Fiery Cacehiquels and Untrained Otomi:

Representations of Outsiders in Aztec and Maya Literature

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The Postclassic through the early colonial period represents a time of intense cultural interaction in Mesoamerica, which culminated in the cultural encounter between native peoples and Europeans during the conquest. By the time of Spanish contact in the late Postclassic period, the Triple Alliance Empire, including both strategic and tributary provinces, spread throughout central Mexico, south and east of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (Smith 1996). The Aztecs incorporated a wide variety of communities into larger, multiethnic polities, and as a result, the iconographic and pictorial tradition used by the Mexica to promote their cultural history and sociopolitical hegemony is sprinkled with images of non-Mexica peoples from other altepetl with whom they interacted. In a similar fashion, the Maya kingdoms of Mayapán in the northern Yucatán Peninsula and Quiché in the southern highlands were expanding, "both of them tribute-collecting conquest states that followed Chichén Itzá in giving mythic prominence to a divine king named Plumed Serpent" (Tedlock 1996:23). The ultimate outsiders, the Spanish, arrived after centuries of sustained ideological and physical interaction between distinct cultural groups, and thus their appearance was no surprise to the native people who continued to produce literature, rapidly incorporating the newest characters on the scene into the continuously evolving literary tradition.

This paper considers the role of outsiders, or people who are defined in some way as being distinct and separate from the subject culture of the text, in Aztec and Maya literature. The texts I have chosen to analyze here are Chapter Twenty-Nine, Book X of
the Florentine Codex by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (translated by Anderson and Dibble 1961) and the first section of History of the Indies of New Spain by Fray Diego Durán (translated by Heyden and Horcasitas 1964). For the Maya section, I have chosen to look specifically at the Quiché Maya Popol Vuh (translated by Tedlock 1996). These texts are, of course, colonial documents written in alphabetic Nahuatl and Quiché respectively, and have been translated from their original oral, pictorial, or alphabetic texts multiple times and thus filtered, interpreted, and re-interpreted through many minds and many pens over the course of their histories. For the Aztec portion of this research, I relied heavily on Sahagún, which I felt was the more reliable source to get closer to an emic perspective, cross referencing it at times with Durán’s Historia. I chose the latest version of the Popol Vuh by Tedlock to represent a cross section of Maya literature that incorporates both creation-myth elements and a migration history comparable to the central Mexican style that probably also dates to the 16th century.

This analysis focuses on both the content (i.e., the appearance and descriptions in the text of outsiders) and the context (i.e., the events, actions, historical backdrop) that give the appearances of others overall meaning within the larger story. Whenever possible, I also interpret certain Mesoamerican literary devices, such as parallelism, repetition, diphrastic kenning, couplet structures, and symbolism employed by the authors to emphasize the characteristics or actions of others, thereby conveying information about the writers’ conceptualization of and relationship with outsiders. By analyzing the roles of outsiders in two of the types of literature we have examined this semester, I hope to address a few broad research questions. First, what kinds of people appear in the literature, how are they represented, and what does this tell us about how
the Mexica and Quiché conceptualized others in relation to themselves during the Postclassic and colonial periods? Secondly, what can the literature tell us about how these peoples may have constructed a concept of ethnicity and, more importantly, chose to portray it to a wider audience? Inherent in this discussion is the relationship between myth and history in Mesoamerican literatures and intercultural relations during the Postclassic and early colonial periods. All of this operates on the basic assumption that literary traditions, whether oral, pictorial, or alphabetic, have the potential to shine a particular kind of light on the ways in which the producers of this literature understood their social and cultural worlds, and their place in them. In order to begin to flush out these ideas as they relate to in Aztec and Maya literature, we must first place the sources used here into their colonial context.

Colonial Sources

In many cases, the colonial context of Mesoamerican literature is not taken into account as much as its potential for upstreaming to an analysis of pre-Columbian society and culture. While for the present topic, this may be less of an issue, all three of the sources used in this research date to the colonial period, and this context should be kept in mind while using these as representative samples of Aztec and Maya literature. Sahagún and Durán were both writing about Nahuas in the 1580s, and the Florentine Codex is currently dated to 1585 and the Historia to 1581. Sahagún was a Franciscan friar who compiled a venerable encyclopedia of information about Nahuat-speaking peoples of New Spain, specifically with the intention of stamping out what he and the church at the time considered to be the idolatrous practices of the native peoples. The text was edited heavily by the church before it was finally published much later.
Fray Diego Durán was of the Dominican order, and his entire *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España e Islas de Tierra Firme* is divided into three treatises (Heyden and Horcasitas 1964:xxiv). The first section, which is the one that I consulted here, deals with the history of Mexico from its mythical origins through the Spanish conquest and Cortés’ expedition to Honduras. The other two sections are devoted to Mexican religion and the calendrical system. Durán’s work is filled with biblical references, and his voice is clearly present throughout the historical part of the text. He explicitly connects the Aztec migration from the Seven Caves to the dispersal of peoples in the biblical tale of the Tower of Babel (Durán 1964:3) and perceives the native peoples of Mexico to be “the ten tribes of Israel which Shalmaneser, King of the Assyrians captured.” In this way, Durán’s work is largely based on a conglomeration of oral tales he compiled from native informants and his own ideas about the nature of Mesoamerican culture. Sahagún, on the other hand, is not so explicitly audible in the text, probably because he relied so much more on native informants, not only to be present, but also to write parts of the document since he had hand tremors too severe to write. This opportunity for the native voice to come through in portions of the Florentine Codex is the primary reason I have relied more heavily on Sahagún. Neither Sahagún’s nor Durán’s histories offer the opportunity to look specifically at the structure of Aztec literature, as they are both written in narrative form, although some parts of Sahagún fall into the couplet structure even though they were written and translated as narrative.

