios e indias,

¹⁹² BHA IV, 275 - 277

¹⁹³ The confiscation and dispersal of Sahagún’s *Historia Natural*, following Philip II orders, is a case in point.

¹⁹⁴ BHA V, 37 - 38

solo por confesarse... y acaecia estarse un mes, o dos, esperando confesor o lugar para confesarse. (1615/1975, III: 176).

Confession was indeed such an urgent task for the friars, who were appalled at the sight of so many souls threatened, that at the beginning, not yet knowing the languages, they would administer the Sacrament by asking the Indians to bring their sins painted.¹⁹⁵ Torquemada¹⁹⁶ recalls here the testimony of Fray Toribio de Benavente, “Motolinía”,¹⁹⁷ who, facing such a crowd waiting to be confessed:

digeles que no avia de confesar sino aquellos solos que trajesen sus pecados escritos por figuras (que esto es cosa que ellos bien saben hacer, y entender, ca esta era su escritura) [...] No lo dije a sordos, porque en diciendoselo, començaron tantos a traer sus pecados escritos que aunque lo tomaba por remedio de descansar un poco, menos me pude despues valer; pero confesavalos mejor, y mas de priesa, porque por aquellos caracteres, se acordavan major, y mas facilmente de sus pecados; los quales iban señalando con un puntero, y yo examinando, y mui poco mas de lo escrito, o figurado, era menester preguntarles. (1615/1975, III: 177)

It is not easy to understand this purported eagerness to be confessed. The testimonies may have been exaggerated, but we must recall that they correspond indeed to the feeling of optimism that reigned among the missionaries who worked in the central areas¹⁹⁸ of New Spain during the first decades.¹⁹⁹ Now, even exaggerations contain some

¹⁹⁵ Interpreters were also used in early confessions, when the priest did not know the language yet. Peña gives precise instructions as to the manner in which confession through interpreters should proceed, and even how should interpreters be chosen: men should be preferred to women, because one knows how women can be talkative (sic) (Lib. VI, Trat. IV, Sec. X).

¹⁹⁶ *BHA* V, 37 - 38

¹⁹⁷ *BHA* III, 289 - 291

¹⁹⁸ This geographical distinction is called for, since Indians in other parts of the territory were adamant to conversion and put the missionaries zeal to hard trials (see De Vos 1990, and Adam Gilg's letter, in Montane 1996)

¹⁹⁹ It was in fact the recurrence of such optimistic accounts that inspired the concept of “spiritual conquest” in Ricard's classical work (1966).

elements of truth. It is also possible that meanings alien to the missionary task were given by the Indians to the act of confession. One could think, for instance, in an interest of seeking protection from the friars, of getting material rewards, and even simple curiosity.

It may be also that penance was in some way intelligible for them, although in reading Peña's *Itinerario* we would tend to think it impossible since it seems that sorrow for their sins was a sentiment alien to Indians and Africans: "Qué hará el Confessor para absolver sin escrupulo a los Indios y Negros bozales,²⁰⁰ que se van a confessar sin dolor de sus pecados?" It is the priest's duty to "excitarlos a tener el dolor necesario" (Peña 1661, III-III-I: 293). Moreover, obtaining an accurate account of the frequency of their sins was problematic, to say the least: a section is devoted to "cómo se ha de haber el Confessor con los Indios en quanto a averiguar el numero de los pecados [...] por rudos e ignorantes y no saber arithmetica, no pueden contar, y responden lo que se les antoja" (Sec.VII: 297). Sins under Christian Law were not infrequently legitimate actions or beneficial traditions for the Indians, as is the case with the loss of virginity in unmarried girls, which was despised among certain Indian populations. (Sec. IV: 314). The lack of intelligibility was such that there are accounts of Indians inventing sins to please the priest. Peña tells the story of an Indian accusing himself of "haber comido mucho y bebido mucho hasta satisfacerse" (Sec.V: 317). It comes not to a surprise then to read pessimistic reflections by missionaries formerly as enthusiastic of the spiritual conquest as Bernardino de Sahagún,²⁰¹ who says:

"Cerca de los otros sacramentos, como fue el de la confesión, y comunión ha havido tanta dificultad, en ponerlos en el camino derecho dellas, que aún

²⁰⁰ "Negro bozal" designated the black slave brought directly from Africa (and not from other colonies).

²⁰¹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

agora ay muy pocos que vayan vía recta a recibir estos sacramentos, lo cual nos da gran fatiga, y mucho conocimiento de lo poco que han aprovechado en el cristianismo”²⁰²

Anthropologist Jorge Klor de Alva (1992) has explored the possibilities and limits of such intelligibility among the Nahua peoples (Nahuatl-speaking central highlands population), and the following analysis relies heavily on him.

Two concepts and their subsequent translations are at stake here: the concepts of sin and penance, for which there was, as I said, no strict equivalent in pre-Conquest times. In particular, sin and sorrow for the sin were probably unintelligible, as well as, obviously, the difference between attrition and contrition (opportunistic sorrow and true sorrow, to put it simply), gaps that had to be filled both conceptually and linguistically. We can sense the desperation of secular priest Juan Martínez de Araujo, who published a bilingual Spanish-Tarasco confession manual, when he explained the difficulties he encountered in trying to make his parishioners to understand the concept of “sinful desires”:

En el sexto precepto no me atrevo ya a escribir un quaderno que tenia apuntado; porque ellos, y ellas tienen unos estilos y unas explicaciones en este precepto que causan horror al Confessor, no tanto de la culpa como de la explicacion, que en otro genero de culpas y confession no se hallara. Usa este verbo **tzitini**, como el mexicano, o **niquelevi**: es dessear, y diciendo lo desseo, juzga que ya esta obligado a el, y no sabe que este mesmo desseo no sabe explicarlo por mal pensamiento, que jamas o rara vez iyra un confessor de indios que confiesse malos pensamientos, y estos quieren ellos excluirlos con el deseo, de suerte que explicando a ella su deseo, si no concede, le carga la culpa, en tanto horror que es una heregia. (Martínez 1690: 74r).

²⁰² Cited in Arthur J. O. Anderson’s introductory study of Sahagún’s *Adiciones, apéndice a la postilla y ejercicio cotidiano* (1993: VX)

He is particularly perceptive in pointing at the conceptual gap revealed by the differences of meaning of the verb: to desire. Aware that it is there, at the translation hinge, that conversion will be decided, he says elsewhere:

Conque es incapaz [el indio]? como no lo es para encaminar sus maldades, sabiendo que todo lo que propone es falso: es mucho dolor, y lastima y perdicion y lagrimas: que en ellos es ceguedad, y el cura las derrama sin remedio: por su mucha terquedad, que son terribles en cabecear. Sepa el confesor que **Unaritspeni, ehcantspeni, tziperantspeni, y ehcanguhpeni**, significa levantar falso testimonio. **Uandandepentsani, uandantzepentsani**, disfamar. **Xaramaritspeni, chambuchambumeni**, andar en quentos. **Xaratatspeni**, descubrir pecados ajenos. **Uanapamunstani, y mayopamunstani**, desdecirse de palabra. **Teruvatanstani, vehpovatanstani, y carovatanstani**, satisfacer de obra y pedir perdon. Si el Confessor no sabe estos verbos y otros muchos difficiles, [...] cómo confessara? (Martínez 1690: 76r)

However, missionaries and other chroniclers were surprised to find among the Indians a comprehensive apparatus of rules and moral codes with their corresponding provisions and punishments for violations. As it should have become visible by now, the objects of such rules and codes were not the same as the Christians had, neither were the religious ends implied in these rules and codes. For Christians, the salvation of the soul was the driving force, and it required that the two parts of self, body and soul, split apart, and that soul keep a permanent watch over the body, as the place of all sins; for Indians, the self was composed of “numerous elements, some of which were shared with other beings, things or cosmic entities” (Klor 1997: 182). These elements had to be balanced through appropriate observances, which were oriented towards averting the host of disasters that haunt human life (hail or drought, hunger, sterility...). Ceremonies, sacrifices and prayers

were meant to “pay back” the gods for their favors. The problematic nature of desires, which, in Christian belief, were considered as the origin of all sins, could not be accommodated in the Indians spiritual context:

In contrast to the ideals that dominated the ethical beliefs of the missionaries, who as austere mendicants recognized desires as problematic and sought to eradicate all but those that led to greater devotion, the Nahuas were unwilling to condemn desire itself, which after all could originate from forces beyond their control. Instead, they were preoccupied with the need to equilibrate the desires. The moral individual, then, was the one who attended to the personal and ritual acts that balanced the forces within him or her in order to restrain any one inclination from overcoming the others. Rather than obliterating earthly desires for an other-worldly end, the Nahuas sought to survive successfully in this life by prolonging them through careful management.” (Klor 1992: 183)

This contrasting spiritual aims “resulted in dissimilar understandings of the meaning of contrition (guilt and responsibility), confession (recognition of one’s fault), satisfaction (penitential acts of atonement [...]) and reconciliation (public exoneration)” (Klor 1992: 192).

There are similarities between Klor’s analysis of the Nahua spirituality and the findings of García-Ruiz (1992) with regards to the Maya cultures:

“Las sociedades mayas [...] articulan sus categorías morales a partir de la noción de *tiox* (sagrado) y no conciben la moral en términos de la oposición material-espiritual, sino que acuerdan una gran importancia a la dialéctica orden-caos, mancha-purificación, cumplimiento-descuido, etc.

Esto permite comprender por qué los franciscanos, al elaborar sus Vocabularios, están guiados [...] por su visión ético-moral y no por la especificidad de las lógicas de la sociedad cakchiquel. Un caso

particularmente interesante es el relacionado con la noción de falta.

Los misioneros, guiados por la visión maniquea de bien y de mal, buscan el mal donde consideran [...] que se encuentra. En el pecado “contra la carne” que investigan minuciosamente en las preguntas que hacen en el momento de la confesión, es por esta razón que van a dar prioridad a *mac* o *mak*, término con que eran designadas en cakchiquel las faltas relacionadas con el comportamiento sexual, se trata en realidad de un concepto al que está íntimamente asociado la noción de descuido, es decir, de algo que se ha hecho porque no se ha cuidado suficientemente de uno mismo. En la mentalidad indígena se trata, por lo tanto, de algo cuya gravedad no implica peligro de muerte, como puede ser las faltas relacionadas con *tiox*. (García-Ruiz 1992: 99)

So, both for the Nahuas and for the Mayas, understanding and internalizing sin, which was an absolute prerequisite to be able to function in the society that was being imposed by the Spanish, meant a complete subversion of their system of beliefs.

Therefore, a dialogue between Indian and Spanish such as the one implied in the confession manual presupposed a coincidence of purposes which was much more complicated, not to say improbable, than in the everyday dialogues of Pedro de Arenas²⁰³ conversation manual.

In fact, the confession inquiry methods resembled the questioning prescribed by the **Inquisition**, and we could even say that, in a way, it replaced it. Although the Inquisition was established in 1536, the Indians were generally not subjected to it since, as “cristianos nuevos”, they were exempted on account that they were considered not yet acquainted with the Church doctrines. However, the compulsory confession (at least once a year) served partly the same purpose, and its practice was also similar, except for the extreme methods

²⁰³ BHA I, 134 V, 306

for extracting confessions, although in this matter one is left wondering:

[Confessor] Has visto quando la gente ha hecho algun sacrificio diabolico: o sabes si alguna persona lo ha hecho?

[Penitent] Lo he visto, Padre.

[Confessor] Quando lo vistes? En donde hizo la gente el Sacrificio? Qué hizo la gente entonces? Quantas personas hizieron este sacrificio? Quantas veces lo has visto? Tú solo lo vistes o tambien lo vieron otras personas? Como se llama la persona, que hizo el sacrificio?

[Confessor] Todo esso que me has dicho, es verdad?

[Penitent] Si, Padre, todo es verdad.

[Confessor] Hijo todo lo que me has dicho aquí ahora es necessario que se lo avises al señor Obiso o al señor Provisor; pero porque el sr Obispo y el sr Provisor viven lexos, puedes decirlo a mi en mi casa o en la porteria, o en la sacristía, o en qualquier parte que quisieres, para que yo pueda ajustarlo y componerlo. Si no quieres decirlo a mi, puedes decirlo al padre cura o al padre vicario. Y hasta que lo digas a mi o al padre cura o vicario no puedo yo absolverte.

[Confessor] Bien puedes decírmelo ocultamente: no tengas miedo, que nadie lo oyra, nadie lo sabra, y tu ningun trabajo tendras. Y si no quieres avisarlo, si no quieres decirlo, harás muy grande pecado, y ofenderás mucho a Dios; y ningun Padre podrá absolverte hasta que lo digas, como digo.

[Commentary] Hecha la denuncia en forma se remite al señor Obispo. Y porque no aya dificultad en hazer diligencia tan importante, y necesaria, como es hazer la denuncia, pondré aquí algunas advertencias, para alivio de los Ministros nuevos.

Adviertese que quando el penitente dice que sabe que otra persona es idolatra, hechizera, bruxa etc.. no se ha de absolver hasta que denuncia extra sacramentum... (Quintana 213-214)

Once the file arrived at the Bishop's hands, he could denounce the presumed idolaters to the civil authorities, who could then proceed judicially. The role of confession

in protecting the new colonial order becomes thus evident in these transwritings, which, in modern terms, would possibly be considered “classified”. This relationship between religious and civil branches has a parallel in the association between the Santo Oficio de la Inquisición and the civil tribunals. In the decisions of the Santo Oficio we read that the offender was released (“relajado”) to the secular arm (“brazo secular”), meaning in fact that the Church delivered him to the executioners.

There were, however, very few cases of executions of idolaters.²⁰⁴ In spite of the violence we can sense in this example, I have not found other texts that can substantiate that it was exerted regularly. What is more important for me here is to stress that confession was not only an inquiry on the indigenous imaginary, but that it forced the penitent to see his own practices through the grid imposed by the confessor. When pointed out by the priest, pronounced in the priest’s mouth and with words which belonged to the indigenous languages but no longer seemed to belong to it, words that had been literally confiscated by the foreigners in their translation, the practices they were compelled to confess may in the end have also acquired a certain foreignness to them. From then on, a new subjectivity could take place. Not exactly a *mestizo* subjectivity, a word which suggests a bland syncretism, but a subjectivity which was the product of a violent ejection of contents and replacement by new matter, which was sometimes disguised as their old matter, and so strange that they could not give it a name or adjust to them.

Obviously, we do not know how this process was felt by the Indians. They did not leave any records and we are left to scrutinize the missionaries’ texts to see if, by omission or by allusion, we can catch a glimpse of the way in which the confession process was

²⁰⁴ Although these few cases were widely known and caused shock among the population (Medina 1952)

internalized by the newly converts. The “other side of the Conquest” was given a voice in the translations of ancient Nahuatl texts by Ángel Maria Garibay and Miguel León-Portilla,²⁰⁵ which depict the bloody battles and ensuing calamities that the indigenous peoples suffered. We have also some accounts of the reactions of the Indians to the friars’ attempts to evangelize them.²⁰⁶ Doctrinal texts written by the Indian scholars have also survived, in which they introduce stylistic figures and imagery belonging to their own tradition, as I have shown in my discussion of Sahagún’s²⁰⁷ *Psalmodia*. And, of course, in their searching questions, the confession manuals themselves indirectly reveal the way in which doctrinal matters were considered by the Indians. But so far no indigenous account has been found that could throw some light into how the sacraments and other Christian rituals and practices were received and accommodated into their daily lives.

It was these lines from present day Zapotec writer Víctor de la Cruz²⁰⁸ that called my attention and put me on a different track:

“quien trajo la segunda lengua
vino a matarnos con nuestra palabra”

It was this “came to kill us with our word” that made a profound impression on me. My own experience as a Catholic-educated Catalan speaker surfaced. I thought that maybe I could venture some parallelisms, however tentative, between my experience and the response of the Indians subjected to the confession ritual. This will require a personal excursus which I will rather leave in bracketed form:

[Nobody had Catalan the way we did. Nobody, except for the occasional

²⁰⁵ See M. León-Portilla’s *La visión de los vencidos*, Mexico: FCE, 1973

²⁰⁶ See Jan de Vos (1990)

²⁰⁷ *BHA* IV, 275 - 277

²⁰⁸ in M. León-Portilla and E. Shorris (2004).

eccentric, would learn a marginal language such as ours. Catalan thus belonged to me and to my sisters and brother, parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, neighbours and schoolmates. In Catalan my grandmother would sing us old songs and tell us naïve jokes, which we would ask her to repeat time and again, and made us laugh always as if it was the first time we heard them. Catalan was not heard on TV or radio. Neither would there be newspapers nor journals. It was, however, used in Church, since the decision of Council Vatican II regarding the use of vernaculars, a fact that had an important impact on our community and helped strengthening the relationship between Catalan nationalism and the progressive branch of the Catholic Church.

Castilians were different from us and they never spoke Catalan, even if they lived among us. One knew that in public offices: Post Offices, Municipality, Police, the officers were appointed by Madrid and were never Catalan. We would therefore address them in Castilian. Our nanny was from Burgos, and she never spoke Catalan even if most of her life she had spent in Catalonia. An uncle married a rich woman from Barcelona (we lived in the province) who spoke Castilian at home because in her family Catalan was despised as peasant language. That uncle began speaking Castilian too, and he mocked us and our peasant accent.

I left Spain in my youth, to study abroad, and I never returned to live there. When I return now, I hear Dutch, Moroccans and Bulgarians speaking Catalan. I even heard a young Chinese boy speaking Catalan the other day on the bus. They have even followed language courses and know more Catalan than I do (during Franco's time, the language was forbidden and therefore was never taught). I cannot but considering it an affront. They have appropriated what was mine; they didn't ask for permission. These foreigners who now speak my language make me feel a stranger. My own language sounds now strange; I do not recognize it in their lips, it seems disfigured. And if they employ idiomatic expressions, the impression is even stronger.

There is no refuge for me now that they know my language. I cannot recognize the version they return to me in conversations; and yet, I understand it. This understanding entertains the fiction that that language continues to be mine. But I am different since they know it. Their using it has changed the most intimate perception I had of it. It has ceased to be a refuge, a harbour, and I have to look elsewhere for safety.

Indeed, since I am no longer acquainted with the local habits, when I have had to ask for information to a passer-by, I have rather stopped an immigrant. I know that I have too become somewhat of a stranger].

I want to connect this estrangement with regards to the own language, which is derived from the appropriation by foreigners, to the fact of the confessional inquisition. The questioning in the confession process aims at the destruction of the old sinner self and the construction of a new redeemed self. In New Spain, Indians were made to hear in their own language, disfigured but still intelligible, from the priests' lips, that the most significant things for them: sacrifices to their Gods, rituals to avert bad weather, etc., the ones that made them who they were, were profoundly wrong and that they had to uproot them. The way in which the priest secured this aim was by having the Indian penitents minutely recounting the gestures and circumstances of these practices, along with the frequency of their performance and the company in which they were performed. Shame and guilt were induced by the atmosphere of secrecy that surrounded the confession: the intimacy with the priest, the humiliation imposed, and by the deeply disturbing fact that the priest was asking what he already knew; the questioning was not a way of knowing something that he didn't know, but of confirming a suspicion. Like in a torture session, making the victim say and repeat what the tormentor already knows (or pretends to know) sinks the victim into guilt and shame and eventually demolishes her self.

In addition, I am convinced that the most disturbing element in the process was, for

the Indian penitent, the fact that the questioning was done in his or her language, the one that had been for him a harbour and a refuge, the one that served to communicate with his people, his family, the one he used to serve his gods, the one for telling jokes and sing songs. And however successful he or she may have been in contouring the priests questioning, and in fooling or misleading him, nothing could change the fact that now the language had no secret for the newcomers, as is illustrated by the author's comment to this excerpt, in which the all possible ways of asking and answering about adultery are given in detail:

Spanish

“Has pecado con mujer?

Mixe

Tò ixmôpocpaait toixtôhc? *Vel* To ixmotuiñpocpa toixtôhc? *Vel* To ixmointuiñ toixtôhc, *vel* to ixmotzotzyoi toixtôhc , *vel* tò ixmòðtait toixtôhc , *vel* tò ixmónaipait toixtôhc , *vel* tò ixpait toixtôhc , *vel* tò ixmôpocpatuiñ toixtôhc , *vel* tò mpocpatuiñ moot toixtôhc

De todos estos modos dichos, usan quando se confiessan, assí hombres, como mugeres; y así es necesario saberlos todos” (Quintana 1733/188?: 235) (the stress is mine).

In a way, then, language had betrayed them, just as they came to believe that their gods had betrayed them when the Christians came. Therefore, it could have been then, through the systematic practice of confession as a habit-modifier practice, when the shift of subjectivities might have happened.

Because, when the sinner had finally confessed to the satisfaction of the priest, the priest would forgive him in the name of God and he would call him “my son”. The Indian would then stand up and walk away as a new Christian, and a new man.

THIRD PART

FROM CATHOLIC TO MEXICAN

3.1. Interwoven translations

Naturally, this shift of subjectivity was not only brought about by the confession process. We do not know how many times in his lifetime an Indian would go to confession, and how thoroughly the questionnaires were applied. Moreover, we do not know what answers were given. The real impact of the confessional practice has to be measured in conjunction with other practices, religious and non-religious, mostly not literate, and also with other readings and other translations.

The Indian who was kneeling at the confessional was already christened. This meant that his name had been replaced by another name. In many cases, he was given a Saint's name and the family name of the priest or the conqueror. He came from an **altepetl** (a city-state) or a **calpulli** (neighborhood) the name of which had also been changed, generally by adding a Saint's name in front of the original name. So the main questions of the identity: "who am I?" and "where do I come from?" were answered in a way different from the way they would have been answered before.

He was also kneeling at the confessional for reasons we cannot easily explain. There was certainly some degree of coercion, but we know too that Indians often found in the Church refuge from abuses by Spanish *encomenderos* and civil authorities. Indians could resist in subtle ways to what was being imposed upon them.

It would therefore be simplistic to think of fixed behaviors and responses. Lockhart's "double mistaken identity" seems an appropriate term to refer to the misunderstandings brought about by these early types of communication by which both sides understood each other with their own schemes of *pre-judgement* (yet, it would have

been suicidal to pretend that it could be done otherwise). One could even think of a mutual strategic misinterpretation, which would ensure the minimum conditions for communication between the two sides. But then, what two sides? Spanish political strategies forced into alliances groups which had previously been enemies, and vice versa; pitted against each other populations that had been friends or mutually indifferent. Spanish themselves did not present a solid façade: neither ethnically nor socially, or ideologically. From the very beginning intense rivalries broke between missionaries and *encomenderos*, both wanting to rule over the Indians. Cortés himself had used his new Indian friends to combat his fellow countryman, Pánfilo de Narváez, a representative of the Crown who was sent to put an end to Cortés' personal ambitions. Later, the Indians were utilized in the clashes between monastic and secular orders, and among the monastic orders themselves. They witnessed the execution of the two Dávila brothers, who supported the rebellion led by Martín Cortés, Hernán Cortés' son. They protested when the Jesuits were expelled overnight. Obviously, the image the Spanish gave was, thus, far from coherent.²⁰⁹

But, then, also, who were the Indians? Were Indians the same in 1521 than in 1560? Can we pool together Mexicas and Chichimecas, Lacandones and Zapotecas? Can we talk about an "original" Indian, not mixed, not acculturated? And, if so, for how long? Is there a moment beyond which we can no longer talk about an Indian? (After all, for Beristáin, the only Indians he mentions in the *Biblioteca Hispanoamericana* are descendants of caciques up to three generations, maybe). There is a heterogeneity that defies a simple explanation of the transformations that eventually led to what is now known as *mestizaje*.

²⁰⁹ Even for us, today, it is difficult to recognize in Erasmist Bishop Fray de Zumárraga the same person who sent the cacique of Texcoco to the stake, and humanist Sahagún as the interpreter in the tribunal dictaminating his death, together with Alonso de Molina, author of grammars, vocabularies, translator of Saint's lives and other doctrinal works.

There was, indeed, a moment in which racial demographic ratios shifted significantly. Indian population decreased at a genocide pace. The phrase “ya se van acabando los indios; recién acabada de llegar la fee, estava el patio del Iglesia lleno, y apretado de gente, quando se juntaban, y a vezes no cabian” is one of the grammar examples given by Horacio Carochi²¹⁰ in his *Arte de la lengua mexicana* (1645: 84v-85r). The percentages of newly arrived Spanish and of mixed races increased. There were important shifts in social status: the descendants of the conquerors were often reduced to poverty, while the mixed races sought occupations from which they could climb to better positions in the colonial society. Miners and other workers, middlemen, such as interpreters, *escribanos* and *alguaciles*, themselves mixed and dealing with people who were also mixed, increasingly used Spanish, the common language, in their exchanges. The Indians, decimated and impoverished, had lost the tutelage of the Mendicant orders and were pushed to the margins of society, both socially and geographically. They were consistently referred to as “pobrecitos indios”, “ruda, ignorante y necesitada gente” (Paredes 1758) by comparison to the “gran nacion” (Pérez 1723) that they were. Doctrines were now written “segun la capacidad de los indios” (Mijangos 1624), who are “de corto alcance ... a los que cualquier cosa los hace dudar, reparar y aun tropezar” (Paredes 1758). They lived in a sort of apartheid, isolated and, in the opinion of many, generally inebriated: “gente tan rústica, apartada de los españoles y lo mas del año ebria” (Pérez 1713).

It can be considered that the first shared collective feeling among the indigenous population is the acknowledgement that the language has changed, and that with it the memory of the past has become unreliable and shaky. The whole structure was now in

²¹⁰ BHA II, 50 - 51

ruins. In the manuscript known as the *Anales de Tlatelolco*, dated around 1524, an anonymous Indian left an **icnocuicatl** (song of sorrow). His are these moving words: “golpeábamos los muros de adobe, y era nuestra herencia una red de agujeros” (Garibay 1987, I: 477); such was the magnitude of the disaster. On top of the material loss, the loss of the certitudes embodied in the language must have been demolishing. Their languages could not shelter them from the disaster, since they had been confiscated. In the 1800’s the missionaries would administer the doctrine to the poor Indians not only “in diluted doses”, as one would do with a child, but in an abridged form and cheap paper, because they could not afford neither the time nor the money, and in a language “adapted to the times”, since they would not understand the “sublime” language of their ancestors:

Los pobrecitos Indios por razon de cristianos exigen de los Sacerdotes que los dirigen, el pasto espiritual de la divina palabra, no en alimento sólido sino desleído en leche por expresiones las mas sencillas y comparaciones obias y perceptibles: por pobres y muy ocupados conviene se reduzca su instruccion a un librito que les facilite su lectura economizando tiempo y dinero: por Indios deberán recibirla en su idioma, si ya no queremos que sean bárbaros para los Ministros, y los Ministros bárbaros para ellos...; en un idioma, digo, qual se habla en el siglo presente, y no en el del siglo de la conquista, que por sublime les sería desconocido. (Anonymous 1819).

El “siglo de la Conquista”, the old gods and ancient idolatries are indeed past for the Churchmen, as Franciscan friar Juan de Torquemada²¹¹ declares in his *Monarquia Indiana*: “Y asi, ya no hay cosa destas enhiesta, sino sola la cruz de Jesu-Christo, y su Santa Fe asi por todos los lugares como en los coraçones de los Indios” (Torquemada 1615/1975 III: 52).

²¹¹ BHA V, 37 - 38

In the minds of the missionaries the territory had been unified in a number of ways: the many languages were subjected to a single writing system, grammar and code of comparison. It had also been unified under one religion. At last, the New World was rescued from the clutches of Satan and brought back to God. Fray Maturino Gilberti²¹² had declared it in the prologue of his catechism, a quotation that I think is useful to recall: “hay de dos maneras de hombres: cristianos e infieles” (1559: I). This was the universal classification. No other identity seemed relevant. The missionary’s spirit was not nationalistic but universalistic. In fact, the friars deliberately ignored the laws stipulating that Spanish was to be taught because they considered themselves not as servants of the Monarch but as God’s servants, and God would be better (and more quickly) served in the indigenous languages (Robins *et al.* 1991: 149). These numerous populations had been directed by the missionaries from darkness to light, from the state of barbarism to civilization. Only secondarily they had become vassals of the Spanish Monarch. And, clearly, this imagined community of Christians was promoted by the transwritings we have analyzed so far: grammars that confirmed the belonging of these languages to a higher design, lexicons that could test the capacity of these languages to carry the Christian message, doctrinal works to demonstrate that, allowing for the necessary adaptations, the equivalence was possible, and confession manuals that ensured that whatever was noxious and non equivalent would be dismantled. All these instruments served to de-legitimizing the old self and legitimating a new identity. This was the Christian community as imagined by the friars: a community of converts in which the Spanish conquerors had little presence but which was eventually useful for Spanish colonial purposes. An identity that had demonstrated its potential in the syncretic operations of translation, in the incorporation of

²¹² BHA II 357 - 358

indigenous symbols and practices into the religious and civil rituals and texts, as we have illustrated with Sahagún's ²¹³ *Psalmodia*.

Several factors materialized this potential in only one language, Spanish: the demographic dynamics, the displacement of the Mendicant orders and their replacement, first, by the Jesuits, and then by the secular priesthood, and the stricter enactment of language related laws and royal orders. The combination of these factors, among others, eventually contributed to push aside the Christian-civilization ideal of community, and the Indian population that went with it. Nevertheless, the groundwork had been done, and the canvass was prepared for another ideal community to emerge, one that would express itself as a new society, "el primer modelo ideal de una posible sociedad criolla" (Lafaye 1985: 79), a New Spain totally different from the Old Spain, just as the New World would be different, free from the deficiencies of the Old World. The main nationalist symbols that united the different races present in the New Spain society were syncretic religious creations: the Virgin of Guadalupe, probably the best example of a syncretic cult, since the Virgin was made to appear at a place consecrated to the **Tonantzin**, a feminine pre-Hispanic deity,²¹⁴ and the emblem of the eagle with the serpent standing over the *nopal* tree, in which the pre-Hispanic and Christian symbolisms are articulated to represent Mexico, not only Tenochtitlan, the capital city, but the whole territory, that is, the New Spain (Alberro 1999).

Although the process I am trying to summarize here was long, some changes happened very quickly, particularly in urban settings. It is quite surprising to find how fast the society of the second half of the sixteenth century was ready to accept a representation

²¹³ BHA IV, 275 - 276

²¹⁴ Juan Diego, the Indian to whom the Virgin appeared, was beatified by the late Pontiff John-Paul II.

of the Indian culture as past, bury the Indian culture and replace it for something new. Already in 1554, Cervantes de Salazar,²¹⁵ a Spanish humanist who was teaching Rhetorics at the newly created Real y Pontificia Universidad de México, wrote in Latin a set of three *Dialogos* to be used at class by his students. In these dialogues, young men, *criollo* characters, that is, Spanish born in New Spain, receive visitors who have just disembarked from Spain. They show them around the city of Mexico, its university and surroundings, while reflecting about the history and customs of the Indians.²¹⁶ The significance of the *Dialogos* is, on the one hand, that Mexico is described in Latin, and thus could be seen as an object of classical interest, and, on the other hand, that when referring to the things of the Indians, all verbs are in past tense:

Los reyes **cuidaban** sobre todo de que nadie estuviese ocioso ... Los palacios de los reyes y principales **eran** sumamente magníficos ... No **conocían** las bestias de carga ... **Tenían** cuantas mujeres podían mantener...**Usaban** alimentos muy cálidos, condimentados con una especie de pimienta que llaman ají. De las raíces del maguey **sacaban** un vino que embriaga más que el nuestro; y trastornados con esa bebida, **intentaban** toda suerte de crímenes Se **comunicaban** con los ausentes, no por medio de letras, sino de figuras de animales pintados en ciertos papeles, a imitación de los egipcios. (Cervantes de Salazar 1554/ 1939: 148. The stress is mine)

Thus, barely 30 years after the fall of Tenochtitlan, young men, students at the newly created University, ride their horses along the streets of that city, chatting about the houses, markets, sewage system, squares and public buildings. Everything is modern and

²¹⁵ *BHA* II, 97 – 100; Born in Spain probably in 1514, he is considered the father of Mexican humanism. He translated Juan Luis Vives' *Dialogos* from Latin into Spanish. Some think he is the author of the famous anonymous "picaresque" novel *El Lazarillo de Tormes*.

²¹⁶ The *Dialogos* warrants a thorough study, which is beyond the scope of this work. In particular, I would call the attention to the fact that it was a sort of exercise book for students of Latin in the newly established Mexican university. There, sons of Spanish colonizers, who would probably never go to Europe, would learn Latin by reading these representations of their own city.

clean, the buildings are stately, the infrastructure is well kept, they visit the University yards, the markets and convents, “todo México es ciudad” says Alfaro, a proud New Spaniard (Cervantes de Salazar 1554/ 1939: 83). The Indians, their culture and customs already belong to the past in this New World which is included within the universe of Classical objects.

The next chapters will show how, sometimes simultaneously and sometimes consecutively to the weaving of the translational canvass, the new identity was manifesting itself in other transwritings: the ones that helped recalling, selecting and rebuilding a memory of the past, the ones that contributed a Classical representation of the nation, and, lastly, the ones that inserted the nation in the general concert of modern nations.

3.1.1. Translation and the foundation myths

The Spanish colonial government favored and, in fact, established, a policy of congregation of the Indian population, for political, economic and religious purposes. Moreover, the administration of the populations that had survived the sequence of epidemics that decimated the territory along the sixteenth century would be facilitated if people were concentrated in urban centers. There, deprived from their territorial base, orphaned, having been compelled to leave their protecting deities behind, these survivors mixed with peoples coming from elsewhere: Europe, Africa and nearby territories. Serge Gruzinski, who gives us the best explorations of this phenomenon, I believe, speaks of “zones étranges” to characterize the highly turbulent, unstable situation derived from the

Conquest that preceded the formation of the colonial society (Gruzinski 1999: 68-72).²¹⁷

The new society, says Gruzinski, is less the result of political calculations than of a move towards social cohesion, in which individuals had to elaborate “nuevas formas de comportamiento y de convivencia que resultaron ser la combinación, adición o yuxtaposición, más o menos exitosas, de elementos sacados de los universos que estaban en contacto. Los elementos descontextualizados que se insertaron en estos *collages* o *patchworks* adquirieron nuevos significados y nuevos valores” (Bernand and Gruzinski 1994: 167-168). Some of these elements that, by being decontextualized, acquired new values and meanings, were the recollections of the past that could help in the social identification of the emerging mixed population.

Social cohesion in the circumstances just explained depended, among other factors, on myths, traditions, rituals and cults that could entertain a sentiment of belonging, a difficult task in view of the diverse origins and differing, often incompatible, interests and realities. A memory of the past, appropriately reconfigured and reconstructed, would play an essential role in bridging the gaps and mending the ruptures. It held the key to continuity and, therefore, to authenticity, originality and generally speaking, to ethnic legitimacy of the society or group (Smith 1984, 1997). This was clearly understood by Juan Cano, the husband of doña Isabel de Moctezuma, the last Aztec ruler’s daughter, who hired historian Franciscans to have the genealogy of his wife rebuilt so that she could apply for royal privileges (Duverger 1983: 35, 50-53).

