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"Goliath Was a Very Big Chichimec": Church Texts in Colonial Nahuatl

Barry D. Sell

Hernando Cortés entered central Mexico in 1519. A few years later the military phase of colonization already was coming to an end. The rapid consolidation of the Spanish position was facilitated by a two-sided approach to local conditions. Whatever was incompatible with Spanish rule was eliminated. This included any of the larger Nahua (Aztec) political structures such as the "empire" of "Montezuma." Whatever contributed to Spanish rule was kept. Among colonial Nahua survivals can be found the county-sized indigenous city-states (*altepetl*) and their traditional dynastic rulers (*tlatoque*; singular, *tlatoani*). Retention of an *altepetl* and its *tlatoani* meant that tribute in labor and goods could be delivered more efficiently and speedily to Spaniards and that the numerous Nahua communities were controlled by traditional Nahua authorities accountable to Spanish colonial officials. Wherever possible the Spanish avoided the wholesale profitless destruction of the people and resources of the area. Almost invariably they attempted to gain maximum advantage for themselves without destroying the basis of their new colony.¹

This combination of intransigence and flexibility also characterizes the colonial church's attitude towards the Nahuas. New Spain was to be a colony of Catholics ruled by Catholics. Nonetheless, content did not automatically determine form. The presentation of basic Christian tenets was adapted in many ways to Nahua preferences and sensibilities. Thus the "spiritual conquest"

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of Nahua Mexico was ensured both by the power of a permanent and growing Hispanic presence as well as by an aggressive program of Christianization couched in familiar terms.² Scholars traditionally have focused on Nahua adaptations to Spaniards, without paying much attention to the other side of the process: Spanish adaptation to Nahuas. It is this relatively neglected side of Nahua-Spanish relations that this article will focus on.³

Church publications in the language of the Nahuas (Nahuatl) illustrate the extent to which priests attempted to adjust their message to their Nahua converts and parishioners. The following excerpt is taken from the first sermonary in Nahuatl printed in New Spain:

Notlaçopilhuane ca ye anquimomachitia, ca yniquac aca vey tlatouani nican tlalticpac, yn canapa tlayhuaznequi, niman achtopa quinnotza yn ipillohuan in itlan nemi, yn anquintocayotia ytahuan, ytechiuhcahoan, yculhoan, yueueyohoan yn tlatoani, ceme yehuantin quinnotza, quimilhuia. Tla xialmohuica noteciuha[uh], nocoltzine, notatzine, cecni nimitztitlaniz: yzcatqui yn nimitznonauatilia, ma xiquimita yn nomaceualhoan ma xiquinca[qui]ti yn notlatol, ma yc xiquinnotza ynic mocencauhriezque, ynic ynnemachpan nacituih. Ca çan no yuh oquimuchiuli yn totecuiyo Dios, ca oquiualmihuali yn nican tlalticpac yn ititlantzin, yehuatl yn sant Iuan Baptista yn iuhqui ytechiuhcatzin, yuan oquimomaquili, yn itecuhtlatoltzin, ynic teoyotica techmononochilia yn tehuantin yn timaceualhuan.⁴

O my dear children, you already know that when some great ruler [tlatouani] here on earth wants to send a messenger to some place he first summons his nobles who live with him, those whom you call the "fathers", "engenderers", "grandfathers" and "elders" of the ruler [tlatoani]. He summons one of them and says to him: "Come, my engenderer, O my grandfather, O my father, I am sending you to another place. Here is what I command you. See

my subjects, report to them my words, advise them to prepare themselves and be ready for my arrival." Our Lord God did likewise for He sent His messenger--Saint John the Baptist--here to earth as his "engenderer" and He gave him His lordly worlds with which he spiritually admonishes us His subjects.⁵ [brackets mine]

While the analogy presented above should pose no difficulties to anyone even remotely familiar with Christianity the terms used are a bit jarring. It is especially disconcerting in a carefully examined Christian text to see John the Baptist referred to as the "engenderer" of God! This seemingly heretical proposition is easily explained within a Nahua frame of reference. Kinship terms could be extended and inverted so that a ruler might call a trusted high level aide his "father", "grandfather", etc. Such usage usually implied polite respect as well as flattery.⁶ While inversion and extension are not entirely unknown to speakers of English (as when a newly purchased beautiful piece of clothing is referred to as "this old thing" or an older adult male named George Washington is called the "father" of his country), these principles were given far wider play in traditional Nahuatl discourse. Nahuatl had many other ways of saying that John the Baptist was God's trusted helper. The intention here was to use traditional terms in an effort to elicit a positive response from Nahua parishioners, even when in a Spanish cultural context those terms could be easily misconstrued. Familiar messages could be presented in unfamiliar forms.

