

CHIMALPÁHIN, DON CARLOS MARÍA DE BUSTAMANTE  
AND *THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO*  
AS CAUSE FOR MEXICAN NATIONALISM

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At first glance, Chimalpáhin and don Carlos don't seem to have all that much in common. The former was a seventeenth-century native annalist who recorded epic histories in nahuatl so that subsequent generations of Nahuas would know of their glorious past. The latter was a nineteenth-century creole lawyer and politician who used the glorious Nahua past to exalt Mexico's future. Both were patriots and both were historians, however, and it was in one book in particular, Chimalpáhin's version of Francisco López de Gómara's *Conquista de México* (1552), that the two men came to find common ground. In the 1820s, in support of Mexican liberty, don Carlos decided to promote Chimalpáhin as ancient Mexico's intellectual incarnate and contacted what appears to be every state in the inchoate country, soliciting funds to publish a new, greatly revised edition of the *Conquista* history. Chimalpáhin, heretofore known only to bibliophiles and scholars of Mexican antiquity, suddenly became a celebrity in the politically charged postcolonial milieu. Just how he made this leap across two centuries into don Carlos's world warrants further investigation. It entails studying the men and their purpose as historians, a cadre of antiquarians, a paper trail of precious manuscripts, and the role of the *indigenista* movement in nation building. The notion of nationalism also deserves elaboration. Nationalism is an idea, and for Mexico it was a long time in the making. Bustamante was not so much interested in the banner waving, marches, and battles so characteristic of the movement for independence from Spain (although he had his share of skirmishes). Rather, his was an intellectual war, a rampage of ideas disseminated in published books, and his most essential purpose was to make known to his fellow literati the exceptional quality of Mexico's indigenous heritage. The sophistication and complexity of its early civilization was incomparable to anything in the Western world, he believed, and they were to serve as the fundament for turning the idea of national-

ism into the fact of a nation. This study exemplifies the too often overlooked existence of Mexico's nineteenth-century intelligentsia, who understood that their country needed more than political wrangling (so characteristic of nineteenth-century Mexico) to become a truly great nation, especially when there was already so much extant and in evidence of an exemplary cultural heritage for everyone to see and know.

Chimalpáhin was born in 1579 in a small town in Amecameca, Chalco. He was baptized Domingo Francisco, a sure sign of his commoner status, although two generations earlier his family had noble affiliations. A maternal grandfather, don Domingo Hernández Ayopochtzin (d. 1577), was acclaimed for his facility in interpreting and writing both ancient and colonial documents.<sup>1</sup> Several of Hernández Ayopochtzin's descendants and other relatives later served as informants to Chimalpáhin, sharing their recollections as well as their pictorial manuscripts with him as he wrote a history of his hometown. Amecameca was a Dominican *doctrina* by the second half of the sixteenth century,<sup>2</sup> and it was surely the Order of Preachers that was responsible for Chimalpáhin's education. At the age of fourteen, he went to Mexico City to work as a *fiscal* at the San Antonio de Abad church in Xoloco, an indigenous neighborhood located at the junction of the Iztapalapa causeway and the island and a short distance from the city center. Chimalpáhin recorded that he lived and worked at San Antón for more than twenty years.<sup>3</sup> However, Xoloco was part of the Franciscans' San Juan Moyotlan Tenochtitlan parish, and there is every indication that he was part of the Nahuatl congregation at San Josef chapel, the spiritual facility for Nahuas at the great San Francisco church in the capital. San Francisco was a hub of Nahuatl and Franciscan social and religious activity, and there was a library there as well. In all probability, it was in that library that Chimalpáhin first gained access to what obviously was an extraordinary collection of precontact pictorial manuscripts, nahuatl—and Spanish—language alphabetic texts, and

<sup>1</sup> Don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpáhin Quauhlehuanitzin (hereinafter, Chimalpáhin), Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Fonds Mexicain (hereafter BNP-FM), 74, f. 225, where Chimalpáhin refers to his grandfather, and throughout the text. See also Domingo Chimalpáhin, *Los ocho relaciones y el memorial de Colhuacan*, translation of Rafael Tena, Mexico, Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1988, v. II, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> For more about the Nahuatl perspective of the Franciscan-Dominican contest for Amecameca, see Susan Schroeder, "Chimalpáhin's View of Spanish Ecclesiastics in Colonial Mexico", in *Indian-Religious Relations in Early Colonial Spanish America*, ed. Susan Ramírez, New York, Syracuse University Press, 1989, p. 21-38.

<sup>3</sup> Chimalpáhin, BNP-FM, 74, f. 234v.

printed books in Spanish and Latin.<sup>4</sup> The San Francisco church was also the best of all possible places for Nahuas to keep current with the goings-on in the city.

Sometime around 1610 Chimalpáhin began to copy and transcribe ancient indigenous pictorial manuscripts to alphabetic texts.<sup>5</sup> His stated purpose was to record the history of his hometown, Amecameca, and he used documents and oral histories from there to write his nahuatl chronicle of its royal lineages and political and social histories. He completed this work in 1620. He had access to a great variety of other materials, though, and he wrote annals about Mexica and Tetzco-co history too. All together, I believe that he wrote at least thirty sets of nahuatl annals, and in almost all of them he made certain there was a reference or two to Amecameca, his *patria chica*.<sup>6</sup> He also wrote extensively about life in Mexico City, with particular information about the Franciscans and their San Josef chapel. He had access to the friars' manuscripts and books and on more than one occasion incorporated a portion of their writings into his own materials. Just one example is his use of fray Juan Bautista's *Sermonario* (1606), from which he took considerable information about astronomical phenomena.<sup>7</sup>

From his annals, then, we know abundantly of the ancient Nahuas' early migrations as they made their way to central Mexico from distant and mythical Aztlan. We know of the travails they experienced along the way—the wars with other groups, pronouncements from deities, the births and deaths of rulers, their marriages, and their dynastic lineages. There is considerable information about the rituals of founda-

<sup>4</sup> The library at the San Francisco church is another research project in its own right. Even into the 1830s, it was known for its manuscript collection, and it is where Joseph Marius Alexis Aubin reportedly obtained many items that he subsequently took to Paris and are now housed at the BNP. See also Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1971, p. 339, and don Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc, *Crónica mexicana*, ed. Manuel Orozco y Berra, Mexico, Editorial Porrúa, 1980, p. 154, who states that in 1792 the collection at San Francisco church contained thirty-two volumes.

<sup>5</sup> According to the eighteenth-century creole intellectual Mariano Veytia, *Historia antigua de México*, ed. C. F. Ortega, Mexico, Editorial Leyenda, 1944 [1836], v. 1, p. 287, Chimalpáhin and don Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc were the two most famous and knowledgeable interpreters of the ancient pictorial manuscripts.

<sup>6</sup> Chimalpáhin did not limit himself to transcribing nahuatl annals, however, as can be seen in his copy of the "Ejercicio cotidiano", a religious treatise in nahuatl heretofore attributed to Sahagún, Chimalpáhin, *Codex Chimalpáhin: Society and Politics in Mexico Tenochtitlan, Tlatelolco, Texcoco, Culhuacan, and Other Nahua Attepetl in Central Mexico*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1997, v. 2, p. 130-183, the *Conquista* book, and possibly other works as well.

<sup>7</sup> Chimalpáhin, *Annals of His Time*, eds. and trans. James Lockhart, Susan Schroeder and Doris Namala, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2006, p. 176-85, and see Juan Bautista, *A Jesu Christo S. N. se ofrece este sermonario en lengua Mexicana*, Mexico, Diego López Dávalos, 1606.

tion of their *altepetl*, or ethnic state(s), the election and installation in office of kings, their territorial conquests, and the confederation of their polities. We also learn of their high esteem for noble women and the great number of children enjoyed by powerful rulers. Not uncommonly, nor of any surprise, little is said specifically about the Spanish invasion; rather, the Spaniards are treated as if they were any other ethnic group with whom the Aztecs or different *altepetl* had to negotiate or wage war. Eventually, though, there is mention of Spanish kings, Catholic saints, processions, and ministers, and ultimately, the annals are filled with information about life in colonial Mexico, with the Nahuatl presence implicit but no longer the subject of the history. Chimalpáhin wrote, he said, so that future generations of Nahuas would know of the wondrous events that had transpired earlier. He was also well aware of the many social and environmental changes all around him—the deaths of thousands of natives from epidemic diseases as well as the draining of the wetlands, the great *desagüe*, and the denuding of the forests.