The *Popol Vuh*, or “Council Book,” produced by the Quiché Maya people of highland Guatemala also dates to the colonial period. It was copied and translated first by a Dominican priest, Francisco Ximénez from an alphabetic Quiché text he acquired in
the town of Chichicastenango sometime between 1701 and 1703 (Tedlock 1996). Tedlock argues that it was most likely a 16th century text with earlier roots in Classic period painted manuscripts and iconography from the lowlands (1996:56). Regardless of what the ancient roots of the text are, it represents an important colonial Quiché document produced within the milieu of European-Mesoamerican contact in one of the “fringe” areas of New Spain. Despite numerous references in the text to colonial names and places, there is also significant syncretism of Mesoamerican and Christian religious beliefs throughout1. The location of the Quiché kingdom, a region of New Spain less aggressively “Europeanized” than other areas, probably reinforced this syncretism of religious beliefs and what I would call historical myths that come through the text.

The colonial context of these sources, once recognized and acknowledged, does not pose a significant problem for the present study. While Postclassic/colonial documents are replete with outside influences, so, in fact, was the Mesoamerican world at the time these texts were produced. While I believe that there is significant gray area about one’s ability to achieve an extremely emic analysis, I would argue that Mesoamerican representations of others in the literature inherently provide a somewhat more emic perspective of cross-cultural interaction. The nature of the subject makes it less likely to be manipulated Europeans who, at least initially, conceptualized all native peoples as falling into the broad category of “indio”. Where one does find European influence on representations of outsiders in the literature is usually along the lines of biblical allusions to lost tribes or references to Spaniards themselves in extremely glowing terms, as they were the power brokers at the time. This, however, makes the

1 See Tedlock (1996:158) for a reference to Moses parting the waters? “Sand banks was the name for the place where they crossed through the midst of the sea. Where the water dwindled, they crossed over…”
context of the characters in the literature just that much more interesting. Moreover, the potentially problematic issues with the texts used here, namely Spanish authorship of Aztec sources is mitigated by a couple of important factors. First, the voices of Sahagún’s informants do come through in the text because they were writing, and Durán at least claims to have gathered his data “from the traditions and paintings and from talking to the old people...who tell fables” (1964:3), thus providing a glimpse into the methodology he employed.

We must also consider the position of the writers in relation to the intended audience. In the Aztec literature examined here, Spanish writers with little or no point of reference for cultural distinctions within the indigenous social world rely on the oral tradition and pictorial manuscripts of the formerly dominant culture in the region to record events and descriptions featuring others. Likewise native informants and authors write their versions either to a Spanish or native audience within a colonial context, influencing oral, pictorial, and alphabetic traditions. Representations of outsiders, others, or distant peoples take on an explanatory role, describing how and why people are the way they are perceived to be in the places that they are. Therefore, representations of people—as self, other, insider, or outsider—provide windows through which we can interpret a part of Mesoamerican cultural reality.

Outsiders in the Aztec World

The logical starting point in Aztec literature for any inquiry into conceptualizations of people is Book X of the General History of the Things of New Spain. This book is devoted to The People, and treats “the general history, in which we are told the different virtues and vices which were of the Body and Soul, whosoever
practiced them” (Sahagún 1961:contents). Of particular interest her is Chapter Twenty-Nine, which:

Telleth of the various kinds of people, the people who dwelt everywhere in the land; those who arrived, who came to settle, who came to cause the cities to be founded (Sahagún 1961:165).

Almost immediately we get the sense of the relationship between “kinds of people” and “those who arrived” from another place. The repetition of the sentence structure underlined above creates a triplet that builds upon itself by adding first one, then two, than many words after the word “who”. In this way, a rhythm is created (more noticeably if written in verse form or performed orally) that replicates the passage of time and movement, building on itself. In this first paragraph, the relationship between the variety of people known and movement over time links the idea of distant peoples and historical migration. These (people and movement), in turn, are the elements of Chapter Twenty-Nine. The text provides a description of 18 (including the Mexica and broader “umbrella” ethnic affiliations) peoples identified as distinct from one another. Within these descriptions it touches upon some of the relationships between these groups. The last section of the chapter focuses on the Mexica themselves as a distinct people flowing into a larger dual creation myth/migration history that charts the dispersal of humans about the landscape from an original group of four tribes through the larger group of tribes at the Seven Caves, or Chicomoztoc. It then progresses through the Mexica migration that culminates in the founding of Tenochtitlan. The Spanish are not described by Sahagún’s informants in the list of the people occupying the land, and this is further indication that the audience is, in fact Spanish, with an interest in native conceptualizations.
An analysis of this text can be approached in numerous ways. I will start with the descriptions themselves, cross-referenced when appropriate with information from Durán, looking specifically at who is identified and how they are described as part (or not part) of the Aztec world. Then, I will examine the descriptive devices that are used and what characteristics are identified as being related to outsiders. Then, we will shift to the creation myth/migration history in order to see how peoples were linked to each other and the regions that they occupy as framed by a Mexica historical narrative of identity.

The 18 different kinds of people separated by both time and space and identified by Sahagún include: the Tolteca (Chichimeca), Teochichimeca, Otomí, Tamine. Nahuachichimeca, Otonchichimeca, Cuextecachichimeca, Nahua (Chichimeca mochanecatoa), Quaquata (Matlatzinca, Toloque), Macauaque, Totonac, Huaxteca (Cuexteca), Tlalhuica, Couixca (Tlapaneca), Yopime (Tlapaneca), Olmeca (Uixtoti, Mixteca), Michoaque (Quaochpanme), and the Mexica (Atlacachichimeca). Unfortunately, this list does not capture the additional temporal and spatial components brought in by the migration history. For this reason, the descriptive portion of the text lends itself much more to an Aztec cartographic representation of history painted in the form of a large lienzo that could accommodate these dimensions. This very pictorial Aztec style pervades even the alphabetic literature.

