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“The rupture generation” : nineteenth-century Nahua intellectuals in Mexico City, 1774-1882

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Chapter 7

Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca: The Last Tlacuilo

Introduction

As we reviewed in the previous chapters of this work, during the first decades of the nineteenth century, Nahua intellectuals remained deeply involved in issues that concerned them both as individuals and also as members of an indigenous community. These issues ranged from the defense of popular sovereignty, the right to govern themselves, as well as the defense of communal property and their right to have access to education.

These Nahua intellectuals involved themselves in the public sphere which resulted in the recognition of their authority by both the members of their own indigenous communities and the major actors in the political arena. From places such as Mexico City, to distant regions like New Mexico and other northern territories, these Nahua intellectuals enjoyed the prestige not only among the Nahua people, but they were recognized by different indigenous communities as leaders as well, even among such groups as the Moqui, Cherokee and other distant Nahuatl speaking people.

During the second decade of nineteenth-century the Nahua intellectuals referred to in this work mostly focused on representing indigenous communities before tribunals and defending their communal property. However, these intellectuals did not limit their efforts only in defending these affairs. The political positions of these Nahua intellectuals became shaped by a series of contemporary political events; which included the French invasion of Spain and the imposition of a French Emperor, the issuing of the Constitution of Cadiz of 1812, as well as the subsequent return to the Spanish throne of Ferdinand VII, and the reactions to this event that led to the independence of Mexico from Spain and the instauration of the first Mexican Empire which created the rise of a new political system in Mexico.

Despite these contemporary topics these Nahua intellectuals became involved in, their influence and leadership remained rooted in Mesoamerican ideas, such as the need for communal property and education. Hence, Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma and Faustino Chimalpopoca proudly presented themselves as heirs of the indigenous Mesoamerican nobility. While Juan Rodríguez Puebla did not share this feature with his fellow classmates, he indeed also acted along with them in order to defend their individual and collective interests.

In this sense, and according to the previous chapter, we reviewed the intense discussions that Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque and Francisco Mendoza y Moctezuma became involved in regarding

the protection of the properties of the *parcialidades*. The Mesoamerican idea of both communal property and labor prevailed into the nineteenth century through the existence of these *parcialidades*. Nevertheless, the changing political system sought to eradicate this form of communal property. The consequences of these changing policies also affected the economic stipends that other institutions received from the income of the *parcialidades*. One of the major beneficiaries of the *parcialidades*' administration, as we have seen above, was the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, in Mexico City. Just as other institutions administrated by indigenous communities, the *Colegio de San Gregorio* was in charge of the supervision of a series of properties that redistributed their incomes as pecuniary incentives for the school. Also, members of indigenous communities had held a voice in the government of the college by maintaining indigenous members on the *junta*. Nevertheless, the new laws that attacked the *parcialidades* also affected the administration of the college, which led to the reshaping of the *junta* and its economic sources. As a direct repercussion of these events, during the early decades of the nineteenth century we saw Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, Juan Rodríguez Puebla, Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma and Faustino Chimalpopoca expressing their concerns about this new phase of reforms that threatened the indigenous future of the college.

Although these Nahua intellectuals remained very active and vocal for years about certain matters related to the political changes occurring in the country, between the years of 1834 and 1848 we barely find documentation authored by these intellectuals. It is interesting to note that apparently none of these individuals wrote any known documents related to the War in Texas and its subsequent independence (1835-1836), or the so-called Mexican American War (1846-1848), with the signing of the Treaty Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848) at the end of the war, or the Gadsden Purchase (1856). Instead, during these years Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, Francisco Mendoza y Moctezuma and Juan Rodríguez only produced their last wills and testaments.⁶⁹² This may have been the result of the advanced age of these individuals, who around those years were mostly in between 50 or 60 years old. However, the youngest of this generation of intellectuals, Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca, around the same years must have been in his early thirties.⁶⁹³ This fact may explain the absence and lack of appearances of Patiño Ixtolinque, Mendoza y Moctezuma and Rodríguez Puebla in the public sphere regarding these events.

One of the few pieces of information that we have about the participation of these intellectuals in one of the previously mentioned events, took place during the North American invasion in Mexico, also known as the Mexican American War (1846-1847). Although the role that these Nahua intellectuals played during this period of time is difficult to ascertain, we have

⁶⁹² *Poder general*, 1 de septiembre de 1834, AHN, notario Antonio Pintos, Notaría 532, fojas 69r-70r. *Testamento de Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma*, 26 de febrero de 1834, AHN, notario Antonio Pintos, fojas 23v-26v. Also see *Testamento de Don Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla*, 867v-868r.

⁶⁹³ Nevertheless, documentation reveals that around the year of 1856 the Ministry of Finance appointed Faustino Chimalpopoca as an interim administrator and representative of the former *parcialidades*. See, *Compra venta de inmueble*, 26 de julio de 1856, AHN, notaría 721, notario Agustín Vera y Sánchez, Volumen 4857; f. 172r.

notices that Juan Rodríguez Puebla, as rector of the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, had bravely protected the school building of San Gregorio against the North American invaders:

Los padecimientos y sacrificios que sufrió el Sr. Rodríguez en el tiempo que ocupó el ejército americano la capital, fueron tan grandes, tan repetidos y tan útiles que ni pueden esmerarse no su esplendor en esta ligera exposición, bastará decir que por efecto de sus disposiciones, logró no solo libertar, ocupasen las tropas el colegio, las tres veces que lo intentaron, sino que fuera sin objeto de respeto y veneración para el mismo invasor [...]⁶⁹⁴

Besides this account, there is little other information about these Nahua intellectuals' interests in the above mentioned matters. In the absence of the rest of the Nahua intellectuals, after the second half of the nineteenth century, Faustino Chimalpopoca rose to serve as the most active indigenous member of a growing Mexican intellectual sphere, which nonetheless remained dominated by non-indigenous intellectuals.

In this sense, the available documentation reveals that Faustino Chimalpopoca followed the tradition previously begun by his older classmates, and fellow members of this generation of Nahua intellectuals. As his predecessors did, Chimalpopoca also cared deeply about defending the existence of the *parcialidades*, and he focused on becoming involved in the political issues that his previous counterparts were also interested in pursuing.

Thus, this chapter will focus on reviewing the influence and legacy that these previous Nahua intellectuals had on the developing work of Faustino Chimalpopoca after the years of 1843. This chapter will also analyze the way in which Chimalpopoca's work becomes more diverse, covering several areas of knowledge.

7.1 *Ihcuac tlahtolli ye miqui* (When a Language Dies):⁶⁹⁵ The Decline of the use of Nahuatl in Bureaucratic and Legal Spheres in Mexico City

During the early decades of the nineteenth century, only a scarce documentation included the name of Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca. For instance, and as we reviewed in the previous chapter, his name appeared on a series of complaints that asked for the removal of Juan Rodríguez Puebla as the rector of the *Colegio de San Gregorio* along with the names of his older colleagues Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque and Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma.⁶⁹⁶ As stated in Chapter 5 of this study, these series of complaints argued that the rectory of the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, according to the school's governing charter, had to be a clergyman, as well as a

⁶⁹⁴ *La Junta Directiva participa haber fallecido el Rector del Colegio de San Gregorio Don Juan Rodríguez Puebla y recuerda a favor de un hijo que deja huérfano los servicios de su padre*, 1848, 74r-74v.

⁶⁹⁵ Miguel León Portilla, "Cuando muere una lengua," *Revista de la Universidad de México*, Nueva Época, Número 82 (Diciembre, 2010): 12-13.

⁶⁹⁶ See, *Clamores de la miseria ante el supremo gobierno*.

member of the indigenous community. But, additionally, as we have seen above, the indigenous complainants also revealed through their arguments that they expected any candidate for director to be a member of the traditional indigenous nobility.⁶⁹⁷

During the third decade of the nineteenth century, Chimalpopoca served as a professor at the *Colegio de San Gregorio* in Mexico City (see Chapter 4 of this work). Among the members of the indigenous community in Mexico City, he must have held a good reputation both as an expert in the Nahuatl language and as a lawyer. For the indigenous communities these may have been factors which let them to consider Mr. Chimalpopoca as a reputable individual in whom they could trust. This fact is interesting to point out since the Nahuatl language, by the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, was no longer considered as an important legal language either in the bureaucratic or the justice system as it had been during the previous decades.

For instance, in 1820 Carlos María de Bustamante still considered it vital to publish a manifesto in the Nahuatl language addressing the Nahuatl speaking indigenous population entitled *La Malinche de la Constitución*.⁶⁹⁸ Nevertheless, with the passing of the years, these pamphlets and documents published in indigenous languages became rare and eventually almost non-existent.

In the decades that came after the movement of independence in Mexico, the ideas of equality also reached the use of language as a public display of homogenous equality among the population of the new country. Although neither the 1824 nor the 1836 Constitutions dictated Spanish as the official language of Mexico, most of the written and published documentation remained exclusively in Spanish.⁶⁹⁹ This factor does not mean that people stopped speaking or writing in the Nahuatl language, but rather Mexico consciously moved towards becoming a monolingual nation. About this transformation in the production of written documents, the scholar Pauja Faudree mentioned that:

Certainly the move toward one legal system for all Mexican citizens, regardless of linguistic background, placed Indigenous People at multiple layers of disadvantage compared with their mestizo and criollo fellow citizens. This weakened position stemmed not only from differential competence in Spanish language itself, narrowly constructed, but also from limited fluency in particular

⁶⁹⁷ *Representación al excelentísimo señor presidente Don Vicente Guerrero a favor de la educación de los indios*, 285.

⁶⁹⁸ Carlos María de Bustamante, *La Malinche de la Constitución; en los idiomas mexicano y castellano* (México: Oficina de A. Valdés, 1820).

⁶⁹⁹ Linda King, *Roots of Identity: Language and Literacy in Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 57.

legal and bureaucratic registers of Spanish and reduced familiarity with the full array of Western legal practices rooted in Enlightenment thought.⁷⁰⁰

The suppression of indigenous courts and the creation of a new legal system based on political equality put indigenous languages at a legal disadvantage. As a reaction, during the first decades of the nineteenth century the Nahuatl language lost the legal importance that it had held throughout the period of the Spanish colony. Subsequently, the importance of Nahuatl as a language used in tribunals and legal matters considerably diminished. Consequently, other fields in which documents written in the Nahuatl language had found a place of great utility in the colonial institutions eventually were replaced by documents written only in Spanish (such as in the writing of wills, testaments, land documents, and many other bureaucratic documentation). In effect, by the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, the written Nahuatl language had lost its legal and scholarly prestige within the bureaucratic sphere.⁷⁰¹ Consequently, after the nineteenth-century reforms and the suppression of the *Juzgado de Indios*, most documents submitted to the nineteenth-century authorities had to already be translated and reviewed by a notary before submission to a court or government agency. For instance, an important amount of documentation at the Notary Archive in Mexico City currently houses several copies of these types of document, already translated, which had been transcribed from documents originally written in indigenous languages.

After the third decade of the nineteenth-century, Nahuatl speaking people also faced limitations and a lack of acceptance from certain spheres. For instance, during the directorship of Rodríguez Puebla it appears that he probably noticed the way that non-Indigenous People perceived native Nahuatl speakers within the academic sphere. What is a fact is that Rodríguez Puebla attempted to polish what seemed to be the “thick accent” and possibly poor Spanish diction that indigenous students at San Gregorio had when they first arrived at the institution. This position caused Rodríguez Puebla’s forms to be fiercely rejected by his fellow indigenous comrades. Nevertheless, as the documentation also demonstrates, apparently Rodríguez achieved this goal. Regarding this matter, Rodríguez Puebla’s supporters expressed in *El Mosquito Mexicano*: “Para exaltar la importancia del rectorado del Sr. Rodríguez [...] que el *Colegio de San Gregorio* es en el día el mejor de todos: que sus alumnos actuales son muy políticos y comedidos: que los antiguos son tan inciviles, que no saben ni hablar [...]”⁷⁰²

Probably this general contempt against the Nahuatl language and Nahua speakers held by the general public, together with the alienation of indigenous students from the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, motivated Faustino Chimalpopoca to develop his first manuscripts copies of ancient

⁷⁰⁰ Pauja Faudree, *Singing for the Dead: The Politics of Indigenous Revival in Mexico* (Durham-London: Duke University Press, 2013), 46.

⁷⁰¹ Matthew Restall et al., *Mesoamerican Voices*, 16-17.

⁷⁰² “Comunicados,” martes 21 de octubre de 1834, *El Mosquito Mexicano*, Número 64.

Nahuatl texts. For instance, in 1834, Mr. Chimalpopoca produced his first copy of the manuscript entitled “*Venida de los Mexicanos a Tenochtitlan.*”

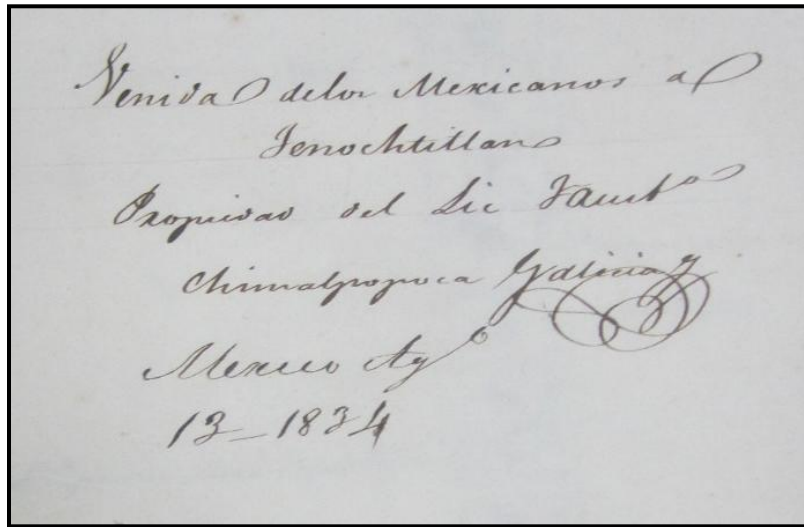


Figure 14. Front page of *Venida de los mexicanos a Tenochtitlan*. Copied by Faustino Chimalpopoca, 1834. Picture taken by the author.

This copy included the legend: “Owned by Lic. Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia, México Agosto 13, 1834.”⁷⁰³ Although there is some uncertainty in asserting that this document is the first manuscript that Chimalpopoca transcribed, it is indeed an important piece in which he surely pretended to emphasize and praise the indigenous roots of Mexico City. Mr. Chimalpopoca did not include a translation into Spanish in this above referred document; however, it is evident that its content presented an important chronology for the rise of the Mexica people. Information regarding the origin, previous owners and the way in which Mr. Chimalpopoca acquired this manuscript remains undetermined.

⁷⁰³ Documentos históricos de Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca, Colección Antigua, NC 25.

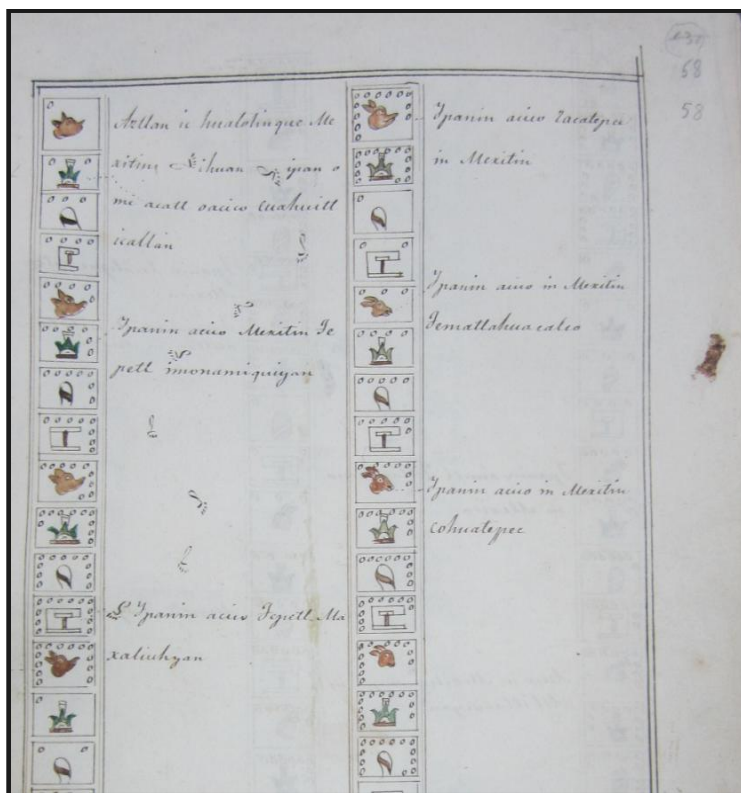


Figure 15. Section of the manuscript entitled *Venida de los mexicanos a Tenochtitlan*, copied by Faustino Chimalpopoca in 1834. Biblioteca Nacional del Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City. Picture taken by the author.

The detail and meticulous copy made from this original Nahuatl manuscript reveal Mr. Chimalpopoca's impressive skills as a paleographer and a copyist. However, the question about what could have been the interest of Mr. Chimalpopoca in copying such document emerges.

At this point, the *Colegio de San Gregorio* had turned into a more open school, and then forced to accept non-indigenous students. Additionally, as we have seen above, against the complaints of Patiño Ixtolinque and others, the school experienced a major transition by being incorporated into a larger unit with other schools (see Chapter 6), which threatened the existence of San Gregorio's legacy as an exclusive promoter of indigenous intellectualism. This menace could also be reflected in the fact that San Gregorio's library, once exclusively used by Indigenous Peoples, had been forced to give access to other students. Faustino Chimalpopoca, probably seeking the preservation not only of historical documents, but also the legacy of the school, decided to act as a *tlacuilo* by practicing the inherited tradition of the school of *Santiago de Tlatelolco* which set the basis for the foundation of the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, preserving copies of the few ancient manuscripts which remained.

Also, by witnessing how the importance of written Nahuatl documentation started to lose its legal importance, Mr. Chimalpopoca probably considered it pertinent to start to make copies of

documents that eventually he thought might be lost by their original owners. Additionally, Mr. Chimalpopoca no doubt recognized the importance of including the knowledge content of these indigenous documents for future reference or for the construction of an official Nahuatl history of the country.

7.2 Chimalpopoca: The Political Figure

During the decade of 1840, we find our first news about the active political presence that Faustino Chimalpopoca had in Mexico City. For instance, on August of 1843, the 38 year old Mr. Chimalpopoca was elected as *compromisario*, or delegate, for the *Ayuntamiento* of Mexico City.⁷⁰⁴ Chimalpopoca's training as a lawyer also allowed him also to teach Law at the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, where he was also known for being able to speak French and being proficient in Greek and Latin, as well as dominating his maternal Nahuatl language, Otomí and of course the Spanish language.⁷⁰⁵

The following year, the newspapers published news about a group of Mexican intellectuals interested in publishing an edited version of the *Historia Antigua de México*, by Francisco Javier Clavijero, a work that had been previously published in an English language London edition. However, according to the person who submitted an open letter to the editor of the Mexican newspaper *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, this edition failed to offer clarifying information, and lacked notes and the proper use of words written in the Nahuatl language.

Before these criticisms, the future editor of Clavijero's edition in Mexico, Mr. Lara (the note failed in providing his first name), commissioned Faustino Chimalpopoca to review the Nahuatl terms included in Clavijero's work. It is interesting to note that the reasons provided for commissioning Chimalpopoca for this work was mentioned by the following terms:

Este sujeto [Mr. Chimalpopoca] posee el mexicano por naturaleza, como lo indica su mismo apellido: por inclinación y educación; pues sin embargo de sus conocimientos y de su posición, nunca ha olvidado que pertenece a la clase indígena, que algunos con injusticia desdeñan; y lo posee también científicamente, pues desde sus tiernos años hasta su presente edad varonil lo ha estudiado por principios, y con tanta mas ventaja, cuanto que posee también por principios el castellano y el latín.⁷⁰⁶

Based on this brief quotation, we can see that the general public by this date considered the Nahuatl language as a language related with historical information, an ancient language, instead of being related to a contemporary indigenous prestige language in which current

⁷⁰⁴ "Nota," martes 15 de agosto de 1843, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Número 629, Segunda Época, México, 4.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ "Nota," martes 6 de agosto de 1844, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Número 988, Segunda Época, Año III, 2.

documents could be written and accepted in the judicial sphere. This may suggest a resultant lack of importance that the Nahuatl language had fallen into in bureaucratic spheres in Mexico City.