Another consideration is Chimalpáhin's expectations in writing his histories. Did he anticipate that his works would be published? Probably not, but it is important to acknowledge that record keeping and texts from precontact time to the end of the seventeenth century, at the least, were highly esteemed in Nahuatl society. Elsewhere I have shown that the office of *tlacuilo* (painter or writer), was occupied by one of the highest-ranking individuals in a particular society; that this individual had to be a member of the royal genealogy and a *tlatocapilli* (royal nobleman), and that the charge passed from generation to generation along with the ancient texts. Such was the prestige of the office that succession to the rulership was for others. This certainly was the case among Chimalpáhin's ancestors. And don Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc (fl. 1598) is a classic example of a Nahuatl aristocrat who took seriously his charge as keeper of the texts and thus never acceded to the rulership of Mexico Tenochtitlan, even though he was a direct descendant of the late emperor Motecuzoma Xocóyotl.<sup>8</sup>

Doubtless, Chimalpáhin's purpose was realized upon having written everything down, following Nahuatl precedent. Unfortunately, however, in the colonial era, royal genealogies, succession practices, and generational record keeping traditions were no longer practicable. This may explain, in part, why Nahuas stopped writing histories. In Mexi-

<sup>8</sup> Susan Schroeder, "Writing Two Cultures: The Meaning of *Amoxtili*, 'Book', in Nahuatl New Spain", in *New World, First Nations*, eds. David Cahill and Blanca Tovías, Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 2006, p. 13-35.

co City, Chimalpáhin was the last of the great annalists, and he was writing only into the 1620s.

But his interests were wide ranging, and he wrote at length in nahuatl on Old Testament themes, bringing in classical references from time to time, and even used Enrico Martínez's *Reportorio* (1606) for details about world geography.<sup>9</sup> His handwriting is familiar in all these works; moreover, he signed himself as he wrote and is therefore the only known native American author to have written an epic history of Indian Mexico in his own language. Most interesting, perhaps, is that he no longer called himself by his baptismal name, Domingo Francisco, but rather don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpáhin Quauhtlehuanitzin, having taken the honorific title don, the name of the church where he worked, the name of the church's patron (Diego Muñón), and the names of two high-ranking individuals from Amecameca, one of whom served as ruler (Quauhtlehuanitzin, r. 1418-65). It was not uncommon for him to sign himself more than once; in his Mexico City annals (1579-1615) his name appears six times.<sup>10</sup>

Chimalpáhin's signature and style have greatly facilitated the identification of his writings. He kept no catalog, and since he was never mentioned by any of his contemporaries —natives or friars— and none of his accounts was published, we are uncertain of all that he wrote. One work that comes as a great surprise is his version of López de Gómara's *Conquista de México*.<sup>11</sup> He never mentioned it. Indeed, the earliest published notice of it is in Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci's (c. 1702-1755) *Catálogo de Museo Histórico Indiano* (1746), where Boturini recorded, "Otra historia de la Conquista, su autor don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpáhin. Es obra entera, ajustada y extensa. Tom. 20, en folio. Original."<sup>12</sup> In the course of interpolating new information and incorporating extensive changes in his copy of the *Conquista*, Chimalpáhin had signed himself again.

Why Chimalpáhin made a copy of López de Gómara's *Conquista* is not known. As early as 1553 Prince Philip of Spain ordered the sup-

<sup>9</sup> For example, Chimalpáhin, BNP-FM, 74, ff. 13-14v and see Henrico Martínez, *Reportorio de los tiempos e Historia natural de Nueva España*, Mexico, Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1948 [1606].

<sup>10</sup> Chimalpáhin, *Annals*, 47, 161, 239, 257, 259, 263.

<sup>11</sup> Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia de las Indias y Conquista de México*, Zaragoza, Agustín Millán, 1552.

<sup>12</sup> Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci, *Catálogo del Museo Histórico Indiano*, in *Idea de una nueva historia general de la América septentrional. Fundada sobre material copioso de figuras, símbolos, caracteres, y geroglíficos, cantares, y manuscritos de autores indios, ultimamente descubiertos*, Madrid, Juan de Zúñiga, 1746, p. 76. For more about Boturini, 1743-1755, see John B. Glass, *Boturini in Spain*, Lincoln, MA, John B. Glass, 2005.

pression of the printing and sale of the book, and in 1566 he prohibited its being read in Castile and the Americas, although the mestizo author don Fernando Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1578?-1650) had a copy of the book in his possession and noted that he believed it was the most accurate of the conquest accounts pertaining to indigenous history to date.<sup>13</sup> Writing one hundred years after the conquest, Chimalpáhin may have been prompted in this undertaking by the fact that the location of San Antón church in Xoloco marked the site of the famous first meeting of Emperor Moteuczoma Xocóyotl and Conqueror Hernando Cortés. Might there have been commemorative festivities to celebrate the event? Certainly, Chimalpáhin's contemporary, the Nahuatl aristocrat don Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc, could have taken on the role of his illustrious grandfather Moteuczoma Xocóyotl as he did on other ceremonial occasions.<sup>14</sup>

Did Chimalpáhin intend to write his own revisionist account of the fall of Mexico Tenochtitlan for Nahuas? Don Carlos María de Bustamante maintained that Chimalpáhin had translated the book into Nahuatl and that he, Bustamante, had it translated back into Spanish for publication in 1826.<sup>15</sup> Apparently, Bustamante then sold the manuscript, and its location is uncertain.<sup>16</sup> Charles Gibson states that the

<sup>13</sup> Veytia, *Historia*, v. 2, p. 52. Bustamante also mentions this in his *Tezcoco en los últimos tiempos de sus antiguos reyes, o sea Relación tomada de los manuscritos inéditos de Boturini, redactados por el Lic. D. Mariano Veytia. Publicados con notas y adiciones para estudio de la juventud Mexicana*, Mexico, Mariano Galván Rivera, 1826, p. 64.

<sup>14</sup> See Chimalpáhin, *Annals*, 67.

<sup>15</sup> Carlos María de Bustamante (hereinafter CMB), *Galería de antiguos príncipes mejicanos dedicada a la suprema potestad nacional que les sucediere en el mano para su mejor gobierno*, Puebla, Oficina del Gobierno Imperial, 1821, p. 27. In his *Historia de las conquistas de Hernando Cortés, escrita en español por Francisco López de Gómara, traducida al mexicano y aprobada por verdadera por D. Juan Bautista [sic] de San Anton Muñon Chimalpáin Quauhltlehuauitzin, indio mexicano*, Mexico, de la testamentaria de Ontiveros, 1826, v. 1, p. 129-130, he states that the cura at Otumba, don Anastasio del Alamillo, translated it from the Nahuatl to Spanish for him. See also Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Archivo Histórico (hereinafter INAH-AH), CB, v. 5 (1809), ff. 86-92v, for a legal case in which Bustamante defended Father Alamillo.

<sup>16</sup> Edmundo O'Gorman, *Guía bibliográfica de Carlos María de Bustamante*, México, Centro de Estudios de Historia de México Condumex, 1967, p. 162, notes a bill of sale indicating that Bustamante sold a Conquista manuscript to Hipólito Segúin in 1834. See also CMB, INAH-AH, Colección Antigua (hereinafter Col. Ant.), 439 (1834), where Bustamante records the sale of a manuscript titled "La conquista de México sin máscara", to Hipólito Segúin for 250 pesos, noting his obligation to give fifty copies to the purchaser once the book was published. He adds that the manuscript was by Sahagún who had translated the work from Mexican, "Nahuatl", into Spanish. However, Sahagún's *Conquista* was published by Bustamante in 1829. CMB, *Historia de la Conquista de México*, México, Galván a cargo de Mariano Arévalo, 1829. Bustamante states that he followed to the letter a copy of the work brought to New Spain by Brigadier don Diego García Panes in 1793, who had obtained it in Spain from don Juan Bautista Muñoz.