This section will try to explain how a few middlemen, mostly interpreters acting as intercultural agents, performed a reconstruction of the past and put it in circulation. They

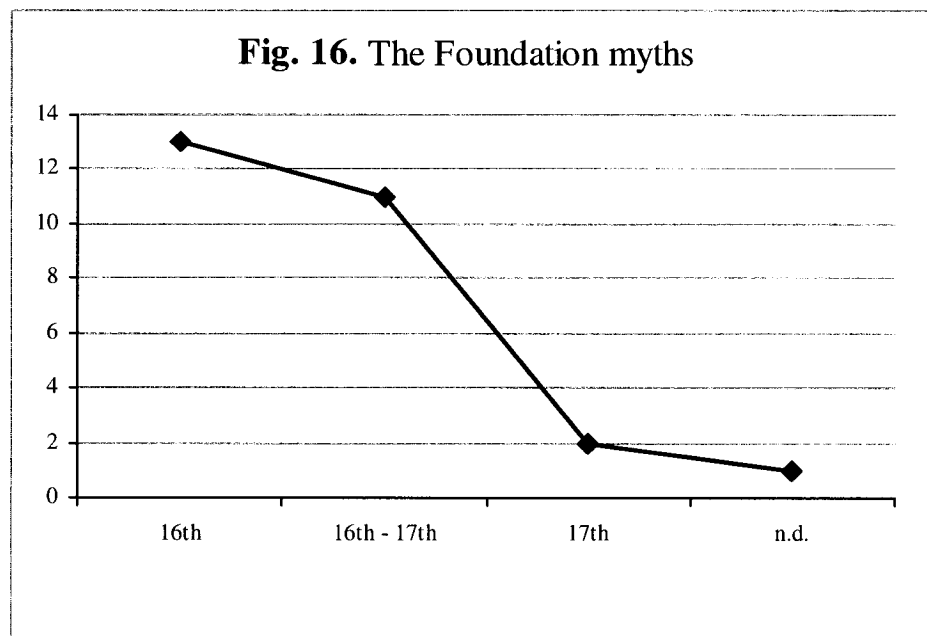
²¹⁷ In an earlier work, Gruzinski (in Bernand 1994: 151) he defines these societies with the scientific term “fractal”, that is, heterogeneous, irregular and fragmented phenomena that cannot be reduced to entire, simple forms.

were ensuring some protection for the old Indian elites, to which they belonged; but, in so doing, they were also disseminating a new discourse to legitimize the society that was emerging. It is to these chaotic, grey, “fractal zones” (see note 217) that the transwritings serving to build the foundation myths belong.

Although the conservation of past memories is a collective enterprise, manifesting itself in many ways (school, civic and religious ceremonies, etc.), the leading social actors who usually take upon themselves to uphold this memory of the past belong to the class of intellectuals: they are historians, teachers, politicians, churchmen, and interpreters, people acting at the juncture between the spheres of power and the general population. It is them who play the main role in the selection and compilation, reconfiguration, idealization and organization of the ethnic memory (Gutiérrez 2001: 46). And, given that this memory has been preserved in different language systems, inevitably the agency of translators and interpreters becomes essential. They can become the key actors in the process of selection, compilation, reconfiguration, idealization and organization of the ethnic memory.

Some nationalism theoreticians and Middle-Americanists have highlighted the “constructed” or “invented” character of the narratives on the nation, as disseminated by these groups of intellectuals acting in fact as agents, but they seem to have not paid any attention to translations and translators in their role of modeling the past and casting these identity-bearing narratives. As for historians, for reasons having probably to do with positivist attitudes towards historiographical sources, as well as with the ancillary status of translation, official Mexican history and anthropology have approached and disseminated the translated texts that narrate the pre-Hispanic past as if they were originals (Payàs 2004), taking the sources as transparent accounts of what had actually happened in those times (Gruzinski 1988: 8-9)

The transwritings related to the founding of ethnic myths are just a handful of extant documents, some of them incomplete, and they were produced in a very short period. In Figure 16 we can see that they constitute the smallest corpus, appearing and fading out in a matter of one hundred years. They are nonetheless a most consequential group of texts, in that they sustain the knowledge we have of the pre-Hispanic past. Moreover, they triggered a literally endless and still ongoing sequence of interpretations and rewritings. The interest for Middle American history is nourished from these translations, and so is Mexican nationalism.



From the point of view of their composition, they are texts derived from other discourses (pictorial and oral) and related to them by more or less loose translation ties (translations proper and transwritings). These original discourses, or hypotexts, to use Gérard Genette's taxonomy (1982), that held the memories of the pre-Conquest past or of the times of the Conquest, were of a collective nature, and, as such, were anonymous. The

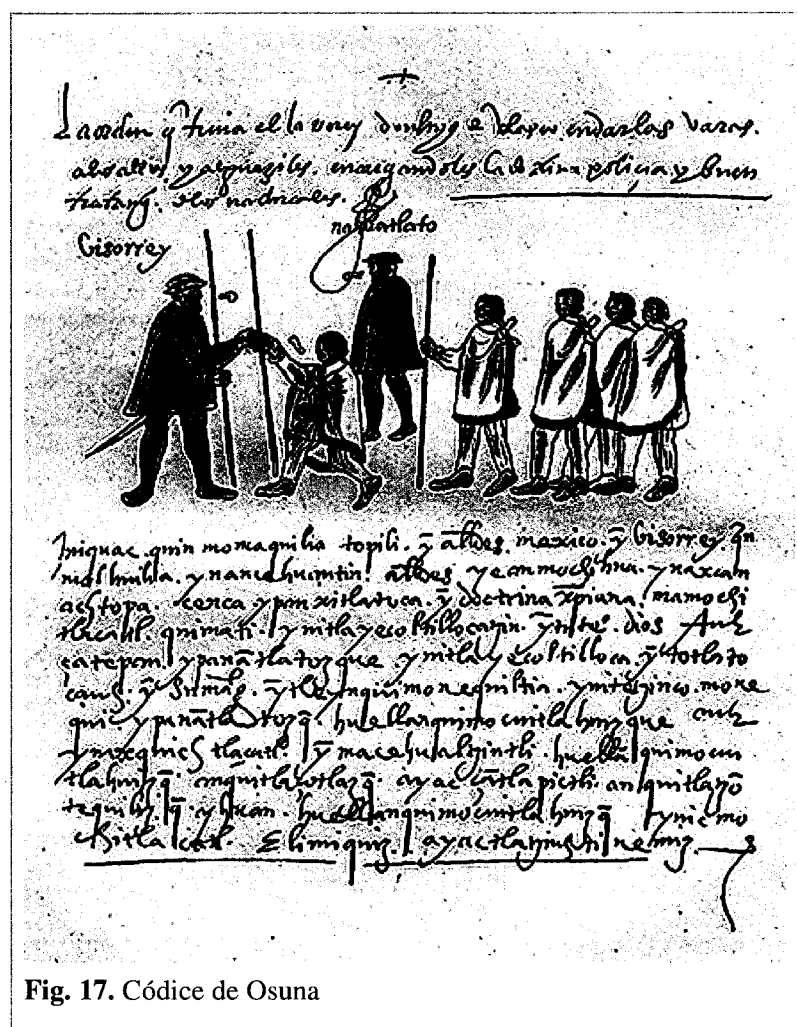
translations' authors were, on the contrary, well identified. Clearly, the significance here of these translations and transwritings, which, following Gérard Genette's taxonomy, can be considered hypertexts, is related to the fact that they help creating or reconfiguring the mythical elements that according to Anthony D. Smith typically sustain national identity and discourse (Smith 1984): a myth of temporal origin, or "when we were begotten", a myth of location and migration, or "where we came from and how we got there", a myth of ancestry, or "who begot us and how we developed", a myth of an heroic age, or how we were freed and became glorious", a myth of decline, or "how we fell into a state of decay", and a myth of regeneration, or how to restore the Golden Age (Smith 1984: 95-105). When put to the service of historiography, translations and rewritings are particularly able to perform the inclusions and exclusions, shifts of stress, nuancing and highlighting that are required to create and disseminate such mythical elements.

Historians, not to say philologists, are mostly interested in deriving factual knowledge from the texts. Not much attention has been paid, therefore, to these characteristics of translations, as well as to the lives of translators and interpreters and the circumstances in which they appear and disappear in history.²¹⁸ Thus, the emphasis is placed in the rescue of this "secondary" individuals, rather in showing the changes that they might have helped bringing about. Similarly, when referring to the early chroniclers, whether they are Spanish missionaries, *mestizo*, or Indians, it is their present significance as historians or ethnographers which is stressed. For instance, when praising the works of

²¹⁸ A biographical attempt, such as Ascensión Hernández' study of Fernando de Ribas, the Indian scholar who helped Alonso de Molina in his Vocabulario (and who, according to Frances Karttunen, could be the author of an anonymous vocabulary found at the Newberry Library), is drafted more like a Saint's life, showing no contrasts nor contradictions (Hernández 1995-96).

Chimalpain²¹⁹ or Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,²²⁰ traditional historiography puts forward their role as historians, and fails to show that before (or rather than) being historians, they were interpreters.

They held a privileged, albeit uncomfortable, position of being in the middle of the field, bridging differences, carrying cultural materials back and forth, drawing always dividing lines, marking the territories of the “us” and “them”. They were “negotiating the frontier”, in Anthony Pym’s words (Pym 2000), as individuals who possess the information



²¹⁹ *BHA* II, 108 - 109

that only insiders have, but the freedom of action that only outsiders can enjoy. As such, they belong to the gray zones, the interstices of the cultural contact surfaces and they are normally regarded with suspicion. The agency of these middlemen, interpreters and guides in colonial history was not problematized until post-structuralist and post-colonial studies, driven by a new awareness of linguistic aspects of colonization, took an interest in them.

Two such groups of translators-interpreters are distinguishable in 16th-17th century New Spain. By collecting and writing about the past, for reasons undoubtedly far from deliberate nation-building, they contributed to the creation or recombination of myths that were later disseminated and eventually helped consolidating an idea of common descent, authenticity and merit. I am referring to the missionaries who wrote various chronicles of “things of Indies” (particularly friars born in Mexico or brought there at an early age and, therefore, well acquainted with the local culture) on the basis of pictorial documents and oral narratives, and to some Indians who, using alphabetized Nahuatl or Spanish, recalled aspects of the history of their ethnic group, community or family. Although the avowed or hidden purposes for writing these materials differ between the two groups, and so their styles and writing quality, they point to the same discursive genre: historiography, a genre of particular significance in those critical times in which it must have been difficult to make sense out of so much pain and destruction. History, even driven by personal or group interest, could hold the key to why things had gone the way they did, it could give a meaning to the present and confirm that there was continuity between the certainties of the past and the present situation, even when the ruptures and crisis of continuity seemed so evident. Translating and rewriting history for the friars had the purpose of attesting to the

²²⁰ *BHA* I, 125

providentiality of the missionary intervention; for the Indians and *mestizo*, translation and rewriting history was a way of holding to what seemed to be slipping quickly and inescapably away, and trying, within a framework that was already Christianized, to explain the present situation and adjust to it. The use of alphabet and Spanish, that is, the tools of the conquerors, gives to this endeavour a particular character: Indians were appropriating the language of the conquerors to tell their own stories (as if they were countering the Spanish appropriation of their languages that I have discussed in previous pages). For our purposes, these translated historical chronicles have functioned as conveyors of the memory of a mythical past.

Historians and anthropologists have tried to understand the way these chronicles were compiled and the sources they derive from. They have concluded that most of these texts are related and that a genealogy of them can be determined. The common sources for this family of chronicles are oral narratives and pictorial documents, already of historical nature, since this was the way the pre-Hispanic peoples recorded their past.

The oral and pictorial registers that served as hypotexts for the translations and subsequent rewritings are of the following kinds:

- ❖ **Cuicatl**: songs
- ❖ **Nahuatilli**: laws
- ❖ **Ilhuitlapohualamoxtli**: cadasters, plans or maps, processes or calendars
- ❖ **Tlacamecayotl**: genealogies
- ❖ **Tlcatlacuilolli**: lists of important figures
- ❖ **Tonalamatl**: inventories, ritual books, divinatory texts
- ❖ **Tlatolli**: stories, discourses. They could be old or elders' stories (**huehuetlatolli**), or present, contemporary stories (**quinaxcan tlatolli**)
(del Hoyo 1957: 350)

It is a fact that, in their missionary zeal, the early friars destroyed many of these records, particularly when they suspected that they contained “idolatries”. At the same time, however, it was obvious that they needed to know what these idolatric practices were in order to identify them whenever they survived, sometimes entangled with Christian practices. This was the explicit motivation of Bernardino de Sahagún’s²²¹ *Historia General de las Cosas de la Nueva España*: “ To preach about these matters, and even to know if they exist, it is needful to know how they practiced them in the times of their idolatry, for, through [our] lack of understanding it ... And the confessors neither ask about them, not think that such thing exists, nor understand the language to inquire about it” (Sahagún, *Historia General*, cited in Klor 1988: 41). In his *Historia de las Indias de la Nueva España*, written probably some 20 years after Sahagún’s words, Dominican Fray Diego Durán²²² complained about the lack of information on the pre-Hispanic cults due to the blind destruction, and concluded that for this reason the friars were unable to discern obvious idolatric practices: “y assí erraron mucho los que con buen celo (pero no con mucha prudencia) quemaron y destruyeron al principio todas las pinturas de antiguallas que tenían, pues nos dejaron tan sin luz, que delante de nuestros ojos ydolatran y no los entendemos” (cited in Alberro 1999: 45). There was a sort of conflict of *pre-judgements*: the Christian *pre-judgement* demanded the destruction, but it could not be properly served unless knowledge of these objects was ensured. And the Renaissance open-mindedness of some of these scholars used this argument to engage in a more thorough than expected survey of the indigenous past.

Moreover, destroying and registering was not a contradictory way of dealing with

²²¹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

²²² BHA II, 210

the past since in the process, the aspects of the indigenous culture that the friars were most interested in keeping were translated and de-paganized: the morality and piety of the indigenous peoples and their disciplined life, the ways they had for educating their children, and, above all, their languages in so far as they could convey the Christian truths.

The first such chronicles were those of Franciscan friars Andrés de Olmos (? – 1571), now lost,²²³ Toribio de Benavente “Motolinía”²²⁴ and Bernardino de Sahagún.²²⁵ They were also the first to use indigenous documents to draft their own chronicles. E. Hill Boone (1998) states that at least for three generations after the Conquest the tradition of registering through pictorial documents prevailed and has traced the different uses to which they were put: father Olmos, the presumed first chronicler, collected paintings and relations from the rulers of several cities, and in late sixteenth century Viceroy Enriquez, who was curious to know about the antiquities of the Indians, was able to secure a number of pictorials from the elders and sages of Mexico, Texcoco and Tula, the cities considered as intellectual centers (Hill Boone 1998: 158). Gruzinski (1988, 1993) has also studied the way in which pictorials were still used many years after the Conquest, and one finds traces of these materials in legal records, in particular those registering land and similar claims.

Another reason for the compilation of such chronicles by the friars was the explicit request by the civil authorities who needed information on the geography, demography and economic possibilities of the land in order to fix tributes (three types of tribute were common during the Colonial period: monetary, labor and in kind). One of the best known of these is the *Codex Mendoza*, named after the first viceroy Antonio de Mendoza (1535-

²²³ BHA IV, 45; Olmos wrote not only grammars and vocabularies of Nahuatl and Totonaca, but also translated from Latin and probably from Hebrew (Beristáin IV: 45; García Icazbalceta 1866: 148-153)

²²⁴ BHA III, 289 - 291

²²⁵ BHA IV, 275 - 277

1550). Mendoza was commissioned by King Charles V to gather information that could serve to ascertain the possibilities of extracting material benefit from New Spain. This pictorial document was prepared in the scriptorium of Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco by Indian artists, who probably copied earlier tribute records, and a Spanish translation was added next to each glyph or scene. (see Figure 18,). The codex contains an annals history of the Mexica rulers and their deeds, a tribute list and a section narrating the everyday life in Nahua society.

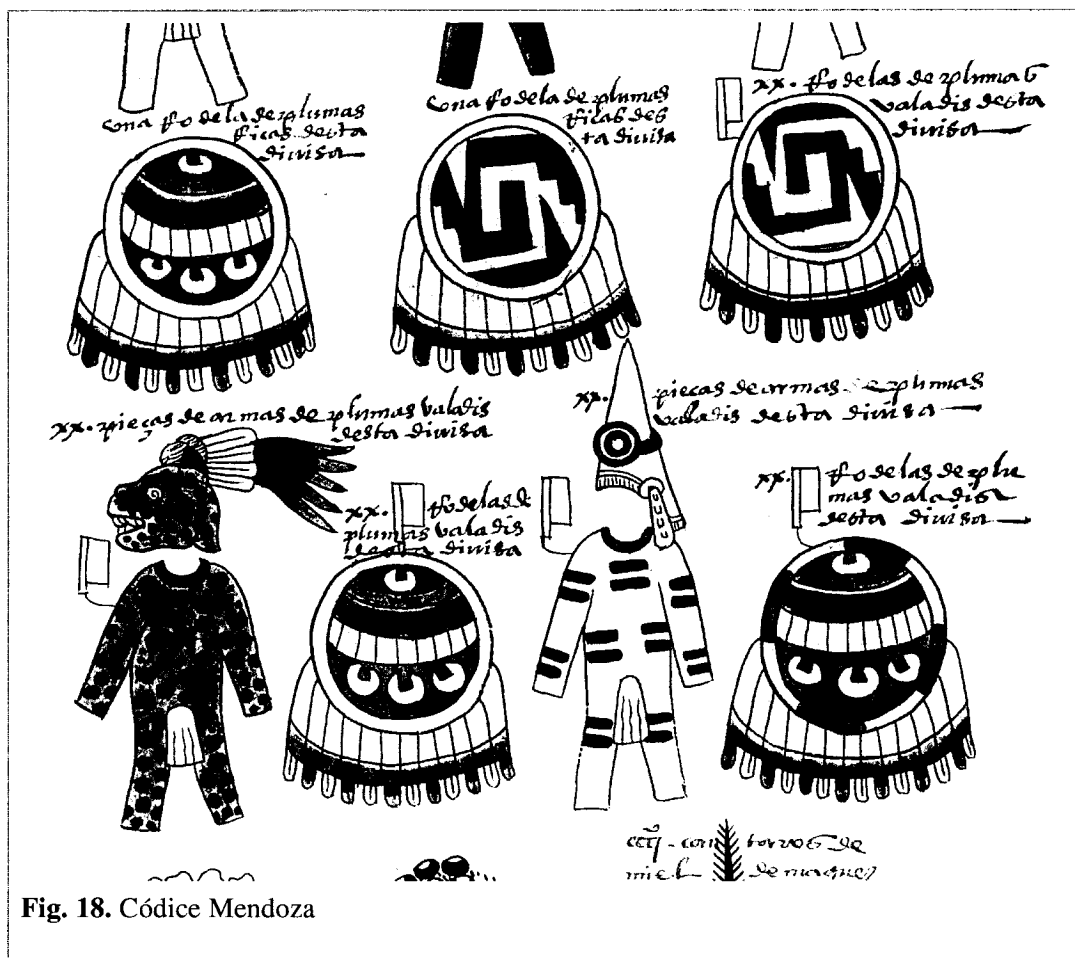


Fig. 18. Códice Mendoza

The compilation of these missionary chronicles, just as in the case of the early transwritings analyzed so far, were thus the result of collaboration with indigenous scholars

who were able to read the sources, and with elders who knew or could recall the ancient stories. We know the names of some of these scholars but not much more. Beristáin includes a number of them in the *Biblioteca*, namely those who were themselves authors: Diego Osorio²²⁶ (who translated “salmos y antífonas”), Pedro de Gante²²⁷ (“tradujo muchos opúsculos”), Celedonio Velázquez,²²⁸ Juan Berardo²²⁹ (“varias versiones del latín y castellano al mexicano”), Diego Adriano,²³⁰ Esteban Bravo²³¹ (“traducía cualquier cosa del romance y del latín a la lengua mexicana, y de esta a aquellas con tanta abundancia de vocablos que causaba admiración”), and other polyglot scholars who helped the friars in their writings: Ribas,²³² Contreras,²³³ Valeriano,²³⁴ Fuente.²³⁵ The collaboration would be needed at different stages: in the oral interpretation of the pictorials, in the transcription of oral explanations into alphabetical Nahuatl or Spanish, under the form of glosses written next to the pictographs. Elders and other knowledgeable Indians would also provide orally information as asked by the missionaries. This first generation of Indian scholars who were trained in Tlatelolco, under the Franciscan rules, did not leave any historical writings. They helped the friars and, as their scribes, they clearly managed to introduce their own stylistic and rhetorical devices, but they do not seem to have acted as independent writers.

These young men, mostly of noble descent, trained as bilingual or trilingual specialists, became acquainted with the European culture, classical literature and thought and, at the same time, they were informants of the missionaries: “il est remarquable que ces

²²⁶ BHA IV, 68

²²⁷ BHA II, 338 - 339

²²⁸ BHA V, 115

²²⁹ BHA I, 250 - 251

²³⁰ BHA I, 73

²³¹ BHA I, 288

²³² BHA IV, 214

²³³ BHA II, 139

²³⁴ BHA V, 83 - 85

²³⁵ BHA II, 309 - 310

Indiens qui avaient reçu une formation occidentale particulièrement sophistiquée aient été ceux aussi qui continuaient à détenir les savoirs antiques” (Gruzinski 1988: 85). They were prepared to relay the friars in churches and schools, but their possibilities of securing these jobs, and the power and influence that would have come with them, were frustrated as their protectors, the Mendicants, begin losing their influence in colonial society. The emerging regular clergy was much less close to the indigenous population and tended to regard the Indians with despise. The experiment of Tlatelolco lasted barely twenty years. The Indian convent-trained nobility and their children found themselves cut from their base²³⁶ but were not accepted as part of the Spanish colonial society. They were **nepantla**, that is, in between.²³⁷ It was only natural that they’d become middlemen in the exchanges between the two societies: “En dicha ciudad [Xochimilco] se proveen para el buen gobierno de ella, en cada un año, un gobernador, demás de los tres caciques que hay, señores naturales y tres alcaldes y siete regidores y dos alguaciles mayores y seis escribanos y un alcaide de cárcel y un nahuatlato de lengua española, *los cuales siempre se elijen del linaje de los nobles hidalgos y caballeros*” (Zavala 1987: 568, the stress is mine). Becoming a **nahuatlato**, or interpreter, an official post in the administration of justice, meant occupying a strategic position: from there one could exert some of the power their noble families used to have while being close to the sites of Spanish power. Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc²³⁸ (Nahuatl interpreter) was Motecuzoma’s grandson, Fernando de Alva Ixtlixóchitl (Nahuatl interpreter) was of mixed race, a *mestizo*, Constantino Bravo (Tarascan and possibly

²³⁶ We shouldn’t forget that, instigated by the friars, these boys spied on their own people, denounced idolatric practices and went as far as attacking and killing one Indian priest (Torquemada 1615/1975, T. III, cap. XIX)

²³⁷ The reference to **nepantla**, meaning, literally, in between, in the middle, comes from Diego Durán’s chronicle. An Indian, scolded by the friar because was failing in his Christian duties, replied to him that it was not his fault: “Todavía estamos **nepantla**”. Many authors have discussed this quotation, among them Bernand and Gruzinski (1993), pp. 297-298.

²³⁸ BHA I, 127

Nahuatl interpreter) was an illegitimate son of a noblewoman, who fought for his nobility rights, Gaspar Antonio Chi (Maya interpreter), belonged also to a noble family. Elsewhere in the territory, **nahuatlato**s, proficient in languages other than Nahuatl also proliferated. Some of them were of noble descent, like the ones just mentioned, but other ways lead to Rome too: the well known Antonio Valeriano, a highly proficient Tlatelolco scholar eventually held a high office in the Indian colonial administration, and a fellow named Tsureque is mentioned in the municipal archives of Pázcuaro (Michoacán) as an Indian who, having been accused and tried argued so convincingly at court that he was eventually appointed interpreter.²³⁹ The names of the interpreters pop up regularly in bureaucratic registers and official documents and not all must have been noble or Indian. The father and grandfather of the Alva brothers seem to have been both Spanish **nahuatlato**s, one of them a relative of one of Columbus captains (Bernand and Gruzinski 1993: 134). They married noble Indian women. Becoming an interpreter could have been also a way of ascending the social ladder.²⁴⁰

The role of the **nahuatlato** in the judiciary was paramount. They were sworn, and rules were drafted to regulate their profession:

Ley primera: que los intérpretes de los Indios tengan las partes y calidades necesarias, y se les pague el salario de gastos de justicia, estrados o penas de cámara. Ley II: que haya numero de interpretes en las audiencias, y juren, conforme a esta ley. Ley III: que los interpretes no recivan dadivas ni presentes. Ley IV: que los interpretes acudan a los acuerdos, audiencias y visitas de carcel....Ley X: que se señale el salario a los interpretes por cada

²³⁹ Nansen, Eréndira, “Los intérpretes jurados indígenas en la administración de justicia de la Nueva España”, conference presented at the V Celebración de San Jerónimo, Organización Mexicana de Traductores, Puebla, México, 2000.

²⁴⁰ This idea was first suggested to me by Eréndira Nansen, in personal conversation.

un día que salieren del lugar, y no puedan llevar otra cosa.²⁴¹

The distinction between translator and interpreter seems to have been neither clear nor necessary. Generally, an interpreter or **nahuatlato** would perform orally and it was the scribe who would take dictation and write the final report of the proceedings. Then both interpreter and scribe would sign it as proof of conformity. Interpreters would also translate documents on sight. Interpreters affirmed their distance from the common Indians and used their language proficiency to exact as much as they could from the relative power position in which the Spanish had put them. In fact, accusations of misconduct and corruption are not uncommon,²⁴² and partly the reason adduced to impose Spanish (Brice Heath 1970: 82-84).

Some of these who were sworn in, that is, officially appointed, **nahuatlatos**, acted also as transwriters, and their works have survived. Theirs are historical accounts in indigenous languages or Spanish, and their sources are the same we have discussed before: pictorials, oral history, preceding chronicles. While we know that the friars were asked by their superiors (or so they said) to write about the “antiguallas”, the writing in the case of mestizo or Indian have less explicit motivations. Among the reasons that moved these individuals to write, the need to legitimate their descent and heritage, particularly to sustain civil claims for land rights and material remunerations, seems to have been predominant. In such claims, the judiciary would order an investigation, or “averiguación” on the claimed rights. The claimants would have to present evidence of occupation of lands. This is the

²⁴¹ Vasco de Puga (1563), *Cedulario Indiano*, Tomo I, Libro II, título 29, 1563

²⁴² A Bartolomé Ximénez, interpreter, was accused by the Indians of corruption and misconduct: “Manda-- dicen los indios--, cuando va a las cobranzas, que lo salgamos a recibir a los ranchos con trompetas y presentes y regalos y cien pesos...”. See Díaz Polanco, Héctor, <http://www.prodigyweb.net.mx/diazp/articulos15.htm>. In Zavala (1987, 2: 409) here is mention of an interpreter having an Indian servant in the context of a judicial claim brought by an Indian community. Such accusations must not have been uncommon.

reason why many maps and similar descriptions with accompanying histories and genealogies were drafted and have survived (Gruzinski 1988). This kind of testimonies could follow the style of Western histories, to become more ambitious historical accounts, in which they typically praised their origins, deployed genealogies and placed themselves as the heirs of a splendorous, although lost, past.

It was also important to establish connections between the indigenous past and the Christian history that could help legitimating the past by inserting it within the Christian context: calendaric comparisons and parallel chronologies were drafted in many cases (Alva, Chimalpain). In so doing, these men who did not belong to the Spanish society and who no longer were, strictly speaking, Indians, were casting the discourse of ethnic descent, the **mexicayotl**, or Mexicanidad, which would be one of the main pillars of the sentiment of national identity.

On the side of the mestizo or Indian translators-interpreters who wrote historical accounts derived from hypotexts, Beristáin mentions twenty such authors: Fernando Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,²⁴³ Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc,²⁴⁴ Alonso Axayaca²⁴⁵ and his daughter Barbola Axayacatzin,²⁴⁶ Gabriel Ayala,²⁴⁷ Cristóbal del Castillo,²⁴⁸ Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpain,²⁴⁹ Constantino Huitzimengari, Francisco Loayza,²⁵⁰ Diego Muñoz Camargo, Tadeo Niza,²⁵¹ Fernando Pimentel,²⁵² Pablo y Toribio Pimentel,²⁵³ Antonio

²⁴³ BHA I, 125

²⁴⁴ BHA I, 127

²⁴⁵ BHA I, 191

²⁴⁶ BHA I, 191

²⁴⁷ BHA I, 193

²⁴⁸ BHA II, 77

²⁴⁹ BHA II, 108 - 109

²⁵⁰ BHA III, 134

²⁵¹ BHA IV, 27

²⁵² BHA IV, 142

²⁵³ BHA IV, 142 - 143

Pimentel, Juan Bautista Pomar,²⁵⁴ Pedro Ponce,²⁵⁵ Antonio Tovar Moctezuma,²⁵⁶ Pedro Xuárez,²⁵⁷ Juan Ventura Zapata Mendoza.²⁵⁸ In all, nineteen men and one woman. Among them, interestingly, three family groups are distinguishable: Fernando de Alva is one of four interpreters in his family; the Axayacas were father and daughter, and the Pimenteles, who are also father and sons.



Fig. 19. Alvarado Tezozómoc.

I have chosen to analyze in more depth the case of two such **nahuatlato**s, who contributed in a significant degree to the creation of two important myths that have

²⁵⁴ BHA IV, 150 - 151

²⁵⁵ BHA IV, 153

²⁵⁶ BHA V, 25

²⁵⁷ BHA V, 181

²⁵⁸ BHA V, 187

nourished this national discourse: Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc,²⁵⁹ a key element in the myth of Tenochtitlan as the Rome of America, and Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,²⁶⁰ in the myth of Texcoco as the Athens of America. These cities represent the two poles of the Nahua culture: Tenochtitlan (the City of Mexico) as the center of the Aztec Empire, embodied the strength of the military power, the place that was assigned by their blood-thirsty god, Huitzilopochtli, to become the homeland of the Mexica, the ethnic warlike group that migrated from the mythic Northern city of Aztlan to found a city in the middle of the lake of Texcoco. And Culhuacan (the city of Texcoco), capital of the arts, heir to the prestigious Toltec past, the city of the poets and civilization, home of Nezahualcōyotl, the great **tlamatini**, the sage-king, the materialization of the fabulous Tula of Quetzalcoatl, the plumed serpent, the man-god that taught man how to read the stars and to plough the land.

3.1.1.1. The Tenochca, or Mexica, tradition

The Aztec written tradition has opportunistically considered Tenochtitlan and Texcoco as sister cities. In fact, the Mexicas, or Tenochcas, who were subjects of the people of Texcoco, or Culhuas, at a point in their migration, asked for the authorization to marry Culhua women in a deliberate move to appropriate the Toltec heritage (Duverger 1983: 207); the assimilation was successful and some sort of alliance between both cities seems to have prevailed.

In the translated historiographies of the two cities the two myths were fixed and disseminated: the myth of the Aztec origins and migration, and the myth of the golden age of Culhuacan (Texcoco), at the time of Nezahualcoyotl. They constitute part of Mexico's

²⁵⁹ BHA I, 127

²⁶⁰ BHA I, 125

official history. They were invoked in eighteenth century neo-aztecism which Phelan associates to the birth of Mexican nationalism (Phelan 1960), became part of the symbolism of the independence movement in 1810 (Gutiérrez 2001 :49), were the object of the first thorough study by Ángel María Garibay in mid-twentieth century, and were finally fixed and given the monumental magnitude we can admire in the National Anthropological Museum of Mexico City during the second half of the same century in the works of nationalist Mesoamericanist Miguel León-Portilla.

The genesis of both official histories is the same: hypotexts either as pictorials (mostly lost) or oral Nahuatl narratives. In the case of the Aztec myth,²⁶¹ the transmission continues with a presumed transcription²⁶² into alphabetized Nahuatl by an anonymous Indian scribe, which is lost, and its translation into Spanish, which has survived. This extant text, which includes a number of illustrations made by a not very proficient European or local acculturated artist, is known as the *Códice Ramírez* (after the name of the 19th century owner), written in the 1560s. The translation was made by the *mestizo* Jesuit Juan de Tovar,²⁶³ born of a Spanish father and a noble Texocan mother, and the text as published by Chavero in 1878 bears the title: *Relación del origen de los indios que habitan esta Nueva España según sus historias*. It is also known as the *Códice Tovar*. The hypertexts derived there from are the following:

- ❖ Juan de Tovar's *Historia de la Benida de los Yndios a poblar a Mexico* (1585-87). He draws upon his earlier translation.

²⁶¹ The hypothesis of a single source for the Aztec tradition, a *Crónica X*, suggested by R. H. Barlow in 1945 (Duverger 1983: 31) was taken up with some hesitations by Garibay in 1954 (Garibay 1983: 292) and seems to have been abandoned since.

²⁶² The presumption is based in the fact that the Spanish text is placed in a column at the left, and the column at the right is empty, as if leaving room for the original text, which would have been copied later. This argumentation seems not to have been challenged so far.