On November of 1844, Faustino Chimalpopoca also appeared mentioned in an interesting article included in the newspaper *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*. In one of its notes, the newspaper notified that the ninth installment of the *Historia de la Conquista de México*, by William H. Prescott, had been released.⁷⁰⁷ The note also emphasized that, in order to provide this work “with interest, novelty and perfection” several scholars contributed to the Spanish language revision of the work. Among them was the historian Carlos María de Bustamante, Luis de la Rosa, José Gómez de la Cortina, Isidro Rafael Gondra, Juan de Orbegoza, Pedro García Conde, Andrés Quintana Roo, José María Tornel, and Faustino Galicia (his surname “Chimalpopoca” or “Chimalpopocatl” seemed absent in this mention). Faustino Chimalpopoca was placed in charge of reviewing and correcting all the Nahuatl words that Prescott included in his work. This meant that Chimalpopoca, along with the other renowned Mexican scholars, worked on this critical Spanish language edition of Prescott’s work prior to 1845. However, in this edition neither Prescott nor the editor made any reference officially about these collaborations.⁷⁰⁸ Still, we know that Chimalpopoca’s collaboration continued in subsequent years as well.⁷⁰⁹

At the time of its publication the *Historia de la Conquista de Mexico* by Prescott, in the version translated by Joaquín Navarro, had achieved immediate success and the fact that Mr. Chimalpopoca had been considered as one of the important contributors in this Spanish language publication demonstrates his good reputation in general as a scholar. According to the publication plan, this edition of Prescott’s work would include notes and additional information from diverse specialists on different areas of knowledge. So, the participants in this project changed in each subsequent number of the published work according to the topic published. However, the only person who remained constantly commissioned throughout all of the various numbers and throughout the several years of labor that this edition took to be published in 1845 was Faustino Chimalpopoca.⁷¹⁰

Meanwhile, during the 1840’s after experiencing this transition and witnessing how the Nahuatl language began to lose its prestige and immediate utility, Faustino Chimalpopoca decided to publish a piece entitled “*Disertación sobre la riqueza y hermosura del idioma mexicano*.” This article appeared in one of the volumes of *El Museo Mexicano*, a publication of

⁷⁰⁷ William H. Prescott, *Historia de la conquista de México: sobre la antigua civilización de los mexicanos y con la vida de su conquistador Fernando Cortés*, trans., Joaquín Navarro (México: Impreso por Ignacio Cumplido, 1844), 46.

⁷⁰⁸ *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, viernes 22 de noviembre de 1844, Número 1093, Segunda Época, Año III, 4.

⁷⁰⁹ *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, viernes 24 de enero de 1845, Número 1183, Tercera Época, Año III, 4.

⁷¹⁰ See *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, martes 3 de diciembre de 1844, Número 1104, Segunda Época, Año III. *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, lunes 9 de diciembre de 1844, Número 1109, Tercera Época, México, 4, *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, martes 10 de diciembre de 1844, 4; *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, lunes 18 de diciembre de 1844, 4; *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, viernes 20 de diciembre de 1844, 4; *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, domingo 19 de enero de 1845, 4; *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, viernes 24 de enero de 1845, 4; *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, sábado 1 de febrero de 1845, 4.

an encyclopedic character whose main purpose sought to publically divulge in mass form important information about the history, arts, biology, of Mexico.⁷¹¹ The fact that Chimalpopoca also participated in this publication gives testament to the positive credentials and reputation that Chimalpopoca enjoyed as scholar of the Nahuatl language.

The “*Disertación sobre la riqueza y hermosura del idioma mexicano*” had as its goal informing non-Nahuatl speakers about the complexity and beauty of this language. Chimalpopoca briefly explained to the readers the origins of the Nahuatl language and the Nahua people by tracing their history to the mythical place of Tlapallan.⁷¹² Additionally, in this publication Chimalpopoca showed his readers the way in which Nahua syllables worked and praised the complexity of this language with its nature of creating compound words, and the inadequate way in which the Latin alphabet limited the representation of the many intricate sounds of Nahuatl. In this article Chimalpopoca also included phrases and citations from scholars who had earlier studied the Nahuatl language, such as the Archbishop Francisco de Lorenzana, Lorenzo Boturini and Francisco Xavier de Clavijero during the eighteenth century. In the same article Chimalpopoca also praised the Nahuatl language by adding:

Autores agobiados con el peso de vastos conocimientos y saber, opinan, que la lengua mexicana es superior en la elegancia y finura de frases, a la latina y griega, y yo creo que solo los que llegan a aprenderla y entenderse de la esencia de ella pueden confesar la misma verdad.⁷¹³

In this excerpt Chimalpopoca compared Nahuatl with the complexity and “elegancy” of the Latin and Greek languages. By doing so, Chimalpopoca sought to elevate the appreciation that people, including the general public to whom this essay was addressed, had about Nahuatl and Nahua speakers. This was an important political and cultural statement since at this point the Nahuatl language enjoyed little recognition among Spanish speaking people, who probably associated the language with only the lowest social strata in Mexico City. The publication of this piece revealed the interest that Mr. Chimalpopoca, who enjoyed a good social status as a scholar, in seeking to change the misconceptions that people probably had about Nahuatl. Since Nahuatl was not longer used as a bureaucratic language, Faustino Chimalpopoca found it important and

⁷¹¹ María del Carmen Ruiz Castañeda, “El Mosaico Mexicano, o colección de amenidades curiosas e instructivas,” in *Empresa y cultura en tinta y papel (1800-1860)*, coord. Laura Beatriz Suárez de la Torre and Miguel Ángel Casto (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2001), 529-536.

⁷¹² Bernardino de Sahagún and his collaborators mentioned Tulla-Tlapallan as the place where Quetzalcoatl fled. See *Historia de las cosas de la Nueva España*, Libro Tercero, “Capítulo XII: De la huida de Quetzalcoatl para Tlapallan y de las cosas que por el camino hizo” (México: Porrúa, 202). Sahagún also referred to Tulla Tlapallan as the place of the red and black, and eventually Garibay suggested that this term referred to the “place of the knowing and writing,” see *Voyages et fondations: séminaire du CRICCAL, 2003-2006* (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2006), 5.

⁷¹³ Faustino Galicia Chimalpopocatl, “Disertación sobre la riqueza y hermosura del idioma mexicano,” in *El museo mexicano o miscelánea de amenidades curiosas e instructivas*, Volumen 4 (México: Ignacio Pulido, 1844), 517-519, 518.

necessary to inform people about the significance of this language and its intimate connection and importance for the history of the nation.

Consequently, due to the low appreciation that the Nahuatl language had among people in general, as well as the fear that he felt that documents written in indigenous languages might lose their historical and judicial importance, Chimalpopoca considered it is personal mission to translate these documents into Spanish. Therefore, starting in the year 1845 Chimalpopoca translated into Spanish the document entitled *Memorial de los indios de Nombre de Dios, Durango acerca de sus servicios al rey* a task entrusted to him directly by the then director of the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla.⁷¹⁴ According to the introduction that made to this manuscript, published in a later English edition of 1943:

[This original manuscript written in Nahua language] fell into the hands of the Indian [sic] Chimalpopoca Galicia a century ago, and he made a copy of it in his fine and beautiful hand on thirteen sheets of thin white paper. Between the lines he wrote his Spanish translation. This manuscript was acquired by the great bibliophile and ill-advised politician José Fernando Ramírez not long after it was written and he had it bound up with many other manuscripts [...]⁷¹⁵

Years later, on September 18, 1853, Faustino Chimalpopoca also wrote a manuscript entitled *Historia del origen del Colegio de San Gregorio*,⁷¹⁶ which is currently housed at the Library of the National Museum of Anthropology and History, in Mexico City.

Apparently, the “*Nombre de Dios Durango*” and “*Historia del origen del Colegio de San Gregorio*” do not share any information in common. However, Chimalpopoca may have decided to translate this historical document and write the history of the College of San Gregorio for reasons he considered important. First, the document about the indigenous settlement of *Nombre de Dios* is a sixteenth-century account about the services that Nahua peoples provided for the Spaniards during the conquest of the northern territories of New Spain. The account describes how Indigenous People from Michoacán, Zacatecas and Nahua people founded the village of Nombre de Dios, in Durango, and how the army of Indigenous allies defeated the Chichimeca people from the region.⁷¹⁷ An additional document that seems to be part of the said account described the agreements, dated March 25, 1585, between the Mexican (Nahua) and the people

⁷¹⁴ *Nombre de Dios, Durango. Two Documents in Nahuatl Concerning its Foundation. Memorial of the Indians Concerning Their Services, c. 1563. Agreement of the Mexicans and the Michoacanos, 1585*; edited and Translated with Notes and Appendices by R. H. Barlow and George T. Smisor (Sacrament: The House of Tlaloc, 1943).

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., xxi.

⁷¹⁶ *Documentos históricos de Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca*, in BMNAH, Colección Antigua, NC 25.

⁷¹⁷ *Nombre de Dios, Durango*, 32.

of Michoacán.⁷¹⁸ This accord described the duties and obligations that both the Michoacán and the Nahua people had within the newly founded village.

As we can see, the content of this document focused on explaining the process of colonization of the northern territories by the indigenous allies of the Spaniards during the 16th century. In addition to the information that this document provides about the role that indigenous allies played on this process of conquest, the document also referred to the benefits, privileges and territorial limits involved in this development. Mr. Chimalpopoca, aware of the decay of prestige and use of the Nahuatl language, probably translated this and other documents in order to make them accessible to any interested person who hoped to use them as a judicial tool. Probably Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla might have even used these documents while he served as a representative of the people of Durango in various land disputes.

Furthermore, Faustino Chimalpopoca probably wrote the history of San Gregorio by consulting other manuscripts and notes about the college and the *Hospital de los Naturales* held within the collections and archives of the school. On the first page of this history he wrote: *Apuntes sacados por el que suscribe de algunos n[ota]s., m[anuscrito]s. Para la historia del Colegio de San Gregorio y del Hospital de Naturales.*⁷¹⁹

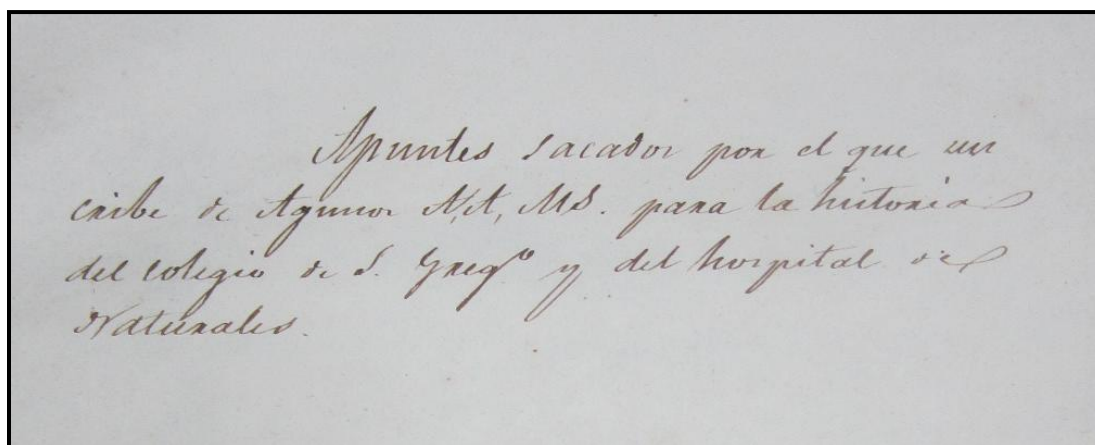


Figure 16. First page of the *History of the Colegio de San Gregorio and the Hospital de los Naturales*, by Faustino Chimalpopoca, ¿1853? Picture taken by the author.

In order to understand the importance of this manuscript, we need to clarify at this point that the *Colegio de San Gregorio* was no longer an exclusively indigenous college at this point of time. Instead, the *colegio* had turned into an open college for indigenous and non-indigenous students as well. This fact, along with the information that we have about the fight that Chimalpopoca and others had earlier engaged in to attempt to keep the college segregated, could

⁷¹⁸ *Acuerdo de los mexicanos y michoacaneses de la villa del Nombre de Dios*, 1585, as cited in *Nombre de Dios*, Durango, 46.

⁷¹⁹ *Apuntes sacados por el que suscribe de algunos n[ota]s., m[anuscrito]s. Para la historia del colegio de San Gregorio y del Hospital de Naturales*, in “Colección de los papeles del licenciado Chimalpopoca,” in BMNAH.

have inspired Mr. Chimalpopoca to write the history of this school as its Jesuits founders originally conceived it. This history about the *Colegio de San Gregorio* also included a brief history of the *Hospital de los Naturales*.

During this period of time, Faustino Chimalpopoca gathered, copied, translated, transcribed and collected an important number of indigenous documents. Apparently Faustino Chimalpopoca felt some urgency and believed it necessary to copy and to transcribe these documents in order to preserve all of this archival material for the future use of the communities. Chimalpopoca probably became fully aware that he remained one of the last members of a group of Nahua indigenous intellectuals who have had access to higher education under the Spanish colonial administration. Under this particular circumstance, he probably remained among the few remaining Nahua indigenous intellectuals in Mexico City who had survived the colonial administration and had found a place into the new political arena. By this date, his fellow Nahua intellectuals Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque (September, 1834) and Juan Rodríguez Puebla (October 31, 1848) had both died, leaving only Chimalpopoca and Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma alive to follow their tradition. Thus, Chimalpopoca realized that his mission had to focus on preserving as much as he could of the series of indigenous documents that might not survive much longer. Many of these circumstances seem valid and may be able to explain the reason why Chimalpopoca started out of a sense of desperation to collect and record a series of historical documents about the Nahua people.

Another factor that I consider important to point out at this juncture is that Chimalpopoca confessed that the Nahuatl language and its meanings had suffered a deep transformation that made it difficult for him to accurately approach the content of certain ideas or concepts expressed in Nahuatl in these sources. This fact would have inspired Chimalpopoca to preserve a large number of indigenous documents written in what we now know as classical Nahuatl. Since he personally experienced and witnessed the way in which the Nahuatl language had transformed to the point that its understanding and interpretation became troubled and difficult even for trained Nahuatl speakers like Chimalpopoca himself, he desperately sought to preserve the original language in all of his copies and transcriptions.

For instance, in a rough draft that seems to be the prelude for a presentation that he gave before the *Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, Chimalpopoca wrote:

Señores: Grande sentimiento me acusa la ignorancia en que me encuentro de no conocer el suelo que piso y en el que tanto tiempo perdido la Providencia Divina ha conservado mi existencia, y tanto mas se aumenta mi pena, cuando que veo que cada día si no se han acabado completamente, se van disminuyendo en gran

manera los elementos que me podrían dirigir, aunque por tradición al conocimiento de tantos tesoros y preciosidades que oculta en su seno Mexico.⁷²⁰

Additionally, during this period of time, an incipient nationalism had begun to arise in which the Mexican nation and its historians attempted to appropriate on a historical basis the indigenous history of the past, in particular the history of the Nahua people of Mexico City. This centralist discourse of what it later became the official history of Mexico began to take shape right before the eyes of Faustino Chimalpopoca. This represented an opportunity for him, as a Nahua intellectual, to extol the indigenous past of the peoples who populated Mexico City and include this information into the new official history. This represented an opportunity for Faustino Chimalpopoca to explain to non-Indigenous People what he and his people considered important and offer a vision of how they saw themselves as the original founders of Mexico City.

7.3 The Life of a Nahua Scholar: Chimalpopoca's Active Academic Participation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Mexico

The period of the Mexican American War and the invasion of the North American army directly into Mexico City must have been a traumatic experience for most Mexicans. The information about the role that Nahua intellectuals played during these events is limited. Nevertheless, we know that Rodríguez Puebla occupied the position of rector at the *Colegio de San Gregorio* at the time the North American army arrived to Mexico City. Also, we have information that corroborates Rodríguez Puebla's participation in the defense of the building of the school.⁷²¹

A year later, in 1848 Juan Rodríguez Puebla died and Faustino Chimalpopoca, as a senior member of the *Colegio de San Gregorio* gave a speech honoring the qualities of the deceased rector of the school.⁷²² During the following year of 1849, two years after the North American invasion ended and probably within an intellectual environment that had become a bit more stable, we find information about Faustino Chimalpopoca once again writing scholarly articles. In 1849 Mr. Chimalpopoca wrote a manuscript entitled "*Explicación de la palabra 'gachupín.'*"⁷²³

⁷²⁰ Document 17, foja 138, in *Documentos Históricos de Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca*. BMNAH, Colección Antigua, NC 25.

⁷²¹ *La Junta Directiva participa haber fallecido el Rector del Colegio de San Gregorio Don Juan Rodríguez Puebla*.

⁷²² *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, sábado 11 de noviembre de 1848, Número 164, Cuarta Época, Año VII, 4. The note does not provide the speech given by Faustino Chimalpopoca.

⁷²³ Faustino Chimalpopocatl Galicia, *Explicación de la palabra gachupín*, México, mayo 20 de 1849, Nattie-Lee Benson Library (University of Texas at Austin): Mexican Manuscript Collection, The Lucas Alamán Papers; Series I: Document 291, f.291.

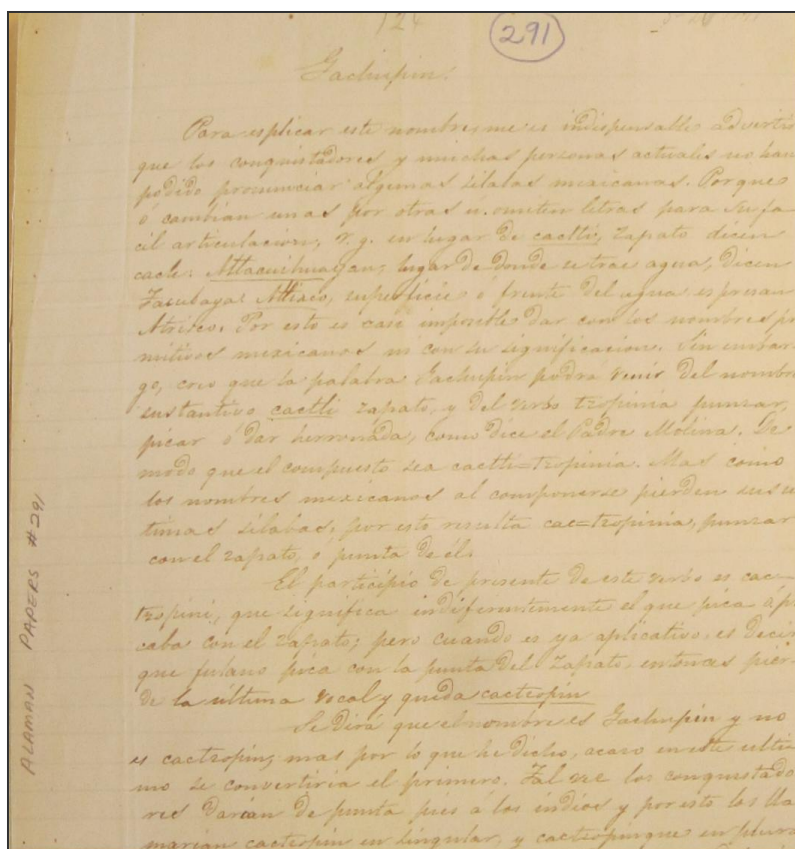


Figure 17. “Gachupín” written by Faustino Chimalpopocatl, 1849. Picture taken by the author.