Priests drew on many sources to bring Christianity and Nahuas closer together. The use of "tlatoani" in the passage on John the Baptist is typical. It should come therefore as no surprise to find in the same sermonary that Saint Paul was struck blind on the road to the "altepetl" of Damascus or that it was three "tlatoque" who came from "where the sun emerges" who made offerings to the baby Jesus.⁷ Borrowing traditional designations for kinship, social status and political office seems relatively safe compared to another most unlikely source: precontact religious terminology. Selective borrowings from this area were made; this is especially clear in the Nahuatl epithets used for the Christian deity. During the third quarter of the sixteenth century prayers to the major precontact god Tezcatlipoca were written down in Nahuatl by the Franciscan Friar Bernardino de Sahagún and a group of literate Nahua aides.⁸ While many of the epithets applied to Tezcatlipoca were rejected

out of hand many others seem to have settled easily upon the imported deity. The following can all be found in Sahagún's work⁹ as well as in mainstream Nahuatl church texts: *ypalnemohuani* (Giver of life); *techihuani* (Engenderer of people); *teyocoyani* (Creator of people); and *tloque nahuaque* (All-pervasive).¹⁰

Such terms enjoyed a long life. According to a seventeenth century oral tradition the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to the "Indian" Juan Diego in 1531. A Nahuatl version of this story was published in 1649. During their first encounter the Virgin identified herself using many of these same deity titles:

ca nëhuatl in niçenquizcaçemìcac ichpochtli Sancta
Maria in ninantzin in huel nelli Teotl Dios in
ipalnemohuani, in teyocoyani, in Tloque
Nahuaque, in Ilhuicahua in Tlalticpacque.¹¹

I am the perfectly eternal virgin Saint Mary, I am
the mother of the true deity God, the Giver of Life,
the Creator of People, the All-pervasive, the
Master of heaven and earth.

More than a hundred years later the last colonial Nahuatl sermonary would still speak of the Christian god as the "Giver of life", the "All-pervasive", the "Engenderer" and "Creator" of people.¹²

While the Bible provided the safest and most frequently used source of edifying examples, priests also could draw on some local Christian traditions. The most widely publicized before the Guadalupe story was that of an early colonial "miracle" that occurred in 1541 in Tzintzuntzan, state of Michoacán. As related in an unpublished Franciscan chronicle of the late 1590s, a manual for priests published in 1600 and a massive Franciscan work printed in Spain in 1612, a consecrated host flew from the hand of an officiating priest into the mouth of an "Indian" parishioner.¹³ A sermonary in Nahuatl alludes to this story when discussing the necessity of being properly prepared for communion:

ca intla mocnopiltiz, momacehualtiz,
aço quimonequiltiz in Dios in huel inohmatcatzincó
in mocamacpa mocalaquitziño: in yuh ipan
omocalaquitziño in ce cihuatzintli icamacpa in
vmpa Michhuacan, in ipan ciudad, itocayocan

Zintzunçan.¹⁴

If you will be deserving and worthy, perhaps God Himself will want to enter through your mouth, as He entered in through the mouth of a woman there in the Michhuacan in the city and place called Tzintzuntzan.

Most local examples were given far less play. One of the most extensive appears in a highly polished Nahuatl imprint of the early seventeenth century. The modern state of Hidalgo (north of Mexico City) is the setting for this testimonial to the power of prayer:

Nimitzilhuiznequi, nimitzpohuiliznequi in
 tlamahuicollin in quinaxcan oquimuchihuiliztino
 Tloque Nahuaque Dios. ...Ce tlacatl cihuatzintli
 ohtlatocaya, Tampico mohuicaya, auh vmentin
 ipilhuan quinhuicaya cacaxco, centetl monenenqui
 quimmamaya, omuchiuh: ca in cihuatzintli in
 tlècotihuiya cecni huey tepepan vmpa in
 metztitlan tlalpan, auh ca huel ixpan
 omotepexihui in cauallo...auh in nantli ...cenca
 omauhcatzazhtic, cenca omotequipacho, otlaocox...
 oquimotlaocolnonochili in iTecuiyotzin in
 iTlahtocatzin Dios, yhuan cenca
 oquimotlatlauhtili in tlaçocihuapilli Sancta
 Maria...inic quimmopalehuilizque ...Auh in
 otemoc...in campa huetzito in cauallo...oquimittac
 in itlapallohuan, in itlaçoezçohuan, ca ahquen
 omuchiuhque. ...auh oquilhuique...in innantzin.
 (Nonantzine) ma timotlaocolti, ma
 timonentlamachiti, ma nen timotequipachihuilti:
 ca ce tlacatl mahuiztlahtohuani,
 cenquizcachipahuacatzintli, ...yhuan
 ce mahuiztlaçocihuapilli,
 cenquizcachipahuacatzintli,
 ...otechmopalehuilique, otechmomaquixtilique,
 otechmomanahuilique itechpa in
 netepexihuiliztli...In oquicac nantzintli, cenca
 opahpac, yhuan oc hualca, oc tlapanahuiya inic
 oquimoyectenehuili Dios.¹⁵

I want to say and report to you the miracle that All-pervasive God made a little while ago. A woman was traveling along a road, she was going to Tampico, and she was carrying her children in a packframe (an animal was bearing them). It happened that the woman was going up on a big mountain in a certain place there in the land of Metztitlan, and right in front of her the horse threw itself off [the mountain]. The mother called out in great fright. She was very anxious and sad. She called out sadly to her Lord and Ruler god and greatly implored the dear Lady Saint Mary to help them. When she went down to where the horse fell she saw her offspring. They were undisturbed and said to her: "O my dear mother, do not be sad or distressed, do not worry needlessly, for an awesome Lord, perfectly handsome and an awesome dear Lady, perfectly beautiful, helped us, saved us, protected us from the fall." When the mother heard it she was overjoyed and praised God much more [than before]. [brackets mine]

This brief sampling of colonial church texts in Nahuatl illustrates the general tendency of Spaniards to insist on imposing certain colonial norms on Nahuas while at the same time being flexible in how those norms were applied in specific cases. Christianity was the official religion of colonial Nahua Mexico, but the composers of church texts attempted to ensure that that required set of beliefs and rituals was fitted as far as possible into a Nahua cultural context. The extent to which the Church could adapt to Nahua culture is the subject of the next two sections on Nahuatl and Nahua ethnocentrism.

Language

This Mexican language has something that elevates it, and in which it has an advantage over even the languages of Europe, and it is that not only the noun, pronouns, prepositions and many adverbs become reverential, as has been said in its place, but also the verbs with only altering and changing a little their roots.¹⁶

This assertion, appearing in the most sophisticated colonial grammar of Nahuatl, evokes the single most pervasive feature of precontact rhetoric found in colonial church texts. Yet it is one of the most difficult features to show in colloquial English translations. Many examples of this reverential usage can be found in the extended sample of polished church Nahuatl found in Appendix A. Some of the nouns end with the reverential suffix "-tzin," e.g., *motlaçoyollotzin* (your-precious-heart-REV); *iohuitzin* (His-road-REV); and, *cententzin* (one-lip-REV). This suffix often goes untranslated because the incessant repetition of synonyms like "esteemed" or "revered" or "honored" would make conventional polite Nahuatl seem forced, boringly redundant and theatrically overdone in English. Verbs in reverential form are especially frequent. Conventional usage among social equals would call for *tiq-uitta* (ti-qu[i]-itta = You-it-see, i.e., "You see it"). In the appendix a son is speaking to a social superior, his father, and this calls for a manipulation of certain features of Nahuatl morphology: *ticmottilitzinohua* (ti-c-mo-[i]ttili[a]-tzinohua = you-it-toyourself-see [applicative inflection]-honorific compounding verbal element, i.e., "You see it [REV]").

Equally ubiquitous is the use of two or more terms to express a single idea. The sample text in the appendix is translated somewhat literally so that this feature is highlighted. It may seem redundant to native speakers of English, but when John says he is immature in eight slightly different ways, one after the other, he is merely following the conventions of proper Nahuatl speech of his time. This feature of Nahuatl often is combined with the Nahua tendency to present two, four or eight of something, an added twist being to incorporate some number (especially three) that violates the canon. An excellent example of both can be found in a contemporary sermonary. The original text is presented so that both the norm and the deviation are obvious:

in izquitlamantli tlahuelilocayotl,
 in tequitlahuanaliztli, in ihuintiliztli, in tequixocomiquiliztli,
 in nepohualiztli, in nehueiliztli, in netachcauhnequiliztli,
 yhuan ahuilnemilizçotl, in tetlàximaliztli, in tepanyaliztli,
 yhuan in teichtequililiztli, in tetlanamoyeliztli, in
 tetlacuicuililiztli.¹⁷

In a more literal translation this would be:

so many vices:
 overdrinking, drunkenness, excessive intoxication,
 pride, self-aggrandizement, haughtiness,
 and carnality, adultery, adultery,
 and stealing, robbery, theft.