²⁶³ BHA V, 52 - 53

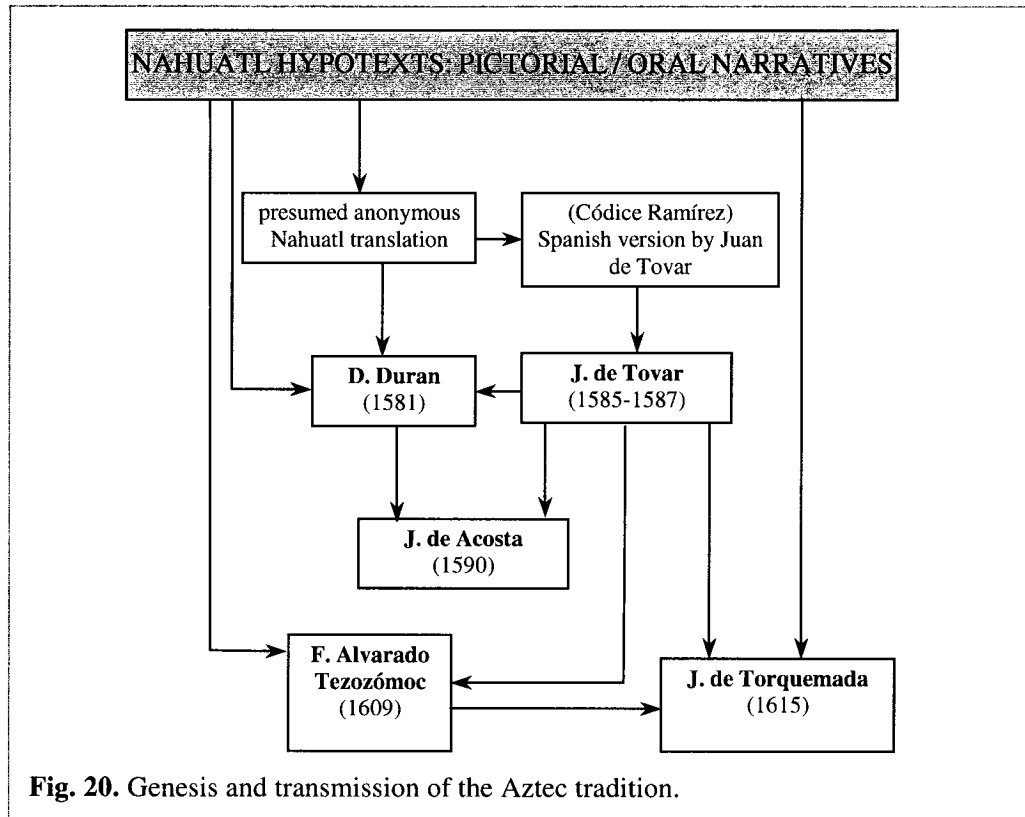
- ❖ Dominican Diego Durán *Historia de las indias de Nueva España e islas de la Tierra Firme* (1570s). He had seen Tovar's manuscript.
- ❖ Mestizo chronicler Fernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc's²⁶⁴ *Crónica Mexicana* (C. 1598) (in Spanish) and its Nahuatl derivation *Crónica Mexicayotl* (C. 1609). As a member of a noble family, he had first hand access to informants and pictorials. There is agreement in that he also takes from Tovar or from the Nahuatl original.
- ❖ Jesuit José de Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590), which for a long time was believed to be an original text. Its derivative status was established much later by historian Manuel Orozco y Berra (Alvarado Tezozómoc 1878). Parts of the text are also translations from his own earlier Works in Latin: *De Natura Novi orbis* and *De procuranda salute Indorum*. He takes extensively from Durán. And, finally,
- ❖ Franciscan Juan de Torquemada's²⁶⁵ *Monarquía Indiana* (1615), the largest compilation of earlier chronicles, written on the occasion of the celebration of the one hundred anniversary of the arrival of the Franciscans in the New World.

Of this series of translations, I will look particularly at the ones by Alvarado Tezozómoc, the **nahuatlato**, a pure blood Indian, of noble descent, who introduces himself at the beginning of the Nahuatl *Cronica Mexicayotl* with these words:

“Y hoy en el año de 1609, yo mismo, Don Hernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc, que soy nieto de la persona que fuera el gran rey Moteuczoma el menor, quien gobernara y rigiera la gran población de México Tenochtitlan, y que proviene de su apreciada hija, de la persona de la princesa, mi amadisima madre, Doña Francisca de Moteuczoma, cuyo conyuge fuera la persona de Don Diego y de Alvarado Huanitzin, padre mío preciadisimo, noble; son ellos quienes me engendraron y en toda verdad soy hijo suyo yo quien aqui me nombro” (Tezozómoc 1609/ 1942: 7)

²⁶⁴ BHA I, 127

²⁶⁵ BHA V, 37 - 38



In spite of the similarity of the titles, the two *Crónicas* he wrote are different. In fact, Tezozómoc²⁶⁶ wrote for two audiences: the Spanish and the Indian, and the reasons for this double standard have not been explored. In both, however, it is the pride of a noble Aztec that impregnates the style of the narration, and they are considered as the best and most complete account of the Nahua pre-Hispanic past by an Indian. In the Spanish *Crónica*, he narrates the birth of the nation pushed by its tutelary god, Huitzilopochtli, to migrate to a promised land, which will be signaled to them by the presence of an eagle devouring a snake over a nopal tree. The mortifications endured in this migration are explained, as well as the eventual foundation of Mexico-Tenochtitlan. Tezozómoc narrates the sequence of their successive rulers, conquests and deeds. Mexicas are described as courageous, proud and warlike peoples, bound to dominate other groups, and Mexico-

²⁶⁶ BHA I, 127

Tenochtitlan is described as the center of the old empire. The *Cronica* ends with the rumors of the arrival of strange men from the West, and Motecuzoma's fear that it is Quetzalcóatl that has come back to recall his throne.

Tezozómoc²⁶⁷ may be a noble Indian, but over all, he is a Christian writing for other Christians, and as such he makes sure that his repugnance of old customs is clear. In referring to the erection of the first Mexica temple upon their establishment in the lake, the sacrificed hearts' vase is described: "los mexicanos comenzaron a hacer casa y adoración de Huitzilopochtli, y hecho el templo, pusieron luego al pie... una gran xícara, como batea grande, a manera de una fuente de plata grande, con que se demanda limosna **ahora en nuestra religion cristiana**" (1598/1878: 227, the stress is mine).

In the Nahuatl *Cronica Mexicayotl*, Tezozómoc compiles and transcribes different types of probably oral narrations and documents: codex, legends, poems, annals, to describe the origins of the Mexica people, the foundation of their metropolis and the consecration of the first ruler. He concludes with an extended genealogy of the regal house of Tenochtitlan in which he includes himself. It is not clear who the reader of this Nahuatl text might have been. León-Portilla (in Garza 1996: 160) states that it was a reference book for those noble nahuas who needed to produce accurate information on their lineage in order to claim rights from the colonial administration, a good reason enough. His dual approach, that is, the decision to write two chronicles in different languages, seems interesting to me. A man placed in between the two cultures uses his high position, both among the Indians and among the Spaniards, as Motecuzoma's grand-child, and as a **nahuatlato**, to reconstruct a knowledge of the past in a way that it can ensure the survival of the past and of his own lineage. In the process, archetypical forms of the past were

²⁶⁷ BHA I, 127

created which were new and belonged also to a new discourse on ethnicity. The pride with which he depicts the **huey altepetl Mexico Tenochtitlan**, the great city of Mexico Tenochtitlan resounds in these words:

La gran poblacion ciudad de Mexico Tenochtitlan, su lugar de fama, su lugar de exemplo, el lugar del asiento del tenochtli, dentro del agua, el lugar donde el aguila se yergue, el lugar donde grita el águila, el lugar donde se extiende el águila, el lugar donde come el águila, el lugar donde es desgarrada la serpiente, el lugar donde nada el pez, el agua azul, el agua amarilla, el lugar de entronque, el lugar del agua abrasada, alla en el ...de plumas, dentro de los tules, dentro de los carrizos, el lugar del brazalete, de plumas preciosas, que esta en el tular, en el carrizal, el lugar de reunion, de espera de las diversas gentes de los cuatro lados , a donde vinieron a llegar, vinieron a asentarse los trece teochichimecas, quienes se vinieron a asentar miserablemente cuando vinieron a llegar. Hela aqui, aqui comienza, aqui se vera, aqui esta asentada por escrito la bonísima, veracísima relación de su renombre, el relato, la historia del origen, la base, de cómo está empezando, de como está principiando la mencionada gran población, la ciudad de México Tenochtitlan, dentro del agua, entre los tules, entre los carrizos, y se dice, se nombra el tule del fuerte viento, el carrizo del fuerte viento, madre, padre, cabeza que se esta haciendo de todos cada uno de los poblados de todos lados de la reciente Nueva España. Asi lo vinieron a decir, asi lo vinieron a asentar en su relato, y nos lo vinieron a dibujar en sus "pergaminos" los viejos y las viejas que eran nuestras abuelas, nuestros abuelos, nuestros bisabuelos, nuestros tatarabuelos, nuestras bisabuelas, nuestros antepasados..... Y esta relacion Tenochtitlan guardo y por Tlatelolco nunca allá nos será quitado, porque ciertamente no acaece ser depósito (no es legado suyo) ... Muy muchos somos nosotros los que somos nobles...." (1609/1942: 4-6)

In the Spanish translation the oral traits of the hypotext are present in the psalmodic

style, the accumulation of epithets. The myth of ancestry is stressed in the reference to the elders who have handed the tradition over to the present. The archetypal elements are also there: the nopal (tenochtli), the thorns of which are used for ritual bloodletting, the marshes (water and canes), signaling the poor and difficult beginnings of the future empire and, prominently, the eagle and the serpent, the symbols of the Mexica. Looking at the present, Tenochtitlan was described by him as the head of all the peoples who live in the “reciente Nueva España”.

3.1.1.2. *The Texcoco, or Acolhua, tradition*

Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl²⁶⁸ (1578? – 1650) is the translator who built the foundations of the Texcoco myth. The hypotexts upon which he based himself, also a combination of pictorials and narratives, were transcribed by Alva into Nahuatl, and then translated into Spanish.²⁶⁹ In the introduction to his *Relación Sumaria de la Historia General de esta Nueva España*, he explained how he proceeded and states his intention of telling the true story (a veiled criticism of the missionaries’ versions?):

Por cuya causa, he conseguido mi deseo con mucho trabajo, peregrinación y suma diligencia en juntar las pinturas de las historias y anales, y los cantos con que las conservaban y, sobre todo, para poderlas entender, juntando y convocando a muchos principales de esta Nueva España, los que tenían fama de conocer y saber las historias referidas. Y de todos ellos, en solo dos hallé entera relación y conocimiento de las pinturas y caracteres, y que daban verdadero sentido a los cantos, que por ir compuestos en sentido alegórico, y adornados de metáforas y similitudes, son difícilísimos de entender. Con

²⁶⁸ BHA I, 125

²⁶⁹ This sequence of retranslation is questioned by some authors, in particular E. del Hoyo (1957), who believes that Alva transcribed directly into Spanish.

cuya ayuda pueda después con facilidad conocer todas las pinturas e historias, y traducir los cantos con su verdadero sentido, con que he satisfecho mi deseo, siguiendo siempre la verdad. Por cuya causa no me he querido aprovechar de las historias que tratan esta materia, por la diversidad y confusión que tienen entre sí los autores que tratan de ellas, por las falsas relaciones y contrarias interpretaciones que les dieron (cited in Garibay 1987 II: 309-10)

Fernando de Alva's case is particularly interesting in that he is not an Indian but what was called a *castizo*, that is, born of *mestiza* mother and Spanish father. Strictly, he should have taken his father's family name, but, for unknown reasons, although there is room for interesting speculations there, he chose two noble family names: "de Alva", probably from the noble house of Alva, in Spain, and "Ixtlilxóchitl", from his grandmother, direct descendant of the great ruler Nezahualcoyotl. In Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,²⁷⁰ who was one of the young men educated by the Franciscan friars at Tlatelolco, became an interpreter at the *Juzgado de Indios*, and held other offices in the Indian administration, we have not only a biological but also a cultural and ideological *mestizaje*, a will to belong to both worlds.

As documentary support to his claims for restoration of his nobility rights, he wrote a number of historical works, focused in particular in the Texcoco area, to which he belonged. The reasons he states are however of a historical nature: "Desde mi adolescencia tuve siempre gran deseo de saber las cosas acaecidas en este Nuevo Mundo, que no fueron menos que las de los romanos, griegos, medos y otras republicas gentílicas que tuvieron fama en el Universo, aunque con la mudanza de los tiempos y caída de los señoríos y estados de mis pasados, quedaron sepultadas sus historias" (del Hoyo 1957: 341)

²⁷⁰ BHA I, 125

His is, therefore, the translation-reconstruction of the heroic age of the Acolhua peoples, that became the official history of Texcoco, the intellectually prestigious center, the Athens of the New World, and his is the myth of the great poet-king Nezahualcoyotl, the sage ruler who abhorred human sacrifices, and who prophetically believed in an only god, the king David of the New World, who, according to don Fernando: “considerando lo poco que le había aprovechado el sacrificio hecho a sus dioses de gente humana, poniendo los ojos en el cielo dijo: “verdaderamente, los dioses que yo adoro, que son los ídolos de piedra que no hablan ni sienten, no pudieron hacer ni formar la hermosura del cielo, el sol la luna y las estrellas que lo hermosean y dan luz a la tierra: ríos, aguas y fuentes, árboles y plantas, las gentes que lo poseen y todo lo criado: algún Dios muy poderoso, oculto (el “Deus absconditus” de Isaías) y no conocido, es el criador de todo el universo” (cited in del Hoyo 1957: 358). Alva’s reconstruction of the past is completely westernized. The deeds of the Toltecs and Chichimecas are narrated according to European forms: feats and battles, heroes and traitors, nobles and vassals. Del Hoyo traced Alva’s European sources and concluded, in particular, that he used king Alfonso X *Cronica General de España* in his writings, based on stylistic parallelisms, such as the chronological correlations: “Pero luego, en el año siguiente, que fue el de Ce Calli (uno casa), y a la nuestra en el de 984, bajo el pontificado de Joanes XIV, en el año primero del gobierno de Otón IV y en el quinto de Alfonso V de España y al mismo tiempo que llovió trigo y peces, comenzó a castigar Dios Nuestro Señor a esta gente ciega y perversa, idólatra, enviándole grandísimos aguaceros, ...” (del Hoyo 1957: 355). In the calendaric and historical parallelisms the two traditions are pooled together and assimilated to each other. Elsewhere, in his *Historia Chichimeca*, the tyrant Tezozómoc (not to be mistaken with the already mentioned Alvarado Tezozomoc) orders the killing of all babies in the kingdom of Texcoco, thus

becoming a New World Herodes, and stories of royal vengeance recall the traditional castillian *Romances*. In this combination and superposition of scholarly traditions, as the past becomes de-paganized, and the Indians are depicted as blind and evil people, a reconfiguration of the pre-Hispanic past is performed, one in which some selected pre-Hispanic rulers would become models for the new society. I will dwell upon this matter in the Modern High Culture section.

Alva Ixtlilxóchitl²⁷¹ belongs also to what we could call a dynasty of translators and interpreters. His father, Juan Navas Pérez de Peraleda, and grand-father, Juan Grande, both Spanish, were also interpreters (Gruzinski 1993: 134, 145), probably judicial interpreters. In 1640, Fernando's younger brother Bartolomé, who was a university graduate ("bachiller") and parish priest, translated into Nahuatl plays by Calderón, Lope de Vega and Mira de Amescua, famous contemporary Spanish playwrights. Bartolomé was close to Horacio Carochi,²⁷² the Jesuit grammarian, to whom he dedicates one of these translations. He was also a man of both secular and religious worlds: he translates popular plays, and is the author of a bilingual confession manual.

By tracing the ascent of don Fernando to his earliest known ancestor, in the lineage of the Texcoco rulers, the circumstances in which this biological and symbolic *mestizaje* came about, Bernand and Gruzinski (1993) lead us through almost two centuries of the life of the Alva family, like in a historical novel, displaying their thorough knowledge of the times, characters and sources, and acquainting us with the field in which Gruzinski in particular has excelled: the clashes, mixing and superpositions of images. Gruzinski and Bernand relate events from both sides of the Atlantic, and propose bold biographical convergences. In concluding, they stress the role that translators and interpreters played,

²⁷¹ BHA I, 125

²⁷² BHA II, 50 - 51

both for every day communication and for the translation of the “realités du Nouveau Monde” (1993: 187). Three generations of intermediaries in the Alva family make exactly the point.

It is in this long span of seemingly just coincidental facts that we can see the relation between translation and the creation and transmission of a national discourse: it was through the translation from the hypotexts to the successive transwritings that the founding myths of the grandeur of the Aztec past and the heroic age of Texoco were consolidated and conveyed along the sixteenth century, in parallel with the contemporary grammars and the lexicons, and the doctrines, Christian dramatic plays and hybrid Saint’s songs.

The reconfiguration of the past, with the shift of values, the displacement of meanings, was only possible from “outside” the culture. The links that tied these noble Indians to their base were severed. They were placed in the margins of their own culture and they had become strangers to their own people.²⁷³ Whatever power the Spanish might have left them was mostly symbolic. They were themselves poor, and they often sent claims to the king asking for their ancestral rights to be respected. In claiming these rights, they presented their histories and genealogies in a way that could be intelligible to the Spaniards. In translating them, the reconfigurations were possible. But then, new values were added, that eventually became new definitions of ethnicity.

I cannot prevent myself from venturing some comparisons with the present situation of the Mexicans living in the U.S.A.: whether they come from the Mixteca of Puebla, Oaxaca, or from Michoacán, they typically have acquired a new dress code: the pointed

²⁷³ Let’s think for a moment about Doña Marina’s solitude. She disappears from the annals of history just three or four years after meeting Cortés. She must have been just nineteen.

boots replacing the sandals, Mohican haircuts , fringed shirts, “norteno” hat, leather belts with tex-mex motives embroidered. Something that evokes Mexico but which would not be recognizable as such in Mexico.

The Mexican population in the United States is reconfiguring some of the Mexican myths and rituals, which are also departing from the ones still present in Mexico. The battle of the 5th of May, for instance, which celebrates the Mexican victory over the French troops in 1862, has become a national day for the Mexicans in the USA, deploying paraphernalia of commercial and other objects unknown in Mexico. These mestizo immigrants, who had very little interest in celebrating local history when in Mexico, certainly because history had ignored them for centuries, became highly sensitive to it when away from home. History has a meaning for these people when they are cut from their base. One would think that they are more Mexican in the USA than in Mexico. It would seem so, but in fact, they are becoming something else, since they are indeed strangers in both countries now, at least temporarily. They are definitely looking for a new ethnic definition, and this is probably one of the reasons why for them, the mythical Aztlan, wherefrom the Aztecs started their migration to the South, is in fact located North of the Mexican border, somewhere in Arizona or California... this is also why Miguel León Portilla, Mexico’s official historian, has modernized the anthropological category of Mesoamerica, which for him covers the chicano “colonization” of the Southern United States, as well as the Mexican and Central American territories, and has his own translations into Spanish of the Nahuatl poetry of the Aztec kings retranslated into English for the benefit of the chicanos who no longer speak Spanish.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴ See E. Shorris and M. León-Portilla’s double anthology of Mesoamerican Literature: *In the Language of the Kings* (2001) and its Spanish version: *Antigua y nueva palabra* (2004).

3.1.2. Translation and the Classical Continuity

The illustrious Mexican cleric Don Juan José de Eguiara y Eguren, born in 1696, taught Rhetoric, Theology and the Holy Scriptures at the University of Mexico, from where he had graduated. He also held several dignities at the Inquisition, archbishopric, Mexico's Cathedral and Seminar.

One day, when reading an epistolar volume by a Spanish contemporary cleric, Don Manuel Martí, Eguiara came across one of the letters in which the author advised a nephew, who wanted to pursue an academic career, to go to Rome, where he would find the best teachers and a suitable scholarly atmosphere. It seems that the nephew had hinted that he might go to Mexico and the uncle promptly set up to dissuade him from such a foolish idea:

¿A dónde volverás los ojos en medio de tan horrenda soledad como la que en punto a letras reina entre los indios? ¿encontrarás, por ventura, no diré maestros que te instruyan, pero ni siquiera estudiantes? ¿te será dado tratar con alguien, no ya que sepa alguna cosa, sino que se muestre deseoso de saberla...? ¿qué libros consultarás? ¿qué bibliotecas tendrás la posibilidad de frecuentar? Buscar allá cosas tales, tanto valdría como querer trasquilar a un asno u ordeñar a un macho cabrío. (Eguiara 1755/1996: 56-47).

It was probably a common opinion in Spain that among the Indians nothing that could deserve the name of culture would possibly grow. And, worst of all, any men born in America would become inconstant, lascivious and liar: "Influye el cielo de la América inconstancia, lascivia y mentira: vicios de los indios, y la constelación los hará propios de los españoles que allá se criaren y nacieren".²⁷⁵ This was enough provocation for Eguiara to decide to prepare and publish a Mexican bio-bibliography by which the world would know

²⁷⁵ Juan de la Puente, 1612, cited in Eguiara 1755/1996, footnote 150, p. 219.

the immense contribution made by the American scholars since the Conquest. With such determination, he sent for a printing press to Spain in 1744, had it installed sometime before 1753, and began to compile information in convent and private libraries, sending letters to men of Church and Academia asking them to contribute to this “causa pública y de tanta gloria a Dios”. He received answers not only from Mexican correspondents but also from Guatemala and La Habana. He dedicated the last twenty years of his life to the endeavour, and went up to letter J in the listing. The first and only volume of his *Bibliotheca Mexicana*²⁷⁶ was printed in 1755, with a dedication to king Ferdinand VI. It contained letters A, B and C. The rest was left as a manuscript, and it was this manuscript, together with the notes he had left scribbled, that served Beristáin de Souza as a departing point of his *Biblioteca Hispano-Americana Septentrional*, seventy years later.

The volume Eguiara eventually published is preceded by a long prologue, in which he explains the reasons that moved him to write such a work, and exhaustively argues for the great New Spain culture as represented by its most excellent scholars. Drawing from fray Juan de Torquemada's²⁷⁷ *Monarquía Indiana*, for instance, he recalls the deeds of Texcoco king Nezahualcoyotl:

Era tanta su sabiduría de dicho monarca que por obra suya se formó, a manera de Academia y bajo la presidencia de su hijo Xochiquetzalzin, un nucleo de poetas y músicos, que entre los texcocanos son muy numerosos, así como de astrólogos, historiadores y cultivadores de otras artes, para que

²⁷⁶ The full title of the *Bibliotheca mexicana* is a detailed explanation of its contents: *sive eruditorum historiam virorum, qui in America Boreali nati vel alibi geniti, in ipsam domicilio aut studiis asciti, quavis lingua scripto aliquid tradiderunt, eorum praesertim qui pro fide catholica et pietate amplianda fovendaque, egregie factis et quibusvis scriptis floruerunt editis aut ineditis* (that is, history of the scholars who, be they born in Northern America or elsewhere, belong to it by virtue of their residence, or studies, or writings in whatever language; in particular, those who have excelled by their famous deeds or any other kind of works, printed or manuscript, directed to enhance and promote the Catholic faith and piety)

²⁷⁷ BHA V, 37 - 38

confiriendo entre si y discutiendo sus problemas, saliesen cada día más prácticos y sabios. Así lo trae Torquemada en el tomo I, lib 2, capítulo 41, p. 147. el mismo autor, al final de cap. 45 del mismo libro, página 156, dice que el citado monarca sobresalió en el cultivo de la poesía y alaba cierto cántico, obra de su numen y destinado a la formación de las costumbres, que comienza.... (Eguiara 1755/1996: 87-88)

Here is, again, over a hundred and fifty years later, the story of the great king Nezahualcóyotl, the poet, the sage, as derived step by step from the stories compiled by the Franciscan bishop Torquemada.²⁷⁸ Now, a significant difference exists between Torquemada's account and Eguiara's citation: while Torquemada's three thick volumes were written in Spanish, Eguiara's *Bibliotheca Mexicana* is entirely in Latin.²⁷⁹ The names of the authors in the *Bibliotheca*'s entries, as well as the work's titles were translated into Latin by Eguiara, and the contents of the entries.

Was there a better way to confirm the importance of the works by the friars, the Indian scholars, mestizo writers and other secular authors, other than latinizing their identities and their works? Latin, as the language of universal culture, would cleanse the image of the New World's literate production. Latin would ensure that every European country would know that the works written in America were as numerous and as important as theirs.²⁸⁰

Latin, the symbol of the kind of past they didn't have, the kind of culture they didn't cultivate, the white people they were not. Latin, from the first days of the colony, with the

²⁷⁸ BHA V, 37 - 38

²⁷⁹ The above citation comes from the bilingual edition of the *Anteloquia* (prologues), published for the first time in 1944.

²⁸⁰ I also wonder if using Latin was not a sort of overkill. After all, Latin was being displaced by Spanish as the language of erudition in Spain. Was he thinking in having readers out of Spain? These questions will remain unanswered for the time being.

first translation, in 1581, by Bartolomé Melgarejo,²⁸¹ of Persio's *Satyres*, to the twentieth century, when Alfonso Reyes made the fantastic declaration "Quiero el latín para las izquierdas"²⁸² and minister of Education José Vasconcelos proclaimed that translating the classical authors was a "deber patriótico",²⁸³ and Ángel María Garibay said that Greek drama "es fundamental para nuestra cultura".²⁸⁴

Latin had arrived with the Franciscan friars who, in founding the Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco, stated as one of the motivations of such establishment was, "que estos indios, sabiendo latinidad y entendiendo los misterios de la Sagrada Escritura, se arraigasen en la fe mas de veras y confirmasen en ella a los otros que no sabían tanto, y ayudasen a los Religiosos que no entendían bien la lengua, interpretando al pueblo en ella lo que dijese".²⁸⁵ Consequently, a Latin grammar for the use of the Indians from this Colegio was prepared by friar Maturino Gilberti, the French missionary who wrote the first American Latin grammar, in which he exemplifies grammatical problems with "formulae ex Erasmo Roterodamo aliisque doctissimis".²⁸⁶

The project of Latin for the Indians was, thus, an "avant-garde" project. Latin would give them access to the clergy, and they would, ideally, be associated with modern European thinking. It is this Latin they learned that gives some of them a place in Beristáin's *Biblioteca*: Diego Adriano, from Tlatelolco, was one of the first Indians educated there, he was "excelente en lengua latina que poseyó con la castellana como su

²⁸¹ BHA III, 230

²⁸² Alfonso Reyes: "Discurso por Virgilio", in *Obras Completas*, Vol. XI, p. 160-61.

²⁸³ *Historia de la lectura en México*, México: El Colegio de México, 1999, p. 262.

²⁸⁴ Garibay, Ángel María, trad., *Las siete tragedias de Esquilo*, México: Ed. Porrúa, 1962, p. XXII.

²⁸⁵ Cited in Julio Alfonso Pérez Luna, "De la educación superior de los indígenas. Repaso de una polémica del siglo XVI", unpublished paper presented at the V Celebration of St. Jerome, Puebla, Organización Mexicana de Traductores 2001.

²⁸⁶ A modern edition has been just prepared by El Colegio de Michoacán in Mexico. My citation comes from <http://www.colmich.edu.mx/publicaciones/fichas/completas/letra2.asp?IDLocal=354>

idioma patrio...tradujo muchos tratados del latín al nahuatl”²⁸⁷; Francisco Contreras (who died in 1610) was also a noble Indian from Cuernavaca; “estudió letras humanas y ayudó al padre Fr. Juan Bautista²⁸⁸ en las diferentes versiones que hizo y publicó, traduciendo al idioma mexicano los libros de Kempis”. Esteban Bravo,²⁸⁹ from Tezcoco, “indio noble, que traducía cualquiera cosa del romance y del latín a la lengua mexicana, y de esta a aquellas lenguas con tanta abundancia de vocablos que causaba admiración”. Juan Berardo, from Huejotzingo (died in 1594), also a noble Indian, “ayudó a los primeros españoles en la acertada interpretación del idioma mexicano y en las diferentes traducciones que hicieron de libros latinos y castellanos a la lengua de los indios”, and allegedly wrote a volume of *Epistolae Latinae varie*, and did “varias versiones del latín y castellano al mexicano”. Pedro Gante, from Tlatelolco (died in 1605), was also one of the first pupils. He taught Spanish and Latin in Tlatelolco, and translated to Nahuatl “muchos opúsculos de los que publicó el P. Fray Juan Bautista, especialmente vidas de santos”. As Briesemeister rightly notes (2002: 524), a long period of diglossic and even triglossic situation was created by the Conquest, in which Latin, Castilian and indigenous languages were simultaneously spoken and written, creating mutual interferences.

Many Tlatelolco students were, thus, involved in the translation of doctrinal works from Latin into Spanish and Nahuatl, and it could well be, as Beristáin notes in the case of Gante, that the actual translations were done by them, but the publications were made under the friars name. Aside from the possible prejudice against them, we cannot forget that the experiment of high learning at Tlatelolco was viewed with suspicion by the civil and secular authorities, who would have preferred that the access of Indians to schools and

²⁸⁷ BHA I: 73

²⁸⁸ BHA I, 230 - 231

²⁸⁹ BHA I, 288

studies be limited. The *Colegio* depended on the viceroial funds (which eventually were withdrawn) and a low-profile attitude with respect to the visibility of the Indian scholars was suitable.

The works that comprise this section share common features with all the other categories of the register. One can see in the Classical Continuity transwritings the character of veneration of the past, if we chose to see Greece and Rome as past civilizations that were used as models for the descriptions we find in the Foundation Myths category of translations. If we chose to see Greece and Rome as the quintessence of modernity, that which can place any tribal culture among the educated contemporary societies, then I should have included them in the Modern High Culture category. On the other hand, as Latin was the language of the Church, it played also an important role in the conversion efforts, as well as in serving as a model for the westernization of the indigenous languages, we could also place Classical Continuity translations in the Translational Canvass category. Instead, I have chosen to individualize this Classical Continuity class and ascribe a particular group of works. It allows me to explore how these transwritings helped creating a discourse of prestige and nobility, eventually helping to insert New Spain into the mainstream of Classical Civilizations.

Whatever the point of view we adopt, of course, we should never lose sight that these Greece and Rome were also ideal constructions, and that if I speak of Classical models, I do not mean any essential or pure, uninterested ideals, but just models that were instrumental to convey other things: the power investing Latin legitimated the Church, forced conversion and class divisions; the power investing Greek legitimated no less charged aesthetic values.

That they were themselves representations belonging to their times and doxological constraints is attested by the fact, as the late Ignacio Osorio Romero reminded us, that both Latin and Greek had been conveniently purged by Counter-Reformist ideas. Didn't Melgarejo said in his 1581 translation of Persius that he had translated into Castilian "todo lo que pude moralizado y a la sagrada escritura para nuevo vivir cristiano aplicado"? (Osorio 1989: 440); Antonio Valeriano, also, the 16th century Tlatelolco Indian scholar, wrote a *Catón cristiano* in Náhuatl. The reading program at the Jesuits grammar and rhetoric classes enlists the authors and editions that did not require previous censorship for their printing (teachers would compile their own manuals): "Fabulas, Caton, Luys viues, Selectas de Ciceron, Bucolicas de Virgilio, Georgicas del mismo, [...] Marcial purgado..." (Briesemeister 2002: 352).

This said, the fantastic phenomenon of Classics was that they could (and can) be used to represent virtually anything, provided it was noble and Christian. One of the Larrañaga brothers, Bruno Francisco,²⁹⁰ wrote in 1788 a *Prospecto de una Eneida Apostolica, o Epopeya que celebra la predicación del V. Apóstol de occidente P. Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús, intitulada Margileida, escrita en puros versos de Publio Virgilio Marón traducidos en verso castellano*, which did not go further than the prospect, to celebrate the life of seventeenth century Franciscan friar Margil, who is known to have traveled barefoot all over Mexico and Central America in his missionary activities.

The consensus around the venerable antiquity and the universal, atemporal truths that classical works embody and transmit made the Classical world, as interpreted by the European medieval scholars and sieved through Latin, a large pool of models for understanding and explaining the present.

²⁹⁰ BHA III, 96 - 97

Probably the most notable and significant of all events having to do with the classical languages in America was the incorporation of the Indian languages into the embrace of Latin through their systematic alphabetization, grammaticalization and lexicalization. The consequences of this event cannot be sufficiently stressed. One can sense the relief of father Rincón²⁹¹ and others who triumphantly declared that the Indian languages were reductible, meaning that they fell within the parameters of human understanding. Latin could be confirmed as the universal grammar. The doors were open and the “*translatio studii et imperii*”, that is, the transfer of cultural materials and of political power, was possible.

Everything could then fall into the course of Universal History: Flavius Josephus’s account of the fall of Jerusalem, preceded by presages and miracles, provided the mould in which the fall of Tenochtitlan could be understood, and so did the different accounts of the Roman tradition.²⁹² It was Aristotle who was recalled to define the type of barbarians to which these populations would belong, as was seen before.

Latin, the universal language, the *lingua franca* not only for religion, but for science and thought, was taught all along the Colonial period.²⁹³ Imports of Latin works from Spain were common, but the production of works in Latin by New Spaniards is also considerable, and largely exceeds the number of works that are represented in the Classical Continuity category. Out of the 68 titles that comprise this class of works, 24 are grammars, which

²⁹¹ BHA IV, 230

²⁹² Guy Rozat, highly skeptical about the early chronicles, dissects the discourses of the Conquest of Mexico and identifies the connections with Greco-Roman similar accounts in his interesting book *Indios imaginarios, indios reales* (2002).

²⁹³ Eguirra y Eguren, cites Julián Garcés, Bishop of Tlaxcala, who, at the height of the missionary period wrote to Pope Paulus III: “Agora es tanta la felicidad de sus ingenios (hablo de los niños) que escriben en latín y en romance mejor que nuestros españoles, y los que se dan entre ellos al estudio de la lengua latina y castellana no salen menos aprovechados” (1755/1996: 197).

reflects the strong presence of Latin in New Spain, particularly promoted after the Council of Trent by the Society of Jesus in their schools, as part of the *Ratio Studiorum*. Compilations of classical authors were prepared by the teachers themselves, and text books dealing with the different parts of grammar, syntax and rhetoric were printed and disseminated in the New Spain. The height of this production takes place during the 18th century, with the Mexican-born Jesuits Santiago Zamora,²⁹⁴ who published three texts on grammar, prosody and syntax, and Mateo Galindo,²⁹⁵ with two grammars in which, the titles say, he follows Nebrija's model. Manuel Arellano Garcia,²⁹⁶ a secular priest and university professor, wrote, according to Beristáin, a *Breve y mas clara sintaxis latina*, which is now lost. Pedro Reynoso,²⁹⁷ a Mercedarian Friar, is a very prolific 18th century grammarian, with five texts on different aspects of the Latin grammar. Seculars Domingo Ugarte²⁹⁸ and Juan Picazo,²⁹⁹ at the beginning of the 19th century, were still writing grammar textbooks for seminaries and colleges. And we must not forget that all this local production was complemented by the imports of books printed in Spain or elsewhere.

But Latin was not only a language for liturgy or for routine school exercises. If the first one hundred years after the Conquest are dominated by the indigenous languages as languages of contact with Spanish, it is the presence of Latin in contact with Spanish that dominates the second post-Conquest century, the Baroque century. Two aspects of the use of Latin draw my attention here: the translations-moralizations of the Classic mythology and the panegyric activity.