Currently, the origin and definition of the term “gachupín” are still debatable, and there are several explanations for its origin. Thus, several historic and linguistic studies have focused on defining the controversial origins and meanings of this term.⁷²⁴ According to several studies, the term appeared to be in use in early documentation in the Americas, particularly in Mexico, from the seventeenth century onward. Nevertheless, the scholar George Butler mentioned that Captain Bernardino de Vargas Machuca, in his work entitled *Milicia Indiana*, published in 1599, had already mentioned such a word referring to a man new to the land, specifically in the Americas.⁷²⁵

Similarly, in the dictionary prepared by the *Real Academia Española*, published in 1729, the word “cachupín,” not “gachupín,” was defined as: “El español que pasa y mora en las Indias, que en el Perú llaman Chapetón. Es voz traída de aquellos países y muy usada en Andalucía; y

⁷²⁴ See James J. Champion, “A Note on Lozano’s “Aztec Traces in Modern Spanish,” *Hispania* 65, No. 2 (May, 1982): 239-240. See also George Butler Griffin, “Some Observations on the Words “Gachupín” and “Criollo,” *Annual Publication of the Historical Society of Southern California* 1, No. 4 (1888): 49-54.

⁷²⁵ George Butler Griffin, “Some Observations on the Words “Gachupín” and “Criollo,” 49.

entre los comerciantes en la carrera de Indias.”⁷²⁶ Thus, during the nineteenth century, the word “gachupín” appeared to be a Mexican derivation of the original term “cachupín,”⁷²⁷ which is defined as “El español que pasa a la América septentrional, y se establece en ella. [Mas de ordinario se pronuncia Gachupín]. *Hispanus advena apud indos*.”⁷²⁸ In late nineteenth century the *Real Academia Española* published a condensed dictionary in which the definition of the term “gachupín” appeared as “El español que pasa y mora en Indias, donde se llama gachupín. Es voz muy usada en Andalucía. *Hispanus advena, qui apud indos degit* [A Spaniard, a stranger, who lives among the Indians].”⁷²⁹ The cited sources concurred about the meaning of the term, either “cachupín” or “gachupín,” and at least the dictionaries produced by the Royal Spanish Academy agreed that the term has its origins in the Americas.⁷³⁰ Nevertheless, these dictionaries did not specify that the word “cachupín” or “gachupín” had pejorative connotations for the peoples from the Americas, which confirms that its derogatory meaning remained related to the rising nationalism and independence in Mexico.

Although the said term appeared in constant use in Mexico, it seems that it was not until the nineteenth century that the term “gachupín” took on a bitter and more political anti-Spanish approach related with the movements of independence and the incipient nationalism of the Mexican people.

Thus, during the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, several intellectuals focused on trying to create an accurate definition of the term “gachupín.” In 1813, José Servando Teresa de Mier, in his *Historia de la Revolución de la Nueva España*, offered a definition about the term “gachupín” that triggered the discussion among several intellectuals about the origin of this word. Mier emphasized that gachupín: “[... era] un nombre [que] se da en N. España a los españoles europeos, y no por apodo sino tomado de los Indios, que llamaron así a los conquistadores, porque les llamaron la atención sus acicates.”⁷³¹

From this information Teresa de Mier suggested that the word gachupín had its roots in the Nahuatl language. Mier further explained that the word came from the term *cactli*, shoe in the Nahuatl language, with the termination *tli*, and the term *tzopini*, which meant “thing or thorn that

⁷²⁶ *Diccionario de la lengua castellana, en que se explica el verdadero sentido de las voces, su naturaleza y calidad con las frases o modos de hablar, los proverbios o refranes y otras cosas convenientes al uso de la lengua dedicado al Rey Nuestro Señor Don Felipe V, compuesto por la Real Academia Española* (Madrid: Imprenta de Francisco del Hierro, 1726), 38-39.

⁷²⁷ Vicente Salvá y Pérez, *Nuevo Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana: que comprende la última edición íntegra, muy rectificada y mejorada del publicado por la Academia Española* (París: Librería de Don Vicente Salva, 1847), 539.

⁷²⁸ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁷²⁹ *Diccionario de la lengua castellana compuesto por la Real Academia española, reducido a un tomo, Segunda edición* (Madrid: Don Joaquín Ibarra, Impresor de Cámara de S. M. y de la Real Academia, 1783), 186.

⁷³⁰ See Manuel de Valbuena, *Diccionario universal Español-Latino* (Madrid: Imprenta Nacional, 1822), 173.

⁷³¹ Servando Teresa de Mier, *Historia de la Revolución de la nueva España antiguamente Anahuac o verdadero origen y causas de ella, con la relación de sus progresos hasta el presente año de 1813*, Tomo II (Londres: Imprenta de Guillermo Glindon, 1813), 149.

picks.” The union of these words resulted on *catzopini*, which means “men with spurs.”⁷³² Concerning the change in the pronunciation of the word, Mier explained that the Spaniards, attempting to pronounce what he said remained a Nahuatl word, mispronounced it as *Gachopín* by “corrupting the accent.”⁷³³

Between the years of 1848 and 1849, Lucas Alamán continued debating the meaning of the word *gachupín* in the first volume of his *Historia de México*. Nevertheless, in this case Alamán consulted Faustino Chimalpopoca in order to get more information about the possible Nahuatl origin of the said term. It is probably at this moment that the figure of Faustino Chimalpopoca started once again to play a significant role among other Mexican intellectuals. Alamán defined the term as following:

El nombre mexicano de calzado o zapato es *cactli* y el verbo *tzopinia* significa, punzar, picar o dar herronada, como lo define el P. Molina en su Diccionario. De la combinación de ambos resultaría *cactli-tzopinia*, mas como los nombres mexicanos pierden en la composición las únicas sílabas queda *cac-tzopinia* “punzar con el zapato o punta de él,” y siendo el participio de presente de este verbo *tzopini*, que usado como sustantivo pierda la *i* final, resulta el nombre de *cactzopin*, “el que punza o pica con el zapato” [...] ⁷³⁴

Alamán concluded with a statement of scholarly authority by saying “Esta interpretación me ha sido comunicada por el Sr. Lic. D. Faustino Chimalpopoca, profesor de lengua mexicana en el colegio de San Gregorio de esta capital.”⁷³⁵

In 1849, José Fernando Ramírez, with whom Faustino Chimalpopoca eventually established a very close scholarly relationship, published *Noticias históricas y estadísticas de Durango, (1849-1850)*⁷³⁶ in which he continued debating the definition of the word *gachupín*. Ramírez offered a brief review about the possible origins and meanings about the word *gachupin* by emphasizing the scholarly authority that Faustino Chimalpopoca had for supporting the definition presented by Lucas Alamán. Ramírez questioned the explanation offered by others about the Nahuatl roots of the meaning of the word *gachupín*, and presented a detailed historiographical review on the sources in which the said term appeared. The sources that Ramírez cited ranged from Garcilazo de la Vega and Vargas Machuca. Ramírez supported his hypothesis about the European origin of the word from the term *chapetona*, which Vargas

⁷³² Ibid., 539.

⁷³³ Ibid.

⁷³⁴ Lucas Alamán, *Historia de México, Tomo I* (México: Imprenta de Victoriano Agueros y Comp., Editores, 1883), 54.

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

⁷³⁶ José Fernando Ramírez, *Noticias históricas y estadísticas de Durango (1849-1850)* (México: Imprenta de Ignacio Cumplido, 1851), 78.

Machuca defined as “newly arrived man to a certain land.”⁷³⁷ Ramirez went further by citing a document from 1620 in which the Marquis of Guadalcazar mentioned the word *gachupín* associated to passengers who commercialized with silver in the Americas. Thus, Ramirez concluded that people in general did not use the word *gachupín* during seventeenth-century Mexico, but instead the term referred to a certain sector of the Spanish migrant population to the Americas.⁷³⁸

The definition of the term *gachupín* that Faustino Chimalpopoca provided to Lucas Alamán triggered a very interesting debate among certain Mexican intellectuals. Since this document is currently part of the Lucas Alamán Paper collection at the Nattie-Lee Benson Library, in Texas, this draft referred to above could possibly be the information that Chimalpopoca sent to Lucas Alamán as collaboration to Alamán’s *Historia de México*, and that this information is the one mentioned by Alamán in his work.

If this is the case, this evidence suggests that, while Faustino Chimalpopoca worked as professor at the *Colegio de San Gregorio* he continued holding a good reputation as a Nahuatl scholar. It also suggests that he was a member of the nineteenth-century intellectual Mexican sphere since Alamán consulted him regarding the definition of the term. Probably through epistolary communication, Lucas Alamán contacted Faustino Chimalpopoca and asked him about the meaning of a term that had gained such a heavy political meaning during the nineteenth century in Mexico. Suffice it to say that Chimalpopoca must have sent a response to Alamán, which is no doubt the document that is currently housed at the University of Texas at Austin written and signed by Chimalpopoca’s handwriting.

The “*Definición de la palabra gachupín*” by Chimalpopoca starts in a very peculiar way by noticing that the Spanish conquistadors corrupted the Nahuatl language due to their inability to properly pronounce the words of this language:

Para explicar este nombre me es indispensable advertir que los conquistadores y muchas personas actuales no han podido pronunciar algunas sílabas mexicanas. Porque o cambian unas por otras u omiten letras para su fácil articulación. Por ejemplo, en lugar de *cactli*, zapato, dicen *cacle*.⁷³⁹

After this explanation Chimalpopoca continued supporting his statement by providing other examples in which Spanish speakers mispronounced Nahuatl words. After providing these examples, Chimalpopoca cited the *Vocabulario en lengua castellana y mexicana* by Alonso de Molina (1571)⁷⁴⁰ as a source to determine that the word *gachupín* included the Nahuatl terms

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

⁷³⁸ Ibid., 79.

⁷³⁹ Faustino Chimalpopocatl Galicia, *Explicación de la palabra gachupín*, 1.

⁷⁴⁰ See Alonso de Molina, *Vocabulario en lengua castellana y mexicana*.

cactli (shoe) and *tzopinia* (picking or itching). This segment of information provided by Chimalpopoca corroborates that Lucas Alamán used this explanation in his book since Alamán also referred to Molina's dictionary and the connotations about this word:

Sin embargo, creo que la palabra gachupín podrá venir del nombre sustantivo *cactli*, zapato y del verbo *tzopinia*, punzar, picar o dar herranada [sic] como dice el padre Molina, De modo que el compuesto sea *cactli*= *tzopinia*. Mas como los nombres mexicanos al componerse pierden sus últimas sílabas por esto resulta *cac*=*tzopinia*, punzar con el zapato o punta de él.⁷⁴¹

Nonetheless, this information is very similar to the rest of the definitions provided by the previously mentioned intellectuals. The second part of this manuscript is the section that reveals the clear interpretation that Faustino Chimalpopoca had about what he considered the true meaning of the word *gachupín*. Alamán did not include this part of Chimalpopoca's definition in his work:

Se dirá que el nombre es *gachupín* y no es *cactzopin*, mas por lo que he dicho, acaso en este último se convertiría el primero. Tal vez los conquistadores darían de punta pies a los indios y por esto las llamarían *cacteopin* en singular y *cacteopinque* en plural.⁷⁴²

Chimalpopoca went further in his explanation referring explicitly to the cruelty of the Spanish conquistadors over the indigenous population:

También podrá derivarse del mismo nombre *cactli* y del verbo *copinia* picar la víbora y según lo que he dicho de la composición queda únicamente *cacchopin* o *cachopin* como se dice aun en muchos pueblos. Por la tradición se sabe que los conquistadores maltrataron a los indios y quizá por eso los llamaron *cacchopin*: que significa víbora calzada; picadora, y por metáfora, hombre cruel.⁷⁴³

Even though the categorical conclusion offered by Chimalpopoca reflected both his sentiment as an indigenous person and also his testimony as a direct victim of the process of the Spanish colonization. This last idea also sought to express the meaning behind the pejorative use of the term *gachupín* during the shaping of Mexican nationalism during the early nineteenth century. Nevertheless, this last idea did not have much of an effect on the non-indigenous nineteenth-century Mexican intellectuals. Nevertheless, Chimalpopoca found it necessary to school them on its possible indigenous origins.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid.

⁷⁴² Ibid.

⁷⁴³ Ibid.

However, by portraying *gachupines* as cruel men who mistreated the Indigenous Peoples in Mexico, Chimalpopoca offered his interpretation about the deep and historical origin of the meaning of such a term. Also, by providing this explanation Chimalpopoca justified the use of the word since he divested the word *gachupín* from its supposed pejorative nature in order to offer what he considered a historical fact of its origin.

7.4 Chimalpopoca the *Tlacuilo*: Researcher, Copyist, Paleographer, Translator and Member of the SMGE

On August of 1849, Faustino Chimalpopoca once again appears, but now as a *Capitular* member of the Commission of Public Instruction for the *Ayuntamiento*.⁷⁴⁴ While in this position Chimalpopoca, along with Mariano Esteva y Ulibarri, advocated for providing education to indigenous communities by assigning more resources to public schools and especially to encourage the attendance of indigenous students. For this purpose, Chimalpopoca and Mr. Mariano Esteva advocated for translating two of the most important religious books into the Nahuatl language: a catechism book and a manual for the Latin mass.⁷⁴⁵ The *Ayuntamiento* answered favorably to this proposal.⁷⁴⁶ Faustino Chimalpopoca occupied the position of *Capitular* at the Ayuntamiento of Mexico at least until the year of 1850.⁷⁴⁷ During this period of time when Mr. Chimalpopoca occupied this position, he dealt with issues related to education for the Indigenous Peoples and the support of the artistic labors carried by the *Academia de San Carlos*, where Chimalpopoca's colleague Pedro Patiño had served as director.⁷⁴⁸

Faustino Chimalpopoca reconciled his obligations for the ayuntamiento and at the same time he remained active in his intellectual work. It seems that Chimalpopoca continued focusing on praising and bringing back the prestige of the Nahuatl language that it had lost during the decades following 1820. Thus, it is during this decade of 1850 when Chimalpopoca published one of his most well known works, *Silabario en idioma mexicano*.⁷⁴⁹ The newspaper *El Universal* announced this work as a book that helped anyone interested in learning the Nahuatl language “to learn based on elemental principles the beautiful and abandoned language of the

⁷⁴⁴ “Nota,” miércoles primero de agosto de 1849, *El Universal. Periódico independiente*, Tomo II, Número 259, 4.

⁷⁴⁵ “Nota,” viernes 9 de noviembre de 1849, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Tomo II, Número 313, p. 2.

⁷⁴⁶ This new is confirmed by *El Universal* newspaper, in his note of viernes 9 de noviembre de 1849, *El Universal*, Tomo II, Número 359.

⁷⁴⁷ See “Descontento por las elecciones del Ayuntamiento. Lo miembros protestan por sus seguridad a la luz de los eventos violentos del lunes 3 de diciembre,” martes 4 de diciembre de 1849, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Tomo II, número 338. See also “Manifiesto publicado por los miembros del Ayuntamiento afectados por los desórdenes ante las elecciones,” viernes 21 de diciembre de 1849, *El Universal*, Tomo III, número 401.

⁷⁴⁸ “Señores suscriptores a la exposición de la Academia de San Carlos de México habido a finales del año de 1849 y principios de 1850 los cuales se reputan como protectores de las Bellas Artes de dicho establecimiento,” viernes 25 de enero de 1850, *El Universal*, Tomo III, número 436.

⁷⁴⁹ Faustino Chimalpopocatl Galicia, *Silabario de idioma mexicano* (México: Imprenta de las Escalerillas, 1849).

Aztecs.”⁷⁵⁰ In this work, Faustino Chimalpopoca unfortunately did not include an introduction, or a prologue. This work had the appearance of being a manual for learning Nahuatl, so I propose that this was probably part of the didactic material that Chimalpopoca used to teach his classes of the Nahuatl language that he taught both at the *Colegio de San Gregorio* and at the University of Mexico.

With the publication of this *Silabario*, Faustino Chimalpopoca seemed to proceed with his ideas that he had initially used to praise the Nahuatl language in his published statement “*Disertación sobre la riqueza y hermosura del idioma mexicano*” in which he pronounced in favor and defense of the beauty of Nahuatl language. By publishing this syllabary, Chimalpopoca demonstrated and presented to the public the complexity of the Nahuatl language in its most basic structures. By demonstrating to the potential reader of this syllabary that Nahuatl had its own linguistic rules, and that in order to form an idea and a sentence in Nahuatl it required a deep knowledge about the grammar and structure of the language, Faustino Chimalpopoca defended his statement about the complexity, and therefore the inherent intelligence, of this indigenous language. This fact may seem pretty obvious to any student of languages; nevertheless, we must remember that for most of mid-nineteenth century Mexico the Nahuatl language had been relegated to the backgrounds of the official bureaucracy and placed as a second class language, mostly spoken by the lower and pauperized classes in Mexico City.

It must have been around this time when Faustino Chimalpopoca was invited to join the *Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística* (SMGE) since in a newspaper article from April 4 of 1850, Chimalpopoca already appeared mentioned as active member of this association.⁷⁵¹ Chimalpopoca’s impressive intellectual credentials, as well as his presentation of himself as a direct descendant of the Aztec Emperor Chimalpopoca,⁷⁵² quickly helped him receive an invitation to join the *Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística* (SMGE) as a member of this prestigious institution. During the nineteenth century, the *Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística* remained the oldest and prestigious scientific society in Latin America. The SMGE was founded in Mexico City in 1833, under the administration of Mexican President Vicente Gómez Farías. This scientific society initially focused on building the major mapping project, *Carta de la República*, and on elaborating the statistics of the new independent nation. Shortly

⁷⁵⁰ The original quotation said: “[...] para aprender por principio el hermoso y descuidado idioma de los aztecas.” “Noticias acerca del Silabario en idioma mexicano,” sábado 16 de febrero de 1850, *El Universal*, Tomo III, número 458.

⁷⁵¹ “Parte oficial. Sesión del día 4 de abril de 1850 de la SMGE,” martes 16 de abril de 1850, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Tomo IV, número 471.

⁷⁵² The *El Universal* paper published a brief note in which included the testimony of Fernando Ramírez about Mr. Chimalpopoca: “Chimalpopoca, tercer rey de México. Se dan noticias muy curiosas sobre la vida y costumbres de aquel famoso monarca azteca, así como sobre su trágico fin: hoy existe un descendiente de aquel rey; que es el Sr. Lic. Francisco [sic] Galicia Chimalpopocatl, persona muy inteligente en el idioma azteca y en las antigüedades de este suelo: por el mismo Sr. Ramírez,” domingo 4 de diciembre de 1853, *El Universal*, Tercera Época, Tomo X, Número 126.

after its foundation, the SMGE became the most important scientific organization that sponsored scientific research in Mexico. In this way, intellectuals, and also foreign members, produced the first institutionalized results of scientific research in Mexico.⁷⁵³ During the nineteenth century this society propelled science and humanities as an activity of research for the “progress” of the country, and not only as just knowledge for teaching in the classrooms. In this sense, it is interesting to note that the inclusion and participation of Faustino Chimalpopoca into this society confirmed his position as a well known intellectual under the terms of the nineteenth-century enlightened thought. The participation of Chimalpopoca in this society revealed the interest that the newly formed nation had in the development of Mexican nationalism by considering the historical studies that Chimalpopoca and many other contributors of the SMGE also conducted.

In 1850, the SMGE informed that Faustino Chimalpopoca had been working on the study of a document entitled *Historia y fundación de Tlaxcala*, originally written in Nahuatl. The SMGE mentioned that Mr. Chimalpopoca had been unable to translate the manuscript because he could not gain the permission to take the manuscript out of the General Archive so that he could work on it:

El secretario de la sección de estadística [...] manifestó que el Sr. Lic. D. Faustino Chimalpopocatl Galicia no había podido traducir al castellano el cuaderno titulado *Historia y fundación de Tlaxcala*, en lengua mexicana, porque no había logrado la licencia de extraerlo del archivo general en donde se halla; pero que los lunes y los miércoles procuraría recurrir a este lugar con aquel fin. [...] ⁷⁵⁴

It is possible that this news made reference to the manuscript of Diego Muñoz Camargo entitled *Historia de Tlaxcala*. The original manuscript by Muñoz Camargo is now currently lost. Nevertheless it is my hypothesis that the work (*Historia de Tlaxcala*) that Chimalpopoca referred to, must have been the work of Diego Muñoz Camargo. Concerning the *Historia de Tlaxcala* it is important to mention that Alfredo Chavero did not present the first edition of this manuscript until 1892. This means that the edition that Chimalpopoca had been preparing in Spanish was never published. In the edition of 1892 of the *Historia de Tlaxcala* by Chavero, he mentioned that:

La *Historia de Tlaxcala* escrita por Diego Muñoz Camargo es la única monografía que tenemos de esa nacionalidad; pues aun errando los bibliófilos se

⁷⁵³ Luz Fernanda Azuel Bernal, “La Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, la organización de la ciencia, la institucionalización de la geografía y la construcción del país en el siglo XIX,” *Investigaciones geográficas: Boletín del Instituto de Geografía*, Número 52 (2003): 153-166, 154.