The Aztec scribes, painters, and storytellers have used a number of characteristic conventions to describe people and distinguish them from others. The common distinguishing factors used in the Florentine Codex are styles of dress, physical features (including hairstyle), material culture/technology, language, activities/skills, social organization/subsistence, personality traits, homeland (altepetl), and patron deities. It is
interesting to note that the top three most frequently referred to characteristics in the text, namely dress, physical features, and material culture/technology have pictorial counterparts represented conventionally in the codices (Boone 2000:39). The Codex Telleriano-Remensis, for example, depicts Chichimecs who carry bows and arrows, are dressed in skins, and have long, busy hair (See Figure 1):

They were called Tamime, that is to say "shooters of arrows," for they went bearing their bows (Sahagún 1961:171)

And the array, the clothing, of the ruler [consisted of] his cape, perhaps of lynx skins, or wild animal skins, or ocelot skins, or wolf, or puma skins, and what was called his squirrel skin head piece (Sahagún 1961:172)

These Chichimeca dispensed with their haircut; the hair was merely worn long, parted in the middle; as the men [were], just so [were] the women (Sahagún 1961:172)

The concept of "Chichimeca" is often used in Aztec literature as an identifier used to identify different people and position ethnic or cultural groups in central Mexico in relationship to one another. While Durán and others have characterized the Chichimecs as a single group of "brutal, savage men who were hunters" (1964:11) and who stood in opposition to more civilized groups such as the Mexica and Tolteca, the role of the Chichimeca in Sahagún is much more complex. At the beginning of Chapter Twenty-Nine, the parallel use of the terms "Mexica" and "Chichimeca" emphasizes their relationship rather than their opposition:

These first came to live here in the land, called land of the Mexica, land of the Chichimeca (Sahagún 1961:165).

The land of the Chichimeca and the Mexica are one and the same, and in fact, the Chichimeca are also directly linked by Sahagún to the ancestors, elders, "and these
Figure 1: Chichimecs with accoutrements. Codex Telleriano-Remensis (Folio 26v; Folio 25v).

Figure 2: Aztecs dressed as Huaxtecs (in white with pointed hats) during a ritual ceremony. Codex Borbonicus (p. 30).
Tolteca were called Chichimeca" (1961:165). Likewise, there were different types of Chichimeca, including the Tolteca-chichimeca, Nahuachichimeca, and Otonchichimeca. As the eldest group in the land with the most established historical roots, the Chichimeca served as an overarching mythical and historical link to a single, unified cultural group that spread forth, settled down, and occupied the landscape. Thus the dichotomy often established between Mexica/Tolteca as civilized groups in opposition to barbaric Chichimeca groups does not hold up in the literature, where a connection to a Chichimeca past was very important in establishing cultural and political legitimacy in central Mexico. Since everyone was connected to a Chichimeca past, it was necessary and beneficial to recognize Chichimeca heritage when identifying a group or others in the literature, just as the Chichimeca lifestyle is often acknowledged as a fault in Sahagún. The human groups described in Sahagún, therefore, are positioned in relation to one another along a historical Tolteca-chichimeca--Teochichimeca continuum, in which the Teochichimeca represents the "real Chichimeca or extreme Chichimeca" in terms of lifestyle, and other more "civilized" groups may share historic links to different Chichimecas along the continuum.

In addition to the Chichimecas, another distinct group described in the literature are the Huaxtecans, who appear in the codices dressed in large white capes, though without breechclouts, exposing themselves. The Mexica imitated this dress, during one feast dedicated to god, Mixcoatl, during the ritual calendar (See Figure 2):

The men did not provide themselves with breech clouts, although there were many large capes (Sahagún 1961:186).
Another important distinguishing characteristic in the literature that is rarely depicted in the codices or iconography is language. Language is mentioned in every description by Sahagún and is used often used in combination with the terms "civilized" and "barbarous." In fact, language is directly linked in the text to the concept of "barbarous" more than any other characteristic, including dress, technology, and physical characteristics. While those groups who spoke Nahuatl—the language of the subject culture—in the literature are considered to be at least partially civilized, there are two additional language groups that are characterized as "civilized" and ultimately civilized, as affiliated groups are automatically considered civilized seemingly by virtue of these linguistic connections. These include the Otomi and the Huaxteca. These linguistic terms, including Nahua, are consistently used as cultural markers and broader definitions for numerous groups in the literature:

Here are mentioned—are named—those called Nahua. They are the ones who speak the Nahuatl language. They speak a little [like] the Mexica, although not really perfectly, not really pronounced in the same way; they pronounce it somehow. These thus mentioned called themselves Chichimeca mochanecatoa, that is to say, Tolteca. It is said these caused the Tolteca to disperse when they went away, when Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl entered the water...

(Sahagún 1961:176).

Analyzing this passage just in terms of its significance as a linguistic and cultural identifier, the direct link between the Nahuatl language, the Mexica, and Toltec ancestry implies a more complex spectrum of historical and hereditary intercultural relationships than the two opposite extremes of "civilized" and "barbarous." The linguistic similarity noted above (though not exactly equal; they seem to speak with an accent), connects people to both a common Nahua identity, as well as a Toltec identity and further
distinguishes them from those "who speak a barbarous tongue" (Sahagún 1961:187). Likewise, there are non-Nahua speakers, such as the Otomí and Huaxteca, who are not considered speakers of a barbarous tongue, nor are they considered to be Nahua. The situation becomes even more complex when one takes into consideration the Olmeca/Mixteca who:

> Were also named Tenime, because they spoke a barbarous tongue. These according to the tradition, were Tolteca--a branch, a remnant, of the Tolteca. These were rich; their house, their land, was really a land of riches, a land of flowers, a land of wealth, a land of abundance
> (Sahagún 1961:187)

Here the Olmeca/Mixteca are linked to a prestigious Toltec ancestry. The repetition of "riches, flowers, wealth, abundance" (all symbols of preciousness in Aztec iconography and literature) emphasize this people's access to resources and parallels the description provided of the Tolteca, who had riches, lands, cities, and wealth (Sahagún 1961:170). Yet, these emphasized traits are juxtaposed with speaking a "barbarous tongue." This technique of juxtaposing seemingly opposing positive and negative concepts within a single description is common in Aztec descriptions of others. The Yopime, for example were:

> Speakers of a barbarous tongue. These were completely untrained; they were just like the Otomí; yet really they were worse. These also suffered affliction. They dwelt in a land of misery; but nevertheless they were the knower of green stones; they were people of wisdom
> (Sahagún 1961:187).