²⁹⁴ BHA V, 186 - 187

²⁹⁵ BHA II, 327 - 328

²⁹⁶ BHA I, 164

²⁹⁷ BHA IV, 200 - 202 V, 426

²⁹⁸ BHA V, 60

²⁹⁹ BHA IV, 138

Recalling my previous explanations, the Greco-Latin Classics furnished a reservoir of motives, subjects and images. But if they were to serve as Christian models, these materials were hardly usable in their original forms: tales of incest, abuse, debauch, cruelty and vengeance were the raw material of the most venerated myths. As Francisco Xavier Clavijero³⁰⁰ declares, in comparison with Greeks, Aztecs were “men[o] superstiziosa, men[o] ridicola, e meno indecente” (Clavijero 1780: 302). Explaining them as metaphors and analogies was a way to dodge the difficulty, as an anonymous woman poet, a Peruvian *criolla*, explains in her *Discurso en loor de la poesia* that precedes Diego Mexia’s translation of Ovid’s *Epistles*:

*“si dizes que te ofende, i trae confuso
ver en la Iglesia llenos los Poetas
de Dioses, qu’el Gentil en aras puso.*

*Las causas son mui varias, i secretas,
i todas aprovadas por Catolicas,
i assi en las condenar no t’entremetas.*

*Las unas son palabras Metaforicas,
i aunque muger indota me contemplo,
se que tambien ai otras Alegoricas.
[...]*

*Pues como? En templo santo, en santo dia
i entre gente Cristiana d’almas puras,
i donde està la Sacra Eucaristia:*

Se permiten retratos i figuras

³⁰⁰ BHA II, 119 - 122

*de los Dioses profanos, i de aquellos,
que estan ardiendo en carceles oscuras?*

*Permitensen poner, i es bien ponellos,
como trofeos de la Iglesia: i ella
con esto muestra, que se sirve d'ellos.*

*Assi esta dama ilustre, quanto bella
de la Poesia, quando se compone
en honra de su Dios, que pudo hazella:*

*con su divino espiritu dispone
de los Dioses antiguos, de tal suerte
qu'a Cristo sirven, i a sus pies los ponen" (Mexía 1608: 24)*

Ovid was one of the favourite authors in New Spain. Adding to his popularity as a writer of love themes, the fact that he had been exiled was viewed sympathetically by New Spaniards: “veinte años que navego mares i camino tierras, por diferentes climas, alturas i temperamentos, barbarizando entre barbaros, de suerte que me admiro como la lengua materna no se me a olvidado, pues muchas veces me acontece lo que a Ovidio estando desterrado entre los rusticos del Ponto, que queriendo hablar Romano, le sale Sarmatico”. These words belong to the first American translator of Ovid, Diego Mexia, in the introduction “del autor a sus amigos” to his translation of the Epistles, revealingly entitled *Del Parnaso Antartico* (1608). Mexia was an Andalusian who traveled to Peru and then to New Spain. Heavily damaged after a storm, his ship, which was loaded with of quicksilver probably destined to the Mexican gold mines, had to moor to be repaired. Mexia preferred to continue his journey by land. During the three months of journey, crossing land ravaged

by the feared **cocoliztli** (epidemic) and in the middle of the rainy season, he translated Ovid's letters after an original bought from a student on the way. He sent the manuscript to Seville, his home town, to be published. It was printed in 1608, with the accompaniment of laudatory sonnets and other poems by friends and admirers in the introduction and conclusion.

Ovid's Heroids are letters of some of the most famous women of the Classical world to their lovers: Elena of Troy to Paris, Penelope to Ulysses, among others. They are an exploration into human emotion and a celebration of earthly love. Instead, in his translation, Mexia's explicit intention is to moralize Ovid: "que cuando estas Epistolas no merecieren el nombre de Ovidianas, por su umilde traduzion, se les deve el de Cristianas, por la onestidad, i moral dotrina con que las é traducido" (1608: 3).

Mexia includes an explanation preceding each letter, and concludes with a Christian morality, often related to the situation in the Indies:

El ingrato Jason con la presencia de la fugaz Medea nunca mas se acordo de su mujer Isifile, lo qual es bien que sirva de exemplo i d'escarmiento, para que aya mucho recato en elegir marido, i mas si es forastero, que por no avello en estas Indias ay tantos casamientos tan infelices (6th Epistle, p. 79)

Hay que advertir especialmente en estos tiempos [...] y en las Indias [...] el recato grande que han de tener los casados de recibir en sus casas huespedes, ni traer a ellas ombres, especialmente mancebos, pues desto an sucedido muchos desastres i infamias, cuyos exemplos no son menester buscarlos en las edades passadas i en regiones estranjeras sino ver las que en nuestras ciudades an acaecido.. pues agora las mujeres sean Elenas, agora sean Penelopes, siempre son ocasión de desastres. (Epistle from Elena to Paris, p.172)

Tambien se puede conocer por esta historia la temeridad de los se fian del mar, i cuan propincuos andan de la muerte; lo qual vemos en tantas flotas perdidas, tantos navios hundidos, i tan innumerable gente ahogada ... Dixolo mui bien Terencio, con no aver en su tiempo los prolixos i temerarios viages deste nuestro. (Epistle from Ero to Leandro, p. 209)

He doesn't fail to bring home the subject of the false gods:

...de la qual historia sera gran razon que ponderemos con la puntualidad que aquella gente ciega cumplia los votos hechos a sus falsos dioses, i con cuanta mas razon i reverencia los Cristianos lo devemos cumplir, al que es solo i verdadero Dios, Rei de los Reyes i universal Señor de los Señores. (Epistle from Cidipe to Aconcio, p. 226)

When purging the text from obscenities, he indicates in the glosses where he has removed the text:

“Imagino tal vez, que reclinada
en tus braços estoi, i algunas pienso,
que mi braço te sirve de almohada.
Tal vez * mas para que tan por estenso
quiero contar, lo que contado ofende,
a mi sensualidad, pagando el censo *aquí dexé de traduzir tres disticos
(Epistle from Sapho to Faon, p. 235)

Poetry in translation was a means by which the Classical world was conveniently purged, de-paganized and re-elaborated by the New Spaniards, in much the same way that historiography in translation had purged, de-paganized and re-elaborated the pre-Hispanic past. Here we can see at work the ideological potential of translation, in that it hides the source of the rewriting while enhancing the canonical or doxologically acceptable characteristics of that source.

At the same time, translation creates a new identity, born out of the friction between old materials and the will to make them say something different. This was, in a way, what

American Baroque was about. The dissemination of Classical models, images and motives in conjunction with local imagery and symbolism was present and widespread: ephemeral architectural pieces such as triumphal arches were built on special occasions: the Saint's day, arrival of a new Viceroy, or bishop; then displayed an abundance of symbolic motives and allusions to both the Classic and pre-Hispanic worlds. Paintings and print images exhibited also the combination of Indian and Classical themes.

In the translation field, though, what is more striking is the absolute fascination held by the seventeenth and eighteenth century New Spain's colonial elite for the Latin word, as demonstrated by the flood of panegyric writings characterized, in particular, by the authors' mastery in playing with words. To start with, at the Jesuits' schools, Latin rhetoric and poetic competitions, theater plays and academic *orationes* were part of the program. Moreover, Latin compositions were prepared on demand, for special occasions or special persons. Characteristic of this production is its display of artificiality, the taste for the "strange" verse: riddles, palindromes, labyrinths (poems that can be read forward or backward or in any other directions, see Fig. 21), retrograde poems, hieroglyphs, inscriptions, epigrams and emblems, *centonia* and bilingual poems. These last two forms are of particular interest here.

The *centonium* is a recycled poem. It is composed of verses from another poem or poems. It is intertextuality not only declared and made explicit: it is the basis for the new creation. The verses are literally taken from other poems, particularly from Classical Greco-Latin poems, and are combined to form a new poem. The original location of the verses is noted at the end of each of them, so the merit of the work resides in the mastery of the combinations.

Bruno Francisco Larrañaga³⁰¹ (? – 1816), a noted Latinist clergyman, decided to elaborate a *centonium* in praise of an early Franciscan missionary, Fray Antonio de Margil, whose travels, poorness and miraculous life earned him the title of “apóstol de occidente” (a reference to Jesuit St. Francis Xavier, the “apóstol de oriente”). In prevision of the difficulties in having the work printed, Larrañaga prepared a booklet which explained his purpose, laid a few pages of the poem itself with the Spanish translation and published it in order to collect subscriptions allowing him to prepare and publish the final work. This is the title he chose for his *centonium*: *Eneida Apostolica, o Epopeya que celebra la predicacion del V. Apostol del Occidente, P. Fr. Antonio Margil de Jesús: intitulada Margileida, escrita con puros versos de P. Virgilio Maron y traducido a verso castellano* (1788).

Here is how he describes his work: "se ha reducido mi trabajo a deshacer un texido, y con los mismos hilos, y trama, hacer otro diferente, de diferentes colores y diferentes labores" (1788: 6). Undoing the weft and making a new one with the same threads, but noting exactly the place they occupied before:

Dicitur ante aras, media inter Numina Divium AE.4.204

Insignem pietatem Virum (mirabile visu!) AE. 1. 14; AE. 12. 252

Larrañaga explains the transfer of verses from the Aeneid to his *Margileida* as a metaphor for a true religious conversion: pagan heroes become models of virtue, the words of gentiles miraculously transformed into Christian messages, himself impersonating Virgil, whose genius is now put to fight idolatry through a Christianized Aeneas, who dictates our destiny: that of becoming Romans. Here are his words, at the introduction of his *Prospecto de una Eneida Apostolica*:

³⁰¹ BHA III, 96 - 97

He deseado, y deseo, ser otro Homero para mi esforzadísimo Aquiles, para mi prudentísimo Ulises; otro Virgilio para mi Venerable piadosísimo Eneas, u otro Ciceron para esta dignísima Causa. A ninguno de éstos me permite igualar la escasez y rudeza de mis talentos. Pero mi venerable asunto ha obrado uno de sus acostumbrados prodigios: no solo sacando de la dura roca de mi discurso sus elogios, sino (lo que es mas) formándolos de las cláusulas de un Gentil, infinitamente ageno de nuestra Sagrada Religión, y diez y seis siglos distante del nacimiento de su Paternidad muy Venerable, o haciéndome a mi en el modo posible otro Virgilio, que celebre la invencible Apostólica piedad, con que el incendio horroroso de la Idolatría, Barbaridad y Gentilismo, engañosamente introducido en este Reyno: de enmedio de la desastrada Troya de los pecados, y errores del Siglo, sacó en sus ombros robustos a su amado Padre Dios: en las manos a sus adorados Penates el Santo Nombre de Jesus crucificado, y su Santísima Fe a seguro salvamento, y hasta colocarlos en templos edificadas por él: y después de alcanzar Victoria de muy reñidas batallas con heroica fortaleza, estableció, y dexó su bendita prole, que nos da la felicidad de ser Romanos. (1788: 5).

The pride of this criollo New Spaniard, a contemporary of Eguíara y Eguren, is striking: “Yo soy” – he says – “quien ha obligado a Virgilio, y lo ha enseñado, que diga divinidades, y mejore el empleo de su elocuencia, hasta soltarlo de entre mis manos convertido, catequizado, animado de un espíritu más penetrante, y escribiendo por fin una Margileida, o Eneida Apostólica, hablando verdades...” (1788: 7). This assertiveness is also a characteristic of a new atmosphere in the colonial society. New Spaniards could use Latin and Virgil as they pleased. Virgil, as Ovid in the previous example, talked to the Americans. The emotions and the labors they sung were not different from the ones felt and suffered there. The universality of the Classics gave the Americans a place in the continuum of civilization. Virgil would be translated into a Christian, and father Margil could be translated into a Mediterranean hero.

I have found another illustration of this free use of Latin in another type of poetic creation, also close to translation: the bilingual poem. Because of its proximity to Latin, Spanish lends itself to such creations, which consist of combinations of the two languages in a same poem. From Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the great poet, is the following *villancico*, dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in 1679:

*Divina Maria / rubicunda Aurora
matutina Lux, / purissima Rosa,
Luna, quae diversas / illustrando zonas,
peregrina luces, / eclipses ignoras*

*Angelica Scala, /Arca prodigiosa,
pacifica Oliva, / Palma victoriosa.
Alta mente culta, / castissima Flora,
pensiles foecundas / candida Pomona.*

*Tu quae coronando / conscientias devotas,
domas arrogantes, / debiles confortas.
Dominando excelsa, / imperando sola,
felices exaltas / mentes quae te adorant*

*Tu sustentas, pia / gentes quae te implorant,
dispensando gratias, / ostentando glorias.
Triumphando de culpa, / tremenda Belona,
perfidas cervices / dura mente domas.*

*Thalamos empyreos / ornas deliciosa
amando inocentes, / discordes conformas
Triste te invocamos: / concede, gloriosa
gratias quae te illustrant, / dotes quae te adornant*

Estribillo:

¡Vive, triumpha, tranquilla, quando te adorant

Seraphines cantando perpetuas glorias !

Although the Classical horizon is dominated by Latin, Greek was also studied and cultivated in New Spain. If we restrict ourselves to the mere number of translations from this language, we would tend to disregard it. Hellenism was however more than symbolically present, be it from the original sources or from Latin, and those who cultivated it were also interested in many other subjects and languages: Jesuit Agustín Castro³⁰² (1728-1790), who taught and promoted Greek both in Mexico and in exile, translated Seneca's *Trojans*, Virgil's *Tytirus*, Fedro's Fables, and poetry from Juvenal, Horace, Anacreon and Sapho, but he also translated into Spanish non-Classical works, such as Bacon's *De dignitate et augmento scientiarum* and poetry by Milton, Pope and Young.

The fact that among the Greek works we have the translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Batrachiomachia* into Latin by the Jesuit Francisco Javier Alegre³⁰³ (1729-1788), and that he also translated books on physics and mathematical instruments from French, and possibly Boileau, argues in favor of a fully developed classical and simultaneously modern erudition. This cultivation of Classical languages was the doing of mostly Jesuits, who imposed themselves in the Church's life from their arrival to New Spain in 1572 as the militant arm of the Counterreformation, and who displaced the Franciscans in the leadership of the Mexican Church Councils (Jesuit Father Pedro de Ortigosa³⁰⁴ was the theological consultant for the 1584 Third Mexican Council: he chose the material to be

³⁰² BHA II, 85 - 88

³⁰³ BHA I, 114 - 116

³⁰⁴ BHA III, 43

discussed, directed the sessions and translated the work into Latin from the secretary's notes in Castilian). After being expelled in 1767, these New Spain Jesuits, four hundred and ninety individuals who had to embark overnight, leaving behind their libraries and writings, resumed their intellectual work and publish their works in exile. One of the most outstanding products of this period is represented by the Latin poem *De Deo, deoque homine heroica*, whose author is the Jesuit Diego Abad³⁰⁵ (1727-1779), translator of Virgil. Abad, who was, like most of the other Jesuits, born and educated in Mexico, that is, a *criollo*, recreated from Europe the excellence of his homeland. His nostalgic feelings are part of the 6432 hexameter poem: the memories of childhood, the colors, the crisp air:

*[ebria]. Sed memini degisse ubi nubila nunquam
obdunctut tenebris hiberno tempore caelum:
nix ubi siquando cecidit; videre cadentem
attonitis similes pueri, iuvenesque! Ubi vixdum
in terram incubuit subito tepefacta liquescit:
nec riget in glaciem, neque sursum tollere cristas
audet, et in magnos concreta assurgere montes. (XV, 12-18).³⁰⁶*

Mexico, the chosen land, upon which the Virgin of Guadalupe turned her eyes, the object of his longing:

“Ut memini! Ut videor, te nunc quoque, Virgo, videre! (XLII, 630)³⁰⁷

Written in Ferrara, the Italian exile, this long poem, composed in Virgilian

³⁰⁵ BHA I, 61 - 64

³⁰⁶ “Pero bien me acuerdo haber morado en otra tierra, donde los nublados no anohecen el cielo de los días invernales, donde la nieve, si acaso ha caído, fue asombroso regocijo de los muchachos y los niños, y de la noche a la mañana se evaporó con tibieza; no congeló sus fríos ni osó encaramar a la cima de los altos montes la cresta de su rígida soberbia”. (Fernández Valenzuela, 1974, *Poema Heroico*, p. 307). For these excerpts I have not found an English version and I prefer not to attempt a version myself.

³⁰⁷ “¿Cómo no te me caes de la memoria, que parece que todavía tengo en ti puestos los ojos!” (Fernández Valenzuela, 1974, *Poema Heroico*, p. 715)

hexameters, is a song praising God and His creation, and announcing the birth of a new man. In it, Abad³⁰⁸ speaks as a prophet:

*Servati, et memores hoc nos ab cardine rerum
venturos deinceps, nostrosque putabimus annos,
et novus hinc oritur, saeculorum, et vertitur ordo. (XXIII, 133-135)³⁰⁹*

Then, paraphrasing Virgil's *Aeneid* and *Bucolica* verses, that read: "deterior conec paulatim ac decolor aetas/ ...successit" (Aen. VII, 326-327), and "Ignotoque etiam surget gens aurea mundo./ Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo" (Buc, IV, 9), he declares:

*Aurea nunc ibit; subsidet decolor aetas.
Ignotoque etiam surget gens aurea mundo.(XXIII, 135-137)³¹⁰*

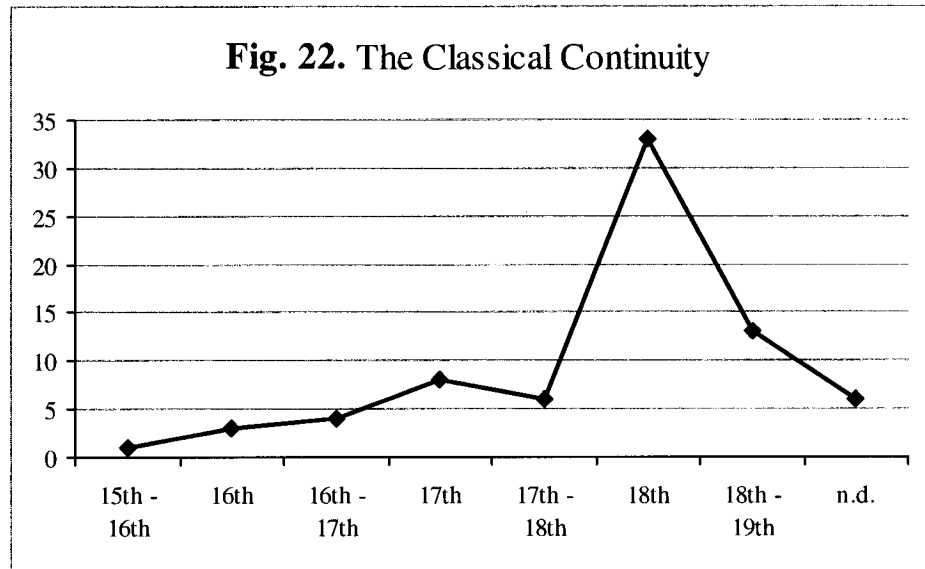
"An unknown world will give birth to a golden race..." With these words, from Italy, and in Latin, paraphrasing Virgil's verses, the pride of the nation was sung. Abad's *De Deo* was first published (partly and anonymously) in Spain, in 1769, under the symptomatic title of *Musa Americana*. A second version was printed in Italy in 1773, and the full text in 1780. It met with an enormous success (Maneiro and Fabri 1989: 180).

Figure 22 shows the evolution of the translation activity I have described in this section. The continued presence of GrecoLatin translation, starting in the first years, becomes visible in this curve, which shows its highest moment in the "baroque century", the Jesuit century, and falls sharply after the expulsion. I must recall that, since the register stops at 1821, the data corresponding to the nineteenth century are not to be taken into account.

³⁰⁸ BHA I, 61 - 64

³⁰⁹ "Nosotros, con puntual memoria, sobre este día moveremos los goznes de la historia, y de aquí contaremos en lo por venir los años, como que de aquí nace la generación nueva de los siglos" (Fernández Valenzuela, 1974, *Poema Heroico*, p. 451). For these two excerpts I have not found an English version and I prefer not to attempt a version myself.

³¹⁰ "Pasará la edad dorada, vendrán en su lugar pálidos siglos, y de un desconocido mundo surgirá una raza de oro" (Spanish version by Fernández Valenzuela, 1974, *Poema Heroico*, p. 451).



3.1.3. Translation and the Modern High Culture

In the Translational Canvass, I have dealt with the transwritings that constitute the basis for an imagined community of Christian faithful. The *pre-judgement* of universalism contributes to establishing a negotiated base of mutual intelligibility. Upon this basis, myths of common descent and chosen people are elaborated through intersemiotic translations and subsequent transwritings, as I have shown in the section on translation and the founding myths. As far as continuity with the great Classical civilizations is concerned, it is constructed through the reelaboration of the Greco-Latin mythology and the intense and creative use of Latin.

These aspects have in general dealt with the “past side” of the Janus-faced phenomenon of nations I briefly defined in my pages on language and nation; that is, when translations offer representations of the nation that are anchored in the past. I will now turn to the modern side of the phenomenon, that is, where translations convey a “forward-looking representation” of the nation. By this, I mean those that contribute to represent a



Fig. 23. Códice de la Cruz-Badiano

culture as autonomous, and its people as educated, prosperous, and capable of competing and dialoguing with other peoples, importing and assimilating the innovations that were considered beneficial and censoring the ones that are deemed prejudicial.

It is not easy to draw the line, though, between these backward and forward-looking representations. Let's take for instance the case of Sahagún's³¹¹ *Historia General*. Some parts could fall perfectly under the High Modern Culture class, since the mindset with

³¹¹ BHA IV, 275 - 277

which they were prepared was forward-looking for today's standards of criticism. I have preferred, though, to guide myself by the author's declared intentions, and not to ascribe a will of modernity when, in fact, he chose to define his text as an aid to mission. In other words, I have left Sahagún's work under the Translational Canvass class because he said that the reason why he wrote the *Historia General* was that the missionary brothers could not confess properly unless they knew what was going on in the Indian's world and minds, and the words that went with it.³¹² Instead, Torquemada's³¹³ *Monarquía Indiana* will come into the Modern High Culture category because Torquemada's intention was to compile in one comprehensive work the histories that were known at the time and, however biased towards religion (which was an insurmountable *pre-judgement*), his intention was historiographical, not missionary: "Es la Historia un beneficio inmortal, que se comunica a muchos. Qué depósito hay más cierto, y más enriquecido, que la Historia? Allí tenemos presentes las cosas pasadas, y testimonio, y argumento, de las por venir: ella nos da noticia y declara, y muestra lo que en diversos lugares, y tiempos acontece: los Montes no la estrechan, ni los Rios, ni los Años, ni los Meses, porque ni esta sujeta a la diferencia de los Tiempos, ni del Lugar. Es la Historia un Enemigo grande, y declarado contra la injuria de los Tiempos, de los quales claramente triunfa".³¹⁴

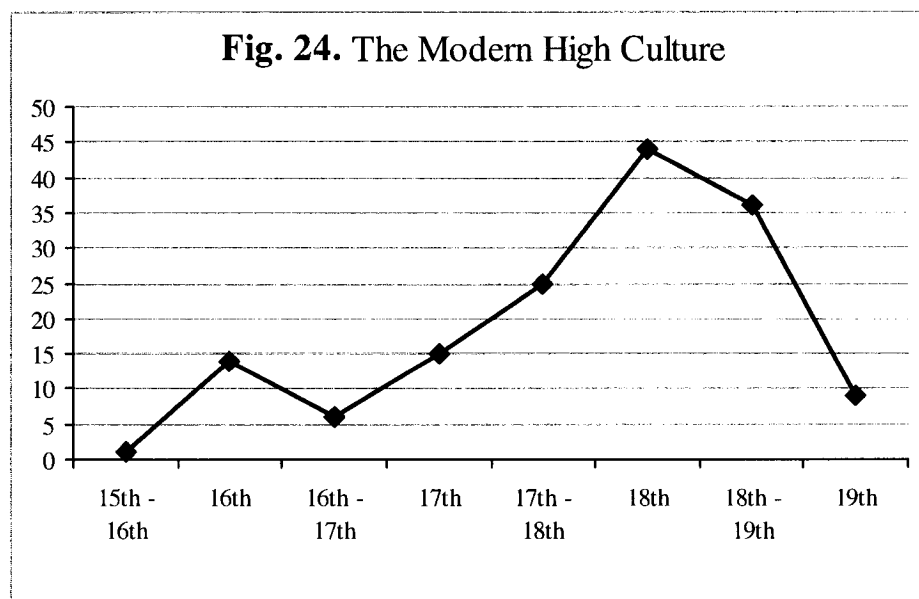
The production I am talking about in this section is, in general, not simultaneous to the one I have analyzed under the Translational Canvass category, but growing exactly as the Translational Canvass category fades and eventually disappears. Its emergence and evolution sharply contrasts with that of the Translational Canvass category, as can be seen

³¹² Before its discovery in the Vatican libraries, the general opinion was that Sahagún's work was in fact a dictionary.

³¹³ BHA V, 37 - 38

³¹⁴ Torquemada 1615/1975. "Prologo general y primero de toda la Monarquía Indiana", unnumbered page.

in Figure 5. Moreover, it is important to stress that, while during the first decades all writing activity was directed to conversion and, therefore, missionary translation virtually occupied the entire literary spectrum, the Modern High Culture translations were only a fraction of the general text production. Indeed, they are literally submerged in a sea of other texts, a very different situation from the one in the first part of the Colonial period, when translations were virtually the only texts and therefore assumed a leading role. Many translators I will mention here are themselves known as authors of original work, and translation was part of their literary activities to a greater extent than translators from other categories. Just as the translators of Greco-Latin works, they belonged less to the intercultural colonial frontier and acted more as agents of a receiving culture which called for these translations. The frontier in which they were acting was not the one that had divided Indians from Spanish, but proud *criollos* from arrogant *peninsulars*. And our translators were proud *criollos* belonging to a social sphere of “letrados”, both producers and consumers of cultural goods: writers, men of Church, teachers, administrators, and



other intellectual professionals that constituted the bulk of the urban bureaucracy moving in *Audiencias*, Seminars, schools and university (Rama 2004: 57). They translated to bring home modern science, essay and devotion, while they also produced science, essay and devotion.

This category represents the second largest corpus of translations, one hundred and fifty, encompassing a variety of subjects: religion, science, history, essay and other lay matters. This production is basically concentrated in the second part of the Colonial period. There are, however, a few important items of early occurrence: one of them is the beautifully illustrated document known as the *Códice De la Cruz-Badiano*, a 1552 Latin translation of a Nahuatl text by Martín de la Cruz, an Indian scholar of the Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco. The translator was another Indian scholar, Juan Badiano. The manuscript is entitled: *Libellus de medicinalibus indorum herbis* (Fig. 23), and contains the description and paintings of medicinal plants used by the Indian population. It is considered to be the first scientific work of America as well as the last medieval herbarium (Trabulse 2003: 43). Amazingly, the text is complete, perfectly readable, the illustrations have kept their colors, and a careful facsimilar edition was prepared in Mexico some years ago. Many aspects make this translation a particularly valuable item: the early date, the matter, the fact that both author and translator are identified, that they are both Indian: Martín de la Cruz identifies himself in the first page as a doctor in the Colegio, specifying that he has not studied medicine and that he knows everything by experience. The Latin translator proudly introduces himself by name, origin and hometown: “Joannes Badianus natione Indus patria Xuchimilcanus”, and signs as the “interpres” at the end of the manuscript. The fact that the *Códice* was written in Nahuatl, an oral language, which had been transcribed barely twenty

or thirty years before, and translated into Latin, a language living mostly in its written form, makes it an exceptional illustration of what Ángel María Garibay, the famous Nahuatl specialist, already in the 1950s was timidly suggesting as a “interculturación”.³¹⁵

One wish we could have at least a few pages of what is known to have been a translation of Dioscorides Pedanius *De materia medica*³¹⁶ into Maya by a certain Father Bernardino Valladolid (1617-1652). This missionary Franciscan friar, who was born in Spain, went to Yucatán in 1634. In his short life, Valladolid managed to learn the language well enough to have written doctrinal works in Maya and to translate the classical Greek pharmacopoeia (from Latin, since it was in Latin that *De materia* had survived), to which he added drawings of local plants with their names in Latin, Spanish and Maya, including their properties. Whether he already found the book in the convent or if he brought it with him from Spain is something we don't know. One 14 of October of 1652 he fell down a flight of stairs and died at the age of 35, says Beristáin, who provides the only information we have about this man. The sudden death of Bernardino must have been a shock for his people, since the date and cause of the accident were carefully registered.

A young friar from Toledo who, as soon as he arrives into this foreign land, takes to import for that new language one of the best medicine works circulating in Europe: he must not have had the slightest doubt about the significance and future of Maya. And he had no doubt that whatever was written in Latin could be said in Maya. Moreover, he complemented the Dioscorides with plants that were unknown in the original

³¹⁵ Garibay uses this term for the first time, I think, in 1954, when referring to mestizo chroniclers: “podría acaso usarse el término, feo por cierto, de interculturación” (1987: 291). Then, in the translation of the *Libellus*, dated 1963, he says that the value of the book resides in that it is “signo de la interculturación de dos pueblos, tan grande el uno como el otro” (1991: 8)

³¹⁶ Dioscorides Pedanius (ca. 40) was a Greek physician who practiced in Rome. His work was still consulted and reproduced in the Renaissance. The first known Spanish translation was made in 1555.

Mediterranean. He was therefore enriching the information database. Once again, as we have seen with the grammarians, the *pre-judgements* that stretch the vision seem to overpower those that limit the vision.

The impact of these two works was small, if any. The *Libellus Medicinalibus* was prepared for King Philip II, apparently in the hope that it would move the Monarch into being more generous with the *Colegio*, which had been severely affected by lack of funds, and suffered great loss of personnel in the recent **cocolitzli** epidemics of 1545. The text was carefully kept in Spain, and nothing else was known about it until it was discovered in the Vatican in 1929. The fate of the Maya *De materia medica* is more uncertain, since we only know it by reference. They were probably just brief sparks of scientific creation with very little impact outside the limited context in which they were produced.

Other cases were more fortunate: in 1570, Philip II sent Doctor Francisco Hernández³¹⁷ to New Spain with the mandate to collect information on flora, fauna and minerals of the land in what was the first scientific expedition to the New World. The result of seven years of travels and study, a voluminous manuscript beautifully illustrated was sent to Spain in 1577, where it was kept under the strictest secrecy as the king had grown suspicious of everything related to the descriptions and histories of America and decided not to have it published: “...estos libros de la descripcion de todas las Indias, me ha parecido que por ser de la calidad que son , y por el inconveniente que se podría seguir si anduviesen por muchas manos...sería bueno que todos se recogiesen en el Consejo y se pusiesen en algún cajón cerrado” (Baudot 2002: 54). In 1576, he had already issued an order declaring: “que ningún religioso trate ni conozca judicariamente de los negocios de

³¹⁷ BHA III, 18 - 28

los indios tocantes a sus ídolos y supersticiones, antes lo remita todo a nuestro padre provincial” (Baudot 2002: 53) and Sahagún’s³¹⁸ works were confiscated in 1577. This radical change of atmosphere hit also doctor Hernández’s work, which could not be published during his lifetime. Some sections of it were published in Rome during the same century, although not respecting the original format which followed the Nahuatl nomenclature of specimens. He had written his work in Latin, with a Spanish and Nahuatl translation, which were not included in this Italian edition. From a copy of this short edition, a Dominican Father who worked at a New Spain’s hospital, Francisco Ximénez,³¹⁹ made a translation and published it in 1615 under the title *Cuatro libros de la Naturaleza*, supplementing the information with observations of his own experience (Trabulse 2003: 47). This Spanish version was very successful in the Americas, and was reprinted twice during the nineteenth century. It was this first version also that crossed the Atlantic in the 1650s to be retranslated into Latin by a Jan de Laet, Dutch officer with the Dutch Company of the Western Indies (which illustrates the lack of communication between Protestant and Catholic scientists). It is believed that Hernández’s original work perished in 1671 in the fire that consumed El Escorial’s royal library. The work, therefore, influenced the New World naturalists and geographers of the eighteenth century, like José Mariano Moziño³²⁰ and Wilhelm von Humboldt, through Friar Ximénez translation.³²¹

Going back to medicine, we do have quite a few transwritings from medical

³¹⁸ BHA IV, 275 - 277

³¹⁹ BHA V, 175 - 178

³²⁰ BHA III, 294

³²¹ The information on Francisco Hernández is taken from Elías Trabulse 2003, vol I, and José Pardo Tomás: “Francisco Hernández (1515?-1587). Medicina e historia natural en el Nuevo Mundo”, in http://nti.educa.rcanaria.es/fundoro/act11_12pdf_web/capitulos/09.pdf.

classics: in 1712 Jesuit Juan de Esteyneffer³²² was publishing a *Florilegio medicinal de todas las enfermedades sacado de varios, y Clásicos Authores, para bien de los Pobres, y de los que tienen falta de Medicos, en particular para las Provincias Remotas, en donde administran los RR. PP. Misioneros de la Compañía de Jesvs*. In 1790, the physician Juan Bermúdez³²³ published his translation from the French original by M. Daubenton of a *Disertación sobre las indigestiones*, while noted mathematician and physician Ignacio Bartolache,³²⁴ founder of the first American medical journal, the *Mercurio Volante*, translated Luigi Cornaro *Discorsi sulla vita sopra*, a popular manual of life-extending recipes, from a French translation, and published it in the *Mercurio Volante*. He is also the author of a curious *Noticia plausible para sanos y enfermos* in Spanish, and in Nahuatl: *Netemachtiliztli*, in which he advertised a brand of ferruginous pills he had produced. Both were published in 1774. Scottish physician John Brown's *Elementa medicinae* (1780) was a point of reference both in Europe and in the New World. During the first years of the nineteenth century scholars Florencio Pérez y Comoto,³²⁵ José María Amable³²⁶ and José Mariano Moziño translated and published aspects of it. Vaccine, which was introduced also in the eighteenth century, was the object of one translation: Louis Moreau de la Sarthe's *Tratado histórico-práctico de la vacuna* by the astounding Spanish doctor Francisco Javier Balmis,³²⁷ who was carrying research with traditional indigenous medicine in New Spain and had to face the skepticism of Spanish scientists. King Charles IV was convinced to finance a worldwide antivariolic vaccination campaign, and Dr. Balmis personally directed the *Real Expedición Filantrópica de la Vacuna*, sailing in 1803 from Spain with 22 orphan

³²² BHA IV, 376

³²³ BHA I, 257

³²⁴ BHA I, 225

³²⁵ BHA II, 133 - 134

³²⁶ BHA I, 137

³²⁷ BHA I, 210

children who were successively inoculated during the trip and served as living vaccines to thousands of people in America, the Philippines and China (Trabulse 2003).