Mexican lawyer, bibliophile, and historian Alfredo Chavero (1841-1906) claimed to own the Bustamante copy of the manuscript.<sup>17</sup> There is a manuscript in Mexico City that I believe is a copy of the original Bustamante version used for the publication, since he identifies himself in the first person and by name and initials in his copious, lengthy notes. One such example is his commentary on the pictorial manuscripts that are mentioned in the text; he tells of how they still exist, that he has seen and admired them, and that they are at the “Secretaría de Cámara de este Virreynato.” He adds that Baron von Humboldt offered almost 6 000 pesos for one depicting the peregrinations of the Mexica and quotes Humboldt, “In London, they will give me 12,000, and I will have half in profit.” Apparently, Humboldt also offered 500 pesos to don Antonio León y Gama’s son to make a copy for him overnight of the *Tonalamatl*.<sup>18</sup> However, another copy of Chimalpáhin’s *Conquista* manuscript came to light in 1986 in a private collection in Yuma, Arizona. This manuscript is in Spanish, and by its description it is the copy made by Boturini and thus the earliest extant version.<sup>19</sup>

How it was that Bustamante came to know of Chimalpáhin is also worth considering and ultimately reveals an impressive circle of creole intellectuals who diligently collected and shared the ancient native manuscripts. While living in Mexico City (1593-1631?),<sup>20</sup> Chimalpáhin did not experience the celebrity status enjoyed by his contemporary

<sup>17</sup> Charles Gibson, “A Survey of Middle American Prose Manuscript in the Native Historical Tradition”, in *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, ed. Howard F. Cline, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1975, v. 15, p. 331. Alfredo Chavero, “Historia antigua y de la conquista”, in *México a través de los siglos*, ed. Vicente Riva Palacio (Mexico: Balleca y Co., n. d.), v. 1, p. XLVI, states that the Chimalpáhin manuscript followed López de Gómara and that he (*tenemos*) owned the one that was used by CMB. Chavero, however, doubted that Chimalpáhin even existed. By Chavero’s time it is likely that all original writings by Chimalpáhin had left the country. Indeed, only a few folios in his hand are extant in Mexico, and they were not identified until the last half of the twentieth century.

<sup>18</sup> Biblioteca Nacional, Mexico, FR 1727, f. 70r-v. The photocopy of this manuscript in my possession is incomplete and a recent visit to BN revealed that the manuscript can no longer be located.

<sup>19</sup> Now known as the Browning Manuscript, it was acquired by the Newberry Library, Chicago, Case Ms 5011, in 1991. When Boturini was first arrested in 1743, he immediately made an inventory of his collection. In this first catalog he described the Chimalpáhin *Conquista* manuscript as “otro tomo manuscrito de á folio en lengua castellana: trata la conquista de México y la general, se sacó de su original; su autor es D. Domingo de San Anton Muñon Chimalpain, indio cacique, y tiene ciento setenta y dos fojas” (cited in CMB, *Historia de las conquistas*, v. 1, p. II). The Browning MS numbers exactly 172 folios. On the last page there is a note by the nineteenth-century historian Nicolás León commenting on the carelessly edited two-volume edition published by Bustamante in 1826.

<sup>20</sup> We are uncertain of Chimalpáhin’s tenure in Mexico City. What is certain is that his beloved priest at the San Antón church, fray Agustín del Espíritu Santo, died suddenly of a stomach ache in 1624. The church was then illegally invaded by Augustinian friars, and city

Nahua and mestizo historians such as don Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc of Mexico Tenochtitlan and don Fernando Alva Ixtlilxóchitl of Tetzoco. Quite possibly it was his humble origin and the marginal location of the San Antón church that kept him at a distance from society's mainstream. In spite of what amounts to close to one thousand pages of historical writing, he was not mentioned by anyone. Indeed, it was not until the end of the seventeenth century that he was acknowledged, and this was by the creole savant and bibliophile don Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora (1645-1700), who wrote on the last page of Chimalpáhin's unfinished Mexico City annals, "Although the good don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpáhin Quauhtlehuantzin lived longer, I did not find any more personal papers on this matter other than those contained here, etc."<sup>21</sup>

Sigüenza y Góngora was a great collector of antiquities, and he shared Chimalpáhin's manuscripts with at least one fellow historian, the Franciscan fray Agustín de Vetancurt, who was the first to mention Chimalpáhin and his works in print (1698).<sup>22</sup> It is likely but not yet certain that many items in his collection had originally come from the library at the San Francisco church. However, upon his death (1700) Sigüenza y Góngora bequeathed his collection to the Jesuits' Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo (Colegio Máximo), where various individuals made use of them, among them the aforementioned Italian scholar Boturini, who arranged for copies to be made of Chimalpáhin's writings and included them in his famous *Museo*. After Boturini's arrest and return to Spain (1743), which was followed later by the expulsion of the Jesuits (1767), their respective extraordinary collections of precious native materials were supposedly being held under government auspices. For the period 1771-1788 the Boturini materials were housed in the library of the Royal University.<sup>23</sup> But the Jesuit collections, at the Colegio de San Gregorio, at least, were immediately inventoried and priced for sale.

officials had to come and evict the friars and close the church, bolting the door. Chimalpáhin was then out of a job.

<sup>21</sup> Chimalpáhin, *Annals*, 12, and BNP-FM, 220, p. 282. Sigüenza y Góngora did not sign himself here, but upon comparing the writing with his notations and rubric in manuscripts at the British and Foreign Bible Society Library at Cambridge University, it can be confirmed.

<sup>22</sup> Agustín de Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano: descripción breve de los sucesos exemplares, históricos, y religiosos del Nuevo Mundo Occidental de las Indias*, México, Doña María de Benevidas, viuda de Juan de Ribera, 1698, f. IIV.

<sup>23</sup> Domingo Chimalpáhin, *Compendio de la historia mexicana*, ed., John B. Glass (Lincoln Center, Mass. in Conemex, n. 3, 1975 (Contributions to the Ethnohistory of Mexico, 3).



Among creole intellectuals there was great concern regarding the collections' disposition, because the Spanish crown had mandated that all manuscripts in the Boturini Museo be gathered together and sent to Spain. Similar orders to collect all indigenous materials were issued in the 1780s and again in the 1790s, with an official expedition sent to Mexico City for that purpose.<sup>24</sup> With certain urgency, copies were made of both the original documents and Boturini's copies, and, in a sense, Chimalpáhin became fashionable, for at least six copies were eventually made of his *Conquista* manuscript.<sup>25</sup> Some manuscripts were actually deposited at the palace, others were at the university, and still others found their way into private collections or were sequestered and have subsequently been lost. The Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731-1787), who taught at the Society's Mexico City Colegio de San Gregorio for Nahua boys, where several nahuatl works by Chimalpáhin were reportedly housed, was well familiar with the manuscripts and specifically mentioned Chimalpáhin's nahuatl translation of the *Conquista* book when he wrote his *Storia antica del Messico* (1780-81) while in exile in Bologna.<sup>26</sup>

Obviously, though their writings were no longer readily accessible, the native historians were not forgotten. More specifically, they played a major role in Antonio León y Gama's (1735-1802) eloquent response to English, French, and U. S. diatribes against New Spain over the course of the eighteenth century. In fact, León y Gama, a great scientist and scholar in his own right, championed Chimalpáhin, Cristóbal del Castillo (fl. 1599), and Alvarado Tezozómoc as exemplars of early American intellectualism. Reflective and probing, León y Gama made specific references to their knowledge of ancient calendrical cycles, traditional record keeping, and astronomical acuity. Accordingly, the

<sup>24</sup> Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Historiographies, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2001, p. 300-305.