The Yopime are also considered to have a barbarous language and are compared in a negative light to the Otomí, previously identified by Sahagún as "civilized" (1961:176), despite their faults. This is followed by references to their poor state juxtaposed against
the positive aspect of their wisdom and knowledge of the green stones—probably a reference to precious stones, or jade—also symbolic of Toltec-like skills and accoutrements. My sense is that references to barbarous languages are simply indicating that some languages were unidentifiable to the Mexica, serving as markers that distinguish other groups as being more distant outsiders, or practically foreigners, compared to those that could be understood locally. Civilization, in Mexica terms, however, is determined by a number of other factors in addition to (or perhaps in contrast to) language, not the least of which would be an historic claim to Toltec heritage. Although Nahua speech is one Mexica link to Toltec ancestry, other forms of speech may not necessarily be indicative of a lack of Toltec heritage. Hence the Olmeca, strongly connected to Toltec heritage, but according to Nahua speakers, barbarous in terms of language.

In attempting to identify specific characteristics that define outsiders in Aztec literature, we must also take into consideration those elements that make people "insiders," or at least less distant from the Mexica themselves:

Fighting with Tlaxcalans, Cholulans, Huexotzinca was like Spaniards warring against Spaniards. According to the natives' histories, all these people were of the same origin and the only difference was that they belonged to different parties. However, other nations such as the Mixtecs, Zapotecs, Huaxtecs, and the coastal peoples were to them as the Moors, Turks, pagans, or Jews are to us

(Durán 1964:238).

The "parties" referred to here are most likely altepetl affiliations, which are one of the least common characteristics used to distinguish people mentioned in Sahagún. Durán also distinguishes between this and what he calls "nations," or communities more distant in terms of particular characteristics than others. Stronger connections with more
proximate peoples, as well as greater contrast with more distant groups, is the result of
correlations forged or broken during the primordial time of origins and the early stages of
the migration from Aztlan, or the Place of the Seven Caves. Likewise, local altepetl
solidified kinship links over time through a common Toltec heritage:

You know that I am of the generation and lineage of the
Toltecs who migrated from Tula, and according to our
traditions, we are all descended from the Aztecs
(Durán 1964:62).

While the leader of the Mizquic altepetl identifies historical kinship here as a primary
link to the Mexica, outsiders, or more distant others, are consistently linked in the
literature to past events that separated them out. Durán quotes portions of a speech
attributed to Tlacaelel, the second-in-command during the reign of the elder
Motecuzoma, in which he urges military leaders to take up arms against local altepetl
instead of more distant communities:

Let us buy with our blood, our heads and hearts and with
our lives,
This market place will be situated in Tlaxcala,
Huetzotzinco, Cholula, Atlixco, Tliluhquitepec and Teocoac,
Because if we place it in remote lands such as Yopitzinco,
Michoacan, the land of the Huaxtecs, or on either coast, it
will be difficult;
Our god does not like the flesh of those barbarous peoples.
They are yellowish, hard, tasteless breads in his mouth.
They are savages and speak strange tongues
(Durán 1961:141).

Here, Tlacaelel (per Durán) identifies Yopimes, Michoacue, Huaxtecs, and
Olmeca/Mixteca (coastal peoples) as outsiders based on the remote location of their
altepetl and language, as well as the patron god, Huitzilopochtli's, apparent distaste for
these groups. Most of these distant outsiders, while sharing only certain characteristics
(certainly not enough to interpret a pattern) in Sahagún's encyclopedia-like descriptions, do share roles in Aztec creation myths or legends that deal with the cultural origins prior to the migrations from Chicomecoatl.

The most common places to find references to outsiders in Aztec literature are the migration histories. Beginning in a primordial time prior to "historic" time, these mythical histories combine elements of creation with the movement of people as they travel over time. The importance of these combined creation myth/migration stories in seeking out representations of others in the literature lies in the fact that these stories were created largely to explain peoples' diversity and how they came to occupy the world that they did. Thus, it is appropriate that Sahagún included one such history flowing out of the description of the Mexica, in order to place the central subject of Aztec literature in its wider historical context.

The first appearance of outsiders begins with the arrival of the first people to occupy the land by boat, whose identity "no one can still reckon, [and] no one can still remember" (Sahagún 1961:190). The priests arrived and consulted with their god, deciding to move the people onward to their first stops at Quauhtemallan and then Tamoanchan (Sahagún 1961:190). From there they bore the god wrapped on their backs. Four wise men are mentioned, "Oxomoco, one named Cipactonal, one named Tlaltetecui, one named Xochicaauaca" (Sahagún 1961:191), who together invert the day count and are thus linked directly to the Toltec tradition. At this time, four tribes existed, namely the Tolteca, Tepaneca, Mexica, and Chichimeca. The cycles of four presented here are symbolically related to both the calendar and creation, and thus, this represents a time prior to the completion of the world in its present state.
After remaining at Tamoanchan:

a long time, they departed there from; they abandoned the land. There they left behind those named the Olmeca Uixtotin. These were magicians, wise men...it is said that they followed those who went to the east...and they went to come upon the seas coast. It is said that they were those now called Anauaca Mixteca (Sahagún 1961:192).

The Olmeca Uixtotin's outsider status is established early on in the migration with the initial separation from the group to follow people to the east. This brief stay at Tamoanchan establishes this group's Toltec affiliation, and also explains the subsequent linguistic separation further distancing them from the central Mexican groups. After Tamoanchan, the four remaining groups moved on to Mt. Chichinauhia, where the elder wise men were brought to council. The leaders were given four jars of wine:

It was about four each that they drank; this they all drank. And it is said the ruler of a group of Huaxteca people who were of one language, not only drank four, [but] when he had drunk four, demanded still another. Thus he drank five, with which he became well besotted, quite drunk; he no longer knew how he acted. And there before the people he threw off his breechclout (Sahagún 1961:193).

Here enters another identified outsider not previously present in the text who engages in activities that eventually determine the course of history for the tribe. As a result of removing his breechclout, the Huaxteca were shamed when a council was called to discuss the offensive action. As a result, the entire shamed Huaxteca group moved to the distant altepetl of Pantla to establish a homeland, likewise distancing itself from the core tribes within the migration. This example not only explains the ultimate location of the people, but also the tradition in the community for men to wear capes without breechcloths. Moreover, Sahagún's informants use this portion of the history as an
explanation for why "Huaxteca men always went about naked" and "always went about as if drunk" (1961:194).