⁷⁵⁴ “Parte oficial. Sesión del día 4 de abril de 1850 de la SMGE.”

refieren a alguna otra crónica en mexicano, se tiene por perdida, y acaso yo solamente poseo algunos capítulos de ese manuscrito.⁷⁵⁵

In this introduction to the edition, Chavero presented a brief mention of the works conducted on Muñoz Camargo's manuscript. So, Chavero did mention the existence of an early edition made by French historian Henri Ternaux-Compans in 1843.⁷⁵⁶ Chavero also mentioned that he was unable to consult the original manuscript written in Nahuatl by Muñoz Camargo; instead, he stated that he got access to a Spanish translation from the original manuscript. According to Chavero, the said translation included several marginal annotations made by Fernando Ramírez.

The translation with the annotations in the margins mentioned by Chavero was probably the translation made by Chimalpopoca from Muñoz Camargo's original manuscript. By considering the close relationship that Faustino Chimalpopoca had with the scholar Fernando Ramírez, it is plausible that Ramírez kept a partial copy of the Spanish version made by Chimalpopoca about the work of Muñoz Camargo. Thus, it was until the 1890's when Alfredo Chavero decided to took up once again the publication of this manuscript. Nevertheless, Chavero was unable to find the original manuscript written in the Nahuatl language; instead only he found a copy in Spanish that I propose Chimalpopoca had probably written and which eventually ended up in hands of Joaquín García Icazbalceta, who eventually published it in separate sections around the year of 1871. It is my hypothesis that Chimalpopoca was able to partially translate the original copy that Muñoz Camargo wrote in Nahuatl into Spanish, and that José Fernando Ramírez kept one of the versions or earlier drafts of this copy. This copy in which Ramírez wrote his own observations about the manuscript is probably the version that Chavero found and the one that he mentioned in the introduction to the version that he published.⁷⁵⁷

It is interesting to note that at this point Mr. Chimalpopoca had created a very impressive curriculum, including establishing credentials that supported his abilities as scholar and his experience in politics. Similarly, Chimalpopoca's abilities and qualities in studying humanities, politics, languages, and also of having been considered a scholar capable enough to conduct translations and copies from indigenous Mesoamerican manuscripts, demonstrates the way that he representation the characteristics of an enlightened nineteenth-century Mexican intellectual.

The interest that Faustino Chimalpopoca had in education remained evident not only by his serving as a member of the *Ayuntamiento* in Mexico City, and as a member of the Education commission, but also by being a member of the Lancastrian Company of Mexico at least from

⁷⁵⁵ Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, ed. Alfredo Chavero (México: Oficina Tipográfica de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1892), 3.

⁷⁵⁶ Ms. 210, Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, France.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

1851 to 1852.⁷⁵⁸ The Lancastrian Society had been in charge of a large part of the public education system and its reforms from the Society's foundation in Mexico in 1819.⁷⁵⁹ In 1845, this organization stopped being the main educational society responsible of providing this benefit to the population; instead, the state took direct charge of this obligation.⁷⁶⁰ The Lancastrian Company however remained a supportive institution along with the state in providing education to the most vulnerable and impoverished children in Mexico City.⁷⁶¹ Unfortunately, during the mid-nineteenth century indigenous children remained a very vulnerable sector of the society, which became the reason why the Lancastrian Society, along with other people, joined efforts in order to provide this and other less privileged sectors of the society with this benefit.⁷⁶² Faustino Chimalpopoca remained one of the members of the Lancastrian Company in Mexico,⁷⁶³ and he actively collaborated in the support of the Lancastrian labor of education through by offering pecuniary donations and also by being a member of a commission that regularly visited and evaluated the functioning of Lancastrian schools.⁷⁶⁴

During this period of time, Faustino Chimalpopoca combined his duties as a professor, writer, member of the Lancastrian Company, and a politician. In October of 1851, Chimalpopoca was elected as a Substitute Deputy for the State of Mexico for the General Congress.⁷⁶⁵ Apparently, Chimalpopoca at least occupied this responsibility until the end of the year of 1852, when he was once again elected for the same position.⁷⁶⁶

On 1853, Mr. Chimalpopoca appeared as one of the deputies with the power to “judge” and review the ministers of the Supreme Court of Justice.⁷⁶⁷ Mr. Chimalpopoca continued to be involved in politics and this same year he was appointed, not elected, as the 7o. *Regidor* of the *Ayuntamiento* of the District (Mexico City).⁷⁶⁸ However, in October of the same year Mr. Chimalpopoca resigned this position in the Ayuntamiento arguing that “he had to find a

⁷⁵⁸ “Nota,” 1 de mayo de 1852, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*.

⁷⁵⁹ Francisco R. Almada, “La reforma educativa a partir de 1812,” *Historia Mexicana* 1, Vol. 17, (Jul-Sep, 1967): 103-125, 106.

⁷⁶⁰ Ernesto Meneses Morales, *Tendencias educativas oficiales en México*, 221.

⁷⁶¹ Will Fowler, “The Compañía Lancasteriana and the Élite in Independent Mexico, 1822–1845,” *Tesserae, Journal of Iberian and Latin-American Studies* 2, No. 1 (Summer 1996): 81-110.

⁷⁶² In order to know how the Lancastrian Society worked according to its principles. See María Isabel Vega Muytoy, “La cartilla Lancasteriana” *Tiempo de Educar* 1, Número 2 (julio-diciembre, 1999): 157-179.

⁷⁶³ “Nota,” sábado 2 de agosto de 1851, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Tomo V, número 944, 3.

⁷⁶⁴ Will Fowler, “The Compañía Lancasteriana and the Élite in Independent Mexico, 1822–1845,” 81.

⁷⁶⁵ “Noticias sueltas,” miércoles 8 de octubre de 1851, *El Universal*, Tomo VI, Número 1057, 3.

⁷⁶⁶ “Nota,” domingo 11 de enero de 1852, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Cuarta Época, Año 12, Tomo VI, Número 1111.

⁷⁶⁷ “Nota,” viernes 30 de enero de 1852, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Cuarta Época, Año 12, Tomo VI, Número 1130.

⁷⁶⁸ “Nota,” jueves 5 de mayo de 1853, *El Universal*, Segunda Época, Tomo VIII, Número 384. The *Charleston Courier* also confirmed this information: “Letter from Mexico,” on May 30, 1853, *Charleston Courier*, South Carolina, USA, 1.

remunerated job to survive since the classes that he taught in San Gregorio had been cancelled.”⁷⁶⁹

Faustino Chimalpopoca continued to teach the Nahuatl language at the *Colegio de San Gregorio* for several years. Nevertheless, it seems that at this point teaching and learning the Nahuatl language was no longer considered a vital matter in academics. No doubt, Mr. Chimalpopoca sought to find other avenues to promote the learning of the Nahuatl language. For instance, the year after in 1854, as member of the Language Commission (*Comisión de Idiomas*) of the SMGE, Chimalpopoca helped the director of this commission, D. Murcio Valdovino, to translate the prayer of the “Our Father” into different indigenous “dialects” [sic] of the country.⁷⁷⁰

Although Nahuatl, as well as other indigenous languages, lost their social power outside of the indigenous communities of the country, the reality was that in the religious sphere, i. e. in the rural communities, elemental education remained in hands of the Catholic Church. This factor, added to the interest that the Church had in indoctrinating the indigenous population in their own languages, encouraged Murcio Valdovinos to start this enterprise. Thus, in April of 1854, Faustino Chimalpopoca wrote a review and critique about the proposal originally made by Mr. Valdovinos. In this review, Mr. Chimalpopoca agreed with the idea of materializing the proposal, even though he argued that it would take time.⁷⁷¹ Nevertheless, both Valdovinos and Chimalpopoca continued carrying out this plan with the help of several clergymen and others who likely have had access to these types of documents. One of the *Actas* from the sessions sponsored by the SMGE recorded that in one of these sessions:

[...]Mucio Valdovinos, haciendo proposiciones como presidente de la Comisión de Idiomas, con objeto de adquirir documentos pasa que sirvan al desempeño de su comisión. Que pase esta comunicación al Sr. Licenciado Don Faustino Galicia, a quien se le recomendará que además de las personas que indica el Sr. Valdovinos, agregue en el pedido a los E. E. e ilustrísimos señores obispos, suplicándole que este asunto lo despache a la mayor posible brevedad.⁷⁷²

The strategy of translating one single prayer into different languages reveals a lot about the interests and principles that drove Faustino Chimalpopoca. The first of these principals centered on the fact that, at this point of his life, Chimalpopoca revealed himself to be a very religious

⁷⁶⁹El gobernador del Distrito consulta sobre las renunciaciones de los regidores, Don Luis Muñoz, Don Juan Bustillo, Don Faustino Galicia y Don Rafael Lamadrid; y propone para llenar estas vacantes a Don José Fraflera, Don Joaquín Anzomena, Don Miguel Cervantes Estanillo y Don Ignacio Algara, 11 de octubre de 1853, AGN, GD-10, Ayuntamientos, Volumen 31, fojas 319-327.

⁷⁷⁰It is sad to see that at this date, 1854, the general public already considered and deprecatingly described Nahuatl and other indigenous languages as “dialects.” See “Nota,” martes 11 de abril de 1854, *El Universal. Periódico Político y Literario*, Cuarta Época, Tomo XI, Número 42, 3.

⁷⁷¹Ibid.

⁷⁷²“Actas de la SMGE,” March 9, 1854, AHSMGE, Actas; 1852-1863.

man. Contrary to his fellow Nahua intellectual predecessors, who expressed their ideas based on deistic terms, Chimalpopoca presented himself as a religious and devoted Catholic person. Also, it is plausible that, due to the conditions in which education reached indigenous populations at this point, Chimalpopoca considered that Catholic religion remained, after the reforms at San Gregorio, the primordial and last remaining gateway that Indigenous People had to basic literacy.

Mr. Chimalpopoca remained outside of the classrooms of the *Colegio de San Gregorio* during this same period, since his Nahuatl classes had been cancelled in this school between the years of 1853 and 1855. For a period of almost two years, Mr. Chimalpopoca probably survived by offering his services as lawyer or even as private tutor, instructor, or translator. In 1855, the same year that liberals rebelled against the dictatorship of Antonio López de Santa Anna, the so-called historical period of the *Reforma* began.⁷⁷³ President Santa Anna, also known as *Su Alteza Serenísima* (S. A. S.), directly appointed Mr. Chimalpopoca as a professor of Nahuatl language at the University of Mexico. According to a published note in a newspaper, Chimalpopoca thanked President Santa Anna for his appointment on January 4, 1855 with the following words:

En la mañana de hoy ha sido en mi poder la comunicación con fecha del 2 del presente se sirve V. E. hacerme de haberse dignado S. A. S. nombrarme catedrático de la lengua mexicana, cuyas lecciones debo dar en la Universidad de esta capital conforme al plan que se acompaña. Por tan alto honor no puedo más que apresurarme a dar a S. A. A. las más expresivas gracias [...]⁷⁷⁴

After his appointment as professor of the Nahuatl language at the University of Mexico, Mr. Chimalpopoca continued occupying other prominent positions and continued being a member of the SMGE.⁷⁷⁵ Chimalpopoca also appeared as a member of a jury for the rest of the year of 1855.⁷⁷⁶

7.5 The Bitter Years of the *Reforma*: Chimalpopoca as a Defender of Indigenous Land

During the troubling years of 1855 and 1856, the Mexican government switched from being politically Conservative to adopting a liberal system of government. The rebellion that started in Mexico after the issuing of the *Plan de Ayutla* (October 17, 1855) against the dictatorship of Santa Anna, ended up with the eventual installation of the interim presidency in Mexico of Juan Alvarez in late October of 1855. By December of the same year, Ignacio Comonfort held the presidency of Mexico which led to important transformations to indigenous communities.

⁷⁷³ See Robert H. Duncan, "Political Legitimation and Maximilian's Second Empire in Mexico, 1864-1867," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 12, No. 1 (Winter, 1996): 27-66, 30.

⁷⁷⁴ "Nota," jueves 11 de enero de 1855, *El Universal. Periódico político y literario*, Cuarta Época, Tomo XII, Número 317, 1. The *Siglo Diez y Nueve* newspaper also confirmed this new.

⁷⁷⁵ "Nota," sábado 17 de marzo de 1855, *El Universal. Periódico político y literario*, Cuarta Época, Tomo XII, Número 382.

⁷⁷⁶ "Nota," sábado 27 de octubre de 1855, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Cuarta Época, Tomo IX, Número 2495.

The liberal administration of Comonfort, which also appointed Benito Juárez as president of the Supreme Court, marked the beginning of the Reform era. Although this period in Mexican history is indeed important, for the purpose of this study, I will mention only a few of the direct effects that this administration had on indigenous communities and hence their impact on the work of Faustino Chimalpopoca.

On June 25, 1856, President Comonfort issued the *Lerdo Law*, also known as the “*Ley de desamortización de bienes de manos muertas*” or “*Ley de Desamortización de las Fincas Rústicas y Urbanas de las Corporaciones Civiles y Religiosas de México*,”⁷⁷⁷ a creation of the Minister of Hacienda, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada. The main purpose of this law was to mobilize and put into production all of the monopolized and unproductive lands in Mexico. Thus, this measure would, in the liberal idea, lead to a creation of small landowners, farmers or peasants, who they hoped would produce and extract direct profits from their work. However, this measure affected the economic activities as well as the social ties that existed among the indigenous communities of Mexico. Contrarily to what is widely publicized, this threat to collective property had already started with the Courts of Cadiz in 1812,⁷⁷⁸ and continued with the abolition of the *parcialidades*. The issuing of the *Lerdo Law* only demonstrated that the problem between the basic ideas of liberalism and collective property still remained at that time.

After the issuing of this law, the discontent of both the Catholic Church in Mexico and the indigenous communities ignited. As we have seen throughout this work, indigenous communities maintained a long tradition of litigations and held a deep trust and confidence in the existent judicial and political institutions. Thus, the response that indigenous communities exercised towards the Lerdo Law remained focused on the juridical limits in which legal negotiations prevailed. In these legal cases, indigenous communities presented titles of property issued during the period of the Spanish colony and they also opted for defining territorial limits by following oral or written traditions, and by choosing legal representatives before the tribunals.⁷⁷⁹

The same year of 1856, the Minister of Finance, the creator of the confiscation law, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, appointed Chimalpopoca as interim manager of the administration of the goods and funds of the former *parcialidades*: “[...] Licenciado Don Faustino Galicia vecino de esta capital, mayor de edad, a quien doy fe, dijo que es encargado interino de la administración de bienes y fondos de las llamadas *parcialidades*, con excepción de la de

⁷⁷⁷ *Ley de desamortización de bienes civiles y eclesiásticos* (México: Imprenta de Vicente G. Torres, 1856).

⁷⁷⁸ See Jean Meyer, *De una revolución a otra. Antología de textos* (México: El Colegio de México, 2013), 198-200.

⁷⁷⁹ José Velasco Toro, “Desamortización civil y resistencia india en México y Veracruz: De la Independencia a la Reforma,” in *Anuario VIII* (Xalapa: Centro de Investigaciones Históricas-Instituto de Investigaciones Humanísticas, Universidad Veracruzana, 1992), 23-56, 33.

Santiago [...].”⁷⁸⁰ As I have analyzed in a previous chapter of this study, the administration of the assets and properties of the former indigenous *parcialidades* remained conflictive. The appointment of Mr. Chimalpopoca as interim manager of these former *parcialidades* probably encouraged the leaders of certain indigenous communities to ask Mr. Chimalpopoca to legally represent them before the tribunals. As the reputation of Mr. Chimalpopoca as an intellectual and as a person involved in politics increased, he started to represent several communities and individuals as well. The Historical Archives of Notaries in Mexico City reveals the large number of files and cases in which Chimalpopoca became involved between the years of 1855 and 1856.⁷⁸¹ The appointment of Chimalpopoca no doubt resulted from his ample credentials and knowledge about the administration of indigenous assets, but also the government must have known that his person could serve as a means of restraint and as a mediator of the contentions between the nonconformist communities and the government. According to the documentation, Chimalpopoca remained active in this position from 1855 and 1856. The cases in which Mr. Chimalpopoca became involved vary widely from adjudications, representations, last wills and testaments, and deeds for the purchase and sale of real estate.⁷⁸² However, all of these cases demonstrate the great trust that indigenous individuals had in Mr. Chimalpopoca, relying on him to represent them in these matters.

Probably inspired by the repercussions that the confiscation laws in Mexico had over indigenous communities, Mr. Faustino Chimalpopoca continued with his mission of translating and interpreting historical documents. Chimalpopoca’s interest in translating these documents relied on the fact that the Nahuatl language had by this time become obsolete as a means of presenting formal juridical documents in the court system. For instance, the cases in which indigenous communities had to present documents written in native languages as evidence in their cases made it hard for them to use and interpret them in favor of Indigenous Peoples in the court system. Another explanation for Chimalpopoca’s increasing focus on transcribing and now translating these Nahuatl historical sources might have been the focus of new requirements of

⁷⁸⁰ *Compra venta de inmueble*, 26 de julio de 1856, AHN, Notaría 721, notario Agustín Vera y Sánchez, Volumen 4857, f. 172r.

⁷⁸¹ *Compra venta de inmueble*, 25 de septiembre de 1850, AHN, Notaría 721, notario Agustín Vera y Sánchez, Volumen 4857. In this document Faustino Chimalpopoca appeared as the administrator of the former *Parcialidad* of San Juan. According to this information, Chimalpopoca helped the members of the *parcialidad* to sell “half of a small plaza” to Doña Ignacia Agreda.

⁷⁸² Among the large number of cases in which Mr. Chimalpopoca played a role as a legal representative or lawyer of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Mexico are: *Licenciado Don Faustino Galicia como curador de los menores Don Francisco Guadalupe y Don José Diego Valle y Medina, sobre que se declare no estar en el caso de pagar el seis por ciento de herencia transversales*, 1854, AGN, México independiente/poderes judiciales federal y local, Tribunal Superior de Justicia de la Ciudad de México Siglo XIX, Caja 0305. There is also another document *Testamento*, 26 de julio de 1855, AHN, notaría 722, notario Francisco Villalón, Volumen 4874, fojas 172r-174r. *Compra venta de Inmueble*, AHN, 5 de septiembre de 1856, acta 56456, folio 4920, notaría 535, notario Agustín Pérez de Lara; *Adjudicación*, 5 de septiembre de 1856, AHN, notaría 721, notario, Agustín Vera Sánchez; *Adjudicación de la parcialidad de Magdalena de las Salinas a través de su representante Faustino Galicia*, 25 de agosto de 1856, AHN, notaría 75, notario José Villela, Volumen 4931, fojas 33r-36r.; *Poder General*, 16 de junio de 1857, AHN, notaría 722, notario Francisco Villalón, Volumen 722.

scientific commissions which mandated that historians should be prolific in their scholarly production in order to remain members of these prestigious groups.

We know that Faustino Chimalpopoca formed part of the SMGE and that he actively collaborated with other historians and intellectuals in writing what would become the official history of Mexico. In this sense, the validity that Chimalpopoca had as specialist on the history of Indigenous People resided on his knowledge and willingness to participate with other non-indigenous intellectuals. Also, we can see that Mr. Chimalpopoca considering this period of major change in the political and social system as something that deeply affected indigenous communities and their legacy. This may have been the reason why he probably decided to produce new records, copies, and translations of all the indigenous documents to which he may have had access.