In a more colloquial English translation this elegant Nahuatl construction of four triplets might read:

so many vices:
 drunkenness,
 pride,
 adultery,
 and theft.

The cleric whose name appeared on the sermonary just cited wrote that Nahuatl was so "elegant, copious and abundant that a line of the Spanish or Latin language could hardly be translated into it, that would not be doubled."¹⁸ While more of the "elegant" features of Nahuatl will be presented below, it is obvious by now why he thought Nahuatl was so "copious and abundant."

Related to the principles of extension and inversion discussed above is that of indirection. Usually the exact nature of the relationship between speakers is left unspecified. John refers to his father without using a transparently direct kinship term, opting instead for a sociopolitical one: "O my *lord*" and "O my precious esteemed *lord*." Often related to these three principles is the use of traditional metaphors in many church texts. Rather than literally saying to his father "Nimopiltzin" (I-your-child-REV, i.e., "I am your child") John instead employs a traditional metaphorical doublet for "offspring" by saying "in nimeço nimotlapallo" (I-your-blood, I-your-blood, literally "I am your blood, I am your blood" and less literally "I am your offspring"). In the context of a conversation between an upper class Nahua and his son, the simple direct statement "I am your child" would lack many of the conventions of polished Nahuatl already mentioned (e.g., indirection, use of doublets and metaphors) and make John appear immature and socially inept.

While many aspects of precontact polite discourse were successfully incorporated into colonial church Nahuatl, there were some elements that proved impossible or difficult to use. Not all precontact epithets of the deity proved usable for the Christian

god.¹⁹ Extremely difficult to use was an aspect of inversion that has not yet been mentioned. Not only were subordinates verbally "raised up" but the reverse was true as well: that which was great and large was said to be less important and smaller. The following is taken from a speech made by a precontact tlatoani upon taking office:

Perhaps thou [i.e., the deity Tezcatlipoca] hast mistaken me for another, I who am a commoner, I who am a laborer. In excrement, in filth hath my lifetime been--I who am unreliable, I who am of filth, of vice. And I am an imbecile. Why? For what reason? It is perhaps my desert, my merit that thou takest me from the excrement, from the filth, that thou placest me on the reed mat, on the reed seat [i.e., the traditional seat of authority]?²⁰

It is immediately apparent that this statement is thoroughly imbued with a false humility and that the variance between the lowly status ascribed by the newly selected ruler to himself and his real status actually enhances (rather than diminishes) the importance of his new role. Nonetheless, this type of inversion is rare in colonial church texts. Diminution in any way of important Christian figures seems to have run afoul of ingrained European cultural norms. One of the few examples of such inversion can be found in the published Nahuatl version of the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Typical of church texts (and in accord with European cultural norms) are the ways in which the Virgin refers to the "lowly" Juan Diego when ordering him to carry out her wishes. What is extremely unusual is the way in which Juan Diego speaks to her: "Nochpochtzinè, Noxocoyohuè, Tlactatlè, Cihuapillè" (O my daughter [!], O my youngest one [!], O personage, O noblewoman) [brackets mine].²¹ While much of precontact Nahuatl was pressed into the service of the colonial church, not all features of this "elegant, copious and abundant" language were equally well received.

Nahua Ethnocentrism

Nahuas had a strong consciousness of themselves as being distinct from (and in many cases, superior to) other peoples. The leveling out of differences among the many indigenous peoples implied by the European terms "Indian" was particularly inappropriate

during the early colonial period when preconquest distinctions were still strongly felt. Nahuas did not use this term to describe themselves.²² Priests especially adept in Nahuatl who worked closely with literate native speakers played on both precontact and colonial Nahua perceptions of other groups in order to more effectively get their points across.