<sup>25</sup> In addition to the Browning Manuscript in Chicago, the copies are currently housed in Paris, BNP-FE 173 (c. 1776); in Madrid, BNMA 13367; in Mexico City, BNM-FR 1727; in New York, Hispanic Society, HC 411/678 (c. 1755); in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, the 'Andrade' copy (c. 1805); in Dallas, Texas, DL-SMU (c. 1800), one-half of a manuscript; and in Providence, Rhode Island, JCBL (c. 1800), the other half of the DL-SMU manuscript. The CMB original copy and of course Chimalpáhin's original possibly two copies are yet to be located.

<sup>26</sup> Francisco Javier Clavijero, *Storia antica del Messico*, 4 v., Cesena, Gregorio Biasini, 1780-1781, and in Spanish, *Historia antigua de México*, 2 v, trans. J. Joaquín de Mora, Mexico, Delfin, 1944, v. 1, p. 28. CMB, *Historia de las conquistas*, v. 1, p. II, states that he searched for the manuscripts in the Colegio de San Gregorio's (CSG) library, finding none, and then suggests that Beristáin took them to his home. There is solid evidence of Chimalpáhin's Mexico City annals at CSG, for the manuscript was listed in a 1768 postexpulsion inventory of the library. See INAH-AH, Col. Ant., CSG, v. 121, f. 294r-298v.

pictorial and alphabetic manuscripts along with a great store of sculpture and architectural monuments were ample evidence of the splendor of ancient American civilizations and thus counterpoise to the disparaging harangues by the foreigners, who, it was felt, were little more than armchair philosophers. What could they possibly know about America without having visited it?<sup>27</sup> Many of the most erudite works were in nahuatl, which the mestizo historian Diego Muñoz Camargo (c. 1529-99) described as “[the] most ample, copious language ever spoken, suave and tender, yet dignified and stately, rich in words, easy and flexible; one can easily compose verses in nahuatl according to the rules of meter and scansion,” even though he himself wrote in Spanish.<sup>28</sup> The attacks by foreigners were progressively demeaning; New Spain’s creole intellectuals, confident because of the wealth of antiquities in their midst as real evidence and their firsthand knowledge of New Spain’s cultures, languages, and peoples, countered with numerous grand essays.

León y Gama was only one among many enlightened intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean who were writing about the “condition” of the native peoples in the Americas as well as America itself. Intellectuals from Montesquieu (1725), Voltaire (1756, 1766), Adam Smith (1776), William Robertson (1777), Cornelius de Pauw (1768) and Abbé Guillaume Raynal (1776) in Europe, who for the most part had little good to say, to Sigüenza y Góngora, Vetancurt (1698), Boturini (1746), Juan José Eguiara y Eguren (1755), Clavijero, and Mariano Veytia (1836), on the defensive and ostensibly positive, joined León y Gama (1792) in writing their own philosophical and historical treatises about ancient America.<sup>29</sup> John Leddy Phelan, above all, credits Clavijero as a pioneer in the neo-Aztecism movement, as he called it, which he believed not only fostered heightened awareness and investment in nationalism but also began to connect Mexico’s citizens to the historical memory of the country’s native peoples.<sup>30</sup> For example, poor education and lack of opportunity were blamed for the present plight of many natives, not innate biological or intellectual inferiority, as the Europeans asserted. Rather, Spanish colonialism was the problem.

<sup>27</sup> Antonio León y Gama, *Descripción histórica y cronológica de las dos piedras*, México, Manuel Porrúa, 1978 [1792].

<sup>28</sup> Cited in Keen, *Aztec Image*, p. 129.

<sup>29</sup> Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write...*, p. 204-300; and Keen, *Aztec Image*, p. 217-309, discuss these ideologues’ exchanges at length.

<sup>30</sup> John Leddy Phelan, “Neo-Aztecism in the Eighteenth Century and the Genesis of Mexican Nationalism”, in *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin*, ed. Stanley Diamond, New York, Columbia University Press, 1960, p. 760-770.

Licenciado don Carlos María de Bustamante (1774-1848) was born, raised, and educated as a lawyer in Oaxaca. From an early age, however, he was caught up in political activities in the capital, working as a journalist and publishing an array of pro-nationalism pieces in a variety of organs. By all the evidence he was also one of the last to join the indigenista school.<sup>31</sup> He was indeed a member of the group of creole intellectuals who circulated, copied, and exploited the Boturini/Jesuit manuscript legacy. But Bustamante did not direct his energies against the literati in Europe; rather, he used his colleagues' scholarship and the native manuscripts for a more pressing cause closer to home. By the nineteenth century, for the Bustamante cohort the epitome of all causes was the realization of New Spain's independence from Spain. And, as Ernesto Lemoine indicates, the creole intelligentsia were not just narrators but actors in the great event.<sup>32</sup>

The precious manuscripts were scattered, and many were used by politicians to suit their own purposes. One flagrant instance of such abuse was his fellow nationalist, Father José María Luis Mora (1794-1850), reportedly in possession of the largest library in Mexico City at the time, who in 1827 traded three bound volumes of priceless manuscripts (two in Spanish and authored by Alva Ixtlilxóchitl and one in nahuatl by Chimalpáhin) for Bibles to James Thomsen, the British and Foreign Bible Society agent in Mexico. The Bibles were to be translated to native languages and used as primers to educate and therefore eliminate what some politicians in Mexico propounded to be the backwardness of nineteenth-century native society. At one point, the legislators even tried to eliminate the word *indio* from the national vocabulary, believing this a possible solution to the problem. The manuscripts were sent to Bible Society headquarters in England where they remained largely unknown until 1983 when a catalog was made of its library collection.<sup>33</sup>

Clearly influenced by León y Gama's belief that the accomplishments from Mexican antiquity were on a par with anything known elsewhere in the Western world, Bustamante selected exemplary accounts to make their contents better known to Mexico's citizenry, noting on the title pages that the books were intended specifically to

<sup>31</sup> For example, see CMB, *Historia de las conquistas*, v. 1, p. XI, for his opinion of De Pauw and Robertson.

<sup>32</sup> Ernesto Lemoine, *Estudios historiográficos sobre Carlos María de Bustamante*, ed. Héctor Cuauhtémoc Hernández Silva, Mexico, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 1997, p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> For more about Mora, his library, and precious manuscripts, see Susan Schroeder, "Father José María Luis Mora, Liberalism, and the British and Foreign Bible Society in Nineteenth-Century Mexico", *The Americas*, 50, 3 (1994), p. 377-397.

benefit the country's youth, because, he added, "We have so few good books."<sup>34</sup> Evidently, he believed that as an independent country Mexico needed an informed citizenry in order to progress. Elsewhere, he wrote, "Many of those pueblos (Mexico, Tlatelolco, Tlacopan, Ecatepec, etc.) have disappeared, and even though they were opulent, there is no memory of them, thanks to the Spaniards."<sup>35</sup> Unofficially labeled an *indigenista*, or one who promoted Mexico's native American accomplishments, as opposed to the *hispanistas*, who tended to focus on Spain's contributions during the colonial period,<sup>36</sup> Bustamante then brought together the native manuscripts, studied them, and prepared them for publication.