The next place that was occupied was the city of Teothuacan, in which the "members of each group understood their own language" (Sahagún 1961:194). This is a reference to earlier language disbursement in the region. The Toltecs established themselves as leaders at this site, and the migration continued to Coatepec. There, "the leader of the Otomí left [the others] at Coatepec. He introduced his people into the forest" (Sahagún 1961:195), and the only three groups to continue are the Mexica, Tolteca, and Nahua. It is during this point in the migration that the Otomí are distanced from the other tribes. The choice of the Otomí to move into the forest, placed them closer to the Teochichimeca side of the continuum, and further distanced them from the Mexica, who immediately are established as the link between Toltec tradition and the Nahua language and cultural group.

The next stage of the migration passes through the desert and approaches Chicomoztoc, or the Place of Seven Caves. The tribes entering and exiting the caves are more closely related, though still differentiated, from the Mexica in the literature. From Chicomoztoc, the first to make offerings and depart were the Tolteca and the Teochichimeca, who represented the extremes in the Mexica worldview. The Michoaque then "traveled there to the west, where they dwell today, toward the setting sun" (Sahagún 1961:195). Durán picks up the story of the continued migration to the west, providing more insight into those of Michoacan:

They came to rest in the province that is now Michoacan, Land of Fish, in a place called Patzcuaro. It should be noted that the Aztecs and those who are now called the Tarascans of Michoacan, and those of the province of
Malinalco were of the same band and had all come out of the seventh cave, all speaking the same language (1964:15).

There is a linguistic unity and kinship, or lineage unity between tribes departing from the same cave of the Seven Caves. This may refer to the notion of shared patron gods, as each cave in other sources is related to a patron god and tribe. When some of the group decided to bathe in the lake, Huitzilopochtli commanded that their clothing be stolen by those on shore and that they then be abandoned completely. As a result, the Michoacue were separated from the core tribes, and thus "otherized" in comparison to those tribes who migrated to popular centers in the central valley. In addition, this incident in the literature also explains why, having grown accustomed to remaining undressed," these people did not previously use loincloths nor mantles, but rather long tunics that reached the floor" (Durán 1964:16). They also wore short sleeves.

The Mexica, naturally, migrated farther than any other group, and in fact continued to wander once all the other groups had settled down. Sahagún notes that by the time they reached the future site of Tenochtitlan, all the different people of the region:

all called themselves Chichimeca. All boasted the Chichimeca estate, because all had gone to the Chichimeca land where they went to live; all returned from Chichimeca land...They are called the Toltecachichimeca. The Otomi are also called Chichimeca--Otonchichimeca. The Michoacue are also called Chichimeca. The people to the east are not called Chichimeca; they are called Olmeca Uixtotin, Nonoualca (1961:197).

In this sense, the migration history also serves as a creation myth for the way in which people of the Aztec world have come to be similar or different from the subject culture. While outsiders appearing in Aztec literature can be described using conventionalized characteristics as identity markers, such as dress, physical features, language, and
material culture, the true explanation for others lies in their relationship to the central Mexican migration history and a larger Tolteca-chichimeca--Teotchichimeca historical heritage. In this way, the concept of outsiders or others in Aztec literature is constructed and communicated by means of the migration history. We now turn our attention to parallels in another Mesoamerican text, the Popol Vuh.

*Outsiders in the Quiché World: The Popol Vuh*

The *Popol Vuh* tells the story of the Quiché people from highland Guatemala, beginning in a legendary, mythical time prior to the creation of the present world, or age. Divided into five parts, the text first describes the events that unfold in the lives of various creator gods as they interact with each other and struggle to mold the human form and the elements of the world around them. Parts Two and Three describe various trickster and hero cycles, including the adventures of the divine heroes, Hunahpu and Xbalanque, as they match wits against the Lords of the Xibalba. Parts Four and Five are often interpreted as shifting from mythical time into historic time as they trace the movements of the earliest lineages of the Quiché people and document the events surrounding the creation of humans and the dawning of the sun.

The first reference to outsiders in the text occurs at the end of Part Three, when the characters of Hunahpu and Xbalanque are resurrected after their death to once again defeat One and Seven Death. They descend to the underworld disguised as "vagabonds" to entertain the masses:

> They really looked like vagabonds when they arrived. So then they were asked what their mountain and tribe were, and they were also asked about their mother and father: "Where do you come from?" they were asked.
"We've never known, lord. We don't know the identity of our mother and father..."(133).

Here the characters of Hunahpu and Xbalanque provide us with the first insight in the text into the Quiché concept of outsiders. Posing as such, they are asked to identify themselves, based on four pieces of information: the location, or place, with which they are associated (a mountain in the context of the highlands), a tribal or ethnic group affiliation--going beyond the place of origin, and the identity of their mother and father, which is most likely a reference to lineage affiliation. In the colonial Quiché world, inheritance passed through bilateral descent, and thus the reference to the identity of both the mother and father would be essential to establishing the identity of the individual. Moreover, this pairing of two paired terms (mountain/tribe : mother/father) in the form of a couplet, as in the underlined portion of the text, serves to emphasize the parallel meaning of the lines and the relationship of the pair (place/ethnicity : matriline/patriline). Likewise, their appearance as "vagabonds" is very similar to the central Mexican emphasis on dress and accoutrements as markers of cultural or ethnic affiliation and distinction from other groups. This sets the stage for the patterns that follow in Parts Four and Five regarding the characteristics that distinguish human groups and position others in relation to the Quiché.

Part Four concerns the creation of humans and the dawning of the sun and also marks the beginning of the shift from mythic to historic time. Four humans were created in the east in order to give "birth to the people of the tribes, small and great" (Tedlock 1996:149). The paired words, "small and great," represent a standard diphrastic kenning used in the text to connote the idea of everyone or everything. The four humans, named Jaguar Quitze, Jaguar Night, Not Right Now, and Dark Jaguar, were paired with four
wives each, named Red Sea Turtle, Prawn House, Water Hummingbird, and Macaw House (Tedlock 1996:149). These four women and four men were the bearers and begetters (mothers/fathers) of three Quiché lineages and several other peoples:

It wasn't only four who came into being then, but there were four mothers for us, the Quiché people. There were different names for each of the peoples when they multiplied there in the east. Their names were numerous: Sovereign Oloman, Cohah, Quenech Ahau, as the names of the people who were there in the east were spoken. They multiplied, and it is known that the Tams and Ilocs began then. They came from the same place, there in the east.