Traditional Nahua ideas regarding other peoples were recorded in a massive work in Nahuatl written by native speakers under the direction of a Franciscan friar. Known today as the *Florentine Codex*, it was completed in the late 1570s. Among the groups mentioned in church texts and the *Florentine Codex* are the Chichimecs, "uncivilized" (in Nahua eyes) peoples of northern Mexico whose skill in war inspired fear and respect: "Such was their food and so limited their clothing, that they were strong, lean, hard, and very wiry, sinewy, powerful, and they ran much".²³ Inspiring far less respect was a group that lived among Nahuatl-speaking peoples, the Otomí. They were considered "untrained, stupid" and a Nahua who was being severely reprimanded might be told something like this:

"Now thou art an Otomí...Not only art thou like an Otomí, thou art a real Otomí, a miserable Otomí, a green-head, a thick-head, a big tuft of hair over the back of the head, an Otomí blockhead, an Otomí..." With all this one was scolded, one was shamed. It was taken, it stemmed, from the uncouthness of the Otomí.²⁴

Worse yet was to be called a "Tenitl" for it meant being "completely untrained" and even worse than an Otomí!²⁵

Keeping the above in mind, the following description of a well-known Biblical villain takes on new meaning: "in tlahuiyac Goliath, in cenca huey chichimecatl, cenca huey yaotlaeco-huani, in cenca huey iyaouh iatzin, itepetzin toTecuiyo Dios" (the giant Goliath, a very big Chichimec, a very large warrior, a great enemy of the altepetl of our Lord God).²⁶ So does this question directed to Nahua merchants that appeared in a confessionary of 1569: did you fool (and thus take advantage of) "yn ycnotlaca, ym motolinia: yn otontzintin yn aquimahmati ym pipiltotonti?" (the miserable, the poor, the little Otomí, the simpleminded and the little children?).²⁷ Lastly, it becomes clear just how strongly a Nahua father urged his son to pay close heed to his parental ad-

vice: do not think of yourself as a "tenitl", i.e., you are a Nahua and do not pretend to be such a blithering idiot!²⁸

The colonization of Mexico brought new groups such as Spaniards and created others such as mestizos. While interaction among individuals could never be completely controlled, on the official level laws could be enacted like that of the town council of Tlaxcala in 1550:

And they agreed that Spaniards are not to be among us here where the city of Tlaxcala is (being) made, since it is not made as the Spaniards' city; this is the city of us Tlaxcalans only, and the Spaniards establish their cities in Mexico City, Puebla, and other places. Therefore they said that we should propose to the viceroy that he grant us the favor that no Spaniard be among us and they leave entirely.²⁹

On the southern outskirts of Mexico City in Culhuacan similar sentiments were voiced in a last will and testament of 1577: "No Spaniard is to buy (the field),...only the citizens here."³⁰ In spite of such sentiments pressure on indigenous communities increased during the late sixteenth century.³¹ Such pressure helps explain the appeal of the following excerpt from an early seventeenth century sermonary regarding the need for community solidarity against outside threats:

Huel nelli namechilhuiya notlaçopilhuane, ca
intlacamo ammochachalaniani, intlacamo
nepanotl ammoyaochihuani, ahmo amoca
omocacayahuani in Castilteca, ahmo
amechcuiliani in ixquich in amocal,
in amotlal: çan yehuatl techocti, tetlaocolti,
yhuan tepinauhti, ca in çaço aquin Castiltecatl,
ahnoç Mestizoton amechalania, amechcomonia,
amonepantla moteca.³²

O my dear children, I am saying something very true to you, for if you would not fight each other, if you would not make war upon each other, the Spaniards would not deceive you, would not take from you all your houses and lands. It just makes

people cry, grieve and ashamed, for whoever is a Spaniard or a miserable little mestizo stirs you up, arouses you, upsets you.

Elsewhere in the same sermonary a not-too-subtle appeal is made to Nahua prejudices concerning the superiority of their language over all others. In a section where a marginal note in Spanish explains how different someone is before and after getting stinking drunk, an elaborate picture of the "before" and "after" conditions is painted in Nahuatl. While sober a person is "cenca qualli" (very good) and "cenca mocnomati" (very humble); after getting drunk "niman ayac quixitta, ayac quimacaci" (s/he respects and fears absolutely no one), not even a judge or a tlatoani.³³ While in a drunken stupor they lie about the supposed noble ancestors from whom they are descended, tell foolish stories, and crawl about on all fours, unable to stand. And the languages in which such outrageous things can be shamefully declared? In typical Nahua fashion four are given, the first being Spanish! One of the others is that of the poor Otomí, victims of so many Nahua jokes. Nahuatl (of course) is not included among the four. Given Nahua attitudes towards the Otomí, the pairing of Spanish and Otomí as two of the languages most appropriate for the declaration of all that is stupidly disgraceful and publicly distasteful must have been a big hit with its intended listeners. It would not have played well in translation before a Spanish-speaking audience.