In the colonial world of the published book, native authorship was not a consideration. The creole indigenistas had hinted at such a thing in their essays; but Bustamante proved native writings a reality. Many of the works he simply edited, but too often it was not without interpolating his personal commentary. Other publications were obviously original treatises based on assorted manuscript sources, although he was inclined to credit the author of the text. In most of his books he included a lengthy, informative but also often biased introduction as well as footnotes and editorial commentary throughout. Some titles glaringly reveal his political agenda, such as his *Horribles crueldades de los conquistadores de Mexico y los indios que auxiliaron, para subyugarlo a la corona de Castilla* (1829), an obvious reminder to readers of why they were to support Mexico's independence from Spain.<sup>37</sup> Yet despite the bombastic title, it is apparent that Bustamante had read the work carefully, as he also furnished a detailed summary of the contents. Telling of his ties to the indigenistas as well as the circulation of the manuscripts among the same group, he noted that the book was originally in the Jesuits' Colegio Máximo library, as noted by Clavijero, and while there Boturini made a copy. He added that his book was based on the Boturini copy, which came to him by

<sup>34</sup> CMB, *Historia del descubrimiento de la América septentrional por Cristóbal Colón, escrita por el R. P. fr. Manuel de la Vega, religioso franciscano de la provincial del Santo Evangelio de México*, México, Ontiveros, 1826, prologue, n. p., "mi objeto principal que es la ilustración de la juventud americana en la historia de este continente, de que tenemos poquísimos libros buenos" (emphasis by Bustamante).

<sup>35</sup> CMB, *Tetzoco en los últimos tiempos*, p. 175.

<sup>36</sup> Howard F. Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers on Ethnohistory", in *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, ed. Howard F. Cline, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1973, v. 13, p. 371-372.

<sup>37</sup> CMB, *Horribles crueldades de los conquistadores de México, y de los indios que los auxiliaron, para subyugarlo a la corona de Castilla, ó sea Memoria escrita por D. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, publicada por suplemento a la historia del Padre Sahagún*, México, Imprenta del ciudadano Alejandro Valdés, 1829.

way of Mariano Veytia, who acquired it from Excmo. Señor conde de Revilla Gigedo, the fifty-sixth viceroy of New Spain (1789-94).<sup>38</sup>

Bustamante's political discontents were largely made known through an outburst of such publications. On at least one occasion he was arrested, imprisoned, and all of his possessions, including his manuscripts, confiscated and subsequently sold at public auction.<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, Bustamante the politician obfuscated Bustamante the intellectual and scholar. Yet a careful examination of his early work reveals much about his formation as a historian. He was certainly among the intellectuals in the León y Gama school whose patriotism was rooted in Mexico's illustrious past. They knew and shared the same documents, and he seems to have intended to make the best possible use of them too, for, remarkably, he was the first to publish them. In truth, he can be called the father of Mesoamerican historiography.<sup>40</sup> He knew both nahuatl and the indigenous literatures. For example, he felt that Sahagún's *Historia general*, which he edited and published in 1829-1830, was an invaluable resource, and he lamented that León y Gama had not had access to it.<sup>41</sup> Unflagging in his enthusiasm, Bustamante edited or wrote histories about Columbus and the America that he discovered (1826), Emperor Moctezuma Xocóyotl (1829), the death of Cuauhtémoc (n. d.), the Mixtón War (1826), and the politics of Tetzcoco and Tlaxcala (both 1826), to name a few.<sup>42</sup> He compiled Aztec king lists, corrected nahuatl numeration and spellings,

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, v. Most likely this would have been don Juan Vicente de Güemes Pacheco y Padilla, the second conde de Revilla Gigedo (r. 1789-1794). The first conde de Revilla Gigedo, don Francisco de Güemes y Horcasitas, served as the forty-third viceroy (r. 1746-55), which is during the period Boturini was being investigated and presumably most of his Museo was still intact.

<sup>39</sup> CMB, *Historia de las conquistas*, v. 1, p. II. Charged with treason, he notes that all of his things were sold in January 1816.

<sup>40</sup> Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers", p. 370-374, is surely the first in the United States to recognize Bustamante's first editions as "historiographical landmarks". See also Roberto Castelán Rueck, *La fuerza de la palabra impresa: Carlos María de Bustamante y el discurso de la modernidad*, Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1997, which explicates Bustamante and his use of the press from 1805 to 1827 without, remarkably, commenting on his indigenista publications.

<sup>41</sup> CMB, "Segunda parte: advertencias anti-críticas", in *Descripción histórica y cronológica de las dos piedras, que con ocasion de nuevo empedrado que se esta formando en la plaza principal de México*, 2a. ed., Mexico, Alejandro Valdés, 1832, p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> CMB, *Historia del emperador Moctheuzoma Xocoyotzin*, in Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España, que en doce libros y dos volúmenes escribió El R. P. fr. Bernardino de Sahagún, de la observancia de San Francisco, y uno de los primeros predicadores del Santo Evangelio en aquellas regiones*, 3 v., ed. Carlos María de Bustamante, Mexico, Galván al cargo de Mariano Arévalo, 1829; *Suplemento a la historia de las conquistas de Hernán Cortés, escrita por Chimalpáhin, ó sea Memoria sobre la guerra del Mixtón en el Estado de Xalisco, cuya capital es Guadaluaxara*, Mexico, Galván á cargo de Mariano Arévalo, 1827; *Necesidad de la unión de todos los mexicanos contra las asechanzas de la nación española y liga europa, comprobado con la historia de la*

and brought to light the contents of many of the ancient codices (1821).<sup>43</sup> Confident and nearly obsessive, it seems, he typically went to great lengths to write himself into the works, as can be seen in his 1832 edition of León y Gama, which brings in new information and graphics from the author's unpublished works while exhorting his own theories on the subject.<sup>44</sup>

Much of his early work is in the form of essays or book-length manuscripts, gathering together seemingly endless bits of information about the past. His "Teoamoxtli," for example, begins with a list of all the women involved during the Spaniards' invasion of North America, followed by dense dissertations on such topics as precontact idolatry, sculpture, and architecture. Using a wealth of materials apparently at his fingertips, he copied from them, defined and explained the terminology, and then went on to discuss a range of topics, citing his sources, from Chimalpáhin to Ixtlilxóchitl to Clavijero, among others. Considering how busy he was as a lawyer with a huge practice, an elected public official, and an ardent supporter of a specific political agenda for Mexico, and considering that he did not hesitate to take sides and denounce whichever president (even seated ones) did not suit his personal purpose for the country, we must acknowledge that Bustamante was not only trying to conserve Mexico's literary and historical heritage by copying or publishing all that he could before they disappeared, but he was convinced that knowledge of the indigenous past was fundamental to Mexico's formation and success as a modern state. Bustamante's nationalism, though, had its limits. There is little evidence in his writing, for example, of what Benedict Anderson describes for nineteenth-century Spanish America as an "imagined community", that is, an inclusive Mexican populous walking in lockstep toward a common goal.<sup>45</sup> He was not a "creole pioneer",<sup>46</sup> speaking for all Mexicans, but rather an ideologue who targeted fellow intellectuals—the lawyers and politicians in his circle and around the country—to be the con-

*antigua república de Tlaxcallan*, Mexico, en la Imprenta del Águila, 1826; *Historia del descubrimiento; Tezcoco en los últimos tiempos*, and CMB, INAH-AH, Col. Ant., f. 120-121v.

<sup>43</sup> See especially INAH-AH, Col. Ant., 446, for just one example of documents from his home state, his *Historia de la provincia de Oaxaca, sacada de antiguos relaciones y manuscritos inéditos*, Veracruz, 1821, p. 128-136.

<sup>44</sup> CMB, "Segunda parte," p. 1-148.

<sup>45</sup> See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, New York, Verso, 1991.

<sup>46</sup> Eric van Young, "A Nationalist Movement without Nationalism: The Limits of Imagined Community in Mexico, 1810-1821", in *New World, First Nations: Native Peoples of Mesoamerica and the Andes under Colonial Rule*, David Cahill and Blanca Tovías (eds.), Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 2006, p. 218-251, explores the shortcomings of Anderson's idealized model of Mexican nationalism.

sumers of his books and presumably disseminate the information and his message, although he never says as much.

As mentioned above, his research, writing, and editing were carried out during Mexico's arduous struggle for independence. Seemingly with inexhaustible energy and in spite of unending political intrigue and upheaval, it was not unusual for him to publish two, even four, books in the same year. One can only speculate about the cost of these undertakings, to say nothing of the problem of finding politically sympathetic publishers. A final consideration is the standard of his scholarship itself, for he suffered humiliating attacks by his enemies after his death, in part because of the presentation and content of many of his works.<sup>47</sup> Bustamante was too often credulous, contradictory, and careless, and historians have been quick to dismiss him for this reason.