Jaguar Quitze was the grandfather and father of the nine great houses of the Cauecs.

Jaguar Night was the grandfather and father of the nine great houses of the Greathouses.

Not Right Now was the grandfather and father of the four great houses of the Lord Quichés (149).

Almost immediately with the creation and multiplication of the first humans, we find reference to several peoples identified as separate from the Quiché people, though from the same original mother/fathers. The different peoples mentioned in the text are said to be distinguished by different names, three of which are listed as "names of people who were there in the east." The name as a marker of affiliation to a larger group is used throughout the Popol Vuh in reference to tribal or ethnic affiliation. Though we do not have a clear understanding from the text what the relationship between the three named peoples and the Quiché lineages is, it is clear that they are differentiated as other than the Quiché people. The Sovereign Oloman, however, do reappear in the text as "people who stayed there in the east" (162). Tedlock then chooses a parallel structure for the next three lines, emphasizing the three distinct lineages of the Quiché people, those who we might call "insiders" in this text (i.e., those members connected strongly to the Quiché community).
Simultaneous with the multiplication of these groups, is the appearance of the Tams and Ilocs, along with thirteen "allied tribes, thirteen principalities" (149). These include the Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of the Bird House, White Cornmeals, Lamacas, Serpents, Sweatbath House, Talk House, those of Star House, those of Quiba House, those of Yokes House, Acul people, Jaguar House, Guardians of the Spoils, Jaguar Ropes. These people are described as "black people, white people, people of many faces, people of many languages, uncertain, here at the edge of the sky" (150). These groups are considered allies and the text states that "it is sufficient that we speak only of the largest. Many more came out afterward, each one a division of that citadel" (149). The implication here is that several human groups emerged from a single source, defined as both a place (east, a citadel) and a mother/father (lineage or heritage). The emerging groups are not the same, however, but distinguished by specific characteristics, including names, size (only the largest), physical features (associated colors, faces), and languages. Some also appear to be more distant than others to the subject culture, or the Quiché. The three Quiché lineages, for example are very much insiders. The Tams and Ilocs eventually become linked to the Quiché through the worship of the same god, Tohil. The thirteen tribes are "allies," and the three additional named peoples are linked to the original mother/fathers.

As the creation myth/historical narrative continues, additional outsiders, or people identified as something other than Quiché, appear in the text described by means of the standard characteristics or identifiers mentioned above. The mountain people, for instance:

They didn't show their faces, they had no homes. They just traveled the mountains, small and great. "It's as if they
were crazy," they used to say. They derided the mountain people, it was said. There they watched for the sunrise, and for all the mountain people there was just one language. They did not yet pray to the tree-stone (150).

Here the mountain people are distinguished by place (or lack there of) and dress, and unified through a common language. Their affiliation to mountains or the wilderness and wandering parallels the descriptions of the Teochichimecas in Aztec literature. The connection to the Quiché, who are identified as highland peoples as well, is vague. Clearly they are defined as distinct, thus outsiders, but whether or not the mountain people reference a migrating or hunting and gathering Quiché past prior to the expansion of the kingdom like the Mexica and their Chichimeca heritage, is not clear from the text.

Another group of outsiders mentioned consistently in the beginning from the creation myth in Part Four through the genealogy of the lineages in Part Five are the Mexican people:

Already there were many of them, all the tribes, including the Mexican people, all penitents and sacrificers (151).

And then all the tribes came in: Rabinals, Cakchiquels, those of Bird House, along with the Mexican people, as the names are today (152).

The Mexican people, despite their literal appearance here, are also used as qualifiers to emphasize the number of tribes present from distant areas. The Mexicans in this sense represent distance and all-inclusive, pan-Mesoamerican participation. The reference to penitents and sacrificers may also be characteristic of a Mexican presence, as the type and scale of heart sacrifice called for by Tohil during the Quiché expansion in the Popul Vuh parallels forms more commonly seen in Aztec literature. This pair of words may be kenning on the idea of war, expansion, or the attainment of victims for sacrifice. This is
not entirely clear, but those concepts are particularly prevalent in the central Mexican tradition, and there is another reference to the first four fathers having "a reputation for penitence and sacrifice" (175) after they completed their expansion and abducted several people to sacrifice to their gods. Likewise, the Mexican people were referred to as "penitents and sacrificers" in the context of the song called "Camacu" (162). Then again, penitence and sacrifice also appears as a paired concept in relation to gatherings of people waiting for the dawn. Thus, this concept may be unifying, rather than divisive in that context.

The relationship between the Quiché and the central Mexicans is expounded upon in the song of "Camacu" sung after the dawning of the sun:

   Alas!
   We were lost at Tulan!
   We shattered ourselves!
   We left our elder brothers behind!
   Where did they see the sun?
   Where must they be staying,
   now that the dawn has come? (162)

The song references the dispersal of cultures after human creation at Tulan Zuyua, or the Place of Seven Caves, which is clearly a central Mexican element incorporated into the Quiché text. The song laments the division of the people at the city of Tulan before the dawning of the sun, and makes reference to shattering, or fragmentation into smaller groups from a larger whole. This corresponds with other references in the text to the dispersal of languages as various tribes multiplied and migrated out of the east. The use of the term "elder brother" is a Mayan symbol used frequently with its younger brother counterpart and has its roots in the important role that siblings played in Maya society. Characters in Mayan literature tend to come in sibling pairs, and elder and younger
denote dominant and subordinate status. In this sense, the Mexican people are referred to here as "elder brothers," implying that they may have been a dominant, or expansionist group operating in the area. Clearly there were tributary provinces established as far south as the Guatemala highlands during the Postclassic, and this may be a reference to this type of dominant-subordinate relationship. Moreover, the Popul Vuh goes on to state that "even though Tohil is his name, he is the same as the god of the Mexican people, who is named Yolcuat and Quitzalcuat." When we divided there at Tulan, at Zuyua, they left with us, and they shared our identity when we came away" (162). Much like the Tams, who shared the god Tohil with the Quiché and thus became united with them, the Quiché likewise have established an historical link based on a shared god that unites them with the dominant outside group. The dominance of the Mexican people as a foreign influence in the area is further attested to by the pairing of "Sovereign" with "Mexican" at points throughout the text (161). There is a kinship connection established between the Quiché Caucel lineages and a Sovereign Mexican who seats one great house within the larger lineage, and this corresponds to the late post-classic period, when Mexican influence was at its height in the region.