Moreover, Chimalpopoca's participation in the intellectual sphere depended on his work and efficiency to deliver his results publically for this group. Thus, several documents that he translated also referred to the early history of Mexico City and its original inhabitants. For instance, in 1856 Faustino Chimalpopoca transcribed a manuscript in the Nahuatl language entitled "*Cronología de los nahuas*" ("Chronology of the Nahua people").⁷⁸³ In the "Chronology of the Nahua People," Faustino Chimalpopoca copied what seemed to be a manuscript from the early period of the Spanish conquest. The content of this work chronologically presents the succession of Nahua kings, with the date of their reigns, lives and deaths.⁷⁸⁴ In this manuscript, Faustino Chimalpopoca displayed his integral abilities as copyist since this manuscript included not only the transcription of the original manuscript written in the Nahuatl language, but also iconographic information that represented calendrical dates and other information from the original document.

⁷⁸³ Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia, *Cronología de los nahuas*, manuscript, 8 fojas, Classification: Mexico 1856-1857; Latin American Collection, Lilly Library, Indiana University, USA.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid.

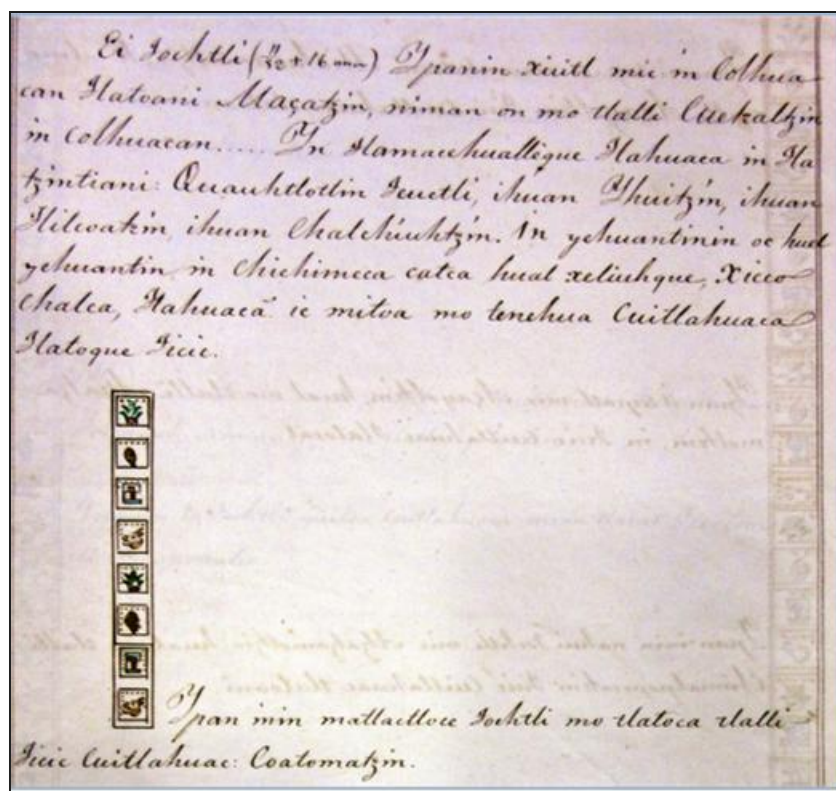


Figure 18. Fragment form the first page of *Chronology of the Nahua People*, copied by Chimalpopoca. Picture taken by Raquel Güereca.

In the last page of this copied manuscript, Faustino Chimalpopoca added the following information written in the Nahuatl language about the date he finished this manuscript: “*Axcan ipan ipan cempohualli ihuan ei tonalli metztli Abril 1856. Nehuatl ticic Cuittlahuac nochan ---- Lic. Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia.*”⁷⁸⁵ This phrase stated that Chimalpopoca completed this copy on April 3, at his house in Ticic, Cuittlahuac, present day Tlahuac, Mexico City.⁷⁸⁶

Although the information contained in this copy provided by Faustino Chimalpopoca remains clear, the transcription included several errors in the Nahuatl language.⁷⁸⁷ This could be the result of the paleographic work made by Chimalpopoca on the original manuscript or may have been caused by the difficulties that interpreting the Classical Nahuatl language represented for him. Still, even considering these mistakes, the entire content of the manuscript is clear and probably very similar to the original.

⁷⁸⁵ Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia, *Cronología de los nahuas*, 12.

⁷⁸⁶ Elia Rocío Hernández and Teresa Rojas Rabiela, “El reparto agrario y la transformación agrícola en Tláhuac, 1856-1992,” in *Estudios campesinos del Archivo General Agrario*, coord. Antonio Escobar Ohmstede (México: CIESAS, 1998), 89-91.

⁷⁸⁷ I want to thank Eduardo de la Cruz, my Nahuatl language professor, from the IDIEZ Institute in Zacatecas, Mexico, as well as his collaborators, for assisting me with the partial translation of this document. I also acknowledge them for offering valuable input and information that contributed to my understanding of the content of this manuscript.

Nevertheless, Chimalpopoca received several criticisms from José Fernando Ramírez, and later on from Gumersindo Mendoza and Felipe Sanchez Solis, about the lack of precision in his translations from Nahuatl to Spanish. These negative reviews eventually marginalized Chimalpopoca's work, even though regulations and protocols for translating and transcribing historical documents were inexistent at the time.⁷⁸⁸

Around this year and probably inspired by the consequences of the confiscation laws, Faustino Chimalpopoca made copies of several documents concerning the history of the town where he used to live: Ticic, Cuitlahuac. For instance, by the end of the nineteenth century, Cuitlahuac disappeared as a municipality attached to the region of Tlaltenco. Additionally, during this decade of 1850, Faustino Chimalpopoca and his wife Francisca Osoy had their first male son, Pedro Pablo.⁷⁸⁹ The births of his other sons and daughters may have inspired Faustino Chimalpopoca to preserve the history of this hometown Tlahuac for the sake of the family and its legacy. In this regard, it is important to consider that Alejo Chimalpopoca, Faustino Chimalpopoca's father, had also officially worked as notary and historian of his hometown, a labor that Faustino continued to follow (see Chapter 4 of this work). Faustino Chimalpopoca probably desired to preserve the history of Tlahuac hoping that one or more of his children might follow the professional path that both his father Alejo and he had chosen. However, I have been able to find any record that demonstrates that any of his children followed in his path as a Nahua intellectual. Nevertheless, his interest in his hometown continued, for example in 1853 Faustino Chimalpopoca made a copy of an ancient map of the town of Cuitlahuac,⁷⁹⁰ and another one about the origins and territorial division of the town of Ticic, Cuitlahuac.⁷⁹¹

⁷⁸⁸ It is probable that many of the criticisms of Chimalpopoca's literary translations of Nahuatl texts might have been motivated by his desire to show the beauty and poetic nature of the Nahuatl language.

⁷⁸⁹ *Acta de bautismo de Pedro Pablo Fernando Chimalpopoca y Galicia, 30 de junio de 1851*, Registro Parroquial del Templo de la Asunción, en el Sagrario Metropolitano (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:NY3D-QFV>) Retrieved 28 July, 2015.

⁷⁹⁰ *Mapa de Cuitlahuac. Copia sacada fielmente de su original por el Lic. Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia*, 15 de febrero de 1853, Manuscript from the Biblioteca Nacional de México, Mexico City.

⁷⁹¹ *Origen de Cuitlahuac. Sacada de un manuscrito escrito en 1570 en el mexicano*. Copy made by Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca on June 13, 1857. Manuscript from the Biblioteca Nacional de México, in Mexico City.

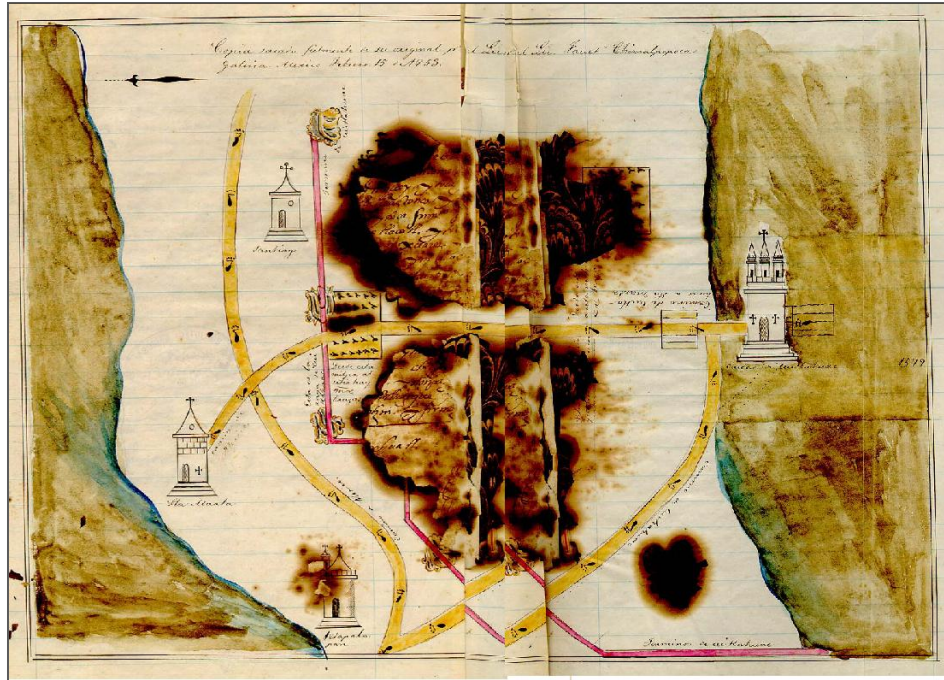


Figure 19. Map of the Town of Cuicahuac. Copy made by Faustino Chimalpopoca on 1853. Biblioteca Nacional de México. Mexico City. Picture taken by the author.

Meanwhile, the active political life and changes in the country at the time again thrust Mr. Chimalpopoca upon the national stage. In 1856 D. Francisco Díaz Covarrubias founded and directed the new *Comisión Científica del Valle de México*. The main purpose of this commission focused on elaborating a hydrographic map of the Valley of Mexico.⁷⁹² The need that the new nation had for geographic, cultural and economic information about the country contributed to the creation of these scientific societies. Concerning its mission, this scientific commission stated that:

Deseando el supremo gobierno hacer un reconocimiento completo de la situación y estado del Valle de México, del que no existen otros datos y noticias que las dadas por el viajero Sr. Baron Humboldt [...] ha nombrado diferentes comisiones que lleven a cabo ese importante pensamiento.⁷⁹³

For accomplishing this purpose the commission appointed several prominent members from both political and scientific spheres to collaborate on this project. Among several of them were Manuel Orozco y Berra, in charge of the commission of statistics and geography; Francisco Salazar Ilárregui in the commission of astronomy, geodesics and topography; and José Fernando Ramírez in the fields of history and archaeology, with Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca serving as

⁷⁹² Ramón Almaraz, *Memoria de los trabajos ejecutados por la Comisión científica de Pachuca: en el año de 1864* (México, J. M. Andrade and F. Escalante, 1865), 8.

⁷⁹³ "Noticias nacionales. Comisión científica," sábado 1 de noviembre de 1856, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Tomo X, Quinta Época, Año 16, Número 2850, 3.

the interpreter and translator of the Mexican (Nahuatl) language.⁷⁹⁴ The said commission, according to a newspaper note, received resources directly from the government for its support, and most probably directly from the presidency. The reputation that Faustino Chimalpopoca held made him still considered as an authority on the Nahuatl language. As a member of the Commission of the Mexican Language, Chimalpopoca remained in charge of reviewing all of the Nahuatl language included in the publications and studies promoted by the said commission.⁷⁹⁵

Faustino Chimalpopoca also continued advising José Fernando Ramírez in his historical studies. In 1857, the SMGE commissioned Fernando Ramírez to write an introduction for the manuscript entitled “*La historia antigua de Tlaxcala*.” Previously the SMGE had commissioned Faustino Chimalpopoca to write something about another manuscript related to the history of Tlaxcala in 1850. In that year Faustino Chimalpopoca argued that he could not accomplish this task since he was unable to gain access to the manuscript, written in Nahuatl language, from the General Archive, where it was housed at that time. The title of this manuscript appeared as “*Historia y fundación de Tlaxcala*.” It is possible that this document, earlier referred in 1850, is the same analyzed by Fernando Ramírez on 1857 under another title. Although the newspaper notes that released this information apparently referred to different manuscripts, this work as we have seen above, probably was the work written by Diego Muñoz Camargo at the end of the sixteenth century, as I previously referred. In any case, Fernando Ramírez indeed worked on writing an introduction for this work, and Faustino Chimalpopoca took over the review of all the words in the Nahuatl language included in this material.⁷⁹⁶

While the shaping and the consolidation of an official nationalism began during this period in Mexico, several discussions and debates took place during the mid-nineteenth century about certain key national concepts. The scientific community was probably the first to stand out in these discussions. For instance, within the interior of the SMGE the definition of the word

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ See Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia, “Comisión de idioma mexicano,” October 28, 1856, in *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, Tomo IV, Núm. 7 (México: Imprenta de Vicente García Torres, 1856), 323-324.

⁷⁹⁶ See *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, miércoles 12 de agosto de 1857, 5a. Época, Año 17, Tomo II, Número 3225. According to the original note, the newspaper indicated that the SMGE had borrowed the manuscript from Sr. General García, without specifying the first name of Mr. García. This information also stated that the original of this manuscript belonged to Sr. Macedo. Similarly, the note failed to specify who actually Mr. Macedo was. It is my hypothesis that if this is the case, the original manuscript of Muñoz Camargo probably went out from the National Archive between 1850 and 1856, since in 1850 Mr. Chimalpopoca was unable to access the manuscript from this institution. It was probably between these years when the manuscript about the history of Tlaxcala fell into private hands. In any case, the original manuscript in the Nahuatl language about the history of Tlaxcala is currently missing. An edition in Spanish of Muñoz Camargo’s work was published by Alfredo Chavero in 1892. Chavero indeed mentioned that one of the copies that he consulted for the publication of this work was a copy in which Fernando Ramírez included several revisions and annotations. Nevertheless, Chavero failed to mention the participation that Mr. Chimalpopoca had in this revision carried out by Ramírez. This was probably the result of a boycott that Faustino Chimalpopoca’s work received after he supported the French Intervention in Mexico between 1864 and 1867.

Mexico, and consequently the meaning of the term Mexica, remained a topic of importance. In 1862, the SMGE published a series of discussions, called “dissertations,” about the origin and meaning of both the terms *Mexica* and *Mexico*. José María Cabrera was the first person to offer an explanation for the term Mexico. The proposal presented by Cabrera centered on the argument that Mexico did not come from the term *Mexi*. Cabrera also argued that the correct pronunciation of the word Mexico was *Meixco*, but over the time, this mispronunciation had led people to believe that the correct term was Mexico. By following this hypothesis, Cabrera assured that the term *Meixco* meant “in front of or at the frontier of the place of the maguey.”⁷⁹⁷ Cabrera arrived to this conclusion by putting together the Nahuatl terms *metl*, maguey, and *ixco*, frontier or border, and also by arguing that the first people who inhabited the capital came from Mexicaltzingo. Cabrera continued supporting his dissertation by constantly citing historical events about the migration led by the Aztecs to Mexico-Tenochtitlan. However, Cabrera set his research on what he considered “solid scientific proof” which led him to exclude, and even condemn, indigenous mythology about the foundation of Mexico as “ignorant and ambiguous explanations.”

[...] la historia que habla de augurios y de prestigios acerca de la fundación de México, es una mala traducción de la escritura en jeroglíficos que se cita, fundándose en cierta ignorancia y ambiguas explicaciones o ciencia oscura que quedó por tradición de los naturales.⁷⁹⁸

Although the explanation provided by Cabrera about the meaning of the said term seemed plausible, he also displayed his own views about Indigenous Peoples and their beliefs. By disqualifying the religious elements that indigenous tradition provided for explaining the foundation of Mexico-Tenochtitlan. Thus to prove the meaning of the term Mexico, Cabrera pretended to follow only the scientific evidence available at that time. Based on his arguments, he also had the purpose of stigmatizing indigenous knowledge as backward and ignorant. Moreover, he also emphasized the fact that all these beliefs resulted in the underdevelopment in which Indigenous People still lived during the nineteenth century.

Cabrera’s arguments demonstrated the stereotypes and poor image that many intellectuals had about the indigenous population in Mexico. This view can be explained by considering that the scientific basis of that time exclusively relied on material evidence and scientific methods. Thus, religious explanations, especially those of indigenous origins, represented the antithesis of enlightened knowledge. In this sense, Cabrera personified the people who idealized ancient Indigenous People while at the same time despising the Indigenous People of his own time.

⁷⁹⁷ “Sobre el origen de la palabra México,” in *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, 1ª. Época, Tomo VIII (México: Andrés Boix, 1860), 406-407.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 407.

In the same publication, Cabrera also included a dissertation about the proper way to write the Aztec name Acamapixtli.⁷⁹⁹ This argument pretended to strengthen his previous explanation about the word Mexico. According to this explanation, Cabrera consulted the *Codex Vaticanus* and he described how the representation of tlatoani Acamapixtli appeared with a maguey plant on his head and holding a bunch of reeds.⁸⁰⁰ Cabrera concluded that Acamapixtli, as founder of Mexico Tenochtitlan, also was the inventor of the *chinampas*, the floating cultivable land. Although Cabrera did not cite other sources besides the *Codex Vaticanus*, it is evident that he based his arguments on the interpretation elaborated by Clavijero. Nevertheless, Clavijero had concluded that the interpretation of “Mexico” as “the place at the center of the maguey” was erroneous due to the linguistic structure of the Nahuatl language.

These racialized arguments that denigrated indigenous knowledge were sure to be rejected and challenged by Faustino Chimalpopoca, also an associate of the SMGE. In response to Cabrera’s dissertation, Chimalpopoca wrote a formal and extensive response and refutation to Cabrera entitled “*Apuntes sobre el origen de las palabras ‘Mexica’ y ‘Mexico’*.”⁸⁰¹ The content of this piece written by Chimalpopoca remained evidently confrontational against the ideas expressed by Cabrera. In his dissertation, Chimalpopoca discredited the idea that the word Mexico came from the other name that the Aztec god Huitzilopochtli received, *Mexihtli*.

Chimalpopoca proceeded to clarify his hypothesis by offering several examples about the conjugation and linguistic structure of the Nahuatl language. Through these rules, Chimalpopoca also denied the plausibility of the meaning of Mexico as the “place of maguey plants,” offered by Cabrera. Moreover, Chimalpopoca presented a vast historiographical review about primary sources and linguistic evidence in order to support his theory. He also displayed his vast knowledge about the history of the Nahua people and how they settled in Mexico, information which Cabrera failed to mention in his explanation, or deliberately left out.

The conclusion provided by Chimalpopoca was based on what Cabrera had described as “ignorant and ambiguous” arguments, since Chimalpopoca referred to the religious explanation of Nahua people about how and why they populated the region of Mexico City. Thus, Chimalpopoca argued, referring to the content of the *Codex Boturini*:

En este lugar habló Huitzilopochtli, diciendo: ‘Xiquimonana can in huei comitl imitlan cate yehuantin ya cachto tequitizque.’ ‘Tomad la olla grande de las que están con ellos, en señal de que serán los primeros que sirvan.’ Y para distinguirlos con insignas características, hacerlos nobles, o armarlos caballeros,

⁷⁹⁹ José María Cabrera, “El primer rey de México, Acamapitzin y la chinampa,” in *Boletín de la Sociedad de Geografía y Estadística*, 407.

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 407.

⁸⁰¹ Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia, “Apuntes sobre el origen de las palabras “Mexica” y “Mexico” in *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, 408-417.

les mudó el nombre diciéndoles: In axcan aocmo amotoca in Amazteca ye Amexica. ‘Desde hoy en adelante no tendréis ya el nombre Azteca, sino Exica: y les rodeó la cabeza de plumas, de donde resultó la palabra Mexica [...]’⁸⁰²

Based on this historical explanation, Chimalpopoca explained the meaning of the term Mexica by defining first the significance of the word Mexico. In this way, Chimalpopoca concluded that the term Mexica meant “noblemen,” and Mexico, “place where the noblemen live.”