A Last Word

Even the most skillfully presented ideas do not always meet with acceptance. Nahuatl-speaking peoples continued to hold to many preconquest beliefs long after the tenets of official Christianity were so ably explained to them. In the first dictionary ever published in the Americas (Spanish-Nahuatl) by the Franciscan Friar Alonso de Molina, can be found an entry for a "conjuror" of clouds or hail: "teciuhlazqui".³⁴ A very detailed manual for priests published in 1600 mentions, describes and condemns this "conjuror".³⁵ Yet more than four and a half centuries after Christianity was first presented to Nahuas, modern researchers could report that in the 1980s there were still "ritual weather wizards, the *tecihtlazqueh* or *graniceros*" who "cast spells and intercede with the Malinche [a volcano in the state of Tlaxcala] to manage the storms."³⁶ Even when expressed in the most accessible way possible, official Christianity could not--and did

not-completely carry the day among the Nahuatl-speaking peoples of Mexico.

Ye ixquich/That is all.

Appendix A

"A Son Thanks His Father For His Good Advice"

The following is taken from an early seventeenth-century publication of the Augustinian Friar Juan de Mijangos.³⁷ Augustin (the father) has just finished giving his son John a long discourse about how to live a proper Christian life.

Ioan (notecuiyoe) otlacauhqui in motlaçoyollotzin ... ca cenca nictlaçocamati in motetlaçotlaltzin, occenca nictlaçocamati in tlaçotlahtolli, in tinechmocaquitilia, in tinechmolhuilia, muchi niccui, ca muchi nicana, in tinechmonahuatiltilia, in tinechmopieltilia ... ma nopampa mitzmotlacuepcayotilili, mitzmotlaxtlahuili in Teotl Tlahtohuani Dios, inic cenca timotenquauhtilitzinohua, timociammictia, inic cencamatl oncamatl tinechmotenquixtililitzinohua, inic tinechmottitilia iohuitzin, iochpantzin Teotl Tlahtohuani Dios, in itechpanchantzinco tetlamelauhtia in Ilhuicac. Auh in axcan (notlaçomahuiztecuiyoe) ye ticmottilitzinohua, ca niconetontli, ca oc nipiltontli, ayamo cenca niyolizmatqui, ayamo nixtlamati, ayamo ninehmatcanemi, aya ninihimati, ayamo cenca nitlacaqui, ayamo nitlachia: ma tinechmolcahuili, ma tinechmotelchihuili, in nimeço nimotlapallo, ma cententzin cencamatzin nonacazco onchipini, oncalaqui, in itechpa in nepializtli, in chipahuacanemiliztli, yehica ca ninopiaznequi, nichipahuacanemiznequi.

John. O my lord, you have been generous [i.e., thank you very much]. I am very grateful for your loving charity. I am especially thankful for the fine words you tell and reveal to me. I heed all [the words of advice] you order me to guard for safekeeping. May the deity and ruler God repay you on my account, because you insist so strongly on tiring yourself in order to declare a word or two [of advice], and because you show me the wide and royal road of our deity and ruler that conducts people straight to His palace in heaven. And now, o my precious esteemed lord, you already see I am a little kid, I am still a child, I am not yet very prudent, I have not yet reached the age of discretion, I do not yet live wisely, I am

not yet a polished person, I do not hear and see things very well. Do not forget me, do not dismiss me. I am your offspring, may a word or two [of your good advice] drip into and enter my ears concerning continence and chastity, because I want to guard myself and live chastely.

NOTES

1. Charles Gibson's *The Aztecs Under Spanish Rule* (USA: Stanford University Press, 1964) is the best currently available account of Spanish colonization of the Nahuas. See also note 3 for a forthcoming work that will soon be replacing it. An overview of Spanish colonization of the original peoples of the Americas and of Spanish American colonial society can be found in James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz's *Early Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 1983).

2. Taken from the title of Robert Ricard's classic study *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico* (University of California Press, 1974).

3. A new look at colonial Nahuas, relying in great part on Nahuatl-language documentation, will be available soon in James Lockhart's *The Nahuas After the Conquest* (forthcoming).