Another community distinguished from the Quiché in the text, but present throughout the story is the Cakchiquels, or the Bat House lineage. Usually listed with the Rabinals and those of the Bird House as separate from the Quiché and other tribes, the Cakchiquels also distinguish themselves in the cultural creation myth/history by evading sacrifice to the god of the Quiché, Tohil, through a miniature trickster cycle:

After that they got warm, but there was one group that simply stole the fire, there in the smoke. This was the Bat House. Snake's Tooth is the name of the god of the Cakchiquels, but it looks like a bat. They went right past
the smoke then, they sneaked past when they came to get fire. Those fiery Cakchiquels didn't ask for their fire. They didn't give themselves up in defeat, but all the other tribes were defeated when they gave themselves up to being suckled on their sides, under their arms (156).

The various tribes had tried to obtain fire from Tohil and the Quichés, and they agreed to pass it along, as long as the tribes were willing to provide sustenance in the form of human sacrifice to Tohil, god of the Quiché people. The Cakchiquels were the only group around that did not give into this, but rather used trickery to steal the fire in the smoke. The reference to sacrifice for the sustenance of the gods is another central Mexican motif, and the use of access to resources (fire) to engage communities in tributary relationships relates to Quiché expansion in the area. Conquering other groups within the framework of this motif provides the victorious community with tribute to the patron god, in this case Tohil and human hearts. The Cakchiquels escape defeat and are not conquered by the Quiché as other groups are, but rather escape through a form of trickery, or the theft of the fire, maintaining their autonomy. This passage also includes one of the only uses of personality traits to describe others; the Cakchiquels are characterized as being "fiery" with a typically Mayan pun on fire for added emphasis. While this portion of the text probably relates to historical attempts by the Quiché to expand into Cakchiquel territory, it also serves to further distance this group from the other tribes in the area.

One final outsider that makes an appearance in the text is the ultimate outsider, the Spanish. The arrival of the Spanish in the Popol Vuh occurs when Pedro de Alvarado appears during the rule of the twelfth generation of lords of the Cauec lineage. Alvarado is referred to by his Nahuatl name, Tonatiuh, a reference to the sun. The Spanish are
called the "Castilians" throughout the text, a reference to their linguistic affiliation. Thus, in the brief description of the Spaniards we see the strong connection the text shares with central Mexico in the reference to Nahuatl terminology, as well as a Quiché re-conceptualization of outsiders in terms of their linguistic affiliation (Castilians). Just as was the case with the Aztec literature reviewed here, the appearance of outsiders in the Quiché Popol Vuh is inextricably linked to a combined creation myth/historical narrative of identity. With the creation of humans in primordial, legendary times, distinct human groups form, multiply and are dispersed from a single source to populate the world and then re-connect during "historic" times, often through the course of a migration, as either distant kin or disconnected others. This parallels not only Aztec motifs, but also the mythical-historical motifs of the Christian tradition, which attests to this document's colonial as well as Postclassic hybrid context.

While I have mentioned briefly some of the mythical-historical events in the Popol Vuh, I would like to revisit them as they relate to the emergence of outsiders identified in the text in order to draw comparisons with the central Mexican literary tradition. The parallels between the Popol Vuh and the creation stories and migration histories of central Mexico are so strong in some places that it could be considered a hybrid text that combines Quiché elements with directly transcribed portions of central Mexican texts. This is especially true of Part Four, which is also the place where the majority of references to other people in the text begin.

The creation of humans in a place to the east involves the generation and multiplication of numerous peoples, including the main progenitors of the Quiché people. The symbolic repetition of the number four in both the male and female portions of the
mother/father, indicates wholeness, completeness, and references the four cardinal directions toward which humans would eventually migrate. Central Mexican traditions also draw on the number four related to the same or similar cosmological and calendrical themes. The present age, for example, was attributed to the date 4 Movement, and previous ages also held the numerical coefficient of four. Similarly, in the Aztec migration history in Sahagún, the events begin with a series of four wise men and four tribes. There can be no question that the emergence of different peoples can be traced back to either human creation in general, or a second tier primordial or legendary time when a number of the original human groups moved into the regions from which proceeding historical migrations would begin (e.g., the Seven Caves). In this case, almost immediately, the people's "names became numerous" (148), thereby distinguishing the three emerging tribes as separate entities from the Ilocs, Tams, Quiché, and the 13 allied tribes. Here the most distant outsiders, like the central Mexicans and the mountain people, are distinguished as extreme outsiders encompassing all others within their bounds. This parallels the same phenomenon in Aztec literature when specific groups break off from the original tribes prior to their presence at Chicozomoc.

At this point in the history, a very similar context to that constructed in central Mexican histories begins to unfold:

And this is the name of the mountain where they went...Tulan Zuyua, Seven Caves, Seven Canyons is the name of the citadel. Those who were to receive the gods arrived there. And they arrived there at Tulan, all of them, countless people walking in crowds...(152).
Numerous peoples reunite or move together to the place of the Seven Caves where the distribution of gods and naming takes place. Similarly in Aztec legend, Chicozomoc is a place where different peoples pray to different patron gods that emerge on the backs of godbearers. Likewise, "Tohil is the name of the god loaded in the backpack borne by Jaguar Quitze" (152), each of the other three original human begetters receives a patron deity. New links are formed between previously unrelated groups who now begin to carry or worship the same god. Much like the Tarascans taking on Mixcoatl, the god of the Chichimecas, as their patron, the Tams, Ilocs, and Quiché "never let go of one another because the god has just one name: Tohil" (152). In this way, a distant kinship is forged that brings those who were previously outsiders, closer to the Quiché. The second important event to take place at Tulan is the distribution of languages:

And the languages of the tribes changed there; their languages became differentiated. They could no longer understand one another clearly when they came away from Tulan. And they broke apart. There were those who went eastward and many who came here, but they were all alike in dressing with hides. There were no cloths of the better kinds. They were in patches, they were adorned with animal hides. They were poor. They had nothing of their own. But they were people of genius in their very being when they came away from Tulan Zuyua, Seven Caves, Seven Canyons, so says the ancient text (152).