As expected, Cabrera replied to Chimalpopoca’s presentation by disqualifying his grammatical knowledge about the Nahuatl language and what he viewed as his failed translations. Likewise, Chimalpopoca replied in response to his attack by arguing:

[...] para que no se me tenga por inventor de reglas, de diccionarios o de palabras mexicanas, de traductor arbitrario; y para no repetir lo que ya he dicho [...] copiaré al pie de la letra la parte relativa de la historia anónima sobre la peregrinación de los Aztecas, a fin de que a los inteligentes hagan la verdadera traducción [...]’⁸⁰³

In order to finalize this public discussion, José Guadalupe Romero and Francisco Pimentel, on behalf of the SMGE claimed that both proposals were valuable and that the society neither disqualified nor supported either of these dissertations. Instead, the SMGE promoted the public discussions that both interpretations could trigger.

The reality is that the meaning of the term Mexico is currently still debatable. Thus, in this section I do not pretend to analyze it, or to favor any of the arguments presented by either Cabrera or Chimalpopoca. Nevertheless, this discussion clearly exemplifies several aspects of the scientific societies and their members active and conflicting debates during the nineteenth century.

This scientific discussion took place first in the *Siglo Diez y Nueve* newspaper, and eventually the whole debate became compiled by the SMGE and published in its memorials.⁸⁰⁴ By being publically published, this discussion reached a much wider public outside the scientific society. The main purpose of these types of publications was to present the topics of discussion, as well as their hypothesis, hoping that the public would join in and contribute to the debate over the topics.

What this public discussion also showed was the turn that the “Indian” matter took at that time. As we can see, Cabrera’s arguments represented the view that people in general had about Indigenous People: the historical indigenous communities deserved to be praised; however, the

⁸⁰² Ibid., 410.

⁸⁰³ Ibid., 415.

⁸⁰⁴ “Nota,” martes 4 de marzo de 1862, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Sexta Época, Año Vigésimo segundo, Tomo III, Número 414.

modern Indigenous Peoples still lived under their “backward and obscure beliefs” that exposed their belief in their general ignorance. On the other side, Chimalpopoca clearly stated the defensive arguments about Indigenous People’s history and the complexity of the Nahuatl language and the importance of the Nahua people’s history for the nation.

The arguments that Chimalpopoca presented in this discussion also lead me to consider the resources that he used, and his tendency to embellish the history of Indigenous People. This process of Chimalpopoca’s constant praising of Nahua history and language, added to the lack of rules for transcription and the difficulty that paleography and the interpretation of the Classical Nahuatl language represented for an individual like Chimalpopoca, came at the expense of his credibility as an expert in the Nahuatl language. Nevertheless, this discussion, especially the arguments that Chimalpopoca presented eventually prevailed and other scientists later cited his work.⁸⁰⁵

Meanwhile the SMGE continued supporting the participation of Mr. Chimalpopoca both as an historian and as a statistician. In 1862, this scientific society appointed Chimalpopoca to elaborate a synoptic chart about the prices of labor and wages in Mexico.⁸⁰⁶ Along with his commitment to the society, Chimalpopoca continued copying and transcribing historical indigenous documents. Moreover, he also participated in the revision of the work entitled *Colección polidiomínica mexicana que contiene la oración dominical vertida en cincuenta y dos idiomas indígenas de la república*,⁸⁰⁷ with D. Manuel Orozco y Berra and D. Francisco Pimentel.⁸⁰⁸ During the same session,⁸⁰⁹ Chimalpopoca also decided to donate one of his most famous works *Silabario del idioma mexicano*⁸¹⁰ and also announced his forthcoming work *Disertación sobre el origen del modo de contar de los mexicanos*.⁸¹¹

With these two works Chimalpopoca sought not only to popularize his material on the Nahuatl language that he probably used in his classes, but also he sought to place himself as the definitive specialist on the Nahuatl language in the capital of the country. His two works about the Nahuatl language remained the only sources for teaching and studying the Nahuatl language produced during the nineteenth century.

While the scientific organizations in Mexico attempted to create an updated database concerning the natural resources, social and historical information of Mexico, the menace of another foreign intervention in the country appeared. By that year, French troops had already touched base in Mexico and several battles between the French and Mexican armies had taken

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁶ “Nota,” sábado 24 de enero de 1862, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6ª. Época, Año 22, Tomo III, Número 375. México.

⁸⁰⁷ *Actas de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística: Acta número 3*, 16 de enero de 1862, AHSMGE.

⁸⁰⁸ “Nota,” domingo 23 de marzo de 1862, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6ª. Época, Año 22, Tomo III, Número 433.

⁸⁰⁹ “Nota,” lunes 10 de febrero de 1862, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6ª. Época, Año 22, Tomo III, Número 392.

⁸¹⁰ Faustino Chimalpopocatl Galicia, *Silabario del idioma mexicano* (México: Tipografía de Manuel Castro, 1859).

⁸¹¹ See Faustino Chimalpopoca, *Origen y modo de contar de los indios* (México: Editor Vargas Rea, 1947).

place. In the same year of 1862 while Chimalpopoca offered his works to the SMGE, the French troops had been defeated by the Mexican army in Puebla. Nevertheless, this defeat did not stop the Napoleonic troops and their advances into Mexican territory.

7.6 The Period of the Second Mexican Empire

The origins of the French intervention in Mexico during the nineteenth century had economic roots. Shortly after Independence, the incipient Mexican government suffered from a perennial lack of adequate funding and an almost non-existent tax base. Inheriting a bankrupted ex-colonial treasury, and having already eliminated much of its tax revenues with reforms, the new nation saw itself forced to take loans from foreign powers. Mexico had already accumulated large debts with Spain, France and England by the middle of the nineteenth century. This situation worsened beginning in July of 1861 when President Benito Juárez announced the suspension of all payments of the Mexican government's debt for two years. Consequently, in October 1861 England, France and Spain signed an agreement calling for a joint military intervention for the purpose of collecting their debts. In the same year Spanish, French and British troops landed in Mexico. However, Napoleon III also saw this as a chance to expand his imperial influence, unknown to his other foreign partners, had planned to place an emperor in Mexico instead of simply collecting the debt owed to France. British and Spanish troops quickly left the country, but the French forces remained behind in the country with more sinister goals of imperial expansion. Thus, from 1861 through 1863 several military encounters between the French troops and the Mexican army occurred.⁸¹² On April 12, 1862,⁸¹³ President Benito Juárez officially announced that Mexico was at war with France.⁸¹⁴

Without a doubt, the North American Intervention in Mexico during the 1840's had deeply influenced the life and work of Chimalpopoca. He witnessed the occupation of Mexico City at the hands of the North American troops, as well as the sacking, disorder and above all the danger that historical archives and schools suffered from this invasion. Given the possibility that the French troops could arrive in Mexico City and eventually take and sack the capital, the SMGE considered it pertinent to publish a statement against the foreign intervention. In this document the name of Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia appeared again:

Como en la sesión de 23 del próximo pasado, de que ya di conocimiento al ministerio del digno cargo de vd., se dispuso que se fuera dando publicidad a las

⁸¹² See *Mexico: An encyclopedia of Contemporary Culture and History*, eds., Don M. Coerver, Suzanne B. Pasztor, Robert Buffington (Denver-Oxford, ABC-CLIO, 2004), 246.

⁸¹³ Patricia Galeana, ed., *El impacto de la intervención francesa en México* (México: Siglo XXI Editores), 45.

⁸¹⁴ *El Lic. Benito Juárez, Presidente Constitucional de la República, a la Nación*, abril 12 de 1862, as cited in Gustavo Adolfo Baz, *Vida de Benito Juárez* (México: E. Capdevielle, 1874), 235-237.

firmas de los socios, según fueran estos suscribiendo la protesta contra la intervención extranjera, tengo el honor de cumplir con dicho acuerdo [...]⁸¹⁵

This SMGE's statement included the names of several members who pronounced themselves against the intervention. Just like the rest of the members of the SMGE, Faustino Chimalpopoca in solidarity appeared as defender of the sovereignty of the country; thus, implicitly supporting the legitimacy of President Juárez. However, as we will see, documentation from early in 1864 reveals otherwise.

Due to the lack of information surrounding this published statement, I can only assume that while Faustino Chimalpopoca signed the statement of the SMGE against the French intervention, he also had already established communication with the supporters of the intervention. This is the only way to explain that how even though this statement appeared in March, by October of the same year of 1863 Chimalpopoca traveled as a member of a commission of Conservative representatives who officially traveled to Europe to offer the throne of Mexico to Maximilian of Habsburg.

On July 2, 1863, the French threat forced President Benito Juárez to flee Mexico City, and by July 10 of the same year the conservative Mexican General Juan Nepomuceno Almonte and Dubois de Saligny entered into Mexico. Shortly afterward, Saligny chose the members of his *Junta Suprema de Gobierno*, composed of 35 members, as well as a special *Junta de Notables* which included 215 prominent Mexican people who supported the conservative cause.⁸¹⁶ At this point, the arrival of a European ruler was imminent since President Benito Juárez had fled the capital and no formal Mexican army offered resistance to the arrival of the French troops.

7.6.1 Chimalpopoca's Presence in Maximilian's Court

One month after these events took place, in July 1863, Faustino Chimalpopoca exchanged a series of letters with leaders of the Conservative party, who had already allied themselves with the French occupiers. One of the letters Chimalpopoca wrote he addressed to presbyter Francisco Javier Miranda y Morfi, one of the major leaders of the conservative party.

In his letter, Faustino Chimalpopoca acknowledged the leadership that Miranda had within the conservative movement after the *Ley Lerdo* of 1856. In this letter, Chimalpopoca, besides praising the victory of Miranda, also congratulated him on being considered one of the members of the *Asamblea de Notables*. Loosing no opportunity to advance the cause of his Nahua people, Chimalpopoca also pleaded with Miranda not to forget about the Indigenous People of Mexico, especially their education:

⁸¹⁵ "Nota," sábado 9 de mayo de 1863, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6 Época, Año 23, Tomo V, Número 845.

⁸¹⁶ Patricia Galeana, *El pacto de la Intervención francesa*, 56.

Así es su influso [sic] se debe ciertamente la uniformidad de los votos para resucitar el grande impero de los aztecas por tal motivo quedo a vuestra perpetuamente reconocido y solo me resta por suplicarla [¿?] lo hago muy enardecidamente, tenga presente a la sufrida callada y agradecida raza pobre india para recomendar a la instrucción, al menos en los rudimentos de la religión ¿santa? de Jesucristo. De este modo, acaso no habrá en lo necesario, algún señor cura que me diga que los indios nunca han defendido la religión habiendo contestado que tampoco en nuestros tiempo ha habido quien nos la enseñe no obstante que en medio de tan impía [¿?] y tenas persecución que acabamos de sufrir, puedo decir que en los pueblos solos los indios, por inteligencia, o por rutina conservaron sus costumbres cristianas o religiosas.⁸¹⁷

Through this letter Mr. Chimalpopoca expressed his concerns towards the new regime and advocated for the sake of the Indigenous Peoples under French occupation. The diverse positions that Chimalpopoca occupied in the Mexican government probably had given him ample experience that previous governments had not done much about the Indigenous Peoples in Mexico. Based on his experience, he witnessed how the *Colegio de San Gregorio* had been forcibly reformed and no longer served as an indigenous college, leaving indigenous students from the republic without access to higher and transitional education. Also, as a lawyer and legal representative of indigenous *parcialidades*, Chimalpopoca had seen how the *Lerdo Law* affected the collective and social structure of former *parcialidades*. The consequences of these confiscation laws had put several assets from *parcialidades* on sale and for purchase by people outside of the indigenous communities.⁸¹⁸

It is possible that between July 15 and July 25, the day when Chimalpopoca wrote a declaration in favor of the new French regime, members of the conservative sphere had been in contact with Mr. Chimalpopoca. The inclusion of Mr. Chimalpopoca in the matters of the Conservative party and its plans for establishing a second Mexican monarchy are not surprising either. For decades, Mr. Chimalpopoca had worked very closely with indigenous students, intellectuals and leaders of indigenous communities. His expertise in different areas concerning Indigenous Peoples, as well as his credentials as public official, turned him into a valuable asset for the interests of the new political sphere. Mr. Chimalpopoca could serve the interests of the Conservative sphere as well, and no doubt he sought to do this in order to protect the interests of his own people.

⁸¹⁷ *Adhesión de Faustino Chimalpopoca*, julio 15 de 1863, AHMNAH, Archivo del Emperador Maximiliano de Habsburgo, Viena, Archivo de Estado, Rollo 6.

⁸¹⁸ There are several cases currently housed at the Historical Notarial Archive in Mexico City (AHN), in which we can see the cases in which Faustino Chimalpopoca worked as a legal representative for several former *parcialidades* which sought advice from him on how to sell their assets to particulars.

Thus, ten days after sending this letter to presbyter Miranda, on July 25, 1863 Mr. Chimalpopoca wrote an “appeal” to “his brothers:” the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico. According to the sources, this manifesto was published in the Nahuatl language in October of the same year and distributed in different places of throughout the city and in other surrounding indigenous towns.⁸¹⁹

During the period of both Santa Anna and Juárez’s presidencies, Chimalpopoca had not published any document complaining about their administrations. However, in this letter, Mr. Chimalpopoca openly showed his indignation about the administration of President Benito Juárez without even mentioning him by name:

Porque avocado con la confusa idea de reforma, creyó conseguirla, primero con negar la existencia del verdadero dios, [¿siervo?] autor del ser que disfrutamos, y con pretender hacer creer en segura que no tenía abastecimiento a querer dar cuenta de sus operaciones.⁸²⁰

Moreover, based on the content of the letter, we can read the generalized discontent that the Indigenous Peoples, especially those in Mexico City and those who Chimalpopoca had worked with, felt towards the administration of Benito Juárez. The members of the Conservative party realized the low approval that the policies issued by Juárez against corporative property had among the Indigenous People, so they capitalized on these disagreements by incorporating the figure of Faustino Chimalpopoca.

Mr. Chimalpopoca continued in this appeal by condemning the way Juárez’s administration had handled the religious practices among indigenous communities:

Vosotros mismos lo habeis palpado los unos y los otros lo habeis oido referir. Decidlo, pueblos todos, ¿no es cierto que aquellos perversos llamaron “fandanguitos” las misas y las funciones de iglesia? ¿No prohibieron que saliera públicamente el sagrado viatico? ¿No es verdad que os sujetaron a una completa privación de repiques, dobles, procesiones y de todo acto religioso? ¿No han perdido todos los pueblos sus tierras de comunidad y de repartimiento, solamente para favorecer y hacer dueños de ellas a los adoptarían por medio de la adjudicación? ¿Se podrá dudar que vosotros todos habéis andado ocultándonos en los montes las cuevas y las barrancas para librar a vuestras inocentes hijas y esposas de la violencia de los reformadores? ¿Y quién no se horroriza aun solo al oír el nombre de Juárez?⁸²¹

⁸¹⁹ Agustín Rivera, *Anales mexicanos: la Reforma y el Segundo Imperio* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1994), 148.

⁸²⁰ *Un llamamiento a los mexicanos*, julio 25 de 1863, AHMNAH, Archivo del Emperador Maximiliano de Habsburgo, Viena, Archivo de Estado, Rollo 7.

⁸²¹ Ibid.

In this excerpt it is notorious how Chimalpopoca expressed the position indigenous communities had towards the secularism promoted by Juárez's administration. Additionally, Chimalpopoca expressed the disdain projected from the government towards the religious activities that, without a doubt, provided social cohesion within the interior of the indigenous communities. The liberalism promoted by Juárez and the members of his administration had been probably perceived by indigenous communities in Mexico as an open contempt for their religious practices and possibly even for their indigenous style of life. Thus, Chimalpopoca argued in his manifesto that with the arrival of a foreign Catholic ruler their "oppression" will end:

El señor ha alzado bandera para servir de señal a un pueblo lejano y lo ha llamado con silvo [sic] desde los extremos de la tierra, el cual de ley este ha acudido con la mayor celeridad para liberarnos, de tan atroz opresión. Este pueblo para nosotros es la Francia.⁸²²

If Indigenous Peoples had their doubts about what to expect with the new French-supported regime, Chimalpopoca explained to them that the new ruler will not steal their independence, their religion, or their property; on the contrary, he argued this new ruler would benefit them:

Pueblos indios, estad tranquilos. El príncipe que viene seguramente os hará mejor vuestra suerte, y no os quitará, como Juárez, hasta vuestra subsistencia, siendo él de vuestra raza. Es príncipe cristiano, y no es príncipe que echando lazo en vuestro cuello os conduzca al sacrificio. Todo cambiará, como ha comenzado ya en Méjico, en donde la leva, la persecución y el servil temor se han convertido en gusto y contento-[...]⁸²³

It seems that under Juárez' administration, Indigenous People not only felt under attack, but also ignored and even mocked and ridiculed. The agenda that Juárez had towards indigenous communities has been known for its strong idea of the forced incorporation of Indigenous Peoples into the Mexican-*mestizo* nationalistic discourse.

If Chimalpopoca had enjoyed social prestige due to his credentials and expertise in politics, it is even more a fact that due to his influences and knowledge about indigenous communities in Mexico that he eventually received an invitation to join the newly imposed empire. Thus, the commission of Conservatives who travelled to Europe to offer the Mexican throne to Maximilian of Habsburg invited Mr. Chimalpopoca to travel with them to meet with Maximilian of Habsburg in October of 1863.

⁸²² Ibid.

⁸²³ Ibid.

Mr. Chimalpopoca was not the only one who recorded this episode. Francisco de Paula de Arrangoiz also described the fact that Chimalpopoca travelled as a companion, though he did not play part a formal part as a member of the commission. Nevertheless, Chimalpopoca appeared impressed with the new Emperor and described his encounter with Maximilian as follows:

El 1o. de este mes en la noche llegamos a Trieste todos los individuos de la comisión. En el embarcadero del camino de fierro encontramos a los gentiles hombres del Archiduque que Fernando Maximiliano, Conde de Bombelle y Marques de Coris. Estos señores nos condujeron en los carruajes que tenían preparados por orden de S. P. F al hotel de la Ville, en donde se nos ha tratado con mucho decoro y distinción [...] El día siguiente tuve la honra de ser recibido por el príncipe, quien se había ya dignado fijar el dia 3 para nuestra recepción.⁸²⁴

Additionally, Chimalpopoca narrated the enthusiasm that Maximilian showed towards his person:

En segundo, pasó el archiduque mismo a las habitaciones de S. A. y la archiduquesa que [?] al estandarte al salón acompañado de su camarera mayor la Condesa de Lubron y de su dama de honor la princesa de Averperg hecha por mí la presentación de los señores de la comisión, [...]“Terminada la primera parte de nuestra comisión, el Archiduque despidió a esta el 5; pero al mismo tiempo me invitó a permanecer a su lado por cuatro días más, con los señores Velázquez de León, Aguilar e Hidalgo.”⁸²⁵

In his own account, Arrangoiz also described the positive impression that Mr. Chimalpopoca had caused on Maximilian due to his indigenous origins:

Muy satisfecho quedó S. A. de las conversaciones cortas que tuvo, durante la comida y después de ella, con los individuos de la diputación. [...] Lo que sí le dijo el Archiduque al autor de estos apuntes, fue que habría deseado que todos los individuos de la diputación hubieran sido mejicanos por nacimiento, y que hubiera formado parte de ella el Sr. D. Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca.⁸²⁶

This first impression that Chimalpopoca created on Maximilian prevailed during the entire period that the French intervention lasted in Mexico. Subsequent correspondence reveals that José M. Gutiérrez de Estrada cultivated a close relationship with Mr. Chimalpopoca, who

⁸²⁴ *Un llamamiento a los mexicanos por Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia.*

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*, pages without numbers.