4. Fray Juan de la Anunciación, *Sermonario* (México: Antonio Ricardo, 1577), f. 12r.

5. When a citation in Nahuatl is followed by an English translation, the translation is mine. At times my versions will be slightly awkward in order to show some of the flavor of the original. However, punctuation, spacing, etc., will tend to conform to standard English. While I have resolved all the overbars, other features of the original orthography will be preserved including grave and acute accents. Direct quotes in English from Nahuatl texts are from the translations of others.

6. See Frances Karttunen and James Lockhart, *The Art of Nahuatl Speech* (University of California Press, 1987), pp. 22-63 for a discussion of this and other aspects of polite upper class Nahuatl.

7. Anunciación, ff. 136r and 18v, respectively.

8. Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex* [Book 6 - Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy], (The University of Utah Press, 1969).

9. See Sahagún, Book 6, pp. 18; 44; and passim. An example of a precontact deity title not acceptable for the Christian god ("night, wind") can be found in Sahagún, Book 6, p. 18 and passim.

10. For the first three terms, see Fray Pedro de Gante, *Doctrina christiana* (México: Editorial Jus, 1981; it is a photoreproduction of the 1553 original), f. 4v and passim. For the last term see Fray Alonso de Molina, *Confessionario mayor* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984; it is a photo reproduction of the 1569 edition), f. 15v and passim.

11. Bachiller Luis Lasso de la Vega, *HVEI TLAMAHUIÇOLLI* (México: Carreño y hijos, 1926; it is a photo reproduction of the original 1649 edition published in Mexico by Juan Ruyz), f. 2r.

12. Padre Ignacio de Paredes, *Promptuario Manual Mexicano* (México: Biblioteca Mexicana, 1759), pp. 28; 29; and passim.

13. The sources referred to are, respectively: Fray Gerónimo de Mendieta, *Historia eclesiástica indiana* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1980), pp. 458-9; Fray Juan Baptista, *Aduertencias para los confesores de los naturales*, tomo 1 (México: Melchor Ocharte, 1600), ff. 60v-61r; and Fray Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquía indiana*. Volumen V (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1977), pp. 284 and 362-3; and Volumen VI (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1979), p. 408. The works by Torquemada are presented in modern orthography, etc., in the editions used.

14. Fray Juan Baptista, *Sermonario* (México: Diego López Dávalos, 1606), p. 702.

15. Fray Juan de Mijangos, *Espeio diuino* (México: Diego López Dávalos, 1607), p. 203.

16. Padre Horacio Carochi, *Arte de la lengua mexicana* (México: Iuan Ruyz, 1645), f.66r. My translation from the Spanish.

17. Baptista, *Sermonario*, p. 470.

18. Ut supra, "Prólogo". My translation from the Spanish.

19. See note 9.

20. Sahagún, Book 6, p. 41.

21. Lasso de la Vega, f. 3r.

22. James Lockhart, and Frances Berdan, and Arthur J. O. Anderson, *The Tlaxcalan Actas* (University of California Press, 1986), p.78.

23. Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex* [Book 10 - The People], (The University of Utah Press, 1961), p. 174.

24. Sahagún, Book 10, p. 178.

25. Ut supra, p. 187.

26. Fray Juan de Mijangos, *Sermonario* (México: Iuan de Alcazar, 1624), p. 191.

27. Fray Alonso de Molina, *Confessionario mayor* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1984; it is a photoreproduction of the 1569 edition), f. 36r.

28. Mijangos, *Espeio diuino*, p. 436.

29. Lockhart, *The Tlaxcalan Actas*, p. 76.

30. S.L. Cline and Miguel León-Portilla, *The Testaments of Culhuacan* (University of California at Los Angeles Latin American Center Publications, 1984), p. 250.

31. S.L. Cline, *Colonial Culhuacan, 1580-1600* (University of New Mexico Press, 1986), p. 156.

32.. Baptista, *Sermonario*, p. 337.

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33. Ut supra, p. 97.
 34. Fray Alonso de Molina, *Vocabulario* (Mexico: Ivan Pablos, 1555), f. 52r.
 35. Baptista, *Aduertencias*, f. 112r.
 36. Jane H. Hill and Kenneth Hill, *Speaking Mexicano* (University of Tucson Press, 1986), p. 22.
 37. Mijangos, *Espeio diuino*, p. 452.