This passage appears as if it were lifted directly out of a Nahua manuscript in central Mexico. The dispersal of languages, in Tower of Babel style, serves as the most important mythic/historical event in terms of defining outsiders, recognizing differences, and constructing concepts of ethnicity in the two traditions analyzed here. Again, language is an indicator of distance, or the degree of disconnectedness between groups who claim a common early heritage. Likewise, the obvious reference to Chichimeca
dress and the wearing of skins, poverty, and the need to wander to connect later Quiché expansionist lineages to a more humble (Chichimeca-like) distant past. The use of juxtaposition of concepts such as poor, unable to communicate, and possessing nothing with wise (and thus able) is also very similar to Aztec conventions and emphasizes the need to maintain balance between both important aspects, the humble and the glorious, of historical identity. This is evidence that the Quiché may have been interested in connecting themselves through distant kinship to both Toltec (Tula) and Teochichimeca pasts in order to link themselves more directly and legitimately to a dominant group of "Sovereign" Mexicans in the late Postclassic.

After additional problems dealing with language disbursement, including the Cakchiquel defeat of Tohil and the Quiché, all the tribes reunited and held council at a mountain:

The name the mountain has today is from when they took council together; Place of Advice is the name of the mountain. They got together and identified themselves there...they named for one another (157).

The meeting represents a ritual form of "otherizing," in which the tribes distinguished each other by naming and receiving names. In this way, names again become an important distinguishing factor for the Quiché in determining identity and one groups proximity and/or distance to another. This meeting, while occurring after the initial migration from the Seven Caves has strong similarities to the council meeting of the tribes in central Mexico at Mt. Chichinahuaria, where tribal elders consumed four bowls of an alcoholic beverage. While naming did not take place, the Huaxteca distinguished themselves from other groups and set out for a distant land, and the tribes left that place more disjointed than before. In that sense, the events are quite parallel.
In the course of describing the outsiders present in the *Popol Vuh*, I have discussed the related events of Quiché history after the dawning of the sun, though a few references to sociopolitical legitimacy and domination over others in the region continue into Part Five. In an event very similar to the commandment of Huitzilopochtli over his subjects to expand into the future Mexica territory, Tohil, the patron god of the Quiché tribes admonishes his subjects:

"You must win a great many victories. Your right to do this came from over there at Tulan, when you brought us here," they were told. Then the matter of the suckling was set forth, at the place called Stagger, and a gift for Tohil, along with Auilix and Hacauitz (165).

For the second time in the text, the procurement of victories in military expansion to appease the patron gods and domination over other groups is legitimized by the ancestral connection to Tulan (Tula/Tollan/Toltecs). As in central Mexico (and perhaps as a result of Mexican presence in the Quiché region), the connections between the patron gods, historical heritage, and the ability to position one people in relation to another are inextricably linked with how outsiders are conceptualized and later represented in the literature consumed by a particular audience. It is interesting that after the death of the four fathers of the Quiché lineages in the *Popol Vuh*, the sons and later lords of the lineages traveled to Tulan to "bring back the writing of Tulan" (180). By establishing a new connection with the mythical/historical citadel:

they resumed their lordship over the tribes. The Rabinals, the Cakchiquels, and those of Bird House were happy...now the lords became great in their very being; when they displayed their lordship previously, it was incomplete (180).
In doing so, they legitimize their historical domination over communities designated as outsiders, if only in the sense that they are not linked to the same modes of legitimacy as the Quiché people. Thus, when the Ilocs tried to rebel against the Quiché, they sought not just military victory, but:

To obliterate the very identity of the Quichés. Only then, they thought, could they alone have sovereignty, and it was for this along, that they came to kill (182).

In this sense, the Quiché Popol Vuh fuses elements of mythical creation, historical identity, and conventionalized representations of ethnicity to describe non-Quiché people, the Quiché themselves in relation to others, and the interactions that occur between them in a colonial context.

Myth and History, One and the Same

 Outsiders appear in the Popol Vuh, Florentine Codex, and History of the Indies of New Spain almost always in relation to the history of a people. They are characterized by personal attributes, including dress, material culture, patron gods, personality traits, and language, and they are also positioned in relation to the subject culture based on a mythical/historical past in which they play distinct roles.

 In the case of the Aztec texts examined here, several groups of people were identified as being different from the central subject, or the Mexica, in a number of ways. Some people were considered to be more similar or more distinct depending on their historical relationship with the subject culture and others. The Otomi, for example, were considered in Aztec literature to be a particularly "outside" or distant group in relationship to the Mexica and in comparison to the Tlaxcalans or other people of the nearby altepetl. The differences in their personal styles, languages, and distant
homelands as represented in the literature had much to do with their quick departure to the forest during the mythical/historical migration of the Mexica and their position in relation to Toltecachichimeca--Teochichimeca heritage. Similarly, in the Popol Vuh, distinct human groups were often recognized as different from the subject culture, in this case the Quiché, based on characteristics directly linked to actions or events occurring during the creation and subsequent dispersal of people throughout the lands. In this sense, the outsiders themselves played an important role in defining how the subject culture was positioned in the literature against the backdrop of myth and history, and this, I believe, is a characteristic of Mesoamerican literature.

In Mesoamerican literature, myth and history are so inextricably linked that they must be looked at as one and the same. The histories presented of a people, whether in the form of migrations, chronicles, or creation myths have little to do with events in real time, and everything to do with linking events that occurred in the distant past with the events playing out in the contemporary world. Looking at representations of outsiders in the literature brings this myth/history dynamic into sharper focus, as the outsiders most often enter the scene in the literature at the crossroads of myth and history. The combined mythical and historical events recorded in the literature shaped and defined how the producers of that literature interacted with others on a daily basis. Thus, a comparative analysis of representations of outsiders in Aztec and Maya literature, has the potential to shed more light on the realities of social interaction as it occurred beyond the text in the Postclassic and colonial world.
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