Science and medicine were part of the construction of an imagined community, just as Benedict Anderson's census, maps, and museums. Geography and natural sciences were also crucial. It is during the seventeenth and eighteenth century that information on the actual dimensions and shapes of the territory, distances among cities, exact locations, mineral richness and natural resources becomes more accurate. Calculating the geographical coordinates of the main American cities was one of the most crucial problems occupying the minds of mathematicians and cosmographers, since exact calculations would facilitate travels and trade. Eclipses and celestial phenomena, when predictable, generated great expectations among scientists and preparations were made by mail between colleagues posted in different cities, at home and abroad (Trabulse 1985). The controversy about the origin and meaning of comets could be followed in the bitter exchanges between Mexican-born and educated Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, for whom comets were exclusively scientific phenomena, and the Austrian Jesuit Father Eusebius Chini (Kino), who believed in their supernatural origin and meaning. The next generation will witness Francisco Javier Alegre³²⁸ (1729-1788), whom we have met as translator of Homer and will meet again as translator of Boileau, participating from his exile in the consolidation of a **local** scientific community with his translations of the works of Nicolas Bion (1652-1733), a **French** specialist in mathematical instruments, and Jacob William Storm, or Stormius, (1688-1742), Dutch physicist and mathematician. Apart from the few works that were translated, there was a wide circulation of scientific works imported from Europe, and the

³²⁸ *BHA* I, 114 - 115

Inquisition was often called to examine the books and submit them to censorship. Registers include during the eighteenth century repeated confiscations of Newton's *Opuscula mathematica* "por proposiciones heréticas".³²⁹

Travels were also originating translations and transwritings, such as the lexicon on the Nutka language appended to José Mariano Moziño *Noticias de Nutka* (1793), and the translation from Portuguese by the Augustinian Francisco Muñoz³³⁰ (1600?) of the travel accounts of the Bishop of Goa (undated manuscript). Finally, Jesuit Agustín Castro,³³¹ who, let's recall, was a translator of Virgil, translated also into Spanish Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) *De dignitate et augmento scientiarum*, one of Bacon's works that shook the old scientific paradigms and set the principles of experimental science.

As one of the main economic activities, mining generated attention from engineers and scientists. Theoretical works were published in Spain, but many reports and practical compendia were produced locally. José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez³³² (1738-1799), a cleric noted for his scientific interests and as the founder of the first New Spain literary journal, the *Diario Literario de México*, published miscellaneous works on natural sciences, physics and astronomy. Among his writings we find mention of a translation on the uses of mercury from a French Mons. Jussieu, which remained probably as a manuscript. There are other translations on military sciences and miscellaneous administrative and law subject matters, from French or Latin.

The kind of translations we find in the second half of the Colonial period reflect,

³²⁹ See *Catálogo de textos marginados novohispanos. Inquisición, siglos XVIII y XIX. Archivo General de la Nación (México)*, Mexico: AGN, Colmex, UNAM, 1992.

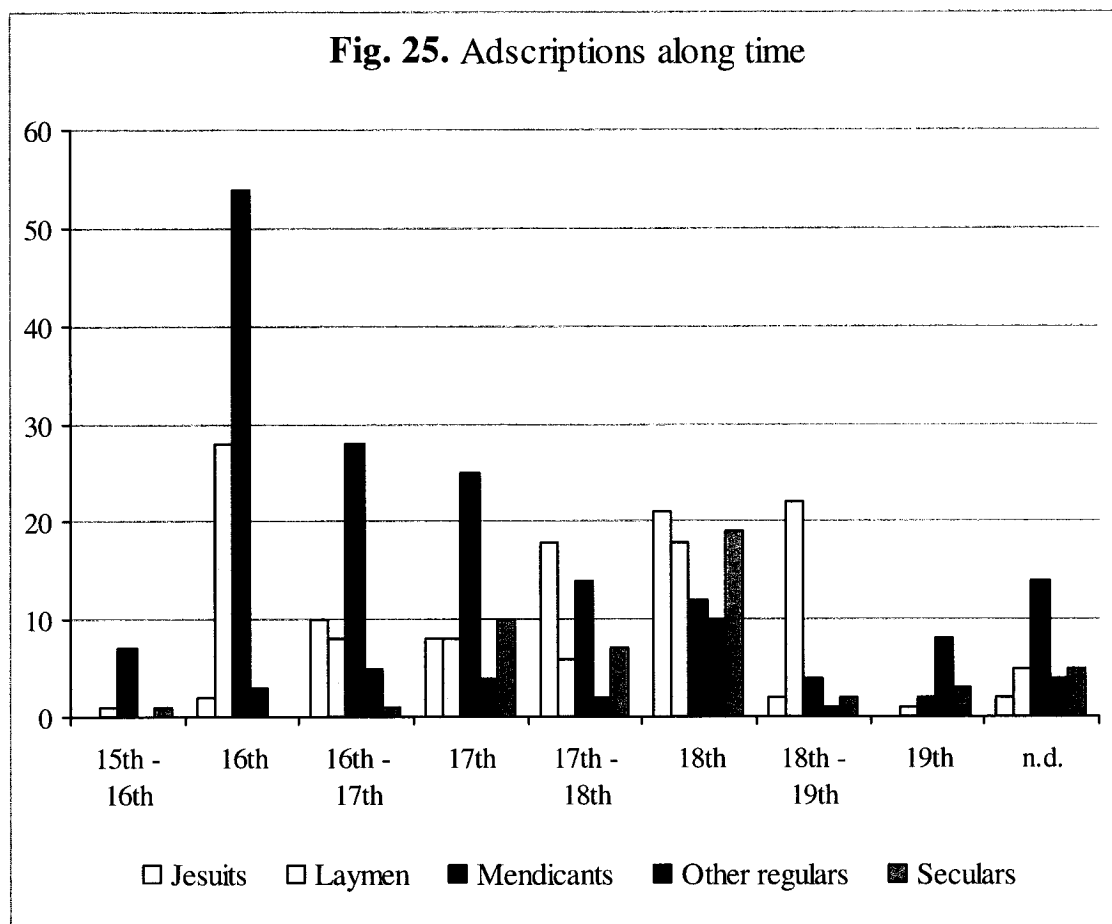
³³⁰ BHA III, 302 - 303

³³¹ BHA II, 85 - 88

³³² BHA I, 134 - 135

indeed, a different kind of society with respect to the first hundred to hundred and fifty years. By and large, the indigenous languages are disappearing from the translational horizon; translations from European languages become more frequent and replace Latin as the major source language. Everything is now translated into Spanish. Jesuits and secular priests, as well as laymen, occupy the place of the Mendicants as translators, as is shown in Figure 25. The geographical and statistical information, disseminated by the newly created periodicals and the school system at a period of prosperity such as the one experienced in the second half of the eighteenth century, disseminated an idea of the dimensions and economic potential of the nation. Something any New Spaniard could be proud of, and which contrasted with the information that had been circulating on America in European scholarly spheres. It is the period of affirmation of the national consciousness, partly triggered by the rivalry between *criollos* and *peninsulars*, and partly as a refutation of the idea that America was a backward continent, and that people there were unable to progress because of their constitutive shortcomings.

However “ilustrados” they were, religion continued to be the axis of the colonial society. In this field we find translations and transwritings not geared to the indoctrination of Indians (after all, there were no longer adult Indians to be converted) but to promote general devotion among all social classes. Eighty-three out of 150 titles correspond to **religious** works. The classical mystics are present: Boecio (480-525), Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471) and Johannes Gerson (1363-1429), but also contemporary Saint Francis of Sales (1567-1622), and Jean Croiset (1656-1738). The religious translation represented here corresponds, thus, to classic post-tridentine works. It is significant for the history of colonial translation that to this category belongs the first translation printed in America,



which was also the first printed book: a translation from Latin into Spanish of a 6th century spiritual devotional, Saint John Climacus' *Scala Spiritual*, translated by a Father Juan de Estrada³³³ (or Juan de la Magdalena) and printed around 1532 for the use of the novices at Saint Francis convent in Mexico.³³⁴ Saints' and Blessed one's lives, including the life of the first American Saint (Saint Rose of Lima), and other prayer books for personal devotion constitute the largest part of religious literature in translation from Latin.

As a curiosity, two works by Methodist author James Hervey: *Meditations among the tombs*, and *Reflections in a flower garden* made it to New Spain thanks to the

³³³ BHA II, 250

³³⁴ This book is lost, but its existence as well as the date and provenance have been well documented.

translations (from French) of Manuel María Gorriño³³⁵ (1810 and 1811) who, probably because he was a public character, signed with the pseudonym Leñogurri.

Lay thinking and literature are another aspect touched upon in translation, with forty-three items. In literature, we will find mentions of translations from Milton, Pope and others, as well as a distinctive liking for Pedro Metastasio's odes, with two different translations by José Iturriaga and Francisco Sánchez Tagle,³³⁶ at the beginning of the 18th and 19th century, respectively. We have the quite extraordinary case of the translations into Nahuatl made by Bartolomé de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,³³⁷ younger brother of Fernando (who was introduced in the Foundation Myths section), in 1640, of three plays by Pedro Calderón de la Barca ("El gran teatro del mundo"), Lope de Vega Carpio ("La madre de la mejor"), and Antonio Mira de Amescua ("El animal profeta y dichoso parricida").

With respect to the indigenous languages description and history of the past, they are now approached with a more scientific than religious angle, in accordance with the illustrated atmosphere of the period. The few linguistic works and general descriptions I have collected here correspond, therefore, to a new, more distant and secularized approach towards the indigenous languages, although not less militant from other points of view. Indigenous languages and history seem to find their place now in the general movement of the Lumières. In the period that goes from the *Monarquía Indiana* (1610/1975), to Francisco Javier Clavijero's³³⁸ linguistic and historical works, written from exile one hundred and fifty years later, a new attitude has emerged with regards to the past, a past made to the measure of the *criolla* society, written not for the Indian descendants neither

³³⁵ BHA II, 379

³³⁶ BHA V, 9 - 10

³³⁷ BHA I, 125

³³⁸ BHA II, 119 - 122

for the missionaries nor for the conquerors, but for the educated New Spaniards, the “ciudad letrada” defined by Ángel Rama.

After this quick but necessarily dense review of the translation contribution to the formation of a cultivated *criolla* society, I would like to turn to the historiographic discourse, which will consolidate as the basis of a national discourse during the “periodo ilustrado”, that is, since the 1760s until the independence wars.

There was no more translation proper of Mexican historiographic materials after Torquemada’s³³⁹ *Monarquía Indiana*. But this work, which was the main general history to circulate freely after the prohibition to write about things of Indies by Philip II³⁴⁰ was, to use again Brading’s phrase (2000: 22), a “permanent arsenal” of information on the past that was extensively used by later historians. The *Monarquía Indiana* (see Figure 20 and 28) had a pivotal role in the conservation chain of ancient histories. It synthesizes earlier missionary and mestizo chronicles: most sixteenth century chronicles, both of the Tenochca and the Acolhua tradition, as fixed by Tezozómoc³⁴¹ and Ixtlilxóchitl,³⁴² converge in the convoluted drafting of the *Monarquía Indiana*, where the respective cities: Mexico-Tenochtitlan and Texcoco cease to be rivals to become equivalent in historical significance: the Rome and Athens of the New World. Torquemada’s work, for a long time denigrated as repetition of earlier chronicles bonded together with abstruse rhetoric, opens the way to a different genre: it is no longer a matter of fixing memories of the past, for the benefit of the author or of the group he represents, but to organize them in a way that creates new

³³⁹ BHA V, 37 - 38

³⁴⁰ Cédula Real, 22 de abril de 1577, addressed to Viceroy Enrique Martínez: “...y estaréis advertido de no consentir que por ninguna manera persona alguna escriba cosas que toquen a supersticiones y manera de vivir que estos indios tenían, en ninguna lengua...” (cited in Baudot 2002: 54).

³⁴¹ BHA I, 127

³⁴² BHA I, 125

historiographic knowledge. Among the later scholars who used Torquemada as a source of their own historiographic reelaborations, two of them are considered at the origins, respectively, of cultural nationalism and historical nationalism: clergyman and ex-Jesuit Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645-1700) and Jesuit Francisco Xavier Clavijero³⁴³ (1731-1787).

3.1.3.1. Cultural nationalism: Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora

Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (close friend of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz), is one of the most brilliant minds of the seventeenth century *criollo* intellectual life. He was an eminent mathematician and astronomer, poet and essayist, although many of his writings could never be printed. He was a polyglot and, although, just as many historians (then and now), he may not be considered as a translator in the strictest sense, he used codices and Nahuatl texts in his own transwritings, was a user of translations, and his work reveals a continuous dialogue with the previous century chronicles (Lorente 1996: 217), which had strong translational components. An original and independent mind, complex and polemic, he was expelled from the Society of Jesus while novice and then followed an ecclesiastic career, never succeeding to be forgiven and accepted back into the Jesuitical Order.

The two expressions of Don Carlos' patriotism were the Mexican past and the contemporary intellectual culture. He was a passionate admirer and defender of the *patria*, and the titles of his works are in this regard telling: *Primavera Indiana*, *Glorias de Querétaro*, *Triunfo Parténico*, *Paraíso Occidental*, *Piedad heroica*, *Trofeo de la justicia*, *Fénix del Occidente*... In history of science he has a well earned place with his writings, in

³⁴³ BHA II, 119 - 122

particular, for his work entitled *Libra astronomica y philosophica*, on the demythologization of comets against the opinion of some scholars, prominently among them the Austrian Jesuit Eusebius Chini (known in Spanish as Padre Kino), an active missionary and explorer in the territory of California, who believed in the supernatural origin and meaning of celestial phenomena. The controversy had a strong nationalist component on Sigüenza's side, as expressed in these sarcastic words:

“piensan en algunas partes de Europa, y con especialidad en las septentrionales, por más remotas, que no solo los indios, habitantes originarios de estos países, sino que los que de padres españoles casualmente nacimos en ellos, o andamos en dos pies por divina dispensación, o que aun valiéndose de microscopios ingleses apenas se descubre en nosotros lo racional” (Sigüenza 1680/1984: XXI)”

It is, however, another aspect of Don Carlos's intellectual activities that should interest us. It happens that in 1680 he was entrusted with the design of a triumphal arch that had to be built on the occasion of the arrival of the new Viceroy, Conde de Paredes, Marqués de La Laguna. These kinds of civic ceremonies were important occasions in which the population would gather and celebrate with all sorts of festive activities, games, parades, dances and religious rituals. In the annals of Juan Bautista³⁴⁴ mentions of such “fiestas” are so recurrent that it would seem that a good part of the New Spain life was spent on them. The mastery the Indians showed in building floral arches, which was part of their tradition and in which Mexicans still excel, was encouraged and put to the service of larger architectural ephemeral pieces, such as the one Don Carlos was asked to design. However short-lived, its dimensions and features were impressive:

³⁴⁴ BHA I, 230 - 231

“Elevóse por noventa pies geométricos su eminencia, y se extendió por cincuenta su latitud, y por doce su macizo, de fachada a fachada, constando de tres cuerpos, sin las acroterias y remates que se movieron sobre diez y seis pedestales y otras tantas columnas de jaspe, revestidos los tercios de hojas de parra con bases y capiteles de bronce...” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:185)

New Spaniards knew how to entertain their illustrious guests: “en prosecución de la grandeza magnífica con que sabe la imperial, nobilísima ciudad de México, cabeza de la Occi-Septentrional América, desempeñarse en semejantes funciones...” (Sigüenza 1684/1984: 185). With these words, Sigüenza y Góngora introduces the detailed description of the Triumphal Arch in his diglossic (Castilian-Latin) *Theatro de virtudes politicas que constituyen a un principe: advertidas en los Monarcas antiguos del Mexicano Imperio, con cuyas efigies se hermoseó el Arco Triumphal, que la muy Noble, muy Leal, Imperial Ciudad de México erigió para el digno recibimiento en ella del Excelentísimo Señor Virrey Conde de Paredes, Marques de la Laguna, &c. Ideólo entonces, y ahora lo describe D. Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, Catedrático propietario de Matemáticas en su Real Universidad.*

As the title says, Sigüenza decided to commemorate the arrival of the Viceroy by displaying in the triumphal arch the twelve political virtues of a prince, personified by as many ancient Mexican rulers (“monarcas antiguos”), headed by the dreaded Huitzilopochtli, god of war, here converted into the “caudillo y conductor de los mexicanos en el viaje que por su disposición emprendieron en demanda de las provincias de Anahuac que habitaron los toltecas, sus progenitores antiguos, y son las que ahora se forma la Nueva España” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:196).

All the Mexican rulers were portrayed with colored feathers, which were highly

valued by them, a trait “they agreed with” Oriental antiquity, as is testified by all the possible authorities invoked, from Classical Rome to the early naturalists and Christian Church Fathers:

“como el traje más individuo de su aprecio ... Propiedad que estos indios convinieron con los orientales, de quienes lo afirma Plutarco, *De Fort. Alex.* “Visten túnicas de plumas de las aves cazadas” y que, según Prudencio en *Harmatig*, fue gala usual de los antiguos tiempos... “...tambien al que teje vestidos de plumas con telas nuevas de aves multicolores”. Véase, acerca de los indios americanos, a Aldrovad., lib II, *Ornitholog*, pág. 656, y en lo general de las vestiduras de plumas al padre Juan Luis de la Cerda, cap. 51, *Advers.*, n. 14; y aunque es verdad en sentir de San Isidro, *Pelusiot.*, lib. 3, Epist. 251, que lo que más hermosea a los individuos no son tanto los brillos del resplandor y de los adornos, cuanto la posesión amable de las virtudes” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:187).

Sigüenza’s descriptions are punctuated with Latin citations (which were translated into Spanish in the modern edition I am consulting) of *auctoritas*, establishing arcane parallelisms between model and reality. The Mexica migration from the North to the valley of Anahuac, leaded by Huitzilopochtli, is represented with a Scriptural model: “se representó en el traje propio de los antiguos chichimecas al valeroso Huitzilopochtli que, mostrando a diferentes personas lo que en las nubes se veía, los exhortaba al viaje, proponiéndoles el fin y premio con las palabras del Génesis, cap. 43, *Ingentem magnam*” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:197). Subsequently, the fire of the torch in the god’s hand unleashes a cascade of references from a host of major and minor Classical authors.

Each of the Mexica rulers represents a virtue: Acamapich, the first ruler, represents hope, and is depicted clearing of canes the muddy waters of the Texcoco lake, which is likened to the earth in Genesis, I: “informe y vacía”, before God’s creation; Huitzihuitl

represents clemency; authority is personified in Chimalpopocatzin, who uses his shield to protect Mexico, represented as an Indian woman surrounded by her children, from the tempest of arrows and lightning thrown by Tyranny, a feminine figure characterized following Petronius' description of Discordia, in *Satyr.*: “la cabellera en desorden, la discordia levantó su cabeza infernal a los cielos; tenía sangre coagulada en la boca y los ojos rasgados lloraban, tenía los dientes rojos por la ira, su lengua manaba veneno, su cabeza rodeada de serpientes....” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:209); Itzcohuatl is prudence, the best of virtues according to Sophocles in *Electra*: “No le puede acontecer nada mayor ni más útil al hombre que la prudencia...”, Motecuzoma Ilhuicamina is piety, for no other Mexican ruler was so devoted to his gods. Sigüenza cites Torquemada,³⁴⁵ saying that he was “otro Numa Pompilio” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:214), and it was his devotion that earned him the victory over his Huexotzinca enemies, an event taken from Torquemada as well as from Nahuatl manuscripts and paintings Sigüenza said he possessed.

Motecuzoma Xocoyotzin, the one Cortés defeated and had killed, is gentleness, and is equated with emperors Titus, Theodosius and Trajan in this virtue; Cuitlahuatzin, who succeeded him, is audacity. He was painted as imitating the Great Alexandre in the act of cutting the Gordian knot. Cuauhtemoc, the last Aztec ruler, is constance. Torquemada is again recalled to praise the spirit with which this emperor faced his destiny, and citations from Seneca, Saint Ambrose, Saint Prosper and Tacit stress the significance of constance in the face of adversity. Why shouldn't Cuauhtemoc's serenity be applauded if he was no less than other heroes of the Classical Antiquity?:

¿Qué elogios no ha conseguido la acción y dicho del rey Mitridates, cuando vencido y prisionero de Euno, capitan de los romanos, sin que se le alterase

³⁴⁵ BHA V, 37 - 38

el semblante ni perder de su gravedad el lujo, según Tácito, li. 12, *Annal.*: “Yo, Mitridates, tanto tiempo buscado en tierra y en mar por los romanos, espontáneamente estoy aquí; haz de mi lo que quieras” Y, ¿por qué no los merecerá Cuauhtémoc, cuando hizo lo mismo, en Torquemada, lib. 4, cap. 101, pag., 524, col. 2? ¿Por qué no los merecerá cuando con invictísima paciencia sufrió el tormento que, para que por él les retornase sus tesoros, le dieron los españoles quemándole los pies? (Sigüenza 1684/1984:229)

Nothing but national pride could have inspired these words: “No tienen ya los mexicanos por qué envidiar a Catón, pues tienen en su último emperador quien hiciese lo que de él dice Séneca, Epist. 104: “A pesar de que tantas veces cambió la república; sin embargo, nadie vio cambiado a Catón; siempre se mantuvo él mismo en cualquier estado: en la pretura, en la repulsa, en la acusación, en la provincia, en el discurso, en el ejército, y finalmente en la muerte” (Sigüenza 1684/1984:229)

One cannot read this exuberant display of Sigüenza’s art of citation without putting into question the practices of citation of our own time (and, of course, ones’ own) and wondering if ours will be deemed as extravagant in three centuries from now. Nevertheless, in reading him, I cannot but subscribe Jacques Lafaye’s characterization as “el gran alquimista de las transmutaciones mitológicas e históricas de las cuales nació la espiritualidad original de una minoría colonial inflamada del arraigo telúrico” (Lafaye 1985: 122).

In Sigüenza’s works, the Indian is dead, and the Aztec empire is a theater set-up. Torquemada³⁴⁶ and Fernández de Salazar wrote about the Indians in the past tense, and now, their rulers were painted in wooden panels, surrounded by Latin inscriptions and made to represent European virtues. On the one hand, it seemed indeed bold to portrait

³⁴⁶ BHA V, 37 - 38

these defeated Indians as models of a prince's virtues; but, on the other, they were disarmed and neutralized. The process of mythification of the indigenous past by the criolla elite had begun (Lafaye 1985: 120).

Don Carlos died at 55. In spite of repeated attempts to be readmitted into the Jesuit Order, the superiors remained adamant. He nevertheless bestowed his library, which included the collection of manuscripts and codices that had belonged to Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl,³⁴⁷ to the Jesuits, where it served future historians until the Jesuit expulsion and dispersal of their possessions.

A telling example of Don Carlos rich and complex character is to be found in his posthumous instructions: he had diagnosed himself his fatal ailment, and he gave precise instructions on how his body should be dissected by whatever surgeons and doctors, for the advancement of medical science: "Pido por el amor de Dios que, así que fallezca, sea abierto por cirujanos y medicos los que quisieren y se reconozca el riñón derecho y su uretra, la vejiga y disposición de su substancia y el cuello de ella donde se hallará una piedra grandísima que es la que me ha de quitar la vida" (Sigüenza 1684/1984: XXIX). His instructions were followed, and a kidney stone the size of a peach pit was found at the exact location he had signaled.

3.1.3.2. Historical nationalism: Francisco Xavier Clavijero

If we go back to the general graph (Figure 4) where the four categories are plotted against time, we can see the final abrupt fall of missionary translation activity and the relative fall in other activities occurring in the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century. They

³⁴⁷ BHA I, 125

are due to the fatal combination of two royal decisions I have already mentioned: the ban on indigenous languages in 1770 and the expulsion of Jesuits in 1767.³⁴⁸ All religious translation devoted to indigenous indoctrination ceased, as we can see in the virtual extinction of the Translational Canvass column. Translation of classical works also declined, as it was mainly represented by Jesuits.

When the unexpected order of the expulsion arrived, in a matter of days, if not hours, over six hundred Jesuits were arrested in New Spain and, heavily guarded, were sent to the port of Veracruz, where from they had to sail to exile. They left their belongings behind, their books and writings; their schools were closed. The intellectual and spiritual void left by their expulsion was enormous. Their schools were deserted, Indian missions orphaned, a climate of resentment grew against Spain and its powers. This was the result of the expulsion. Protests sprung everywhere, and were violently suffocated, fuelling the already strong feeling of injustice that prevailed in the *criolla* society.

Francisco Xavier Clavijero³⁴⁹ (Veracruz 1731- Bolonia 1787) was a contemporary of the ban and a victim of the expulsion. He was one of the over five hundred Mexican-born Jesuits who were exiled to Italy. Others were also eminent authors and translators, like Diego Abad³⁵⁰ and Francisco Javier Alegre,³⁵¹ whom we have met in previous sections. He **would not** be the only one who wrote about Mexico's history from exile. Exile companions were Pedro José Márquez and Andrés Cavo.³⁵²

³⁴⁸ Both royal orders were to be applied in all Spanish territories. It is thus likely that the effects may have been felt in a similar way in other Spanish American colonies.

³⁴⁹ BHA II, 119 - 122

³⁵⁰ BHA I, 61 - 64

³⁵¹ BHA I, 114 - 116

³⁵² Cavo, driven by his "amor de la patria" published in exile *Anales de la ciudad de México desde la conquista española hasta el año de 1766*, in Spanish and in Italian, and Márquez published in Italian several

Clavijero³⁵³ was fluent in Classical and several European languages, and had sufficient knowledge of Nahuatl. Before the expulsion, he taught rhetoric at the great Jesuit Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo, introducing rationalist ideas in the academic curricula through the teachings of Bacon and Descartes. Like Sigüenza y Góngora, he believed in the worth of experimental method over abstract reasoning and speculation. Less devoted than the latter, though, to baroque rhetoric, “levantó osadamente la bandera del sobrio y límpido neoclasicismo francés” (Mendez Plancarte 1970: 159) which he upheld in his commented translations from Saint François de Sales on the subject of preaching and confession. This was the approach he used in his works on the Mexican language and history.

He wrote in exile his magnum opus, the *Historia Antigua de México*, but for reasons not clear (he said that he yielded to his Italian friends), he translated it into Italian and had it printed in 1780 in Cesena, as *Storia Antica del Messico*. The work met with great success and was soon translated into English and German before being eventually translated into Spanish in 1826.³⁵⁴ The manuscript of the original Spanish version was not found until much later, and it was published in Mexico in 1945.

Clavijero's *Storia Antica* has a historical part and an argumentative section composed of *Dissertazioni*, in which he makes his defense against the philosophers: Raynal, de Paw, Buffon, and others. In the first chapter, or book, he enlists and reviews all preceding historians, from the sixteenth century onwards, including Indian and *mestizo*, he defines the Mexican territory, explains the political divisions as “reinos”, the “república de Tlaxcala”, the “provincias mediterráneas” with their extension, latitudes, main geographical

books on archaeology and aesthetics, among them, *Due Antichi Monumenti di Architettura Messicana* (1804) (Méndez Plancarte 1941, 1970)

³⁵³ BHA II, 119 - 122

³⁵⁴ This is the Spanish edition I have consulted.

features, minerals, animals and plants. The scientific knowledge acquired by the scientists I have introduced earlier in this chapter is compiled and elaborated to represent the nation. In Clavijero we no longer find citations of the Sacred Scriptures (except in the obliged references to the origins) and the Church Fathers, as authorities, but modern science combined with Classical Antiquity.

Indeed, the Mexican Empire, or Mexico (and no longer New Spain) is represented as a self-contained nation, on a par with any other nation: “Tenían los mejicanos como todas las naciones cultas noticias claras aunque alteradas con fábulas de la creación del mundo, del diluvio universal, de la confusión de las lenguas y de la dispersión de las

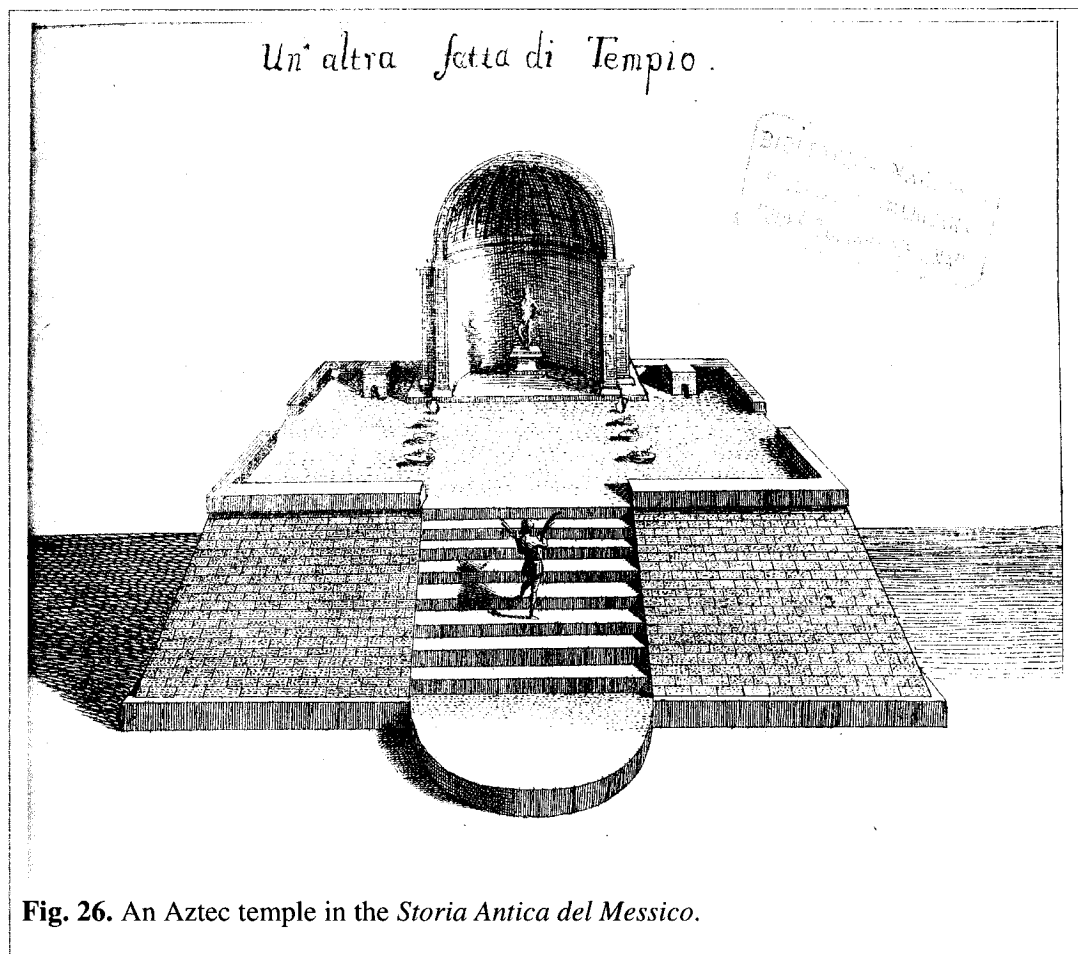
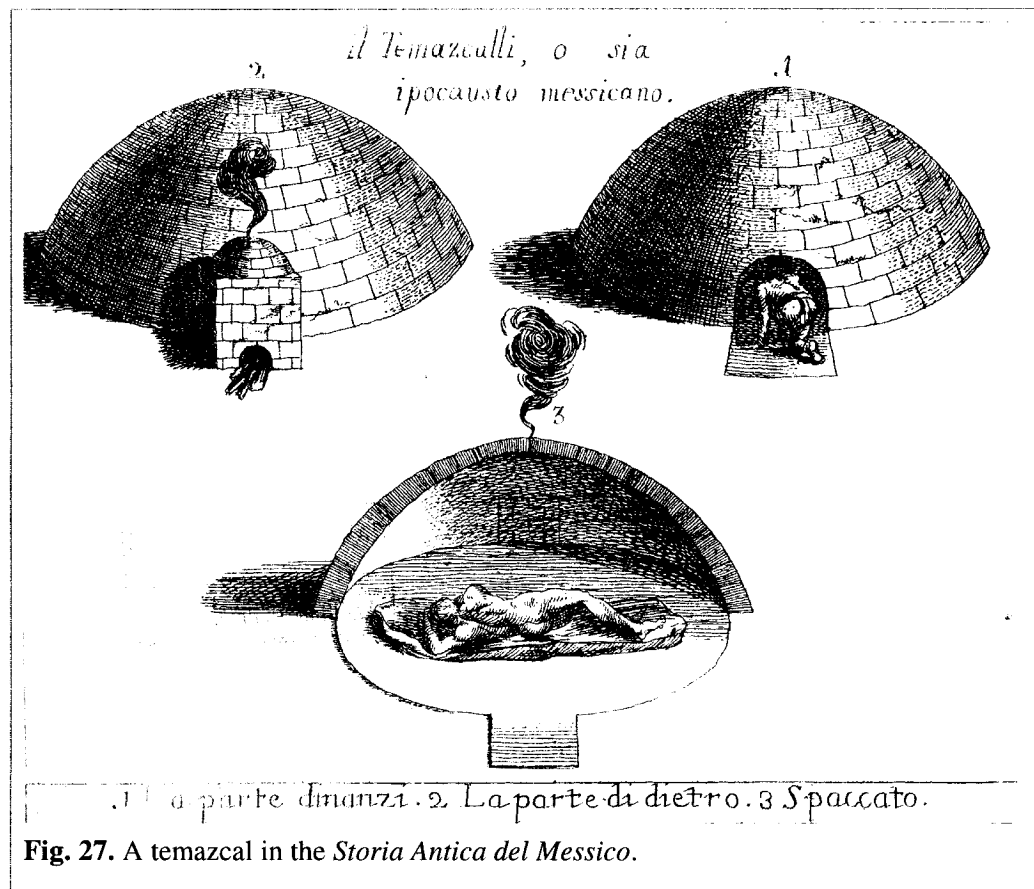


Fig. 26. An Aztec temple in the *Storia Antica del Messico*.

gentes, y todos estos sucesos se hallan representados en sus pinturas”³⁵⁵ (Clavijero 1826: 225). As any other general national history would have, a full book is devoted to “Gobierno político, militar y económico de los mejicanos, esto es el rey, los señores, los electores, los embajadores, las dignidades, los magistrados, y los jueces, leyes, juicios y penas, milicia, agricultura, caza pesca y comercio, juegos, trage, alimentos, y muebles, idioma, poesía, música y baile, medicina, historia y pintura. y otras artes” (Book VII).