Howard Cline states that Bustamante published more than 20 000 pages of history, not counting more than 150 manuscripts yet to see the light.<sup>48</sup> Edmundo O'Gorman has gone a long way toward bringing together Bustamante's impressive oeuvre.<sup>49</sup> Many of his works speak to his role as indigenista patriot, whether as a Oaxacan elected as deputy to Congress or as a Mexico City journalist. Of course, for him, there was not always a real line distinguishing the two roles, for his many publications dealing with early Mexican antiquities and creole intellectualism and his later political objectives were easily conflated, if they were ever separate, that is. In his early thirties he was a founding editor of *El Diario de México* (1805-1817), a periodical that came to serve as a vehicle to promote nationalism, and he did not hesitate to include anecdotes from Chimalpáhin to make a point. Later, in 1826, he reported that the viceroy had prohibited him from using the native sources, and so he stored them away, waiting for an opportune moment to let loose his indigenista campaign. He published four works that year, noting that he was doing so because Mexico was finally at peace due to independence from Spain and true freedom of the press.<sup>50</sup>

In recent years there has been an effort to begin to rehabilitate Bustamante's reputation as a scholar, and I should like to contribute to at least one aspect of that effort by revisiting his dual role as scholar

<sup>47</sup> Published anonymously at the time, and impiously, Lucas Alamán, *Noticias biográficas del licenciado don Carlos María de Bustamante, escritas por un amigo de don Carlos y más amigo de la verdad*, Mexico, Tipografía del R. Rafael, 1849. Cited in Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers", v. 13, p. 372, 423.

<sup>48</sup> Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers", v. 13, p. 370-374.

<sup>49</sup> O'Gorman, *Guía bibliográfica...*

<sup>50</sup> Discussed in Lemoine, *Estudios historiográficos...*, p. 153, and CMB, *Historia de las conquistas*, v. 1, p. 1.

and reformer. First, he aimed to preserve Mexico's patrimony by publishing as many precious manuscripts as he could. Thus, the works of Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Alvarado Tezozómoc, Chimalpáhin, and Sahagún, among others, became available to a wide readership for the first time. Once in print, they were saved for posterity, for the manuscripts were rapidly disappearing from Mexico, as were many ceramic and stone artifacts from archaeological sites. Second, he, along with Isidro R. Gondra, was instrumental in establishing the Museo de Antigüedades in the university library in 1822 to store the collections. He published drawings of some of these exquisite materials in his periodicals, again to heighten awareness of Mexico's heritage. It was then proposed that the Museo publish the fray Bernardino de Sahagún and Alva Ixtlilxóchitl manuscripts, although the government ultimately financed only the writings by Sahagún.<sup>51</sup> The prestigious Museo Nacional de Antropología in Chapultepec Park is, in part, the product of Bustamante's preservation endeavors. The significance of these two contributions cannot be overstated, especially on considering the unparalleled collection of artifacts on display and stored at the museum today as well as the extraordinary corpus of scholarship that is the result of his making known the antiquarian materials. Finally, almost as *über patrón*, he was a passionate, persistent propagandist, whose emphasis on Mexican antiquity made certain that its citizens would be cognizant of the importance of indigenous contributions to Mexico's history, as will be seen below when Bustamante makes Chimalpáhin something of a poster boy for nationalism.

But Bustamante was not an easy man to understand. He was obviously conflicted in his loyalties, at one point going to great length to praise Hernando Cortés for his courage and his accomplishments while blaming the Spaniards for everything wrong in Mexico. Benjamin Keen has furnished some typical examples of such exhortations from Bustamante:

Ashes of Ferdinand, Charles, and Philip, return to life and behold the spectacle presented by that Anahuac which you chained. Know that three centuries later this precious patrimony has been restored to its

<sup>51</sup> Keen, *Aztec Image*, 322. See especially John B. Glass, *The Boturini Collection and the Mexican National Museum and General Archive, 1821-1826*, Lincoln Center, Mass., Conemex Associates, Contributions to the Ethnohistory of Mexico, n. 5, 1977, p. 4-5, who credits Lucas Alamán as overseeing the establishment of the museum and its collection. And see INAH-AH, CB, v. 22 (1829), 17, f. 71r, 81r, which suggests that Bustamante had to raise money from across the country to finance the Sahagún *Historia*. It is noteworthy that the Metropolitan Cathedral Chapter gave Bustamante 500 pesos to help with its publication.



sons, for Heaven is just and sooner or later avenges the offenses done to the people.<sup>52</sup>

and:

[Cortés] was the best, wisest, and most humane of all the conquistadores of America [...] Humanity lost much through his aggressions, for he almost caused the loss of the world, but how great was the gain for the moral world! Huitzilopochtli is adored no more; men's blood no longer flows on the infamous altars of the Devil; the people no longer march in the ranks of the armies to die in defense of their lords or to be sacrificed to the war gods. What a gain for mankind! Oh Cortés! To you the world owes this happy change! Would that Heaven had allowed you to achieve it by other means than aggression and robbery.<sup>53</sup>

Some of Bustamante's hyperbole can be traced to his great reluctance to disparage his patria, New Spain, which would of course be siding with foreign intellectuals. Therefore, he lauded Spain for putting an end to Huitzilopochtli (i. e., human sacrifice) and for establishing so many universities and colleges (i. e., look at how well educated we are); and he celebrates the magnificent colonial buildings (i. e., the colony's architectural triumphs). Perhaps his opinions at the time depended on with whom he was speaking, for Frances Calderón de la Barca, author and wife of don Angel Calderón de la Barca, minister plenipotentiary to Mexico from the court at Madrid,<sup>54</sup> who knew Bustamante, quoted him at length about New Spain being at least on a par with the mother country while concluding that the colony was actually better off.<sup>55</sup>

I should like to devote the remainder of this essay to a study of Bustamante and how he used Chimalpáhin, whom he thought superior to other Nahua authors,<sup>56</sup> to make a case for the edification of Mexico's present as it could be realized through knowledge of its past. In doing so, we shall discover how Chimalpáhin finally became known, even published (although it was not for his preferred Nahua audience). In

<sup>52</sup> CMB, *Galería de príncipes mejicanos*, segunda parte, Puebla, Imprenta Liberal de Moreno Hermanos, 1821, p. 20. Keen, *Aztec Images*, p. 319.

<sup>53</sup> CMB, *Historia de las conquistas*, v. 2, p. 178-179; Keen, *Aztec Image*, p. 319.

<sup>54</sup> According to William H. Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, ed. John Foster Kirk, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott, 1873, v. 1, p. VII, the minister was a "gentleman whose high and estimable qualities even more than his station secured him the public confidence and gained him access to every place of interest and importance in Mexico".

<sup>55</sup> Frances Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico*, London, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1970 [1843], p. 348.