⁸²⁶ Francisco de Paula de Arrangoiz, *Historia del Segundo Imperio Mejicano* (Madrid: Imprenta de M. Rivadeneyra, 1869), 148.

enthusiastically expressed his gratitude to Gutiérrez Estrada for considering him to travel with them and meet with Maximilian.⁸²⁷

After Maximilian accepted the throne of Mexico on April 10, 1864, Gutiérrez Estrada, as leader of the Mexican Commission after the members of the commission returned, had proposed to Chimalpopoca to go back to Europe to accompany Maximilian on his trip from Miramar to Mexico. However, Chimalpopoca was unable to accomplish this task due to financial matters, as he described it:

[...] siento entrañablemente no poder ir a cumplir con el llamamiento de Nuestro Gran Maximiliano; primero porque de Supremo gobierno según me dijo el Señor Secretario del Ministerio de Relaciones Don Miguel ¿Trejo?, no tiene dinero para costear mi viaje, y segundo, porque mis circunstancias particulares absolutamente no me permiten ni aun moverme; pero quizá en algún tiempo podrá servir en algo mi inutilidad [...]⁸²⁸

Chimalpopoca was not the only person attracted by the new regime. Other prominent citizens and intellectuals quickly joined the enthusiasm for the Mexican monarchy.⁸²⁹ On May 28, 1864 Maximilian of Habsburg and his empress Carlota arrived at the port of Veracruz and the following day the Emperor and his wife arrived at the town of Soledad, a distant community from the port. At Soledad, Maximilian and Chimalpopoca met again.⁸³⁰ Faustino Chimalpopoca apparently escorted the Emperor Maximilian and his wife Carlota on the rest of their journey towards Mexico City and he also seemed to appear with them in public events. According to the documentation, we know that during this trip Emperor Maximilian and his wife Carlota stopped in different towns in order to announce the beginning of the imperial government. In several of these public proclamations, Chimalpopoca remained in charge of providing a public speech to the inhabitants of the towns upon their arrival. For instance, on July 1, 1864, the emperor, his wife and other members of the imperial retinue visited Orizaba, Veracruz. During their visit, the Emperor and his wife realized several protocol events and afterward they received the visit of the local authorities. Later on, the Emperor listened to a speech in Nahuatl language that a clergyman of the town of the Naranjal, Veracruz, had prepared for the occasion.⁸³¹ Since the

⁸²⁷ *Carta de Arroyo a Chimalpopoca. Anuncia la aceptación de la corona*, noviembre 14 de 1863, AHMNAH, Archivo del Emperador Maximiliano de Habsburgo, Viena, Archivo del Estado, rollo 12, Expediente 74.

⁸²⁸ *Carta de Chimalpopoca a Gutiérrez Estrada. Agradecimiento por lo que ha hecho y hace*, noviembre 25 de 1863, AHMNAH, Archivo del Emperador Maximiliano de Habsburgo, Viena, Archivo del Estado, Rollo 12, Expediente 75.

⁸²⁹ Patricia Galeana de Valadés, *Las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el Segundo Imperio* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1991), 93-96.

⁸³⁰ Niceto de Zamacois, *Historia de Méjico. Desde sus tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros días: escrita en vista de todo lo que de irrecusable han dado á luz los más caracterizados historiadores, y en virtud de documentos auténticos, no publicados todavía, tomados del Archivo nacional de Méjico, de las bibliotecas públicas, y de los preciosos manuscritos que, hasta hace poco, existían en las de los conventos de aquel país*, Volumen 17 (Barcelona: J. F. Párrés, 1881, p. 284.

⁸³¹ *De Miramar a México*, 114-115.

clergyman pronounced his speech in Nahuatl, Faustino Chimalpopoca translated it into Spanish for the Emperor and his wife. Emperor Maximilian also pronounced in Spanish a brief response to this welcoming speech, which Faustino Chimalpopoca similarly translated into Nahuatl for the general public.⁸³² The assistance that Faustino Chimalpopoca provided to the Emperor Maximilian in translating and interpreting diverse speeches from Nahuatl into the Spanish language is well documented in diverse works.⁸³³ For instance, upon their arrival in the town of Cholula, Emperor Maximilian received a group of Indigenous Peoples who addressed him in the Nahuatl language; Faustino Chimalpopoca rapidly translated these speeches into Spanish for the Emperor. Similarly, Chimalpopoca interpreted into the Nahuatl language the corresponding response provided by Emperor Maximilian which caused an enormous joy among the attendants.⁸³⁴

On June 11, 1864 Maximilian of Habsburg and his wife Carlota made their first entry into Mexico City. Just as in the rest of their previous visits throughout various towns, upon their arrival into Mexico City, the Emperor Maximilian and his wife received an elaborate reception. As part of the celebration, the Emperor and his wife formally received several delegations from diverse parts of the country. The members of these delegations pronounced several speeches, either in Spanish or Nahuatl, which Faustino Chimalpopoca translated for the monarchs.⁸³⁵ It is apparent that during their initial travels that Faustino Chimalpopoca not only served as an interpreter, but he also acted as a sort of ambassador for the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico before Emperor Maximilian. For instance, as part of the official festivities to welcome the emperor and his wife to the capital of the country, Faustino Chimalpopoca delivered a speech, both in Spanish and Nahuatl, in representation of the Indigenous Peoples of the country. Part of Chimalpopoca's speech included the following ideas:

Ye huécouh Azteca, Yepalli, in ti huei Maximiliano, mitzmo chíelítica.
El antiguo Trono de los Aztecas, ¡oh gran Maximiliano! Os está esperando.

⁸³² Ibid. For a more detailed account about this same speech translated by Faustino Chimalpopoca see Ferdinand Anders and Maarten Jansen, *El Manual del Adivino: Libro explicativo del llamado Códice Vaticano B* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993), 115-116.

⁸³³ It is also important to note that Anders and Jansen (in footnote 6 in Anders and Jansen, *Manual del Adivino*, 115-116) first traced this mentioned speech translated by Chimalpopoca for Emperor Maximilian in Orizaba by chronicling the publication of this speech in various 19th century sources, which include the following: *Alocuciones, cartas oficiales & instrucciones del Emperador Maximiliano durante los años 1864, 1865 y 1866* (México: Imprenta Imperial, 1867); as well as in the *Advenimiento de SS. MM. II. Maximiliano y Carlota al trono de México. Documentos relativos y narración del viaje de nuestros soberanos de Miramar a Veracruz y del recibimiento que se les hizo en este último puerto y en las ciudades de Córdoba, Orizava, Puebla y México* (México: Imprenta de J. M Andrade y F. Escalante- Edición de "La Sociedad," 1864). I have also found another account of this speech in the work *De Miramar a México*, 114-115.

⁸³⁴ *De Miramar a México*, 187.

⁸³⁵ Ibid., 298.

In huel nelli macehualmecayo, amoqui pie thein mitsmo huentilliz, in Tihuei Tlatoani, ca zan itlatocatopil in to huei Moteuczoma [sic].

La raza indiana pura no tiene otra cosa que ofreceros, gran Príncipe, sino el cetro de Moctezuma.

Xihualmo huica, in Ti tlauizpilli, ihuan ximo chiuhtzino, tito Teoyatica Napalolliz in To Teouio Jesucrito.

*Venid, ¡oh Príncipe insigne! Y sed nuestro firme apoyo en la Religión Santa de Jeuscristo.*⁸³⁶

The administration promoted by Maximilian, to the chagrin of the conservatives, remained based mostly on liberal ideals. Moreover, his conciliatory rhetoric about government made him even appoint open supporters of liberalism and the policies that Juárez had first established, which alienated from him the support of the Conservative group.⁸³⁷ Also, Maximilian had openly spoken about “parliamentary liberalism” and “constitutional rule” before his arrival to Mexico.⁸³⁸ In 1865, Maximilian published the *Estatuto Provisional del Imperio Mexicano*, which set the basis for the new government, as well as establishing the different branches for public administration.⁸³⁹ The *Estatuto* declared that the government of Maximilian would be a moderate inheritable monarchy, and it dealt with the appointment of ministers, the creation of a State Council, tribunals, the organization of the military, the limits of the territory, defining the members of the nation, and a setting up of individual rights, such as freedom of worship and the right to *Habeas Corpus*.⁸⁴⁰ Among several of the individual rights included, the *Estatuto* mentioned the right to possess property, the right to exercise their freedom religious practices, and the prohibition of confiscations of goods, and an open freedom of the press.⁸⁴¹

Although the *Estatuto* clearly stated the way the Empire would work, in reality the materialization of this plan struggled due to several reasons. First of all, the reign of Maximilian became characterized for its excessive and expensive ceremoniousness and protocol,⁸⁴² and upon his arrival he found a severely depleted national treasury, a divided army, and conflicts between the Emperor Maximilian’s open liberalism which bothered Mexican conservatives, among many

⁸³⁶ Ibid., 350.

⁸³⁷ For more information about the Second Empire in Mexico and the role that Emperor Maximilian had on it, see the books of Ferdinand Anders: *Maximilian und das Segundo Imperio Mexicano: Wissenschaft, Munzen und Medaillen, Ordenwesen, Philatelie* (Wien: Ezenhofer, 1974), *Maximilian von Mexiko: Erzherzog und Kaiser* (Verlag St. Polten: Niederösterreichisches Pressehaus, 1982) and *Von Schönbrunn und Miramar nach Mexiko : Leben und Wirken des Erzherzog-Kaisers Ferdinand Maximilian* (Graz : ADEVA, Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 2009).

⁸³⁸ Robert H. Duncan, “Political Legitimation and Maximilian’s Second Empire in Mexico, 1864-1867,” 33.

⁸³⁹ *Estatuto Provisional del Imperio Mexicano* (México: Imprenta de Andrade y Escalante, 1865).

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid., “Título XV: de las garantías individuales,” 8-10.

⁸⁴² See Manuel Payno, *Cuentas, gastos, acreedores y otros asuntos del tiempo de la intervención francesa y del imperio. De 1861 a 1867* (México: Imprenta de Ignacio Cumplido, 1868).

other problems.⁸⁴³ As a consequence, the shaping of the new cabinet remained troubled from the outset. Several of the appointees, such as José Fernando Ramírez, initially opposed the French intervention; however, he too eventually accepted the position of Minister of Relations in the new imperial court.⁸⁴⁴

The interests that Emperor Maximilian had towards indigenous population no doubt were probably rooted in his liberalist ideas. Concepts such as cultural pluralism, ethnic inclusion and self determination most likely influenced and increased the interest of the emperor for this sector of the population. It has to be noted that the emperor himself came from a multi-ethnic and multi-languages empire of Austria-Hungary. Nevertheless, the knowledge that Maximilian may have had at that time probably came mostly from history books that he had read during his youth and previous to his arrival in Mexico. He most likely also gathered information from Mexicans who took part in the commission that offered him the throne, as well as reports, and from, what we will see below, Faustino Chimalpopoca had told him.

Maximilian's desire to know more specific information about the indigenous population of Mexico made it necessary for him to rely on the knowledge of the local erudite scholars. Thus, a month after the official establishment of the Mexican monarchy, Don Francisco Pimentel wrote to Emperor Maximilian the *Memoria sobre las causas que han originado la situación actual de la raza indígena de México y medios para remediarla*.⁸⁴⁵ The content of Pimentel's work expressed certain contradictions and prejudices that, as we read in Cabrera's definition about the word Mexico, already prevailed among the *mestizo* intellectual class of Mexico. The purpose of this essay focused on providing the Emperor Maximilian with a general overview about the character of Indigenous Peoples from Mexico through an analysis of historical evidence and comparisons. Pimentel sustained that:

Contentémonos, pues con fijar la vista en los puntos más notables de la civilización mexicana, y con hojear la historia de los indios [...] porque solo comparando al indio antiguo con el moderno podremos conocer su diferencia; solo la historia de la raza indígena nos indicará las causas de su abatimiento.⁸⁴⁶

In his work, Pimentel portrayed, in very negative terms, nineteenth-century Indigenous Peoples. He described their original religion as backward and as non-enlightened as Catholic religion. Pimentel argued that only Catholicism could enlighten what he called "the vile spirit of

⁸⁴³ See *Examen crítico del príncipe Maximiliano de Austria en México* (México: Imprenta de Vicente G. Torres, 1867).

⁸⁴⁴ Luis González Obregón, *Vida y Obras de Don José Fernando Ramírez* (México: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal, 1901), 20.

⁸⁴⁵ Francisco Pimentel, *Memoria sobre las causas que han originado la situación actual de la raza indígena de México y medios para remediarla* (México: Imprenta de Andrade y Escalante, 1864).

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

indigenous persons.”⁸⁴⁷ In general terms, the portrayal offered by Pimentel about Indigenous People remained negative and also revealed a lack of understanding that this generation of *mestizo* intellectuals had about the negative effects that colonialism had over indigenous communities and the way in which nineteenth-century Indigenous People had handled these effects. For instance, Pimentel mentioned the counterproductive effects that the enlightenment and education had produced in modern Indigenous People since, as he argued, they had both turned them into nagging people:

Ilustrado el indio, pero desenvolviéndose en él un talento maligno, su civilización traería males y no bienes. En la tribuna de las cámaras, en las reuniones populares henos ya oído a los indios ilustrados vociferar contra los blancos, hemos visto a menudo, algunos abogados de color excitar a los naturales contra los propietarios, decirles que ellos son dueños del terreno, que le recobren por fuerza.⁸⁴⁸

In this excerpt Pimentel made it evident that outspoken, educated, intellectual Indigenous People made most people feel uncomfortable, and represented an inconvenience for the prevalent political class. For instance, Pimentel also mentioned that even President Alamán had mentioned the dangers of making the “Indians” able to understand the content of newspapers.⁸⁴⁹ Pimentel eventually concluded, in a very contradictory argument, that the only solution for “fixing” Indigenous Peoples was either to kill them or to transform them through the immigration of white European people with the purpose of merging these two human types into another class of *mestizo* people, or what he called a “race of transition” towards the ultimate purpose of gradually eliminating the “indigenous race” from the country.⁸⁵⁰

Through available documentation we know that Emperor Maximilian eventually supported the idea of promoting the immigration of white European descent people into Mexico. However, Maximilian’s goals focused not only on “improving” or “whitening” the indigenous “race,” but all Mexicans. Maximilian had concluded that Mexicans in general carried with them several moral vices such as laziness and corruption.⁸⁵¹ Moreover, the option of promoting the immigration of “white people” into Mexico under the sponsorship of Emperor Maximilian did not remain a secret.⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid., 152.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., 233.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid., 234.

⁸⁵¹ For a more in-depth view of the nineteenth-century concepts of Mexican mestizos see Argelia Segovia Liga “As Seen through Foreign Eyes: Nineteenth Century French Images of Mexico and Mexicans and Their Contributions to the Creation of a National Stereotype, 1822-1873” (M.A. Thesis, Missouri State University, 2010).

⁸⁵² Alfred J. Hanna and Kathryn Abbey Hanna, “The Immigration Movement of the Intervention and Empire as Seen Through the Mexican Press,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 27, No. 2 (May, 1947):220-246.

Before his official arrival, Emperor Maximilian had received information about the nature of all of the inhabitants of Mexico, most probably from diplomatic information readily available to him.⁸⁵³ For instance, several of the reports that Maximilian received from the members of his cabinet remained consistent about the idea that the Indigenous Peoples' conditions of life remained inferior in Mexico due to two main causes: the negative effects of the Spanish conquest and colonization and the lack of willingness from the political class to help them:

And it is very evident that the native race is inferior now; but after the conquest and all the states swims they have done anything to help the native race, and just by exception some Indians have been accepted in the caste of the "peoples of reason."⁸⁵⁴

The arguments that Pimentel presented in his work no doubt deeply bothered Faustino Chimalpopoca and his own views about the situation of Mexico's Indigenous Peoples. Faustino Chimalpopoca had been educated with the ideas about sovereignty and inalienable rights that Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque and Juan Rodríguez Puebla had earlier exposed publically. These early writings also had denounced and exposed the fatal consequences that centuries of colonialism had over indigenous communities, their lands, traditions and even their psyche.

The political and philosophical ideas with which Chimalpopoca had been educated, as well his experiences in working on alleviating indigenous communities' problems, surely made him disagree with several of the ideas exposed by Pimentel. Especially the arguments in which Pimentel indicated that educated Indigenous People could be annoying and hard to deal with may have been a personal affront to Chimalpopoca when the author referred, probably to Chimalpopoca, by saying that "lawyers of color" only rant against white people. By expressing this statement, Pimentel clearly expressed his incomprehension and unwillingness to understand the sentiments of Indigenous Peoples and their rejection of Spanish colonization as the cause that had created their troubles.

Eventually, Francisco Pimentel played a role as an advisor to Emperor Maximilian in matters concerning the *Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*⁸⁵⁵ and general

⁸⁵³ The literature that supports the argument that Emperor Maximilian indeed received detailed information about Mexico, its people and its geography prior and during his staying in Mexico is vast. For instance, see E. de Fleury, "Noticias geológicas, geográficas y estadísticas sobre Sonora y Baja California", in *Correspondencia secreta de los principales intervencionistas mexicanos. La intervención francesa en México según el archivo del Mariscal Bazaine* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1973), 557. In the same book see the letters from January 7, 1865, and January 22, 1867. See also *Versión francesa de México. Informes Diplomáticos (1863-1858)*, Volumen Primero, trans. Lilia Díaz, (México: El Colegio de México, 1963).

⁸⁵⁴ *Minuta de carta del Gral. Bazaine al Emperador Napoleón III en contestación a la carta de este fechada el 12 de septiembre de 1863, y con vastos informes sobre la situación militar social y política de México*, México, 25 de octubre de 1863, as cited in François-Achille Bazaine, *La intervención francesa en México según el archivo del mariscal Bazaine II* (México: Editorial Viuda de C. Bouret, 1908), 146-147.

⁸⁵⁵ José Ignacio Durán, Tomás Murphy, José Fernando Ramírez, J. Urbano Fonsecas. *Sociedad de Geografía y Estadística: nombramientos de José Ignacio Durán y Aniceto Ortega y Francisco Pimentel para Vice Presidente*

geographical information about the country.⁸⁵⁶ However, Pimentel did not appear as an advisor about indigenous affairs or any related matters during the period of the Second Empire. It is probably that sections of his work *Memoria sobre las causas...* had led to some serious questions for Maximilian since several arguments of the work remained contradictory and conflictive to the liberal mentality of the monarch. For instance, the praising of Mesoamerican cultures, to some extent, and the aberration that Pimentel expressed about current living Indigenous Peoples in his work, probably made Emperor Maximilian consider him as unfit to occupy or lead a ministry associated with any indigenous affairs. Still, Pimentel eventually occupied a position in which he was in charge of promoting the immigration of foreigners into Mexico.⁸⁵⁷

Based on the sources produced by Maximilian we notice that the image that he had about Indigenous Peoples in Mexico remained rooted on the idea of the “noble savage” theory that prevailed in Europe at that time. During his first month of residence in Mexico, Emperor Maximilian and his wife Carlota had shown special interest for the Indigenous Peoples in Mexico, as the sources revealed:

El Emperador y la Emperatriz especialmente manifiestan un interés preferente por los indios, a quienes tratan con predilección, admirando su amable carácter y su sencillez. En Orizaba, llevaron a bautizar y fueron padrinos de un indio infeliz. Aquí, en su Palacio, tienen tres a su servicio personal, a quienes he visto yo, vestidos con casacas de paño de grana, medias de seda, calzón corto y zapatos de charol, con un porte y unos modales, que parecen antiguos cortesanos. Uno de ellos se llama Juan Vargas. En la Villa oyeron tocar unas chirimías de los indios y quisieron que tocaran otra vez, porque les cayó en gracia la música.⁸⁵⁸

y Segundo Secretario, 7 de enero 1865 - 22 de enero 1867. Ministerio de Negocios Extranjeros, AGN, Segundo Imperio, Caja 19, Expediente 067.