The Mexican Empire is described as “ilustrado”, and the other peoples as barbarian and primitive. Other parts of the *Storia* are devoted to its historical events, wars, lineages,



³⁵⁵ This and the following Spanish citations are taken from the 1826 Spanish translation by José Joaquín de Mora. The ones in Italian are taken from the original Cesena edition of 1780.

and religion: gods, temples, priests, sacrifices and oblations, fasts, austerity, chronology and calendars, feasts and rites. Temples are depicted as neoclassical, and even the modest, utilitarian, domestic steam bath, *temazcal*, becomes an “ipocausto messicano”

Comparatism with other American nations is also a tool in his history:

Además de las pinturas se servían de hilos de diversos colores, y diferentemente anudados, llamados *quipu* por los peruanos, y por los mejicanos *nepohualtzitzin*. Este extraño modo de representar las cosas, tan usado en el Perú, no parece que haya sido adoptado en los países del Anahuac si no en los siglos más remotos, pues no se encuentran vestigios de aquellos monumentos. (Clavijero 1826: 371)

As I said before, the Scriptures still hold the clue to the origin of the American peoples, since the Bible is the “common book of humanity” (Villoro 1998:133). But Clavijero³⁵⁶ does not think, as does Sigüenza, that they come from the tribes of Israel nor finds he reasons to believe that Indians come from any of the current populations inhabiting the Old World. The notion that they might come from Egypt, founded in the existence of the pyramids, is ridiculed by Clavijero, saying that the view of mountains is enough to inspire the building of similar structures (Clavijero 1826: 205). Based in the Sacred Scriptures, Americans descend from the different nations or families dispersed after the **confusion** of tongues in Babel, and the animals found here are descendants from those **saved by Noah**: “El sumo respeto que se debe a los libros Santos me obliga a creer que los cuadrúpedos y reptiles del nuevo mundo descenden de aquellos individuos que se salvaron del diluvio universal en el arca de Noe.” (Clavijero 1826: 219). Men and animals passed from the old to the new continent, in ships, or on foot, over land or ice banks. However, the

³⁵⁶ BHA II, 119 - 122

opinion that the bones found in different places in New Spain were, according to a British scholar, of elephants, is dismissed. Based on the Scriptures, they are bones of a giant human race (Clavijero 1826: 198).

On the subject of the ancient laws, he defends the Mexicans, who, however cruel, did not torture their prisoners to exact confessions, and cites Montesquieu's *L'esprit des lois* to say that torture is a barbaric practice that will bring shame on Enlightened Europe (Clavijero 1826: 253). Following Alva Ixtlilxóchitl³⁵⁷ and Torquemada,³⁵⁸ he praises Nezahualcoyotl work as a legislator:

Para perfeccionar la civilización de sus pueblos y corregir los desordenes introducidos en su reino en tiempo de los tiranos promulgo ochenta leyes que después fueron compiladas por su noble descendiente D. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl

However grave, he was also clement and generous:

Era tanto lo que anualmente se expendía en su familia y casa, y en el alivio de los pobres que seria increíble, y yo no osaría escribirlo si no constara por las pinturas originales vistas, y examinadas por los primeros misioneros que se emplearon en la conversión de aquellos pueblos, y si no lo confirmara el testimonio de un descendiente de aquel monarca, convertido a la fe cristiana y llamado, después del bautismo, D. Antonio Pimentel (Torquemada asegura haber tenido en sus manos aquellas pinturas). (Clavijero 1826: 175)

The image of the poet-king comes again, directly from Alva Ixtlilxóchitl:

Era diestro en la poesía nacional, y compuso muchas piezas poéticas que fueron universalmente aplaudidas. En el s. XVI eran celebres aun entre los españoles los sesenta himnos que compuso en loor del criador del cielo. Dos

³⁵⁷ BHA I, 125

³⁵⁸ BHA V, 37 - 38

de aquellas odas o canciones, traducidas al castellano por su descendiente D. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl se han conservado hasta nuestros tiempos. (Clavijero 1826: 175)

Texcoco, home of Classical Nahuatl; the Athens of Anáhuac. King Nezahualcóyotl, its Solon:

Su esclarecido ingenio, y el amor que tenia a sus súbditos contribuyeron en gran manera a ilustrar aquella corte, la cual se considero después como la patria de las artes y el centro de la civilización. Tezcuco era la ciudad donde se hablaba con mayor pureza, y perfección la lengua mexicana, donde se hallaban los mejores artífices, y donde más abundaban los poetas, los oradores, y los historiadores. De allí tomaron muchas leyes los mejicanos, y otros pueblos, de modo que puede decirse que Tezcuco fue la Atenas, y Nezahualcoyotl el Solon de Anahuac. (Clavijero 1826: 177)

It was Nezahualcóyotl scientific curiosity that convinced him that there was an only God. Clavijero³⁵⁹ presents him as a dissident of the idolatric Mexicas, a prophet of Christianity and a scientist who uses his knowledge to the service of religion:

Pero en nada se deleitaba tanto Nezahualcoyotl, como en el estudio de la naturaleza. Adquirió muchos conocimientos astronómicos... aplicose también al conocimiento de las plantas y de los animales, y por no poder tener en su corte los que eran propios de otros climas, mando pintar en su palacio, al vivo, los que nacían en la tierra de Anahuac. De estas pinturas habla el Dr. Hernández, que las vio, y hizo uso de ellas, y por cierto que son mas útiles y más dignas de la mansión de un rey que las que representan la perversa Mitología de los Griegos. Investigaba atentamente la causa de los fenómenos naturales, y esta continua observación le hizo conocer la vanidad de la idolatría. Decía privadamente a sus hijos que cuando adorasen con señales exteriores los ídolos, para conformarse a los usos del pueblo,

³⁵⁹ BHA II, 119 - 122

detestasen en su interior aquel culto despreciable, dirigido a seres inanimados: que el no reconocia otra divinidad si no el criador del cielo, y que no prohibia en sus reinos la idolatria, como deseaba, por que no lo acusasen de contradecir la doctrina de sus mayores. (Clavijero 1826: 176)

Clavijero, thus, rewrites the history of Nezahualcoyotl, which is now sustained by a modern citation and reference apparatus (Torquemada, Pimentel, Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Francisco Hernández) instead of the Classical universe of reference deployed by Sigüenza, or the Scriptural one by Torquemada and the earlier chroniclers, and thus fixes the myth of the good King forever.

There is another aspect that distinguishes Clavijero from earlier historians: if the early missionary chroniclers wrote, as they said, to know about the idolatries and the past of the Indians they were indoctrinating, and to divulge this information among other missionaries; if the mestizo and Indian chroniclers wrote to defend their nobility, privileges and territorial rights of their families or groups; if Torquemada³⁶⁰ wrote so that the Franciscan history and approach to Indian things would not be lost and thus made the first large synthesis of previous scholarship; if Sigüenza y Góngora erected scenarios where Mexican gods became statues of illustrious models of behaviour, and put his translational baroque pyrotechnics to the service of a cultural patriotism, Clavijero's³⁶¹ *Storia Antica* was triggered by anger.

Drawing upon Sigüenza's materials he had read while at the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo, upon Torquemada's *Monarquia Indiana* (and reelaborating on Torquemada's sources), upon Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,³⁶² Dr. Francisco Hernández, J.de Acosta and

³⁶⁰ BHA V, 37 - 38

³⁶¹ BHA II, 119 - 122

³⁶² BHA I, 125

others, and upon the original codices he said he consulted and interpreted in several Italian libraries, in the Vatican and elsewhere, Clavijero wrote to refute Cornelius de Paw's³⁶³ and others' derogatory opinions on America, its inhabitants, fauna, flora and natural resources. Although he didn't recognize it explicitly, he was also taking revenge from the Spanish monarchy, that had exiled them, and against those in the peninsula who believed that New Spain, and Spanish America in general, was an intellectually barren land, like the Deán Martí, whose letters had prompted Eguiara y Eguren to write his *Biblioteca Mexicana* during those same years. In the preface Clavijero says he writes to serve his homeland and nation and to "rimetter nel suo splendore la verita offuscata da una turba incredibile di moderni scrittori dell'America" (Clavijero 1780: 1). Clavijero appears as the epitome of historical nationalism.³⁶⁴

In *Dissertazione IV*, Clavijero³⁶⁵ addresses two very important accusations by de Paw, Buffon and Robertson: one is that American peoples had no alphabet and, therefore, they were backward. Those peoples lacked words for metaphysical concepts, so translation was impossible. On the first charge, Clavijero says that de Paw doesn't want to give credit to the Indians' writing because it would mean that they were equal to Egyptians, something that he is not ready to admit. On the second charge, that is, that "de las lenguas americanas no hay ni una que tenga más de tres conceptos metafísicos. No se puede traducir ningún

³⁶³ Clavijero's targets were Cornelius de Paw's *Recherches philosophiques sur les Americains*, William Robertson's *The History of America* (1799), and G. T. Raynal's *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (1770).

³⁶⁴ Although much less known and studied, this nationalism is also visible in Clavijero's linguistic works. As the author of a non-missionary Mexican grammar and vocabulary in which Nahuatl is described as a fully evolved language, he defies the opinion of bishop Lorenzana, who promoted the eradication of indigenous languages and imposition of Spanish as the culturally superior language. Bárbara Cifuentes, in her 1998 review of multilingualism in New Spain, emphasized the singularity of Clavijero's contribution to Nahuatl lexicography. He made diachronical observations by comparing Classical and 18th century Nahuatl as well as between Nahuatl and Classical European languages.

³⁶⁵ BHA II, 119 - 122

libro a la lengua de los algonquinos, guaranis o paraguayos, ni a la de los de Mexico ni Peru por no tener suficiente número de terminos propios”, he observes that no language, not even Latin, had those “conceptos metafisicos” since they were originally forged in Greek. However, he says, Nahuatl, which has been recognized not only by Spanish but by French and Flemish missionaries as a fully comprehensive language, did have a wealth of abstract terms, and gives a list of them: “mente: **teixtlamatia**/ sabiduria: **tlamatiliztli**/ razón: **ixtlamachiliztli**/ cognicion: **tlaximatiliztli**....” (Clavijero 1826: 240).

On the second charge, that nothing could be affirmed about their past since the missionaries had destroyed the pictorials and other historical traces for fear of idolatry, and that, if not the missionaries, then the same Indians had hid or destroyed them for fear of being accused by the friars,³⁶⁶ Clavijero³⁶⁷ uses a circular argument: this allegation is not true since how else could the Spanish and mestizo chronicles have been written if not thanks to the many surviving documents. He defends the authenticity of the early manuscripts and the way they were used by his antecessors: Sigüenza y Góngora, Torquemada,³⁶⁸ Ixtlilxóchitl,³⁶⁹ Sahagún,³⁷⁰ Chimalpain, and,³⁷¹ Tezozómoc,³⁷² Tadeo de Niza,³⁷³ Gabriel de Ayala,³⁷⁴ who all, he says, used these painted texts. In addition, he observes that the Indians kept them because they served as supporting evidence in case of **land disputes** (Clavijero 1826: 223).

³⁶⁶ A first big fire of documents had been done by the Tlaxcalans when they entered with Cortés in Texcoco (Pomar 1582), more were burnt after the inquisitorial process against Carlos Ometochtzin, the *cacique* of Texcoco, for fear of Juan de Zumárraga, the inquisitor. I cannot but recall that, some eight or ten years ago, in Cholula, following the imprisonment of a private collector of archaeological pieces, the local newspaper mentioned that people who possessed such pieces were destroying them for fear of being discovered.

³⁶⁷ BHA II, 119 - 122

³⁶⁸ BHA V, 37 - 38

³⁶⁹ BHA I, 125

³⁷⁰ BHA IV, 275 - 277

³⁷¹ BHA II, 108 - 109

³⁷² BHA I, 127

³⁷³ BHA IV, 27

³⁷⁴ BHA I, 193

At this point in the research, I realized that the character of the controversy and the arguments invoked hold an extraordinary similitude with a more recent controversy: the one that confronted some twenty years ago Miguel León-Portilla, the famous Mexican Middle-americanist, to Amos Segala, John Bierhorst and López Austin, on the matter of the use and translation of sources for pre-Hispanic history (Payàs 2003). Briefly put, nationalist historiography represented by M. León-Portilla has been criticized on grounds that, using sources in a biased manner, it has distorted certain facts for the sake of a representation of the past that has served nationalist ideology.

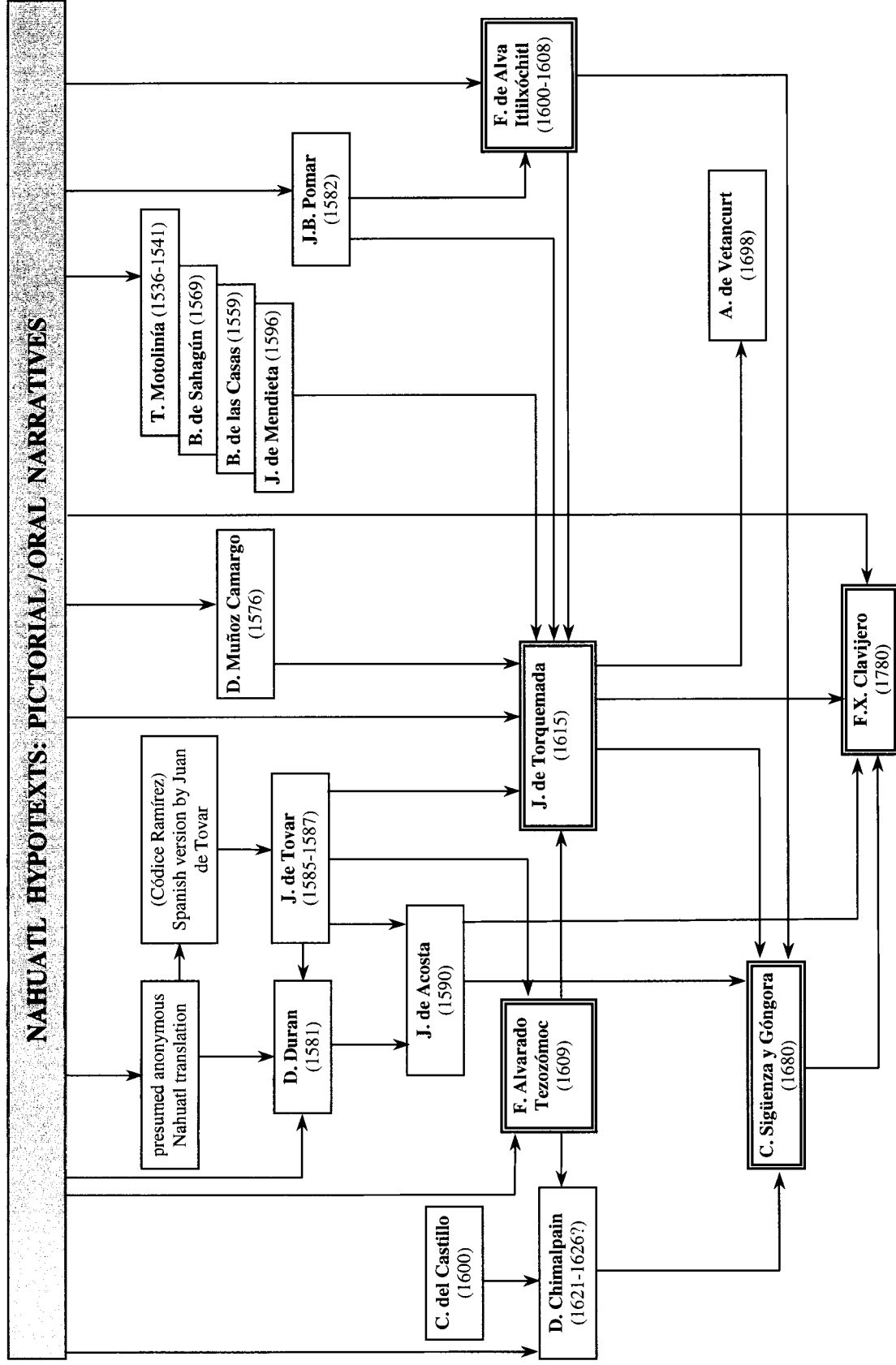
Without pretending to go further in the comparison, the arguments given by M. León-Portilla are similar to the ones Clavijero³⁷⁵ gave when attacked by foreigners who believed that the sources did not warrant such interpretations. The crucial point is that, indeed, the hypotexts are the key to the past. If they are invalidated the whole structure can crumble, and History would have to be retold.

Let us have a look at the structure that nationalist historiography built until Clavijero.

In Figure 28 I have tried to locate the main chroniclers and their intertextual relations. It is a self-made plan, composed by collecting and noting the information given by chroniclers themselves or by modern specialists.³⁷⁶ I have drawn a large pool of hypotexts (codices, early Nahuatl manuscripts and oral narratives) which were allegedly the sources for later chronicles. Let's start by looking at where Clavijero is, at the bottom of the tree. Clavijero says he looked at some manuscripts and codices that belonged to Sigüenza y

³⁷⁵ BHA II, 119 - 122

³⁷⁶ To the best of my knowledge, the intertextual relations are accurate but incomplete. There are more chronicles to be taken into account. I am restricting myself to the ones I have mentioned in the course of the research.



Góngora, namely the ones the latter had obtained from Alva Ixtlilxóchitl³⁷⁷ relative, plus the ones Clavijero saw in Italy (arrow to pool of hypotexts). He also draws extensively from Torquemada³⁷⁸ and Acosta. Torquemada, in turn, takes from the previous Franciscan chronicles, and both Tenochca, or Mexica (Alvarado Tezozómoc³⁷⁹) and Acolhua, or Texcoco (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl) traditions, as well as from the pool of hypotexts. Acosta draws from Durán, who draws from Tovar,³⁸⁰ who presumably translated into Spanish an unknown Nahuatl transcription of a pictorial, as I already explained in the Foundation Myths section. It is in this mesh of intertextual relations based upon intersemiotic translations that the reelaboration of history takes place.

Not only the first generation of chroniclers but the ones that followed never failed to say they are basing their writings on papers and codices, and on the knowledge of elder Indians. Of course, they give no proof of it, but they needed to be believed. In 1608, one of them, Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl,³⁸¹ went as far as having the Indian authorities (*Cabildo*) of Otumba to certify the accuracy of the translation at the sight of the ancient documents he said were his originals, which makes me think that it must not have been uncommon to question the authenticity of such documentary evidence.³⁸² We might be, therefore, in presence of a phenomenon of authority conferred by translations, real or pretended, to

³⁷⁷ BHA I, 125

³⁷⁸ BHA V, 37 - 38

³⁷⁹ BHA I, 127

³⁸⁰ BHA V, 52 - 53

³⁸¹ Don Fernando's insistence on having this certification was due to the fact that the history of his ancestors was intended to support his claims to privileges of nobility. He was, indeed, appointed governor of Texcoco in 1612 (Aranda 1978: 12). The texts submitted were five *Relaciones de los Tultecas*, eleven *relaciones de la Historia de los señores Chichimecas* and the *Ordenanzas de Nezahualcoyotl*. These books were apparently written in Nahuatl and translated into Spanish (by the local *alguacil*, Francisco Rodríguez).

³⁸² History writing was never disinterested. Juan Cano and his wife, Isabel, legitimate daughter of Moctezuma, hired the services of Franciscan friars to write Isabel's genealogy in order to ask King Charles V for the restoration of her father's properties (Duverger 1983: 35, 50-53). Even in this case, where the writers are Churchmen and, therefore, supposedly more trustworthy, they did not fail to attest, in the title, that they derived the information from paintings and from accounts of the elders.

historiography.

The questions, then, that face historiography converge with those of translation. They concern the truthfulness of allegations of having drawn information from those documents, the actual existence and readability of such documents, the capability of the historian or of the interpreter to read them and their relative intellectual honesty, as well as the degree of source, informants and interpreters' sharing that was going on.

Maybe this a good point to put an end to the work: having seen how translation was at the source of the historiographic discourse, now we see it dissolved in it, sharing its problems and questions.

I hope this discussion will have shown doubts as well as certitudes about the role of translation in the construction of the discourse that eventually led to independence and later forms of nationalism in Mexico.

CONCLUSION

As I have shown, the significance and functions of translations vary along the colonial period. Their dynamics is also different. I have explained how they played a leading role when what was at stake was cultural survival, and the way they were present in the emergence of a new subjectivity. In those years their presence is so strong that one can safely say that they are everything there is on the learned scene. I am referring to the Translational Canvass materials woven during the first decades. The social reality in which they are produced is moving, fractal and unstable, but bonded together by religion. An imagined community of faithful, a Catholic community, as dreamed by the Mendicants, is the motor of this translation-negotiation, and their universalist *pre-judgement* works in favor of this movement.

The passage from Catholic to Mexican identity is punctuated by translations and transwritings also of variable significance and functions: irrespectively of the purposes with which they are actually written some help establishing the myths of foundation, while others contribute to a representation of Classical nobility and worth, and others help creating a representation of a modern, dynamic nation. Their relative weight as compared to other forms of writing diminishes with time, as an independent national culture grows.

In the Modern High Culture category, I have identified many names of men who, spurred by the disdain from those who believed that nothing worth of being considered culture could grow in America, contribute to building a national discourse and culture. Among them, with his five volume *Biblioteca Hispanoamericana Septentrional*, a bibliographical apparatus today only seen as a curiosity, is D. Mariano Beristáin de Souza, a quasi contemporary of Clavijero. Beristáin, following Eguiara y Eguren, tries to demonstrate the wealth of the literate production of New Spain. I have taken advantage of

this nationalist discourse to discover and track the practice of translation during the colonial period.

This review of translation along three centuries shows some one hundred translators and transwriters: Spanish, Indian, *criollos* and *mestizos*. Their agendas are not coincidental, of course, and their products are not homogenous either: translations without originals, translations with many originals, rewritings of all sorts and borderline cases. I have shown that some of them are deeply embedded in the colonial discourse, while others reveal more independence. In others, still, it is the Indian who confiscates the language of the colonizer to serve his own ends.

The word “role” in the title of this research seems now, at this distance, a very poor representation for the heterogeneity of materials, characters and responses I have tried here to understand and explain.

If we can talk about a single role of translation here, it should be that of accompanying historical events and phenomena. Its responsibilities may be larger sometimes, and sometimes smaller; its guilt too; sometimes translation may play a brilliant role in breaking new ground. Whatever its historical responsibilities, it is there, with its potential for hiding or revealing meanings, changing subjectivities and promoting biases. It has become part of the social discourse and it has accompanied the construction of a national identity.

Therefore, if translation has something to do with national identity, and we have seen that it does, can this relationship be considered universal, in particular in view of the present blurring of frontiers and the emergence of new, extraterritorial, multilingual or other identities? Can we, in the context of globalization (I had managed to avoid the phrase

so far), still say that translation helps defining national frontiers, or can we talk about a redefinition of the roles of translation in this new context?

Maybe part of the answer to this question can be found in today's attempts at defining new territories: Mexico's official specialist in pre-Hispanic and early Colonial history, Miguel León-Portilla, recently co-edited a one-thousand pages sort of Mesoamerican Bible, first in English, and then in Spanish. The titles of both versions are almost naively reminiscent of the Book: *In the Language of the Kings*, and *Antigua y Nueva Palabra*. It is a collection of pieces written originally in Nahuatl, Maya, and other indigenous languages, from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century, which is offered to us in translation.

The book is dedicated to the Chicano reader, presented in it as the new *mestizo*, in a "new geography of Mesoamerica". This "new" Mesoamerica is in fact the same that was defined by anthropologists for the pre-Hispanic times, extending from the South of the United States, covering Mexico and including most of Central America. What is definitely new is the modernization of the term, which now proposes a cultural counterpart of NAFTA, with Mexico as its center. To the empire of trade and hard currency, León-Portilla opposes a "Mesoamerican ethos", a spiritual empire of soft philosophy and Sunday literature. The war-like Aztec culture, which for decades was the symbol of national pride against the imperialist North, is now replaced by a larger, more diffuse, less militant and more "New-Age" culture, in which indigenous languages and cultures become undifferentiated by translation, yielding either to English or to Spanish. Also, the representations brought about by translations make Mayas and Toltecs better symbols of the sort of culture that is disseminated by ethnic tourism.

For this book, Miguel-León Portilla had his Spanish translations from Nahuatl re-translated into English, deliberately ignoring the many fine English translators of this indigenous language that have emerged in recent years, and which clearly escape the translation-historiographic paradigm set up by nationalist Mexican historiography.

There we have, again, as accompanying history, translation.

The historical responsibilities of translation make me conclude that, literarily appealing as it may be, I cannot agree with Pym's romantic portrait of the translator as the frontier man or woman. I admit that I too enjoy being in middle grounds, in the no-man's land of cultural anti-essentialism. I indulge also in the idea of a translator-Christophoros carrying worlds across the river. And maybe I have been personally inspired by such images. Nevertheless, I must conclude that the translator, especially seen from the historical point of view, acts as an (intercultural, if we want) agent. Anthony Pym's intercultures, to which the translators would belong, are transits with the potential to bring about new identities, but only briefly intercultural identities, while Tezozómoc, Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Sigüenza, Clavijero, and León-Portilla are agents of some culture and language. Only this location gives them, and us, rights and responsibilities. Only as agents knowing what we work for are we subjects of ethics.

I cannot finish without saying that two colonial women characters are left out of this study, and both have to do with translation and national identity: Malinche and Guadalupe. It was not done on purpose. Every time there was a chance to include them in the study (and there were many such chances), I held back. My excuse is that they have received so much scholarly and non-scholarly attention that it is difficult to approach them from new points of view. It was not possible to include them without casting large shades over the

rest of the characters I wanted to describe. Now that this is finished, I realize that maybe it is not so bad that such powerful representations could be eschewed.



Fig. 29. Malinche y Cortés en la azotea.

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APPENDIX: TRANSLATORS' REGISTER

The Translational Canvass:

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
1	Acevedo, Juan	Instrucciones catequísticas y morales para los indios		16th - 17th
2	Acevedo, Juan	Arte de la lengua de los Yucatanos		16th - 17th
3	Acevedo, Martín	Dramas alegóricos en lengua chocha		17th
4	Acevedo, Martín	Autos sacramentales en lengua misteca		17th
5	Acosta, Francisco	"Varios tomos de sermones en lengua pirinda"		16th - 17th
6	Acosta, Francisco	Arte de la lengua pirinda		16th - 17th
7	Agreda, Antonio de	Arte breve para aprender con alguna facilidad la dificultosa lengua otomí	1769	18th
8	Aguado, Marcos	Catecismo en lengua de los indios		n.d.
9	Agüero, Cristóbal	Diccionario de la lengua zapoteca		17th
10	Agüero, Cristóbal	Miscelanea Espiritual en idioma zapoteco		17th
11	Agüero, Cristóbal	Los evangelios cuadregesimales en lengua zapoteca con estampas		17th
12	Agüero, Cristóbal	Tratado de la Pasión de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo		17th
13	Aguila, Vicente	Sermones en lenguas indígenas		16th - 17th
14	Aguila, Vicente	Doctrina cristiana en verso, para el uso de los indios		16th - 17th
15	Aguila, Vicente	Varios artes y vocabularios en diversos idiomas de los indios		16th - 17th
16	Aguilar, Pedro Sánchez	Doctrina cristiana en lengua yucatán		16th
17	Aguirre, Manuel	Doctrina cristiana y pláticas traducida en lengua ópata	1765	18th
18	Albornoz, Juan de	Arte de la lengua chiapateca	1690	17th
19	Alburquerque, Bernardo de	Doctrina cristiana en lengua zapoteca.		16th
20	Alcázar, Juan de	Doctrina cristiana en lengua zapoteca		16th
21	Alcocer, Martín	Tratados doctrinales en lengua mexicana		n.d.
22	Aldama y Guevara, José Agustín	Arte de la lengua mexicana	1754	18th
23	Almaraz, Francisco	Sermones mexicanos		n.d.
24	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Bartolomé	Confesionario mayor y menor en lengua mexicana	1634	17th
25	Alvarado, Francisco Anaya, Cristóbal Díaz (o	Vocabulario del idioma mixteco	1593	16th - 17th
26	Cristóbal Díaz Santa Ana)	Arte para aprender el idioma Totonaco		n.d.
27	Anaya, Cristóbal Díaz (o	Vocabulario totonaco - castellano		n.d.
28	Cristóbal Díaz Santa Ana)	Vocabulario de la lengua de Yucatán		16th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
29	Anunciación (o Asunción), Domingo de la	Del auxilio y fomento de los indios (obra escrita en latín por el Ilmo. Casas y puesta en Castellano)		16th
30	Anunciación (o Asunción), Domingo de la	Doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana	1545	16th
31	Anunciación (o Asunción), Domingo de la	Doctrina cristiana breve y compendiosa por vía de diálogo entre un discípulo, en castellano y mexicano	1565	16th
32	Anunciación, Juan de la	Sermonario en lengua mexicana	1577	16th
33	Anunciación, Juan de la	Sermón moral sobre la bula de la Cruzada en idioma mexicano, predicado a los indios de orden del arzobispo D. Pedro Moya	1577	16th
34	Anunciación, Juan de la	Sermones de santos en mexicano	1577	16th
35	Anunciación, Juan de la	Doctrina muy copiosa en mexicano y castellano, para la instrucción de los indios y administración de sacramentos	1573	16th
36	Anunciación, Juan de la	Catecismo en lengua mexicana y lengua española	1577	16th
37	Anunciación, Juan de la	Sermones del tempore en lengua mexicana	1577	16th
38	Ara, Domingo de	Doctrina cristiana en tzeldal	1557	16th
39	Ara, Domingo de	Vocabulario de la lengua Tzeldal - Castellano según el orden de Copanabastla	1571	16th
40	Araoz, Francisco Xavier	Diccionario de Náhuatl	1778	18th
41	Arenas, Pedro de	Vocabulario manual de las lenguas castellana y mexicana	1611	16th - 17th
42	Arroyo de la Cuesta, Felipe	Gramática Mutsun		19th
43	Avendaño, Andrés	Diccionario de la lengua de Yucatán		17th - 18th
44	Avendaño, Andrés	Diccionario abreviado de los adverbios de tiempo y lugar de la lengua de Yucatán		17th - 18th
45	Avendaño, Andrés	Arte para aprender la lengua de Yucatán		17th - 18th
46	Ávila, Francisco	Arte de la lengua mexicana, con pláticas sobre los Misterios de la fé	1717	17th - 18th
47	Ávila, Francisco de	Espejo de la doctrina Xpiana para los naturales, compuesto en su idioma mexicano y termina con un vocabulario hispano - mexicano		18th
48	Ayora, Juan	Tratado del santísimo sacramento del altar en lengua mexicana	157...	16th
49	Ayora, Juan	Arte y diccionario de la lengua mexicana		16th
50	Ayora, Juan	Arte y diccionario de la lengua tarasca		16th
51	Baltasar, Juan	Sermones en lengua mexicana		17th - 18th
52	Barquera, Juan Sánchez de la	Luz y guía para leer, escribir y pronunciar y saber...	1751	18th
53	Barreda, Nicolás	Arte de la lengua chinanteca		17th - 18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
54	Barreda, Nicolás	El Manual de sacramentos, el arte y las oraciones y la explicación de los misterios en idioma chinanteco		17th - 18th
55	Barreda, Nicolás	Doctrina cristiana en lengua chinateca	1730	17th - 18th
56	Barrientos, Luis	Doctrina cristiana de la lengua Chiapaneca	1875	17th - 18th
57	Basac (o Bassaccio), Arnaldo	Sermones en lengua mexicana para los Domingos y Fiestas del año		16th
58	Basac (o Bassaccio), Arnaldo	Los evangelios y epístolas de las mismas de todo el año traducido a la lengua mexicana		16th
59	Basalanque (o Basalenque), Diego	Sermones en dicha lengua, Catecismo en la misma y manual de párrocos de Michoacán		16th - 17th
60	Basalanque (o Basalenque), Diego	Arte y vocabulario de la lengua matlacinga		16th - 17th
61	Basalanque (o Basalenque), Diego	Arte de la lengua tarasca o pirinda		16th - 17th
62	Bautista, Jerónimo	Sermones para todo el año en lengua Matlacinga		16th
63	Bautista, Juan	Algunas obritas pequeñas en lengua mexicana	159...	16th - 17th
64	Bautista, Juan	Indulgencias que gozan los terceros de San Francisco en lengua mexicana		16th - 17th
65	Bautista, Juan	La obra del P. Estella de la Vanidad del Mundo, puesta en lengua mexicana		16th - 17th
66	Bautista, Juan	Catecismo en castellano y mexicano		16th - 17th
67	Bautista, Juan	El Kempis o los libros del Contemptus Mundi, puestos en mexicano		16th - 17th
68	Bautista, Juan	Historia de los tres niños mártires de Tlaxcala		16th - 17th
69	Bautista, Juan	Advertencias para los confesores de los naturales	1599	16th - 17th
70	Bautista, Juan	Confesionario en lengua mexicana y castellana, con muchas advertencias muy necesarias para los confesores	1599	16th - 17th
71	Bautista, Juan	De la miseria y brevedad de la vida y los novísimos o postrimerías des hombre en mexicano	1604	16th - 17th
72	Bautista, Juan	Diccionario eclesiástico en lengua mexicana		16th - 17th
73	Bautista, Juan	Vidas de santos en mexicano		16th - 17th
74	Bautista, Juan	A Iesuchristo S. N. Ofrece este sermonario en lengua mexicana	1606	16th - 17th
75	Bautista, Juan	Sermones para todo el año en lengua mexicana	1699	16th - 17th
76	Bejarano, Fernando	Vocabularios en Lengua Mije		17th - 18th
77	Bejarano, Fernando	Sermones en lengua mije y en castellano		17th - 18th
78	Beltran de Santa Rosa, Pedro	Arte del idioma Maya		18th
79	Beltran de Santa Rosa, Pedro	Declaración de la Doctrina en Yucateco		18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
80	Beltran de Santa Rosa, Pedro	Gramática, Diccionario, Catecismo y Sermones de la lengua Maya	1739	18th
81	Benito (o Beneito), Marcos	Arte de la lengua Mije Devocionario Manual de los Misterios del Rosario en la misma lengua		n.d.
82	Berardo, Juan	Varias versiones del Latín y Castellano al mexicano		16th
83	Betanzos, Domingo	Adicciones a la Doctrina Cristiana.	1544	15th - 16th
84	Betanzos, Domingo	Adiciones de la Doctrina Cristiana, traducción al mexicano	1550	15th - 16th
85	Beteta (o Bitela), Gregorio	Doctrina Cristiana en lengua Zapoteca		16th
86	Bonifaz, Luis	Arte de la Lengua principal de Sinaloa		16th - 17th
87	Bravo de Lagunas, Juan Bautista	Arte de la lengua de Michoacán que contiene: Confesionario, Preparación para bien morir, Explicación del Salmo Miserere, Explicación del Salmo Beati qui Audiunt, Explicación de las Letanías	1574	16th - 17th
88	Bravo, Esteban	Beristáin no consigna ninguna. "traducía cualquier cosa del latín al náhuatl...."		16th
89	Buenaventura, Gabriel	Arte de la Lengua Maya		17th
90	Buenaventura, Gabriel	Diccionario Mayo hispano e Hispano - Mayo		17th
91	Calderón, Ignacio	Varios opúsculos en latín y castellano		17th - 18th
92	Calvo, Pedro	Gramática y vocabulario en lengua chiapaneca		16th
93	Camacho, Alonso	Tratado de los siete sacramentos en Lengua Zapoteca sobre la palabra Divina		17th
94	Cancer, Luis	Varias canciones en Verso Zapoteco sobre los Misterios de la Religión, para el uso de los Neófitos de la Vera-Paz		16th
95	Cárceres, Pedro de	Arte de la lengua otomí	1905	16th
96	Cardenas, Carlos	Práctica y régimen del Confesionario de indios, en lenguas castellana y mexicana para uso de los seminaristas	1761	18th
97	Carochi, Horacio	Arte de la lengua mexicana con la declaración de todos sus adverbios	1645	16th - 17th
98	Carochi, Horacio	Vocabulario copioso de la Lengua Mexicana, Gramática de la Lengua Otomí		16th - 17th
99	Carochi, Horacio	Vocabulario Otomí		16th - 17th
100	Carochi, Horacio	Sermones en Lengua Mexicana		16th - 17th
101	Carranza, Diego	Doctrina Cristiana		16th
102	Carranza, Diego	Sermones		16th
103	Carranza, Diego	Ejercicios Espirituales		16th
104	Carranza, José	Arte donde se contienen todos aquellos rudimentos y principios preceptivos que conducen a la lengua mexicana		n.d.
105	Castañón, Bartolomé	Catecismo Breve en lengua mexicana con el acto de Contrición en idioma mexicano	1744/1817	17th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
106	Castillo, Baltazar	Luz y Guía de los Ministros Evangélicos		17th
107	Castillo, Baltazar	Modo de ayudar a bien morir a los indios.	1667	17th
108	Castillo, Baltazar	Cartilla Mayor en Lengua Castellana, Latina y Mexicana, Nuevamente Corregida y Enmendada, y Reformada en esta última impresión	1683	17th
109	Castillo, Pedro	Vocabulario de la Lengua Otomí		15th - 16th
110	Castro, Andrés	Sermones y catecismo de la Lengua Matlatzinga		16th
111	Castro, Andrés	Arte y diccionario de la Lengua Matlatzinga		16th
112	Castro, Juan de Dios	Vocabulario de la lengua Otomí		17th
113	Castro, Juan de Dios	Arte o Gramática de la lengua Otomí		17th
114	Chacón, Tomás	Arte de la lengua Tarasca y Sermones en la misma		16th - 17th
115	Cisneros, García	Sermones compuestos en Lengua Mexicana		16th
116	Ciudad Real, Antonio	Gran Diccionario o Calepino de la lengua Maya de Yucatán, en 6 tomos		16th - 17th
117	Contreras, Francisco (o Francisco Bautista)	"Ayudó a F. Juan Bautista en sus traducciones..." Manual de administrar los Santos Sacramentos á los españoles u a los Indios de la Nueva España conforme á la reforma de Paulo V, Pontífice Máximo, en latín y en Mexicano		16th - 17th
118	Contreras, Pedro	Manual de administrar los Santos Sacramentos á los españoles u a los Indios de la Nueva España conforme á la reforma de Paulo V, Pontífice Máximo, en latín y en Mexicano	1637	17th
119	Córdova, Juan	Arte de la lengua Zapoteca	1578	16th
120	Córdova, Juan	Vocabulario de la lengua Zapoteca o Diccionario Hispano-Zapoteca	1571	16th
121	Córdova, Juan	Voacabulario en lengua Capoteca... con licencia	1578	16th
122	Córdova, Juan	Confesionario breve o modo de confesarse en lengua Zapoteca	157...	16th
123	Coronel, Juan	Doctrina cristiana en lengua maya	1620	16th - 17th
124	Coronel, Juan	Arte en lengua Maya		16th - 17th
125	Coronel, Juan	Discursos predicables y tratados espirituales en lengua Maya	1620	16th - 17th
126	Cortes y Zedeño, Gerónimo Thomás de Aquino	Arte, Vocabulario y Confesionario en el idioma mexicano, como se usa en el Obispado de Guadalajara	1765	18th
127	Cortezaro (o Cortecero), Diego	Manual para la administración de los santos sacramentos a los indios mexicanos	1669	17th
128	Cruz, Juan de la	Catecismo de la Doctrina Cristiana en lengua huasteca	1571, 1689	16th
129	Cuellar, Lope	Muchos Sermones Doctrinales en Lengua Misteca		16th - 17th
130	Cueva, Pedro	Arte de la Gramática de la lengua zapoteca conforme al que la gramática Latina escribió Antonio de Nebrija	1607	16th - 17th
131	Dávila Padilla, Antonio	Arte para aprender la lengua mexicana		16th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
132	Domínguez, Francisco	Catecismo de la doctrina cristiana puesta en el idioma totonaco de la Cierra Bajo de Naolingo, distinto de la Cierra de Papantla	1837	19th
133	Durán, Diego	Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e islas de tierra firme	México	16th
134	Durán, Diego	Calendario		16th
135	Durán, Diego	Libro de los Dioses y Ritos		16th
136	Escalona, Alonso	Comentario sobre los diez preceptos del Decálogo en Lengua Mexicana		15th - 16th
137	Escalona, Alonso	Sermones en Lengua Mexicana		15th - 16th
138	Escamilla, Juan Francisco	Arte o Gramática de la lengua otomite		n.d.
139	Escobar, Sebastián	Cartas en lengua Otomí a varios sujetos		16th
140	Espinareda, Pedro	Arte y Vocabulario del idioma de los Zacatecas		16th
141	Espinoza, Juan	Arte y Vocabulario completo del idioma Concho.		17th
142	Estrada, Sebastián	Libro de los dolores de la Virgen.	1689	17th - 18th
143	Feria, Pedro	Doctrina Cristiana en lengua castellana y zapoteca	1567	16th
144	Feria, Pedro	Confesionario en lengua Zapoteca		16th
145	Feria, Pedro	Doctrina Cristiana en lengua Zapoteca		16th
146	Feria, Pedro	Vocabulario de la Lengua zapoteca		16th
147	Fernández, Benito	Los Evangelios y Epístolas de las misas traducidos a la lengua misteca	1550	16th
148	Fernández, Benito	Libros Catequísticos en lengua Misteca		16th
149	Fernández, Benito	Doctrina Cristiana en Lengua Misteca	1550	16th
150	Fernández, Benito	Doctrina en la que se explican la creación del mundo, la Encarnación del Verbo Divino, La vida, pasión y muerte de Jesucristo con otros Misterios y los Sacramentos y oraciones	1568	16th
151	Fernández, José	Arte y Vocabulario de la lengua Tepehuana		17th - 18th
152	Figueroa, Gerónimo	Catecismo y confesionario en lengua Tepehuana y Tarahumara		17th
153	Figueroa, Gerónimo	Arte y Copioso Vocabulario de las lenguas Tepehuana y Tarahumara		17th
154	Focher, Juan	Arte de la lengua mexicana		16th
155	Fonte, Juan	Arte y vocabulario dela lengua Tepehuana		16th - 17th
156	Frence, Pedro	Catecismo en lengua de los indios		17th
157	Fuensalida, Luis	Diálogos y coloquios en dicho idioma entre la Virgen María y el arcángel San Gabriel		16th
158	Fuensalida, Luis	Sermones en lengua mexicana	1624	16th
159	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	Relación mercuriana de la admirable Aparición de la virgen María de Guadalupe		17th - 18th
160	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	Cartilla mexicana y castellana		17th - 18th
161	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	El portento mexicano: comedia de la aparición de nuestra Señora Guadalupe		17th - 18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
162	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	Consideración de la santísima trinidad en mexicano		17th - 18th
163	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	El maestro genuino del elegantísimo idioma Náhuatl		17th - 18th
164	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	El catecismo de Ripalda en lengua mexicana		17th - 18th
165	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	El Arco iris del P. Ulloa en mexicano		17th - 18th
166	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	Los Oficios del Santísimo Sacramento y del Patriarca San José en mexicano		17th - 18th
167	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	Sacra Filomena o los Misterios del Rosario en verso mexicano		17th - 18th
168	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	El Arte de Nebrija en Mexicano		17th - 18th
169	Fuente, José Antonio Pérez	Dia festivo del alma en lengua mexicana		17th - 18th
170	Gante, Pedro	Doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana	1522, 1523	16th - 17th
171	Gante, Pedro de	"tradujo al mexicano muchos opúsculos de los que publicó el P. Juan Bautista...."		15th - 16th
172	Gaona, Juan de	Homilías de San Juan Crisóstomo		16th
173	Gaona, Juan de	Poesías Castellanas en alabanza de la Concepción Inmaculada de la Virges María		16th
174	Gaona, Juan de	Coloquios de paz y tranquilidad cristiana en lengua mexicana	1582	16th
175	Gaona, Juan de	Tratado de pasión de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo		16th
176	Gaona, Juan de	Sermones dominicales en mexicano		16th
177	Gilberti, Maturino	Thesoro spiritual de los pobres en lengua de Michuacan	1575	15th - 16th
178	Gilberti, Maturino	Vocabulario en lengua castellana y mechuacana	1559	15th - 16th
179	Gilberti, Maturino	Diálogo de la Doctrina Cristiana en lengua de Mechuacán	1559	15th - 16th
180	Gilberti, Maturino	Arte de la lengua de Mechuacán	1558	15th - 16th
181	Gilberti, Maturino	Arte gramatical de la lengua tarasca, con equivalencia latina		15th - 16th
182	Gilberti, Maturino	Confesionario tarasco		15th - 16th
183	Gilberti, Maturino	Vocabulario en lengua Mechuacan	1559	15th - 16th
184	Gilberti, Maturino	Cartilla para los niños en lengua tarasca	1559	15th - 16th
185	Gilberti, Maturino	Evangelios en Tarasco		15th - 16th
186	Gilberti, Maturino	Sermones en tarasco		15th - 16th
187	Gilberti, Maturino	Diálogo de la Doctrina Cristiana en lengua tarasca	1555	15th - 16th
188	Gilg, Adalmo (o Adán)	Vocabulario de las lenguas eudeve, prima y seris		17th - 18th
189	Gómez, Francisco	Varios Opúsculos sobre la inteligencia de la lengua mexicana		16th - 17th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
190	González, Antonio	Catecismo de la Doctrina cristiana del p. Gerónimo Ripalda, traducido al idioma misteco con varios apéndices	1719	17th - 18th
191	González, Baltasar	Historia de la milagrosa aparición de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en México		17th
192	González, Diego Pablo	Manual de la administración de sacramentos en lengua caita, con un apéndice en el mismo idioma del método de hacer una buena confesión	1740	17th - 18th
193	González, Jacinto	Instrucciones gramaticales para aprender con facilidad y perfección la lengua mexicana		n.d.
194	Gravina, Pedro	Arte y vocabulario de la lengua xiximije		16th - 17th
195	Grijelmo, Domingo (o de la Cruz)	Setenta y siete textos de la Santa Escritura explicados moralmente en lengua zapoteca		16th
196	Grijelmo, Domingo (o de la Cruz)	Sermón en lengua zapoteca		16th
197	Guadalajara, Tomás	Arte general de diferentes idiomas de los indios bárbaros (tarahumaras y tepehuanos)	1683	17th - 18th
198	Guasco, Juan	Sermones varios en idioma de los indios de México		n.d.
199	Guerra, Juan	Arte de la lengua mexicana según el dialecto de los pueblos de la Nueva Galicia	1699	17th
200	Guerreña, Marcos	Via crucis; ó modo de hacer las Estaciones; en lengua de los indios del Nte.		17th - 18th
201	Guevara, José	Sermones mexicanos de dicho religioso		17th - 18th
202	Guevara, Juan	Doctrina cristiana en lengua huasteca		n.d.
203	Guevara, Miguel	Arte doctrinal y modo general para aprender la Lengua Matlatzinga	1757	16th - 17th
204	Guevara, Miguel	Arte vocabulario y manual de la lengua pirinda		16th - 17th
205	Haedo, Francisco	Gramática de la lengua otomí y método para confesar a los indios en ella	1731	18th
206	Herrera, Alonso	Sermones Dominicales y de Santos en lengua mexicana		16th
207	Hierro, Diego Fernández del	"maestro de la lengua mexicana de la cual escribió un Arte....."		n.d.
208	Iragorri, Juan Francisco	Vocabulario y Diálogos mexicanos		18th
209	Jaime Ricardo Villavicencio, Diego	Luz y método de confesar idólatras y destierro de idolatrías, debajo del tratado siguiente: tratado de avisos y puntos importantes de la abominable Seta de idolatría	1692	17th
210	Landa, Diego de	Arte de la lengua de Yucatán		16th
211	Landa, Diego de	Vocabulario de la lengua de Yucatán		16th
212	Landa, Diego de	Doctrina cristiana traducida en lengua de los indios de Yucatán		16th
213	Lara, Domingo	Vocabulario de los indios de Chiapas		16th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
214	Laso de la Vega, Luis	Historia u Origen de Ntra. Sra. De Guadalupe, aparecida en el cerro de Tepeyac, cerca de México en mexicano	1646	17th
215	Lazcano, Francisco Javier	Doctrina cristiana en verso castellano		18th
216	León, Martín	Vocabulario mexicano español		16th - 17th
217	León, Martín	Camino del cielo en lengua mexicana, incluye arte de bien morir y calendario	1611	16th - 17th
218	León, Martín	Sermonario mexicano para todo el año		16th - 17th
219	León, Martín	El contempus mundi traducido al mexicano		16th - 17th
220	Loaiza, Francisco (1)	Dos libros de los diferentes idiomas que se usan en la Provincia de Sonora		18th
221	Lombardo, Natal	Vocabulario de la lengua Tequima y pláticas doctrinales en ella		17th - 18th
222	Lombardo, Natal	Arte de la lengua tequima, vulgarmente llamada Opata	1702	17th - 18th
223	López Yepes, Joaquín	Catecismo y declaración de la doctrina cristiana en lengua otomí	1826	19th
224	Lorra Baquío, Francisco	Explicación de los efectos de los Santos Sacramentos en lengua mexicana, conforme al manual Toledano		17th
225	Lorra Baquío, Francisco	Manual mexicano para la administración de los Santos Sacramentos, conforme al manual Toledano	1663	17th
226	Marroquin, Francisco	Catecismo y doctrina cristiana en idioma Utlateco	1556	15th - 16th
227	Marroquin, Francisco	Arte para aprender los principales idiomas de la lengua de Guatemala		15th - 16th
228	Martínez de Araujo, Juan	Manual de los Sagrados Sacramentos en el idioma de Michuacán	1690	17th
229	Medina Plaza, Juan	Sermones para los Domingos y las Fiestas del Año en dicha lengua		16th
230	Medina Plaza, Juan	Doctrinalis Fidei in Michuacanenfium linguam	1575, 1578	16th
231	Medina Plaza, Juan	Explicación del símbolo de la Fé en lengua Tarasca o Pirinda		16th
232	Medina, Francisco	Vida y Milagros de San Nicolás Tolentino en Lengua Mexicana		16th - 17th
233	Mena, Carlos	Sermón y Opúsculos piadosos en Lengua Yuacateca		n.d.
234	Mendoza, Juan	Doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana		16th - 17th
235	Mercado, Nicolás	Arte de la lengua mexicana, según el Dialecto que usn los indios de la Costa del Sur de Sinaloa		18th
236	Mijangos, Juan	Sermonario y santoral en Lengua Mexicana	1624	16th - 17th
237	Mijangos, Juan	Espejo divino que deben consultar los padres para la instrucción de sus hijos	1607	16th - 17th

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238	Mijangos, Juan	La parábola del hijo pródigo, explicada en lengua mexicana	1624	16th - 17th
239	Mijangos, Juan	Primera parte del sermonario dominical y sanctoral en lengua mexicana : contiene las dominicas que ay desde la septuagesima hasta la ultima de Penthecostés ...	1624	16th - 17th
240	Miranda, Francisco	Catecismo breve de la doctrina cristiana en Lengua Otomí	1759	18th
241	Moles, Joaquín	Explicación más copiosa de la doctrina cristiana breve: que de orden del Papa Clemente VIII compuso para los niños y los adultos no instruidos en nuestra fe católica	1817	18th
242	Molina, Alonso de	Doctrina Cristiana en lengua mexicana con privilegio	1578	16th
243	Molina, Alonso de	Evangelios de todo el año en lengua mexicana		16th
244	Molina, Alonso de	Doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana	1578	16th
245	Molina, Alonso de	Confesionario mayo y menor en lengua mexicana	1565	16th
246	Molina, Alonso de	Confesionario mayor en lengua (sic.) mexicana y castellana	1565	16th
247	Molina, Alonso de	Doctrina cristiana traducida en lengua mexicana	1606	16th
248	Molina, Alonso de	Diccionario hispano - mexicano y mexicano - español	1571	16th
249	Molina, Alonso de	Doctrina cristiana breve en lengua mexicana	1571	16th
250	Molina, Alonso de	Rosario o Psalterio de Nuestra Señora (Teocuitlaxochicozcatl)	1605	16th
251	Molina, Alonso de	Vida de San Francisco de Asís en mexicano y castellano	157...	16th
252	Molina, Alonso de	Confesionario breve en lengua mexicana y castellana	1565	16th
253	Molina, Alonso de	Oficio parvo de la Virgen María en mexicano		16th
254	Molina, Alonso de	Arte de la lengua mexicana y castellana	1571, 1576	16th
255	Molina, Alonso de	Los evangelios traducidos al mexicano		16th
256	Molina, Alonso de	Vocabulario de la lengua castellana y mexicana	1555	16th
257	Mora, Pedro	Disertación teológica - crítica sobre la voz mexicana: Quatiquía, equivalente de la latina Baptizo, para la válida administración del Bautismo en dicha lengua		18th
258	Moreno, Gerónimo	Tratado curioso de las raíces y formación de los Verbos de la lengua zapoteca		16th - 17th
259	Moreno, Gerónimo	Sermones en lengua zapoteca		16th - 17th
260	Motolinia (o Benavente), Toribio de Paredes	Doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana	155...	16th

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261	Motolinia (o Benavente), Toribio de Paredes	Vida y martirio de los tres niños nobles de Tlaxcala, Cristóbal, hijo del cacique Acxotecatl, Antonio y Juan, en náhuatl y traducida después al castellano	1601	16th
262	Nájera, Diego	Doctrina e instrucción cristiana en lengua mazahuatl, útil y proverbios para los indios y los párrocos	1637	17th
263	Nájera, Diego	Manual para administrar los Santos Sacramentos en la lengua Mazahuatl		17th
264	Navas, Francisco de las	"Se le atribuyen unos Memoriales"		16th
265	Nazareo, Pablo	Obras varias desconocidas		16th
266	Neve y Molina, Luis	Reglas de Ortografía, Arte y Devocionario del idioma otomí para principiantes	1767	18th
267	Olmedo, Antonio	Arte de la lengua mexicana de Vásquez de Gastelu, corregido y enmendado	1726	18th
268	Olmos, Andrés de	Tratado de los Santos Sacramentos en mexicano		16th
269	Olmos, Andrés de	Tratado de los Sacrilegios en mexicano		16th
270	Olmos, Andrés de	Tratado de los pecados capitales en Mexicano		16th
271	Olmos, Andrés de	Arte de la lengua mexicana	1555	16th
272	Olmos, Andrés de	Vocabulario en mexicano		16th
273	Olmos, Andrés de	Arte y vocabulario de la lengua Totonaca		16th
274	Olmos, Andrés de	Arte, Vocabulario, Catecismo, Confesionario y Sermones Huastecos		16th
275	Olmos, Andrés de	Gramática de la lengua Náhuatl		16th
276	Oroz, Pedro	Gramática de la lengua otomí		16th
277	Oroz, Pedro	Historia de la Provincia del Santo Evangelio del Orden de San Francisco, fundación de sus conventos y Vida de sus Venerables Hijos.		16th
278	Oroz, Pedro	Suma Espiritual o compendio alfabético dela Suma de Confesores del Dr. Azpilcueta, Naavarro.		16th
279	Oroz, Pedro	Gramática de la Lengua Otomí más correcta y aumentada que la de Fr. Pedro Palacios		16th
280	Oroz, Pedro	Sermones en lengua mexicana para todos los Domingos y Festividades del año		16th
281	Ortega, José	Confesionario manual en lengua Cora	1732	18th
282	Ortega, José	Vocabulario de las lenguas castellana y cora	1732	18th
283	Ortiz, Francisco	Arte y Gramática de la Lengua Misteca y Catecismo cristiano en la misma, dedicado a la Provincai del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús del Orden de San Agustín		n.d.
284	Osorio, Diego (1)	Arte y vocabulario de la Lengua Mexicana, preparados para las prensas		18th
285	Osorio, Diego (2)	Oraciones Salmos, Antífonas en la lengua de aquellos indios		17th
286	Pacheco de Silva, Francisco	Doctrina cristiana traducida de la lengua castellana en lengua zapoteca nextitza	1687	18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
287	Paez, Bernabé	Reglas para aprender con facilidad la lengua mexicana		n.d.
288	Paez, Bernabé	Método de confesión sacramental en mexicano		n.d.
289	Paez, Bernabé	Los 4 evangelios puestos y explicados en mexicano		n.d.
290	Paez, Bernabé	El Símbolo de san Anastasio en mexicano con Notas		n.d.
291	Palacios, Pedro	Corona de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo en lengua Otomí		16th
292	Palacios, Pedro	Catecismo y Confesionario		16th
293	Palacios, Pedro	Vocabulario mexicano y otomí		16th
294	Palacios, Pedro	Arte de la Lengua Otomí		16th
295	Palma, Victoriano	Informe y exámen crítico de todos los Catecismos publicados en lengua mexicana, hecho de orden del Concilio Cuarto Mexicano, y leído en la Sesión 107 de dicho Concilio		18th
296	Pangua, Diego Díaz	Diccionario de la lengua Chichimeca y catecismo de la misma		16th - 17th
297	Pangua, Diego Díaz	Arte de la lengua Chichimeca		16th - 17th
298	Paredes, Ignacio	Promptuario manual mexicano. Contiene cuarenta, y seis pláticas con sus exemplos, y morales exhortaciones, y los sermones morales	1759	18th
299	Paredes, Ignacio	Doctrina breve sacada del catecismo mexicano	1809	18th
300	Paredes, Ignacio	Compendio del arte de la lengua mexicana que compuso el P. Horacio Canoché, dispuesto con brevedad, claridad y propiedad	1759	18th
301	Paredes, Ignacio	Catecismo mexicano	1758	18th
302	Pareja, Francisco	Gramática de la Lengua Timiquana	1614	16th - 17th
303	Pareja, Francisco	Catecismo y exámen para los que comulgan en lengua castellana y timiquana	1614	16th - 17th
304	Pareja, Francisco	Catecismo y Breve exposición de la Doctrina Cristiana en castellano y Timiquiano	1617	16th - 17th
305	Pareja, Francisco	Catecismo en lengua Castellana y Timiquana	1612	16th - 17th
306	Pareja, Francisco	Confesionario en Lengua Timiquana de la Florida	1612	16th - 17th
307	Perea, Miguel Ruiz	Oración panegírica y doctrinal en la solemne publicación de la Bula de Santa Cruzada, en lengua mexicana	1700	18th
308	Pérez Dolz, Francisco	Catecismo de la doctrina cristiana en lengua otomí	1834	19th
309	Pérez, Manuel	Arte del idioma mexicano	1713	17th - 18th
310	Pérez, Manuel	Método para auxiliar moribundos en lengua mexicana con las Indulgencias que concedió el Illmo. Arzobispo Lanciego	Varias veces	17th - 18th

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311	Pérez, Manuel	Devoto ejercicio que nuestro Redentor Jesucristo encargó a su esposa santa Gertrudis para los tres días de Carnestolendas	1726, 1748	17th - 18th
312	Pérez, Manuel	Catecismo Romano traducido en castellano y mexicano	1723	17th - 18th
313	Pérez, Manuel	Alfabeto español, latino y mexicano	1714	17th - 18th
314	Pila, Pedro	Doctrina moral y cristiana en Lengua Tarasca		16th
315	Pimentel, Francisco Antonio	Voc. Manual de la Lengua Opata	1863	18th
316	Pinelo, Bernardino	Manual mexicano para la administración recta de los Sacramentos	1650	17th
317	Pomar, Juan Bautista	Relación de las antigüedades políticas y religiosas de los Indios, dirigida al Rey Ntro. Sr. en 9 de marzo de 1582		16th
318	Pozo, Antonio	Arte de la Lengua Zapoteca		16th - 17th
319	Purón, Francisco	Arte de la lengua de los Otomites con todos sus diferentes Dialectos		n.d.
320	Quintana, Agustín	Instrucción Cristiana que contiene: el Arte de la Lengua Mije y los Tratados de la Santísima Trinidad de la Creación del Mundo y de la Redención del género humano por Jesucristo, en que traduce grandes fragmentos de Fr. Luis de Granada Nieremberg	1725	17th - 18th
321	Quintana, Agustín	Confesionario de la lengua mije	1733	17th - 18th
322	Quiroga, Vasco de	Sermones varios para que se prediquen a los indios de Santa Fe de México		15th - 16th
323	Quiroga, Vasco de	Doctrina para los indios, con adiciones		15th - 16th
324	Quiroz, Bernardo	Arte del idioma Guasteco, proporcionado en todas sus reglas con el de Antonio de Nebrija		n.d.
325	Ramírez, Antonio de Guadalupe	Breve compendio de todo lo que debe saber y entender el cristiano, para poder lograr ver, conocer y gozar de Dios Nuestro Señor en el cielo eternamente	1785	18th
326	Ramírez, Juan (1)	Doctrina mexicana		16th - 17th
327	Ramírez, Juan (2)	Sermones en lengua tarasca y vocabulario de ella		16th
328	Ramírez, Juan (2)	Catecismo en Mexicano		16th
329	Rangel, Alonso	Sermones mexicanos para todo el año		16th
330	Rangel, Alonso	Arte y doctrina en lengua Otomí		16th
331	Rangel, Alonso	Arte de la lengua mexicana		16th
332	Rangel, Alonso	Arte y Catecismo de la Lengua Otomí Arte, vocabulario, confesionario y modo de administrar el Sagrado Sacramento de la Eucaristía... para mayor inteligencia y noticia desta lengua, a quien vulgarmente llaman Mame, e Indios Mames desta tierra	1644	17th
334	Rengino, Luis	Sermones y tratados doctrinales en diversas lenguas de los indios		16th

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335	Reyes, Antonio de los	Arte de la lengua misteca	1593	16th - 17th
336	Reyes, Gaspar de los	Gramática de las lenguas zapoteca serrana y zapoteca del valle de Oaxaca	1891	17th - 18th
337	Ribas, Fernando	Paz y tranquilidad del ánimo		16th
338	Ribas, Fernando	Vocabulario mexicano - español		16th
339	Ribas, Fernando	Esposición de los preceptos del Decálogo		16th
340	Ribas, Fernando	La vanidad del mundo del Padre Estella		16th
341	Ribas, Fernando	Flos Sactrum		16th
342	Ribas, Juan	Preguntas y Respuestas de la vida cotidiana en mexicano		16th
343	Ribas, Juan	Flos sanctorum		16th
344	Ribas, Juan	Doctrina Cristiana en lengua mexicana		16th
345	Ribas, Juan	Catecismo mexicano	1537	16th
346	Ribas, Juan	"Autos de varios misterios de la religión Católica"		16th
347	Ribas, Juan	Sermones dominicales y diálogos morales en mexicano		16th
348	Ribero, Sebastián	Vocabulario de la lengua Otomí	16...	17th
349	Ribero, Sebastián	Tratados de la Paz del alma en Mexicano		17th
350	Ribero, Sebastián	Diálogos de la Doctrina Cristiana en Lengua Mexicana		17th
351	Rinaldini, Benito	Arte para aprender la lengua tepehuana	1745	17th
352	Rincón, Antonio del	Arte Mexicana	1885	16th - 17th
353	Río, Diego	Diccionario copioso y erudito de la lengua misteca		17th
354	Río, Diego	Tratados espirituales y Sermones en la misma lengua		17th
355	Rivera, Gregorio	Silabario de la lengua mexicana	1818	18th - 19th
356	Roa, Agustín	Arte para aprender el idioma de los Tarahumares		17th - 18th
357	Rodríguez, Diego	Arte de la lengua tarasca		n.d.
358	Rodríguez, Diego	Comedia de San Judas Tadeo en idioma pirindo o tarasco		n.d.
359	Rodríguez, Luis	Los proverbios de Salomón		16th
360	Rodríguez, Luis	Doctrina cristiana, Sermones y otros tratados en lengua mexicana		16th
361	Rodríguez, Luis	El libro de Eclesiastés		16th
362	Rodríguez, Luis	El libro de la imitación de Kempis		16th
363	Roldán, Bartolomé	Cartilla y doctrina cristiana breve y compenciosa para enseñar los niños a manera de diálogo	1580	16th
364	Roldán, Bartolomé	Cathesismo en lengua chuchona y castellana		16th
365	Romanones, Juan	Sermones y otros tratados espirituales en lengua mexicana		n.d.
366	Romanones, Juan	Stromas de la Santa Escritura y SS. Padres, para uso de los Predicadores de Indios		n.d.
367	Romero, Eugenio	Arte o Gramática de la Lengua Totonaca		n.d.

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
368	Rosa López Figueroa, Antonio	Arte de las artes, o Florilegio de las Artes de la Lengua Mexicana, que se han escrito, y en que con nurvo y fácil modo se enseña su gramática		18th
369	Rosa López Figueroa, Antonio	Tesoro catequístico indiano. Espejo de la doctrina cristiana y política para la instrucción		18th
370	Ruiz Perea, Miguel	Oración panegírica en la solemnidad plausible de la publicación de la bula	1700	17th - 18th
371	Ruz, Joaquín	Gramática Yucateca	1845	18th - 19th
372	Ruz, Joaquín	Cartilla o silabario de la lengua yucateca	1845	18th - 19th
373	Ruz, Joaquín	Catecismo y expocition breve de la doctrina cristiana por el P. M. Gerónimo de Ripalda	1847	18th - 19th
374	Ruz, Joaquín	Colección de sermones para los domingos de todo el año y cuaresma	1846 - 1850	18th - 19th
375	Saavedra, Marcos de	Confesionario breve activo, y pasivo, en lengua mexicana	1746	18th
376	Sahagún, Bernardino	Diccionario trilingüe, latino - español - mexicano		16th
377	Sahagún, Bernardino	Vida de San Bernardino de Sena		16th
378	Sahagún, Bernardino	Tratado de las virtudes teologales		16th
379	Sahagún, Bernardino	Catecismo de la doctrina cristiana en Lengua Mexicana	1583	16th
380	Sahagún, Bernardino	Psalmodia cristiana en Lengua Mexicana	1583	16th
381	Sahagún, Bernardino	Conferencias de los misioneros con los sacerdotes gentiles en idioma mexicano (Coloquios)		16th
382	Sahagún, Bernardino	Explicación de los Evangelios y Epístolas de la Misa en mexicano		16th
383	Sahagún, Bernardino	Sermones en mexicano para todo el año		16th
384	Sahagún, Bernardino	Diccionario histórico mexicano		16th
385	Sahagún, Bernardino	Arte de la lengua mexicana		16th
386	Salazar, Manuel Santos	Coloquio en lengua mexicana de la Invención de la Santa Cruz por Santa Elena, escrito en 1714, con una pequeña pieza dramática en la misma lengua		18th
387	Salcedo, Francisco	Sermones trilingües, 3 tomos		16th - 17th
388	Salcedo, Francisco	Arte y diccionario de la lengua mexicana		16th - 17th
389	Salcedo, Francisco	Documentos cristianos en tres lenguas		16th - 17th
390	San Francisco, Juan	Conferencias espirituales con ejemplos y doctrinas de Santos en Lengua Mexicana		16th
391	San Juan Bautista, Elías de	Compendio de las excelencias, de la Bulla de Sancta Cruzada, en lengua Mexicana... con licencia y privilegio	1599	16th
392	San Juan Bautista, Elías de	Catecismo mexicano		16th
393	San Juan Bautista, Elías de	Diálogos en lengua mexicana	1598	16th

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394	San Juan Bautista, Elías de	Expansión de la Bula de la Cruzada en mexicano	1601	16th
395	San Miguel, Isidro	Paraíso cultivado: Vida del V. P. Fr. Sebastián de Aparicio	1695	17th - 18th
396	Sandoval, Rafael	Arte de la lengua mexicana	1810	19th
397	Santa María, Domingo	Doctrina Cristiana en Lengua Misteca		16th
398	Santa María, Domingo	Arte de la lengua misteca		16th
399	Santa María, Domingo	Los evangelios y epístolas del año en dicha lengua		16th
400	Santoyo, Antonio	Catecismo y confesionario		n.d.
401	Saravia, Francisco	Catecismo chinanteco		16th - 17th
402	Saravia, Francisco	Gran Homiliario Chinanteco		16th - 17th
403	Sedelmair, Jacobo	Vocabulario de la Lengua Pima		18th
404	Serna, Damián	Varios Opúsculos en Lengua Mexicana		17th
405	Serra, Angel	El catecismo del P. Bartolomé Castaño		17th
406	Serra, Angel	Manual trilingüe latino, castellano y tarasco, para administrar los Sacramentos a los españoles y a los indios	1697	17th
407	Serra, Angel	Arte, Diccionario y confesionario en dicha lengua		17th
408	Solana, Alonso	Sermones en lengua maya		16th
409	Solana, Alonso	Diccionario mayo - español		16th
410	Suarez, Lorenzo	Sermones en Lengua Mexicana del año 1617		17th
411	Tapia Zenteno, Carlos	Arte novissima de lengua mexicana	1753	18th
412	Tapia Zenteno, Carlos	Diccionario, manual y catecismo en lengua huasteca		18th
413	Tapia Zenteno, Carlos	Noticia de la lengua huasteca	1753	18th
414	Tapia Zenteno, Carlos	Gramática de la lengua huasteca		18th
415	Tapia, Gonzalo de	Catecismo y doctrina en lengua acaje		16th
416	Tecto, Juan de	Primeros rudimentos de la doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana		16th
417	Tellechea, Miguel	Compendio gramatical para la inteligencia del idioma tatahumar, oraciones, doctrina cristiana, pláticas, y otras cosas necesarias para la recta administrativa de los Santos Sacramentos en el mismo idioma	1826	18th - 19th
418	Tobar, Manuel	"dejó muchos escritos en los idiomas zapoteco y mixteco y muchos Sermones y Opúsculos"		17th
419	Toral, Francisco	Arte y vocabulario de la lengua Totolaca o Totonaca y varios opúsculos catequísticos en la misma		16th
420	Toro, Juan	Sermones en Lengua de los Indios Mistecos		17th
421	Torralba, Francisco	Sermones Doctrinales en Lengua Maya		16th - 17th
422	Torralba, Juan Francisco	Arte zapoteca, confesionario, administración de los Santos Sacramentos y otras curiosidades que en él se contienen		16th - 17th