<sup>56</sup> CMB, *Galería*, p. 27.

spring 1826 Bustamante wrote letters to presumably every state congress in the new republic, soliciting financial support for the publication of a two-volume set of Chimalpáhin's manuscript copy of López de Gómara's book about the conquest of Mexico.<sup>57</sup> Judging by the many replies to his petition, we assume that he sent letters out across the country. However, only the letter of 13 March 1826, addressed to the Congress of the Free State of Zacatecas, is extant.<sup>58</sup> As template of a sort, the letter explains that in 1807 a manuscript titled "Conquista de Mexico y otros reynos y provincias de la Nueva España que hizo Fernando Cortés, escritas por D. Domingo de S. Anton Muñon Chimalpáin Quauhlehuanitzin [*sic*],"<sup>59</sup> casually fell into his hands. He adds that the manuscript numbered 135 *pliegos*, that it was written in the language of the epoch of King Philip II, that Chimalpáhin wrote with truth and beauty, and that it cost 13 pesos.<sup>60</sup> It was his understanding that it had been hidden in the library of the Jesuits' Mexico City Colegio Máximo. Elsewhere, in reference to the same manuscript, he was more specific: "Father don José Pichardo of the Oratorio and Casa Profesa gave the manuscript to me, and moreover, it was two manuscripts, not one—the first in Spanish and the second in *mexicano* [nahuatl]—," and that he had it translated into Spanish.<sup>61</sup> Bustamante went on to say that if he had to choose among the unedited manuscripts that "we have," he preferred the writings of Chimalpáhin, since he lived after the conquest and knew of the conquerors and the veracity of his account was unquestionable.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> According to Bustamante's *Diario Histórico de México*, Mexico, INAH, 1981, t. 1, v. 2, p. 193-195, his 20 November 1823 entry states that under the "Acta Constitutiva de la Nación Mexicana", the states in the federation were Chiapas, Guanajuato, Interno de Occidente (Sonora, Sinaloa and both Californias), Interno del Norte (Chihuahua, Durango, and Nuevo México), Interno de Oriente (Coahuila, Nuevo León, Texas, and Nuevo Santander), México, Michoacán, Oaxaca, Puebla de los Ángeles with Tlaxcala, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Tabasco, Veracruz, Jalisco, Yucatán and Zacatecas.

<sup>58</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000719, 7, f. 9r-v.

<sup>59</sup> He omitted the first *h* in Quauhlehuanitzin, which was not an uncommon practice in the nineteenth century.

<sup>60</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000719, 7, f. 9r-v.

<sup>61</sup> CMB, *Galería de antiguos príncipes*, p. 27; Keen, *Aztec Image*, p. 339, notes that Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), who visited New Spain in 1803, described Father Pichardo as "that learned and industrious man whose collection was the richest in the capital". Pichardo was certainly among the creole intellectuals in the León y Gama school who defended the entitlement of New Spain. See especially his massive study, José Antonio Pichardo, *Pichardo's Treatise on the Limits of Louisiana and Texas. An Argumentative Historical Treatise with Reference to the Verification of the True Limits of Louisiana and Texas, written by Father José Antonio Pichardo of the Congregation of the Oratory of San Felipe Neri to Disprove the Claim of the United States that Texas was Included in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803*, 3 v., ed. and trans. Charles Wilson Hackett, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1931.

<sup>62</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000719, 7, f. 9r-v.

Bustamante's need, and subsequently the momentum, to get his indigenista message out was relentless. In the letter he thus sought financial support for the publication of Chimalpáhin's *Conquista* manuscript, soliciting assistance in the amount of 2,500 pesos to cover the cost of printing. He added that the book would be for the literary glory of the Mexican nation and for the greater advancement of Mexico's young people.<sup>63</sup> Remarkably, fourteen responses to his petition have survived. Most were written in the same elevated style, and almost all the congresses were interested in obtaining copies of the two volumes that he wished to publish. The politicians typically allocated between 100 and 300 pesos to support the publication, and almost all concluded their letters with a patriotic "Dios and libertad" or "Dios y la ley." Michoacán<sup>64</sup> and Nuevo León,<sup>65</sup> however, were not able to participate at the time. Coahuila and Texas wrote to acknowledge receipt of the letter but made no commitment,<sup>66</sup> while San Luis Potosí had 100 pesos for ten copies and also requested a copy of Bustamante's Columbus book in addition to other works.<sup>67</sup> Zacatecas allocated 200 pesos with instructions as to which muleteer he was to give the books for their delivery.<sup>68</sup> The Congress of Villa de Orizaba designated 160 pesos, requested twenty copies of the Chimalpáhin book because it was a "true history", ordered a *botánica*, among other things, and asked that Bustamante notify them of the cost. It later wrote to complain that only part of the order had been filled.<sup>69</sup> Oaxaca, his home state, allocated 300 pesos and later sent another letter acknowledging receipt of three copies of his history of Tlaxcala.<sup>70</sup> Durango wrote, sending congratulations and praising Bustamante for his "laudable zeal", and ordered twenty-two copies—eighteen for the congressmen and four for the state—.<sup>71</sup> Querétaro committed 100 pesos,<sup>72</sup> and the Congress of Occidente indicated it would send 300 pesos.<sup>73</sup> Gua-

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000726, 14, f. 16r-v.

<sup>65</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000738, 26, f. 29r-v.

<sup>66</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000740, 28, f. 31r-v.

<sup>67</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000728, 17, f. 20r-v; 000741, 29, f. 32r-v; 000775, 63, f. 74r-v; v. 20 (1827), 000802, 19, f. 23r-v.

<sup>68</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000761, 49, f. 56r-57v; 000774, 62, f. 73r-v; v. 20 (1827), 000842, 59, f. 98r.

<sup>69</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000724, 12, f. 14r-v; 000739, 27, f. 30r-v; v. 20 (1827), 000790, 7, f. 7r-v; 837, 54, f. 90r-v.

<sup>70</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000728, 16, f. 19r; 000731, 19, f. 22r-v; 000734, 22, f. 25r-v; 000757, 45, f. 52r; v. 29 (1827), 000816, 33, f. 38r.

<sup>71</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000723, 11, f. 13r-v; 000767, 55, f. 63r-v.

<sup>72</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000725, 13, f. 15r-v; 000730, 18, f. 21r-v.

<sup>73</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000746, 34, f. 40r-v.

najuato ordered three copies;<sup>74</sup> Tamaulipas asked Bustamante to give the books to a porter who would be transporting them and was also to pick up copies of the “Discovery of the Californias,” for which the congress had paid 300;<sup>75</sup> and Chihuahua specified the person to whom Bustamante was to give the copies of the two-volume work, then wrote again stating that sixteen copies of Chimalpáhin’s *Conquista* volumes and five copies of the Columbus book had been received.<sup>76</sup> They were still waiting for the *History of the Revolution*.<sup>77</sup> Lorenzo de Zavala, from the state of Mexico, wrote to say that the congress had received twenty-five copies of the first volume and gave instructions regarding to whom he should give the copies of volume 2.<sup>78</sup> Don Carlos also placed notices in various periodicals about when to expect the different books.<sup>79</sup> There are several letters from the congresses regarding orders for and the delivery of any number of other books that Bustamante was publishing. For example, San Miguel de Allende was sympathetic but concerned about using public funds for the publication of a book about the revolution, adding that the congress would try to help, while the Congress of Jalisco would find money for the publication of Viceroy Mendoza’s conquest expedition to Jalisco.<sup>80</sup> His office must have been a veritable entrepôt for book distribution. Additional considerations in regard to his publishing enterprise are the rapid delivery of the mail (within a week or two, it seems), the prompt convening of congresses (sometimes within two weeks of receipt of the letter but surely with more on the agenda than the Chimalpáhin *Conquista* book), the congresses’ timely and patriotic responses, the packaging and delivery of the books, and the exchange of moneys. Occasionally, Bustamante added notations to the letters regarding the delivery of a certain number of books, but there is little evidence of receipts or financial accounts. Of what is extant of the correspondence, letters relating to *Conquista* book purchases and delivery were exchanged for close to two years. Chimalpáhin was now known nationwide, but perhaps even more remarkable was the new, expanded readership interested in books about ancient Me-

<sup>74</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000770, 58, f. 69r.

<sup>75</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000727, 15, f. 17r-18v; 000773, 61, f. 72r-v.

<sup>76</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000840, 24, f. 24r; v. 20 (1827) 000836, 53, f. 89r-v; 000840, 57, f. 96r-v.

<sup>77</sup> The reference is most likely to CMB, *Cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana, comenzada en 15 de septiembre de 1810 por el ciudadano Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla*, 4 v., Mexico, Imprenta del Águila, 1823-1827.

<sup>78</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 20 (1827), 841, 58, f. 97r-v.

<sup>79</sup> CMB, *Historia del descubrimiento*, prologue, n. p.

<sup>80</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 20 (1827), 000829, 46, f. 81r-v; 000831, 48, f. 83r-v; 000832, 49, f. 84r-v.

xico. There is even correspondence from a publisher regarding the translation of Bustamante's *Historia antigua de México* into French.<sup>81</sup>

What was special about Chimalpáhin's version of the conquest of Mexico? Scholars in the United States and Mexico have paid little if any attention to this work, stating that other than his signature, Chimalpáhin's contributions to López de Gómara's book are insignificant. Perhaps they were put off by Bustamante, who managed to get Chimalpáhin's name wrong on the printed title page. Instead of Domingo, Bustamante put Juan Bautista, which is unacceptable. It was a foolish mistake, because in all his correspondence to the state congresses, Chimalpáhin's long name was always spelled out with care. In his haste, Bustamante made other errors, stating in the letters that Father Pichardo had given him the two copies of the manuscript, while in the prologue of the book, he wrote that it was Dr. don Agustín Pomposo y Fernández who had given them to him. In one sentence he states that Chimalpáhin was from both Ameca[meca] and Tetzcoco, and elsewhere Bustamante claims that he was a graduate of the once-celebrated Colegio de Santa Cruz at Tlatelolco and almost an eyewitness to the conquest. By the time Chimalpáhin was born in 1579, the Colegio de Santa Cruz had greatly diminished in its stature and offerings, serving as little more than a primary school.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, Chimalpáhin states on more than one occasion in his nahuatl writings that he came to Mexico City in 1593 and went directly to the San Antonio Abad church. Obviously, he could not have been an eyewitness to the invasion of the Spaniards, nor he did begin writing his histories until close to one hundred years after the fall of Mexico Tenochtitlan. It is likely that knowledgeable readers were put off by the sloppiness. Indeed, many creoles came to discount almost all that Bustamante published, commenting almost as if by surprise when something was done well. Lucas Alamán's cruel and humiliating publication attacking Bustamante after his death contributed to this attitude, but fractious government politics played a role at the time as well.

Why, then, should we bother with Bustamante at all? Can he be trusted? There is no reason to think otherwise.<sup>83</sup> Bustamante was indeed careless, but he was not malicious or stupid. It is nearly impossible to

<sup>81</sup> INAH-AH, CB, v. 19 (1826), 000769, 57, f. 65r-66v.

<sup>82</sup> In reference to the Colegio de Santa Cruz, Bustamante was simply repeating León y Gama, who states that Chimalpáhin was an "indio cacique y maestro que fue de Latinidad y Bellas Artes en el Barrio de Santiago Tlatilolco"; cited in Domingo Chimalpáhin, *Compendio*, 7.

<sup>83</sup> See Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers", 373, for background on comparable European and Mexican publishing standards in the nineteenth century. By no means was Bustamante an exception.

examine everything that he wrote, but much is exemplary, considering the time and the place. Bustamante's patriotism knew no limits, and the books were for the greater glory of Mexico. To question his love of and commitment to his patria, he said, is to wonder if Plato was Greek.<sup>84</sup>

But was it worth the effort? For present purposes, to my knowledge no one other than Bustamante has paid careful attention to Chimalpáhin's *Conquista* history. Recently a team of scholars has completed a translation of the Boturini copy of his manuscript into English, and a careful comparison has been made with the Bustamante publication to determine if it is, as he said, a translation from the nahuatl back into Spanish (it is not).<sup>85</sup> This is not the place for a thorough discussion of the translation project. Suffice it to say that Chimalpáhin had his way with López de Gómara's book. For example, he eliminated certain information about Cortés's personal life in Spain and the expeditions in the Caribbean. Instead he tended to focus on indigenous aspects of the conquest—dignifying Malintzin with a second name and frequent mention of her important role as Cortés's interpreter—. Regarding other Nahua women, Chimalpáhin made a point to phrase things to present them in the best possible light, even though they obviously were serving the Spaniards as sexual partners and drudges. We find considerable new information about Tlaxcala (Chimalpáhin obviously visited there), and there is more than you may want to know about Moteuczoma Xocóyotl, who, for whatever it is worth, when it came to cannibalism, consumed less human flesh than had his ancestors, but when he did partake he preferred the feet and ankles. As is typical in all of Chimalpáhin's writings, details pertinent to his hometown Amecameca have been added.

Considerable information about indigenous life has been revised and lists of key ranked Nahua individuals and their offices have been added to enhance the indigenous presence in López de Gómara's story. Native titles and reverentials abound, as we would expect. But, strangely, huge sections are left untouched, and only occasionally are the egregious Spanish spellings of indigenous names and places corrected. By all appearances, from what can be determined from the Boturini manuscript copy, Chimalpáhin intended to make a true copy of the Spanish text, and likely that was his task as a copista. The interpolations in the narrative are classic Chimalpáhin style, for it was not uncommon in his nahuatl

<sup>84</sup> CMB, *Teomoxli, o Libro que contiene todo lo interesante a usos, costumbres, religión, política, y literature de los antiguos yndios Tltecas*, v. 1, ms, n. d., INAH-AH, Col. Ant., 251b, f. 103v.

<sup>85</sup> See Chimalpáhin's *Conquest: A Nahua Historian's Rewriting of Francisco López de Gómara's Conquista de México*, ed. Susan Schroeder, trans. Anne J. Cruz, Cristián Roa-de-la-Carrera and David Tavárez. In Spanish, *Chimalpáhin y la Conquista de México: la crónica de Francisco López de Gómara comentada por el historiador nahua*, forthcoming.

annals to find superscript and automarginalia filling all the blank space on a page. His written Spanish apparently has something of a Nahuatl syntax. His manuscript copy of the *Conquista* is also unfinished, as are some of his Nahuatl manuscripts. And he signed himself in the text. In this instance, he was correcting López de Gómara, stating, “although the author Francisco Rodríguez [*sic*] de Gómara takes Cuitlahuactzin to be a nephew of the great lord [Emperor Moctezoma Xocóyotl], he was not his nephew but a blood brother by his father or mother. I say this, don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Quauhlehuanztin.”<sup>86</sup>

Now, this statement was reproduced in all the copies of the Chimalpáhin *Conquista* manuscript and in Bustamante’s two-volume publication of it as well. But it seems, remarkably, that Bustamante often forgot that the author of the original work was Francisco López de Gómara and that Chimalpáhin was only the copyist. For example, he comments that Chimalpáhin wrote as if he were in Spain, when, in fact, the phrase was straight from López de Gómara and not one of Chimalpáhin’s interpolations. But, then, Bustamante would likely not have known exactly what Chimalpáhin changed as he wrote, since there is no evidence that he [Bustamante] possessed an original copy of López de Gómara’s 1552 book. He then carries on his catalog of vanities emphasizing Chimalpáhin’s wisdom and great talent. Of other Nahuas’ abilities, he adds that don Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc not only learned Spanish but also could write it fluently in the short space of six months. In another long disquisition in his manuscript copy (although still in a footnote), Bustamante marvels at Chimalpáhin’s insights, reportage, and style, which he equates to Plutarch’s.<sup>87</sup>

Certainly, we must appreciate Bustamante’s enthusiasm (however misguided) in promoting Chimalpáhin as the author of a truly great work. And Chimalpáhin’s emendations to it do indeed begin to set the record straight, at least regarding the indigenous perspective of the story of the Spanish invasion. Indeed, Bustamante was not alone but rather the first among equals who recognized and treasured the country’s historical memory as it had been realized in the archaeological, architectural, and literary legacy of ancient Mexico’s peoples. Therefore, what is most important is that while others compiled lists or wrote essays about Nahuatl intellectuals and their works, Bustamante saved them for posterity. Chimalpáhin and the others glorified a golden age long past; Bustamante used the Nahuas’ writings to bring on a golden age for a new Mexico.

<sup>86</sup> Chimalpáhin’s *Conquest*.

<sup>87</sup> BN, Mexico, FR, 1727, ff. 75r-v, 76r, 87v.