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423	Tovar Cano y Moctezuna, Antonio	Elementos de la gramática mexicana		17th
424	Trugillo, Alonso	Sermones para todos los domingos y festividades del año, cuatro diferentes para cada día		n.d.
425	Urbano, Alonso	Arte breve de la lengua otomí y vocabulario trilingüe náhuatl, latín, otomí	1605	16th - 17th
426	Vaca, Diego	Catecismo de la doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana		n.d.
427	Val, Miguel	Comparaciones várias en las dos lenguas Castellanas y Mexicanas		17th
428	Valades, Diego	Catecismo: Vergel del Alma y otros opúsculos mexicanos		16th
429	Valeriano, Antonio	El milagro de la Virgen de Tepeyac Conclusiones Teológicas en idioma	1895	16th - 17th
430	Valladolid, Bernardino	Yucateco, para orientación de los doctri- neros y predicadores en esa lengua		17th
431	Vargas, Bernabé	Varios opúsculos mexicanos y otomíes		17th
432	Vargas, Melchior de	Doctrina christiana muy útil y necesaria en castellano, mexicano y otomí	1576	16th
433	Vásquez Gastelu, Antonio	Catecismo breve que previamente debe saber el cristiano, dispuesto en el idioma mexicano	1846	18th
434	Vásquez Gastelu, Antonio	Arte de la lengua mexicana	1693	18th
435	Vázquez, Nicolás	Un tomo en 4 de Sermones mexicanos		18th
436	Velasco, Pedro	Arte de una de las Lenguas de Sinaloa		16th - 17th
437	Velázquez de Cárdenas, Carlos Celedonio	Breve práctica y régimen del confesionario de indios en mexicano y castellano	1761	18th
438	Velázquez de Cárdenas, Carlos Celedonio	Doctrina cristiana en lengua mexicana		18th
439	Venegas, Miguel	Hymnus in laudem B. Mariae Virginis de Guadalupe	17...	17th - 18th
440	Vergara, Diego	Sermonario en zapoteco		17th - 18th
441	Vergara, Diego	Varios opúsculos doctrinales		17th - 18th
442	Vetancurt, Agustín de	Sermones en lengua mexicana		17th
443	Vetancurt, Agustín de	Luz para saber andar las Estaciones de la Vía Sacra		17th
444	Vetancurt, Agustín de	El Vía Crucis en lengua mexicana		17th
445	Vetancurt, Agustín de	Vida de San José y San Juan Bautista en mexicano		17th
446	Vetancurt, Agustín de	Arte de la Lengua Mexicana	1673	17th
447	Victorino, José	Arte y Vocabulario completo de la Lengua Tarahumara, general en toda la custodia del Parral		n.d.
448	Vidales, Luis	Vocabulario maya - hispano		17th
449	Vidales, Luis	Vocabulario hispano - maya		17th
450	Vilchis, Jacinto	Nuevo rosario en verso zapoteco para Sufragio de las almas del purgatorio		16th - 17th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
451	Vilchis, Jacinto	Método para rezar con fruto el Rosario de la Virgen María y Meditaciones de sus nuevos misterios, todo en verso zapoteco		16th - 17th
452	Villafañe, Fernando	Arte o Gramática de la Lengua Guasave		n.d.
453	Villalpando, Luis	Arte y Vocabulario de la lengua de Yucatán		16th
454	Villanueva, Vicente	Los misterios del rosario en verso dramático zapoteco		n.d.
455	Villanueva, Vicente	Dramas o actos de los principales Misterios de la Fé Cristiana en verso zapoteca		n.d.
456	Ximenez, Francisco (2)	Arte, Vocabulario y Catecismo y Sermones Mexicanos		15th - 16th
457	Xuarez, Pedro	Memorial en Lengua Mexicana de cosas memorables		16th
458	Zambrano, José	Arte de la lengua totonaca, conforme a el arte de Antonio Nebrija... lleva añadido una doctrina de la lengua de Noling, con algunas voces de la lengua de aquella sierra y de esta de acá	1752	18th
459	Zárate, Miguel	Opúsculos doctrinales y morales en Lengua Mexicana		16th
460	Zumárraga, Juan de	Compendio de la manera de como se han de hacer las procesiones compuesto en latín por Dionisio Riquel Cartusian, y romanceado para común utilidad	1544	15th - 16th
461	Zumárraga, Juan de	Doctrina cristiana cierta y verdadera, para gente sin erudición, ni letras, en que se contiene el Catecismo o Información para indios con todo lo principal y lo necesario que el Cristiano debe saber y obrar, con suplemento y adiciones	1546	15th - 16th

The Foundation Myths:

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
1	Aguado, Marcos	Historia de las indias		n.d.
2	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Bartolomé	Pláticas en lengua mexicana, contra las supersticiones, que han quedado entre los indios	1634	17th
3	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Fernando	Relación de la aparición de Nuestra señora de Guadalupe en mexicano		16th - 17th
4	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Fernando	Cantos del emperador Netzahualcoyotl, traducidos al castellano de la lengua náhuatl		16th - 17th
5	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Fernando	El cantar a Huehue - Tetzotzomocli de Netzahualcoyotl al español		16th - 17th
6	Alvarado Tezozómoc, Fernando	Crónica Mexicana	1878	16th - 17th
7	Alvarado Tezozómoc, Fernando	Crónica Mexicayotl	1942	16th - 17th
8	Axayaca, Alonso (Axayacatzin, Alfonso, Ixhuecatócatl)	Obra histórica desconocida		16th
9	Axayacatzin, Bárbara (o Barbola)	Obra histórica desconocida		16th
10	Ayala, Gabriel	Apuntes históricos de la nación mexicana en lengua náhuatl		16th
11	Castillo, Cristobal del	Historia de la venida de los mexicanos y otros pueblos e Historia de la conquista	1991	16th
12	Cervantes de Salazar, Francisco	Crónicas de la Nueva España	1914	16th
13	Chimalpain, Domingo de San Antón Muñón	Crónica de México desde el año 1068 hasta el de 1597, de la Era Vulgar (en Náhuatl)		16th - 17th
14	Chimalpain, Domingo de San Antón Muñón	Apuntamientos de sucesos desde 1064 hasta 1521(en Náhuatl)		16th - 17th
15	Chimalpain, Domingo de San Antón Muñón	Historia Mexicana que comprende los sucesos y sucesión de reyes hasta el año 1526		16th - 17th
16	Chimalpain, Domingo de San Antón Muñón	Relaciones originales de los Reinos de Alculhuacan, México y otras provincias desde muy remotos tiempos (en Náhuatl)		16th - 17th
17	Chimalpain, Domingo de San Antón Muñón	Relación de la Conquista de México por los Españoles (en Náhuatl)		16th - 17th
18	Loaiza, Francisco (2)	Historia de la fundación de la ciudad de Tlaxcala y de sus cuatro parcialidades		16th
19	Niza, Tadeo	Historia de la Conquista de México, firmada por treinta señores de Tlaxcala en 1548		16th
20	Pimentel Ixtlilxochitl, Fernando	Carta sobre la genealogía de los reyes de Acolhuancán		16th
21	Pimentel, Pablo y Toribio	"Relaciones históricas"		16th
22	Ponce de León, Pedro	Breve relación de los dioses y ritos de la gentilidad		16th - 17th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
23	Tovar Moctezuma Ixtlilxóchitl, Antonio	Memorias de la genealogía y descendencia de los Reyes Mexicanos		16th
24	Tovar Moctezuma Ixtlilxóchitl, Antonio	Memoria de la descendencia de los Reyes de Tezcucuo		16th
25	Tovar, Juan de	Códice Ramírez		16th
26	Zapata Mendoza, Juan Ventura	Crónica de Tlaxcala en lengua Mexicana, que contiene todos los sucesos de los tlaxcaltecas desde su arribo al país de Anáhuac hasta el año 1589		17th
27	Zurita, Alonso	Breve y sumaria relación de los señores de la Nueva España	1942	16th

The Classical Continuity:

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
1	Abad, Diego José	Varias églogas de Virgilio		18th
2	Adriano, Diego	"Muchos tratados del latín al náhuatl"	1666	17th
3	Alegre, Francisco Javier	Homeri Ilias, latino carmine expressa.	1776	18th
4	Alegre, Francisco Javier	Homeri batrachomiomachia latinis carminibus		18th
5	Anónimo	Fábulas de Esopo en lengua mexicana		n.d.
6	Arellano García, Manuel	Breve y más clara syntaxis latina		18th
7	Berardo, Juan	Epistolae Latinae varie		16th
8	Beristáin y Martin de Souza, Jose Mariano	Odas de Filipatro con notas históricas, poéticas y mitológicas; dedicadas al real seminario de Vergara	1782	18th - 19th
9	Beristáin y Martin de Souza, Jose Mariano	Homerus a Sanctis Ecclesial Patribus illustratus: sirve versus, Sententiae et hemistichia Illiados Homeri quae in SS. Patrum libris laudantur		18th - 19th
10	Bringas de Manzaneda y Encinas, Diego	Musa Americana : poema que en verso heroico latino escribió un Erudito Americano (Abad)	1783	18th - 19th
11	Cabrera Quintero, Cayetano	Seis sátiras de Juvenal en tercetos castellanos		18th
12	Cabrera Quintero, Cayetano	Liber variorum Epigrammatum é Graeco in Latinum translatorum		18th
13	Cabrera Quintero, Cayetano	Letras Laureadas		18th
14	Cabrera Quintero, Cayetano	Artes de las lenguas Hebrea, Griega y Mexicana		18th
15	Cabrera Quintero, Cayetano	Varias sátiras y Epístolas de Horacio en Español		18th
16	Campo y Rivas, Manuel Antonio de	Crítica de Paris y Aventuras de Damon	1788	18th
17	Canel y Acevedo, Pedro	Las Heroidas de Ovidio en verso castellano		18th - 19th
18	Castillo, Martín del	Arte hebraispano : grammatica de la lengua santa en idioma castellano	1676	17th
19	Castillo, Martín del	Gramática de la lengua Griega en Castellano	1678	17th
20	Castro, Agustín	Colección de poesías de Juvenal, Horacio, Virgilio, Anacronte, Safo en verso castellano		18th
21	Castro, Agustín	El Titiro de Virgilio en verso castellano		18th
22	Castro, Agustín	Las Troyanas, tragedia de Séneca en castellano		18th
23	Castro, Agustín	Las fábulas de Fedro en castellano		18th
24	Errada Capetillo, José	Discurso Apologético del llanto de Heráclito.	1685	17th
25	Galindo, Mateo	Explicaciones de la syntaxis, según las reglas del Arte de Antonio de Nebrija	1793	17th
26	Galindo, Mateo	De Gramática et Syntaxi Latina Libri duo Mexici		17th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
27	Galindo, Mateo	Explicacion del libro quarto conforme a las reglas de el arte de Antonio de Nebrija	1717	17th
28	Gálvez y Escalona, Francisco	Arte para aprender las lenguas Griega, Hebrea y Ciriaca		17th - 18th
29	García, Eugenio	Los quatro libros de los Reyes traducidos del latín al castellano	1791	18th
30	García, Eugenio	Interpretación clara y sencilla, o sentido propio literal en una paráfrasis continuada de los Salmos de David	1787	18th
31	Gilberti, Maturino	Gramática latina (Grammatica Maturini)	1559	15th - 16th
32	Guerrero, Antonio	Diez Panegíricos profanos en verso latino y castellano		17th - 18th
33	Guerrero, María	Elogio latino con su traducción en verso heróico castellano a la muerte del rey de las Españas, D. Felipe V el animoso	1747	18th
34	Guridi y Alcocer, José Miguel	Arte de la lengua latina	1805	18th
35	Hortigosa, Fernando	Método de estudiar con más facilidad y utilidad la Lengua Latina		18th
36	Labrador, Miguel	La fábula de Pan y Siringe en verso castellano		n.d.
37	Larrañaga, Bruno Francisco	Revilla Ggedo Novae Hispania Pro rex Poema		18th - 19th
38	Larrañaga, Bruno Francisco	Prospecto de una Eneida apostólica ó Epopeya que celebra la predicación del Venerable Apóstol de Occidente P. Fr. Antonio Margil de Jesús intitulada, Margileida, escrita en puros versos de Virgilio y, traducida en versos castellanos	1788	18th - 19th
39	Larrañaga, José Rafael	Respuesta a la censura que hizo el bachiller Alzate de la traducción del Virgilio	1787	18th - 19th
40	Larrañaga, José Rafael	Traducción de las obras de el príncipe de los poetas latinos Publio Virgilio Maron a metro castellano	1787	18th - 19th
41	Maldonado, Angel	Carta hispano - latina del Rey Felipe V, renunciando el obispado de Michoacán	1726	17th - 18th
42	Melgarejo, Bartolomé	Las sátiras de Persio, traducidas al castellano con notas		16th
43	Mexía, Diego	Del parnaso antartico de obras amatoria ; con las 21 Epístolas de Ovidio, ... en tercetos	1608	16th - 17th
44	Mexía, Diego	Las Heroidas de Ovidio	1608	16th - 17th
45	Nogales, José	Séneca traducido al castellano		n.d.
46	Ochoa y Acuña, Anastasio María de	Las heroidas de Ovidio, en romance endecasílabo	1828	18th - 19th
47	Ortigosa (o Hortigosa), Pedro de	Actas del Concilio III Mexicano	1584	16th - 17th
48	Picazo Timerman, Juan	Preceptos para las últimas clases de la Gramática latina	1803	18th - 19th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
49	Picazo Timerman, Juan	Breves y útiles preceptos para las primeras clases de la gramática latina	1802	18th - 19th
50	Reynoso, Pedro	Explicación y notas de las reglas que pertenecen a la sintaxis: para el uso de nombres y...	1711	18th
51	Reynoso, Pedro	Artificiosum vocabularium poeticum, seu prosodicum, distinctum per duodetriginta legitimos pedes una cum octo partibus orationis, earumque attributis mutua...	1734	18th
52	Reynoso, Pedro	Segunda parte en que se trata de la construccion figurada, y de algunas reglas para bien construir...	1712	18th
53	Reynoso, Pedro	Liber de syllabarum quantitate, ac versificandi ratione, utroque idioomate, sciliset Hispano & Latino	1730	18th
54	Reynoso, Pedro	Advertencias de declinaciones y de todo genero de tiempos con otros rudimentos de la grammatica	1727	18th
55	Reynoso, Pedro	Obra dividida en dos tratados en que se observan las reglas de géneros y pretéritos, cuya introducción...	1717	18th
56	Rodríguez de Medrano, Baltasar	Fábula de Pan y Siringe en verso castellano		18th
57	Rodríguez de Medrano, Baltasar	Invectiva a Judas y a Caco en verso		18th
58	Rodríguez de Medrano, Baltasar	Fábula de Saturno en verso		18th
59	Rodríguez, Diego	Poesías varias latinas y Castellanas		n.d.
60	Rodríguez, José Manuel	Epítome de las Antigüedades Romanas		18th
61	Rosa López Figueroa, Antonio	"Un tomo en 4º de varias poesías latinas y castellanas"		18th
62	Rueda Berañegos, Casandro	Pindarum quisqui, traducida en sáfico - adónicos Castellanos	1792	18th
63	Rueda Berañegos, Casandro	La Oda de Horacio		18th
64	Salazar Bolea, Juan	Pasajes notables de los poetas latinos, puestos en verso castellano		17th
65	San José, Lázaro	Epítome completo de Gramática Latina en sus cuatro partes: etimología, sintaxis, prosodia y ortografía; con un Apéndice sobre la Retórica		n.d.
66	Santa Teresa, Manuel Castellanos	Compendio de Instituciones gramaticales de la lengua latina	1724	18th
67	Sartorio, José Manuel	Epigramas antiguos traducidos		18th - 19th
68	Torija, Vicente	El Virgilio en verso castellano		n.d.
69	Ubilla, Andrés	El sitio y destrucción de Jerusalén por Tito y Vespasiano		16th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
70	Ugarte, Domingo	Instituciones de la Gramática Latina, para uso del nuevo seminario de Monterrey	1803	18th - 19th
71	Valeriano, Antonio	Catón Cristiano en lengua mexicana o náhuatl		16th - 17th
72	Zamora, Santiago	De la naturaleza y partes de la Gramática latina	1735	17th - 18th
73	Zamora, Santiago	Explicación de la syntaxis según las reglas del arte...	1726	17th - 18th
74	Zamora, Santiago	Prosodia o tiempo de la sílaba latina	1754	17th - 18th

The Modern High Culture:

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
1	Abadiano y Valdés, Luis	El purgatorio descubierto a la piedad de los vivientes	1843	19th
2	Alegre, Francisco Javier	Compendio de Bion y Sformio sobre instrumentos matemáticos		18th
3	Alegre, Francisco Javier	Arte poética de Boileau		18th
4	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Bartolomé	El Gran Teatro del Mundo, de Calderón de la Barca		17th
5	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Bartolomé	El animal profeta y dichoso parricida		17th
6	Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Bartolomé	La madre de la mujer		17th
7	Alvarez de Guitian, Alexandro	Vida de nuestro Señor Jesu-Christo: sacada de los quatro Evangelistas y mezclada de notas historicas y cortas reflexiones morales	1758	18th
8	Alvarez de Guitian, Alexandro	Retiro espiritual para un dia casa mes	1757	18th
9	Alzate y Ramírez, José Antonio de	Memorias de Mons. Jossieu sobre azogues		18th
10	Amable y Urbina, José María	Elementa medicinae in epitomen redacta quae pro academica exercitatiione as statam Reg. Ac Pontif	1801	18th - 19th
11	Amaro, Juan Romualdo	Doctrinas extractadas de los catecismos mexicanos de los padres Paredes, Carochi y Castano	1840	19th
12	Amat, José	Piadosísima devoción de la Escala Santa, que se venere en el Convento de San Antonio de la...	1794	18th
13	Arizaga Elyzalde, Ignacio Ramón de	Advertencias útiles para exercitar lícitamente la negociación lucrativa con un espejo de mercaderes	1764	18th
14	Arnaya, Nicolás	Los libros de la imitación de Cristo de Tomás Kempis, traducidos al castellano	1615	16th - 17th
15	Arroyal, León de	Versión castellana del oficio parvo de Nuestra Señora	1820	18th
16	Arroyo, Luis	Annotationes in Sacram Scripturum collatis expositorum Sententiiz cum Texto hebreo		17th - 18th
17	Avendaño, Andrés	Diccionario de nombres de personas, ídolos, danzas y otras antugüedades de los indios de Yucatán		17th - 18th
18	Avendaño, Andrés	Diccionario botánico y médico de Yucatán		17th - 18th
19	Badiano, Juan	Libellus de Medicinalibus Indorum Herbis	1991	16th
20	Balmis, Francisco Javier	Tratado histórico práctico de la vacuna		18th - 19th
21	Barri, Juan Bautista José de	El pecador arrepentido	1715	17th - 18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
22	Barri, Juan Bautista José de	Los seis meses primeros del retiro espiritual del P. Croisset, traducidos al castellano		17th - 18th
23	Bartolache y Díaz De Posada, José Ignacio	Discurso de Luis Cronaro sobre la vida sobria, traducido al castellano		18th
24	Bartolache y Díaz De Posada, José Ignacio	Noticia plausible para sanos y enfermos en castellano (Notemachtiliztli en mexicano)	1774	18th
25	Bermudez, Juan	Disertación sobre las indigestiones	1790	18th
26	Borunda, José Ignacio	Clave general de interpretación de los jeroglíficos mexicanos		18th - 19th
27	Borunda, José Ignacio	Fragmentos para la formación de un diccionario geográfico etimológico de las provincias mexicanas		18th - 19th
28	Boturini Benaducci, Lorenzo	Idea de una nueva historia general de la América Septentrional	1871	18th
29	Bringas de Manzaneda y Encinas, Diego	Semanario Mariano, devoción piadosísima en obsequio de la Madre de Dios, para alcanzar su protección en la hora de la muerte	1816	18th - 19th
30	Bringas de Manzaneda y Encinas, Diego	La Piisima del P. Palma, traducida al castellano		18th - 19th
31	Cabrera, Cristóbal	Flores de Consolación	1550	16th
32	Cabrera, Cristóbal	Los argumentos de las epístolas de San Pablo de la Biblia Complutense	1540	16th
33	Calderón de la Barca, Manuel	Diccionario de la Fábula	1783	17th
34	Campo y Rivas, Manuel Antonio de	Historia literaria de la edad media, traducida del francés, y aumentada con notas	1791	18th
35	Canton, Pedro	Diccionario castellano y latino sacado del de Zurín y de los mejores diccionarios latinos y españoles		18th - 19th
36	Canton, Pedro	Via Crucis del Beato Leonardo á Porto Mauricio, traducido del italiano		18th - 19th
37	Castañiza, José (o José María)	El Tratado de la Beneficiencia de Dios.		18th - 19th
38	Castro, Agustín	Prosodia castellana		18th
39	Castro, Agustín	De dignitae et augmento scientiarum de Bacon, traducida al español		18th
40	Castro, Agustín	Historia de la villa de Córdoba en latín y castellano		18th
41	Castro, Agustín	Colección de poesias de Gesero, Osian, Pope, Young, Milton		18th
42	Cervantes de Salazar, Francisco	La introducción y camino para la Sabiduría		16th
43	Clavijero, Francisco Javier	Historia Antigua de México en lengua castellana.	1780	18th
44	Clavijero, Francisco Javier	Storia antica de Messico	1780	18th
45	Clavijero, Francisco Javier	Reglas de gramática y vocabulario de la lengua mexicana		18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
46	Clavijero, Francisco Javier	Compendio de la vida de San Juan Nepomuceno, traducido del italiano del p. César Calino	1762	18th
47	Clavijero, Francisco Javier	Cartas de San Francisco de Sáles á los predicadores y confesores, traducidas del francés; con los discursos y sobre los abusos de los oradores de este siglo y sobre ls confesores y literatos		18th
48	Colombini y Camayori, Francisco María	Reflexiones militares escritas en francés por Monsieur Boussanelle		17th - 18th
49	Colombini y Camayori, Francisco María	El camino del cielo abierto para los militares: discurso cristiano peusto en castellano	1701	17th - 18th
50	Comoto, Florencio Pérez	Reflexiones de Goviffes sobre el sistema de Broun, traducidas al castellano	1804	18th - 19th
51	Corbalán, Cristóbal	Oración para contemplar en el Santo Sacrificio de la Misa; y reflexiones acerca del camino de la salvación	1795	18th
52	Cubillas Donaygüe, Francisco	Directorio de religiosas compuesto por San Francisco de Sales	1693	17th - 18th
53	Curruchaga, Pedro	Devoción a nuestra Señora de los Dolores, de Buenaventura Santos Cardenal	1816	19th
54	D. M. G. C.	Vida de J.J. Dessalines, jefe de los negros de Santo Domingo	1806	19th
55	Díaz Canel y Lastra, Blas	Instrucción de confesores y penitentes, desengaño universal	1769	18th
56	Díaz de Godoy, Antonio	Compendio de la vida de nuestro Padre y Patriarcha San Phelipe Neri : que en forma de meditación para el aparejo espiritual de la fiesta del Santo hizo en lengua toscana el P. Francisco Amadeo de Ormea	1714	18th
57	Echeverría, Atanasio	"estaba traduciendo las Caricaturas de Savatier cuando por la invasión francesa huyó...."		18th - 19th
58	Escartin y Carrera, Francisco Antonio	Ordinario de la Santa Misa, con las oraciones o colectas de los domingos y fiestas	1812	19th
59	Espinosa, Isidro Félix	Fragüe de amor divino para ablandar	1745	17th - 18th
60	Esteyneffer, Juan de	Florilegio medicinal de todas las enfermedades	1712	17th - 18th
61	Estrada, Juan de	La escala espiritual de S. Juan Clímaco	1532	16th
62	Estrada, Sebastián	Meditaciones del P. Auriemma	1689	17th - 18th
63	Fernández Herrojo, Francisco	Ilustraciones en método de diálogo catequístico (del Papa Benedicto XIII)	1730	18th
64	Flores, Francisco Fernando	Conversaciones sobre diferentes asuntos morales	1787	18th
65	Funes, Gerónimo	El arte del bien morir del cardenal Bellamino.		17th
66	Gadea, Miguel	Apología de la devoción del Corazón de Jesús en lengua italiana		18th
67	Godoy, Antonio	Compendio de la vida de San Felipe de Neri	1714	17th - 18th

	Translator	Title	Publ. date	Century
68	Gorriño, Manuel María	Los paseos de Herbei (James Hervey: título ?)	1811	18th - 19th
69	Gorriño, Manuel María	Los sepulcros, escritos por Mr. Hervey; traducidos del frances por el abate Roman Leñoguri	1810	18th - 19th
70	Guevara y Zaldivar, Francisco	Vida de la venerable hermana María Reggien	1632	16th - 17th
71	Guevara, Francisco	Libro de la vida de la bendita Soror María	1632	17th
72	Gutierrez Huesca, Manuel	La belleza en las piezas del espíritu	1802	18th - 19th
73	Hernández, Francisco	Historia Natural de Cayo Plinio Segundo	1999	16th
74	Humboldt, Alejandro de	Experiencias acerca del Galvinismo y en General sobre la irritación delas fibras musculares y nerviosas, escritas en alemán, traducidas al francés, y puestas en castellano	1803	18th - 19th
75	Humboldt, Alejandro de	Ensayo político de la N.E.	1811	18th - 19th
76	Ibargoyen, José	Oraciones propias para la proximidad de la muerte	1812	18th - 19th
77	Iturriaga de Alzaga, Manuel	El Alma en soledad en un día de retiro en cada mes para santificar la muerte con las máximas de los ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola	1796	18th - 19th
78	Iturriaga, José Mariano	"Traducciones de Pedro Metastasio"		18th
79	Jesús María, Antonio	Boecio de Consolación		17th - 18th
80	Larrañaga, Bruno Francisco	La América Socorrida en el gobierno del Exmo. Sr. Virrey Conde de Gálvez	1786	18th - 19th
81	Lavalle, José Antonio	Oraciones y meditaciones para asistir con devoción...	1814	19th
82	Lezamis, José	Vida del Apóstol Santiago	1699	17th
83	López, Gregorio	Tratado del apocalipsi de S. Juan	1787	16th
84	López, Juan Francisco	Modo de confesarse bien, principalmente para quien desea hacer confesion general escrita en lengua...	1820	18th
85	Lozano, Francisco Javier	Los atributos de Dios y misterios de Dios Hombre: Poema en verso castellano, traducción del que en latín escribió el P. Diego Abad, jesuita mexicano		18th
86	Matoso, Antonio López (o Ignacio Antonio)	Discurso de Mr. Aguessau sobre la dignidad de los abogados, traducido al castellano	1812	18th - 19th
87	Matoso, Antonio López (o Ignacio Antonio)	Instituciones sobre el derecho público sacado de las obras del chanciller Henrique Francisco d'Aguessau	1813	18th - 19th
88	Méndez, Juan Bautista	Regla de N. G. P. S. Augustin, y constituciones de las religiosas del Sagrado Orden de predicadores	1691	17th
89	Mora, Juan Antonio	Vida del P. Sertorio Caputi de la compañía de Jesús traducidas del Italiano		17th - 18th

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90	Morales, Miguel	Modo de practicar la devoción de los trece viernes, instituida...	1817	19th
91	Morfi, Juan Agustín	Diálogos sobre la elocuencia en general y sobre la del Pulpito en Particular, del Sr. Arzobispo de Cambrai con la carta de éste sobre la Poesía y la Historia, traducidos al castellano	1795	18th
92	Mozíño, José Mariano	Elementae Medicinae	1803	18th - 19th
93	Mozíño, José Mariano	Noticias de Nutka	1913	18th - 19th
94	Muñoz, Francisco	Viaje del Arzobispo de Goa P. Fr. Alejo de Meneses a las Sierras de Malava		17th
95	Naranjo, Francisco Gutierrez	Teología en Lengua Castellana		16th - 17th
96	Olmos, Andrés de	Dos cartas de dos rabinos traducidas al castellano		16th
97	Olmos, Andrés de	De Haeresibus, de Alfonso de Castro		16th
98	Osores y Sotomayor, Félix	Traducción del primer libro de la Historia Antigua de México que en lengua toscana escribió el P. Francisco Javier Clavijero con muchas notas		18th - 19th
99	Oviedo, Juan Antonio	El pecador arrepentido, traducido del latín Cerimonial y rúbricas generales con la orden de celebrar las misas y avisos para los defectos que acerca de ellas puedan acontecer: sacado del misal tridentino y traducido	1796	17th - 18th
100	Ozcariz, Juan	Vida del padre Francisco María Galluzi de la Compañía de Jesús	1579	16th
101	Pazuengos, Bernardo	"Traductor de letras apostólicas"	1761	18th
102	Peñuelas, Pablo	Reflexiones de Goviffes sobre el sistema de Broun		18th
103	Pérez y Comoto, Florencio	Regla aurea de los actos humanos o formula de la recta intencion para todos los dias de la semana	1804	18th - 19th
104	Quiroga, Domingo	Visita amorosa y agradecida que las esposas de Christo... sacado de las meditaciones de Tomás Kempis	1728	17th - 18th
105	Ramos, Francisco	El novelo religioso o vida de los religiosos nuevos; obra escrita en latín por el Ven. P. Gaspar Druzbiki y traducida al castellano	1767	18th
106	Reales, Pedro	Festa Sanctorum de quibus officium in Provincia Sancti Jacobi in Indiis Occidentalibus		18th
107	Rengino, Luis	La devoción a María Santísima en su hermosa Imagen de la Luz	15...	16th
108	Rincón, Lucas	El Anteojo Aristotélico del Conde Manuel Tesauro	1737	17th - 18th
109	Ríos, Francisco	Varios opúsculos ascéticos del p. Piamonti		18th
110	Ríos, Francisco			

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111	Rivas, Manuel José de la	Grammatical construccion de los hymnos ecclesiasticos : dividida en siete libros por el orden de el Breviario Romano ; explicacin y medida de sus versos	1738	18th
112	Rodríguez, José Manuel	La caridad del sacerdote para con los niños encerrados en el vientre de sus madres difuntas	1799	18th
113	Ruiz de Alarcón, Hernando	Tratado de las supersticiones y costumbres gentilicias que oy viven entre los indios naturales de esta nueva España	1629	17th
114	Ruselmi, Tomás	Clamores y llantos del hijo pródigo, o afectos de un ánima penitente y convertida a Dios	1778	18th
115	Salas, Francisco Gregorio de	Método para celebrar las tres horas que anualmente se hacen la tarde del domingo de ramos, de Martín Rojas	1823	19th
116	Salazar, Eugenio	De los Negocios incidentes en las Audiencias de Indias.		16th
117	Salbago, Francisco	Bula		17th
118	San Cirilo, Francisco de	Reflexiones sobre las reglas y sobre el uso de la crítica en orden a la historia de la iglesia	1792	18th - 19th
119	Sánchez, Francisco	Vida de Santa Rosa de Lima y Bula de su Patronato en ambas Américas		17th
120	Sartorio, José Manuel	El viage de la compasion de la afligida madre virgen	1815	18th - 19th
121	Sartorio, José Manuel	Triduo de San Andrés Avelino, traducido del portugués	1809	18th - 19th
122	Sartorio, José Manuel	Consuelo del alma, traducida del italiano		18th - 19th
123	Sartorio, José Manuel	Cánticos de S. Buenaventura		18th - 19th
124	Sartorio, José Manuel	Vida del Santísimo padre Pío VI, traducida del francés		18th - 19th
125	Sartorio, José Manuel	Compendio histórico de su viaje y cautiverio, con la descripción del incendio de San Cloud		18th - 19th
126	Sartorio, José Manuel	María clementísima refugio de los pecadores : version castellana de un rithmo latino	1817	18th - 19th
127	Sartorio, José Manuel	Himnos del breviario romano, y de algunas sagradas religiones	1832	18th - 19th
128	Segni, Carlos	Novena sacra a la gloriosa Madre y seráfica doctora Santa Teresa de Jesús	1752	18th
129	Segura, Nicolás de	Vida de el glorioso San Juan P. Nepomuceno, Canónigo de la Metropolitana de Praga	1733	17th - 18th
130	Tagle, Francisco Sánchez	Odas traducidas del Metastasio	1811	18th - 19th
131	Torquemada, Juan de	Monarquía Indiana	1610	16th - 17th
132	Uribe, Juan de Dios	Himnos en alabanza de María Santísima de Guadalupe	1812	19th
133	Urtassum, Juan de	Intereses de la Inglaterra mal entendidos en la presente guerra con España	1728	17th - 18th
134	Valdivielso, José de	Exposición paraphastica del psalterio y de los cánticos del Breviario	1781	16th - 17th

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135	Valladolid, Bernardino	Dioscorides en lengua de Yucatán con adiciones		17th
136	Vallejo, José Ignacio	Vida del Señor San Joaquin y de Santa Ana padres de la madre de Dios	1774	18th
137	Vásquez, Pedro	Relación de la jornada que hizo D. Francisco Sandoval Acaxitli, cacique y señor de Tlalmanalco, con el señor virrey, Don Antonio de Mendoza, en la conquista de los chichimecas de Xuchipila en mexicano y puesta en castellano en 1541		16th
138	Vázquez, Pedro Alcántara	El Aristotélico antejo de larga vista; o la idea de la ayuda e ingeniosa elocucion que sirve a toda Arte, oratoria, lapidaria y simbolica		17th - 18th
139	Vega, Silvestre Díaz	Traducción al castellano del tomo 3 de la obra de Mr. Necker sobre la administración de rentas públicas		18th - 19th
140	Veitia, Mariano	Papeles curiosos sobre jesuitas, traducidos del latín y del francés		18th
141	Venegas, Bernabé Ruiz	De los siete Sacramentos de la Iglesia, de los Pecados y las censuras eclesiásticas: con otras cosas dignas de saberse y entenderse por los Eclesiásticos	1646	17th
142	Venegas, Miguel	Vida y virtudes del VP Juan Bautista Zappa de la Compañía de Jesús	1754	17th - 18th
143	Verruguete, Francisco Gracián	Clemente Papa Nono, ad futuram rei memoriam: la solicitud pastoral del oficio con que por la inefable abundancia de la divina sabiduría y clemencia, governamos la Iglesia Católica ... Roma ... diez y siete de junio del año mil seiscientos y sesenta y nueve		17th
144	Vidal Figueroa, José	Meditaciones y ejemplos del P. Tomás Auremmia, traducidos del Toscano	1689	17th - 18th
145	Vidal Figueroa, José	Libro de los dolores de la virgen María, traducido del que escribió en Toscano el P. Fabio Espinola	1689	17th - 18th
146	Villeras y Roelas, José	Otras obras inéditas escritas en latín, entre ellas una traducción en verso del Cantar de los Cantares. Así como una gramática griega Quatro libro de la naturaleza, y virtudes de las plantas, y animales que estan recibidos en el uso de medicina en la Nueva España, y correccion, y preparacion con que administrallos se requiere		17th - 18th
147	Ximenez, Francisco (1)	Exercicios divino, revelados al venerable Nicolas Eschio, referidos por Laurencio Surio	1615	16th
148	Ximenez, Juan		1629	16th - 17th

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149	Zumárraga, Juan de	El tripartito del Cristianismo y consolatorio doctor Juan Gerson, de Doctrina Cristiana; traducido de latín en lengua castellana para el bien de muchos necesario	1544	15th - 16th
150	Zumaya, Manuel	Vida del P. Sertorio Caputo, jesuita, traducida del italiano		17th - 18th