⁸⁵⁶ *Gabinete Civil del Emperador. Leopoldo Río de la Loza, Francisco Pimentel. Correspondencia referente a: mención de la entrega de planos y dibujos relativos a las concesiones de las vías de Tehuantepec; disposiciones para colocar el retrato del Emperador en la Academia de Ciencias; acuse de recibo de conocimiento del establecimiento de las capitales de los departamentos del Imperio; nombramiento de Severo Castillo como general de brigada en Yucatán; órdenes para destinar los hospitales militares de Puebla y Orizaba para el uso de las tropas austro belgas; llamada de atención al ministro José Salazar de Illaregui por el desorden en la organización de su Ministerio, 15 de Marzo 1865 - 18 de Junio 1866, AGN, Segundo Imperio, Caja 58, Expediente 021.*

⁸⁵⁷ *Los alcaldes de los pueblos de San Francisco Acayucan, San Bartolo y Zereso pertenecientes a la municipalidad de Teloayucan del Distrito de Pachuca, solicitando se declare vigente la ley de 31 de julio de 1854 referente al deslinde a las propiedades raíces, y la expedición de un decreto que arregle los pactos de los operativos de campo con los labradores, agosto de 1865, AGN, Segundo Imperio, Caja 27, Expediente 079 A, foja 11v. In this document Faustino Chimalpopoca mentioned Mr. Pimentel as the person in charge of the organization of providing land and terrenos baldíos for the foreign immigrants who wanted to settle in Mexico.*

⁸⁵⁸ *Carta de Don José Ignacio Palomo, México, 25 de junio de 1865, as cited in Maximiliano y el imperio según correspondencias contemporáneas, que publica por primera vez don Manuel Romero de Terreros, Marqués de San Francisco (México: Editorial Cultura, 1926), 25.*

Both the information that Maximilian and the Empress might have had about Indigenous People from Mexico could have come from former diplomats, members of the army, personnel from his cabinet, and even from Faustino Chimalpopoca. Due to the good relationship that existed between Emperor Maximilian and Faustino Chimalpopoca from the first day they met, as well for the admiration that Maximilian had towards Chimalpopoca's works and credentials, and also probably from the direct recommendation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Fernando Ramírez, Emperor Maximilian decided to integrate Faustino Chimalpopoca into his cabinet.

7.6.2 The Culmination of Nahua Collective Efforts: The *Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas*

There is no doubt that Emperor Maximilian viewed the Indigenous People from Mexico under the European perspective of the “noble savage.” This concept also implied paternalistic arguments that supported the idea that Indigenous Peoples were somehow inferior and that they needed assistance in order to thrive.⁸⁵⁹ Also, from the public audiences that Emperor Maximilian used to have at the imperial residence in Chapultepec, he could assess the immediate needs of this class.⁸⁶⁰ Indigenous Peoples became fully aware of the existence of these personal audiences since the empire published these corresponding bylaws both in Spanish and Nahuatl. The notification about the public audiences reached both indigenous communities from the city and many of those from distant regions.⁸⁶¹ Moreover, the open contempt that several Mexicans, members of Maximilian's cabinet, showed towards Indigenous Peoples probably conducted Maximilian to consider the creation of a special board to deal with issues concerning Indigenous Peoples in Mexico.⁸⁶²

Based on all this information, the administration of Maximilian of Habsburg in Mexico quickly became characterized by standing against the policy of confiscation of communal indigenous properties that had been promoted during the presidencies of Comonfort and Juárez.

⁸⁵⁹ Patricia Galeana de Valdés, *Las relaciones iglesia-estado durante el Segundo Imperio*, 156.

⁸⁶⁰ “Título I, Artículo 8: Todo mexicano tiene derecho para obtener audiencia del Emperador, y para presentarles sus peticiones y quejas. Al efecto ocurrirá a su Gabinete en la forma dispuesta por el reglamento respectivo,” in *Estatuto Provisional del Imperio Mexicano* (México: Imprenta de Andrade y Escalante, 1865).

⁸⁶¹ “Tlatecpanaliztli itech pani tlacaquiliztli/ Reglamento para las audiencias públicas,” in *Maximiliano de Habsburgo. Ordenanzas de tema indígena en castellano y náhuatl*. Trans., Miguel León Portilla (Querétaro: Instituto de Estudios Constitucionales de Querétaro, 2003).

⁸⁶² *Carta de Doña Rincón de Palomo*, 25 de junio de 1864, as cited in *Maximiliano y el imperio según correspondencias*, 28. In the said letter, Doña Rosa del Rincón narrated how Almonte and other members of the court had not allowed a group of Indigenous People to gain an audience with Emperor Maximilian. After knowing about the incident Emperor Maximilian personally invited this group of Indigenous People to what seemed to be the imperial residence in Chapultepec to have a personal audience with him. He later invited the members of this group to eat with him. The original citation is: “Manuel muy querido: Ya Nacho te dice algo de los ocurrido con la entrada del Emperador y creo que tú, que eres verdadero patriota. Lo querías, si estuvieras aquí. Tiene una predilección muy marcada por los indios, a los que, en los pueblos donde fue llegando antes de entrar aquí, los sentaba a comer con él; y lo sigue haciendo aquí. Esos, de que te habla Nacho, lo pararon en la plaza, al salir de Palacio, y le dijeron que Almonte y otros no los habían dejado entrar a Palacio, y él entonces se revolvió con ellos y les dio un audiencia más larga que a los personajes; y luego los convidó a comer y comieron con mi papá y mi mamá [...]”

This position placed Maximilian's administration close to the protectionism practiced by previous Spanish colonial regime. Also, these measures can be compared to the reigning socialist ideas prevalent in Europe at the time which sought the protection and promotion of the proletariat class, both urban and rural.⁸⁶³

Supported by these ideas, Emperor Maximilian apparently appointed Faustino Chimalpopoca as *Visitador imperial de los pueblos y posesiones de indios* on November of 1864.⁸⁶⁴ Faustino Chimalpopoca probably occupied himself only with cases within Mexico City and its environs since available documentation showed that there were several *visitadores de pueblos* assigned regionally.⁸⁶⁵ From this position, Faustino Chimalpopoca probably found the initial platform to advocate for indigenous communities and conduct the complaints that indigenous communities in Mexico had directly to Emperor Maximilian. An overview about the cases recorded by Chimalpopoca as *visitador* illustrates that most of these complaints revealed a series of abuses committed by particular citizens against indigenous communities. The nature of these cases also gave evidence to how unprotected indigenous communities had remained in the hands of *hacendados* or land speculators.

⁸⁶³ See Jaime del Arenal Fenochio, "La protección del indígena en el Segundo Imperio mexicano: La Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas," *ARS IURIS*, No. 6 (1991): 524.

⁸⁶⁴ See Margarita Carbó, "La Reforma y la Intervención: El campo en llamas," in *La cuestión agraria mexicana. La tierra y el poder, 1800-1910* 2, 82-267, 174 (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 1988). Several authors, such as Margarita Carbó, Arenal Fenochio and Erika Pani cited the following source to support this argument: AGN, Visitador Imperial de los Pueblos y Posesiones de Indios, legajo 1770. However, I have been unable to find this series at the AGN, either in the catalog or in the archive.

⁸⁶⁵ For instance, the section labeled "Segundo Imperio" at the AGN, in Mexico City, currently houses the following documents that reveal the existence of several regional *visitadores* under the command of Emperor Maximilian. Only to mention a few of them, see. José Fernando Ramírez, Martín de Castillo y Cos. *Correspondencia del Ministerio: Publicación del Diario del Imperio. Informe del Visitador Imperial de Oaxaca: Rechazo de disidentes por fuerzas austriacas bajo el mando de Mayor Hotze en Ixtlan*, 1 de septiembre 1865–13 de diciembre 1865, Caja 10, Expediente 16; J. D. Ulibarri. *Oficios y acuerdos referentes a: informes de la llegada del visitador imperial la Paz; al traslado de los archivos del Congreso y del Tribunal de Cuentas y a la remisión del informe del visitador de la cárcel de Belén*, 1 de diciembre de 1865, Caja 32, Expediente 72; J. D. Ulibarri, Santiago Méndez. *Oficio referente al informe del visitador imperial de Baja California sobre las disputas y desmanes ocurridos con motivo de la elección de nueva autoridad política; acuse de recibo del proyecto para el arreglo de la contabilidad administrativa del Tribunal*, 20 de junio de 1866, Caja 32, Expediente 75; Emperador Maximiliano. *Acuerdos referentes a: rechazo de solicitudes de rebajas para el pago de derechos de importación; concesión de plazo al contador de la administración principal de rentas de Guadalajara para que presente las fianzas con que debe caucionar el manejo de su empleo; nombramiento de Francisco Manero como visitador de la administración principal de rentas de Querétaro; concesión de reservas de solicitudes de empleo*, Caja 35, Expediente 19; Emperador Maximiliano. *Acuerdos referentes a nombramientos de: Rafael Espinosa como comandante militar de Baja California y visitador Imperial de aquel departamento, de Luis de Arroyo como encargado interino del despacho de la Subsecretaría del Ministerio de Negocios Extranjeros, y de José María Yañez como prefecto del Palacio Nacional*, 14 de agosto de 1865, Caja 35, Expediente 24; Gabinete Civil, Montellano, Langlais. *Oficios y correspondencia referente a: propuesta de los habitantes de Tenancingo para destinar el templo del Santo Desierto al culto católico; informe de la libertad del visitador de la recaudación principal de contribuciones directas de Toluca; solicitud de beca de gracia para la Academia de San Carlos; informe de envío de la planta de empleados y sueldos de la administración de rentas de Tulancingo*, 2 de diciembre 1865–21 de diciembre 1865, Caja 38, Expediente 47.

Thus, on April 10, 1865, probably under advice from Chimalpopoca, Emperor Maximilian decreed the creation of the *Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas* (JPCM). The empire also published this decree which created this dependency of government both in Spanish and Nahuatl, so that peoples from the “needy classes” would have access to it. The published decree stated:

Considerando que desde que aceptamos el trono de México, al que fuimos llamados por la voluntad del pueblo, las clases menesterosas han sido siempre objeto de nuestra especial solicitud [...] hemos podido conocer las necesidades y sufrimientos de que hasta hoy han sido víctimas: a efecto de mejorar lo más eficazmente posible la condición de esas clases desgraciadas, y deseando para ello [...] decretamos [...] una junta que se denominará “Protectora de las clases menesterosas” [...]⁸⁶⁶

This new *Junta* remained under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Government, and it included five advocates, or *vocales*, which included a President, Vice-President and the Sub-Secretary. Likewise, the *Junta* also had the ability to create and appoint “*juntas auxiliares*” in all the “municipios” of the empire.⁸⁶⁷ Consequently, Emperor Maximilian appointed Faustino Chimalpopoca as the President of the newly issued *Junta*:

S. M. el Emperador, atendiendo a la aptitud y circunstancias que concurren en el Lic. D. Faustino Chimalpopoca. Ha tenido a bien nombrarlo para el empleo de Presidente de la Junta Protectora de las clases Menesterosas con el sueldo anual de mil y quinientos pesos= Por tanto manda el Emperador que se tenga por tal Presidente al expresado Lic. D. Faustino Chimalpopoca; y tomadas razón de este despacho en las oficinas respectivas, y previos los demás requisitos de estilo, se ponga al interesado en posesión del mencionado empleo y se le abone el sueldo referido=⁸⁶⁸

According to the decree, the *Junta* focused on receiving all of the complaints from the so-called “needy classes” and finding the way to bring justice to them. However, the *Junta* only had the power to receive, analyze, organize and make proposals for the possible solution of the reported conflicts based on the evidence available in each case. Afterwards, the *Junta* would send its verdict to the emperor through the Ministry of Government or the corresponding dependencies. In other words, the *Junta* worked as an intermediary between the so-called “needy classes” and the authorities with the power to solve their requests.

⁸⁶⁶ Maximiliano de Habsburgo. Ordenanzas.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ Nombramiento de Faustino Chimalpopoca como presidente de la Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas, 28 de abril de 1866, AGN, Instituciones gubernamentales: época moderna y contemporánea, Administración pública federal S. XIX, Gobernación siglo XIX, Despachos, Volumen 1, fs. 150.

In her own studies, Ericka Pani concluded that through the creation of the JPCM, Emperor Maximilian had considered that the disadvantages these indigenous communities faced were the direct result of years of colonialism and exclusion. Thus, contrary to the *patriotas criollos*, the emperors did not disassociate the relationship that existed between the glorious Pre-Columbian past and the living Indigenous People from the nineteenth century.⁸⁶⁹ Also, the JPCM did not provide Indigenous People with a different status that differentiated them from the rest of the Mexican inhabitants, but the decree provided them equality before the law but also recognized their different needs. According to Pani, the JPCM represented a palliative for the indigenous communities during their transition to modernity, and their eventual division into small private landholders.⁸⁷⁰

Although the decree for this *Junta* specified that it would receive the complaints from all “needy people,” most of the files collected by this imperial institution came largely from indigenous communities.⁸⁷¹ Thus, the efficiency of the way the *Junta* worked resulted in an extensive production of files containing diverse complaints. Most of these cases came from indigenous communities fighting for regaining the lands that they had lost due to the confiscation law of 1856. Other cases included information about the delimitation of new territorial borders. Most of the cases gathered by the *Junta* concerned land or water disputes. Faustino Chimalpopoca, as the *Junta’s* president, directly reviewed these claims, probably because he had a wide experience in working with documents related to these communities and their issues with land reform. Consequently, indigenous communities overwhelmingly surpassed the number of complaints to the members of the *Junta* in comparison to other needy, marginalized and pauperized people.

It is not difficult to conclude that the high number of cases submitted to the *Junta* by members of indigenous communities resulted from having an indigenous person as president of this institution. Moreover, the intellectual tradition of Indigenous Peoples had demonstrated that in general they had special respect for following the judicial procedures through the corresponding authorities. In this sense, we can note from the documents from the *Junta* that indigenous communities still remained confident in their indigenous community leaders and the governmental institutions of the time. Additionally, the *Junta* and the way it worked closely resembled the earlier colonial courts of the *Juzgado de Indios*, courts that had been abolished along with the Spanish colonial system in early nineteenth century.

⁸⁶⁹ Erika Pani, “¿“Verdaderas figuras de Cooper” o “pobres inditos infelices”? La política indigenista de Maximiliano,” *Historia Mexicana* 47, no. 3 (1998): 571-604, 575.

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 588.

⁸⁷¹ Miguel León Portilla stated that in the translation of the decree made for the creation of this junta into the Nahuatl language, the word “needy,” “menesterosa” in Spanish, was translated as “altepeme,” by the translator in charge (possible Chimalpopoca). For this argument see *Maximiliano de Habsburgo. Ordenanzas de tema indígena en castellano y náhuatl*, 13. However, by reviewing the text we can notice that the translator decided not to interpret the word “menesterosa” and that instead he decided to leave it in the Nahuatl text in its original Spanish. In other cases within the same document, the translator decided to use the term “motolinia” to refer to the needy people, or the term “motolinia tlaca” or “motolinianime tlaca” in plural.

All of this evidence refers to the development of a long historical process that indigenous communities experienced which had enabled them to rely on authorities to channel their complaints and seek redress of the problems that concerned their communities. These documents also demonstrate how disruptive the period of the Reform became for these indigenous individuals and their communities. The documentation concerning the *Junta Protectora* includes several cases from other parts of the republic and even from regions that make up the modern United States, which demonstrated the Pan-American indigenous identity that prevailed among indigenous communities during the entire time of the European colonization of the Americas.

Through an exhaustive revision of the files archived under the JPCM, we can note several factors in its brief existence. In first place a high level of participation from indigenous authorities existed in these cases. In several of them, the legal representative of the “common people” continued to be their *alcaldes* or *gobernadores indios*. Also, Indigenous People forcefully complained about the tragic results that the law of 1856 had on their land and their economic productivity. In several cases, these indigenous communities complained that they ended up forcibly working for *hacendados* and the wealthy families who purchased their lands they lost. Consequently, Indigenous People used the JPCM to denounce the abuses that these *hacendados* committed against them.

In other cases, the problems faced by indigenous communities originated with the law of 1856 and caused severe limitations in their community’s access to “common water,” which the new *hacendados* eventually monopolized. In other cases, the *títulos primordiales* of the towns, which the National Archive supposedly housed, remained lost; so that several towns were unable to find the copies of their land titles and subsequently filed suit with the *Junta*. In some cases, these community leaders were forced to provide oral accounts about the history of their land holdings and their limits (for an example see the map below in “Figure 20,” submitted by the community leaders of Tepojuma).

On the other hand, in several cases, the land titles were written in the Nahuatl language or *mexicano*. In these cases, the petitioners referred to the official translator and paleographer of the National Archives for providing a translated copy from their land titles for the cases in which the titles appeared attached to the complaint submitted to the Junta.⁸⁷²

⁸⁷² *Los vecinos del pueblo de Tepetlixpa del Distrito de Chalco, pidiendo se les declare en posesión del Rancho del Jardín, mandado rematar por la Administración de bienes nacionalizados*, junio de 1866, AGN, Gobernación, Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas, Volumen 7.

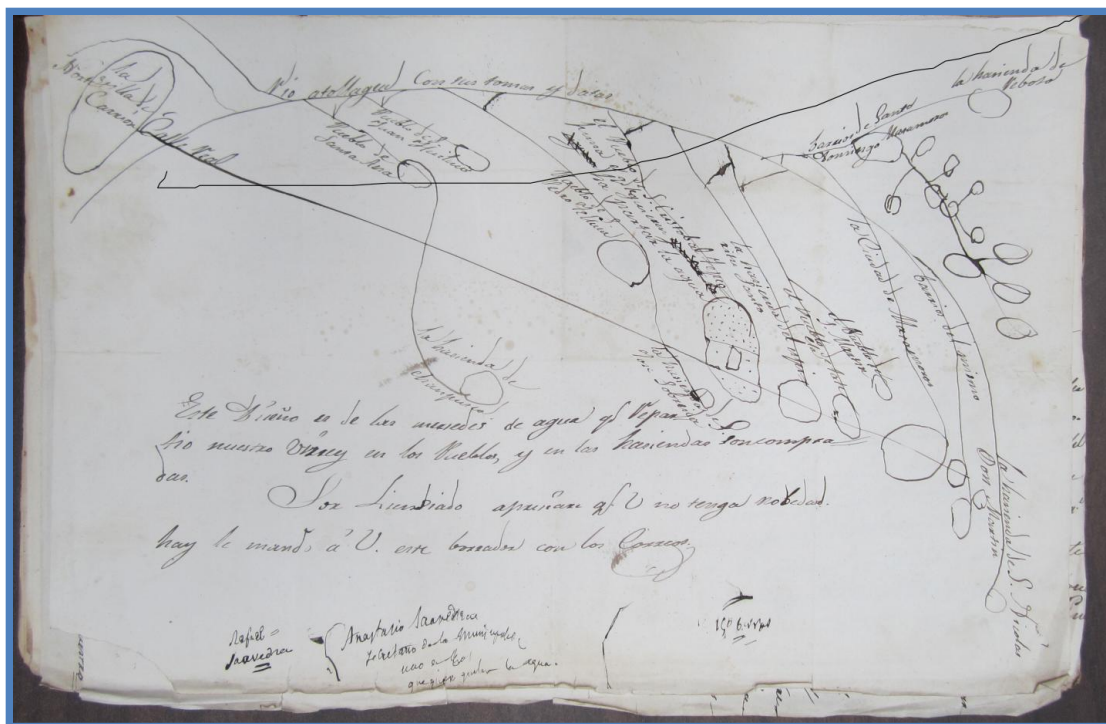


Figure 20. Map included in the document entitled *Títulos de seis surcos de agua del pueblo de San Cristóbal Tepojuma, Puebla* submitted to the *Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas* in 1866. Archivo General de la Nación. Picture taken by the author.

After Emperor Maximilian issued the law of June 26, 1866 several towns sought to repossess their lands, which had already been taken by other individuals. In one particular case, the Indigenous People from the town of Nonoalco asked to reclaim the lands that the *Compañía del Campero* had previously purchased under the presidency of Benito Juárez. However, they argued that the said company never occupied nor produced anything on these lands, and thus it did not comply with the orders. In this case, Faustino Chimalpopoca did not submit this request to the Minister of Government, but rather on June 2, 1866 he informed: “[...] hágales saber a los vecinos del Pueblo de San Miguel Nonoalco, que conforma a la ley del 26 del próximo pasado junio, pueden proceder a la adjudicación de las tierras que solicitan según ella la dispone.”⁸⁷³ Eventually the verdict was sent to the Minister of Civil Affairs. In a different litigation the same affected community of Nonoalco denounced that the person or companies to which they sold their land had not paid them for the transaction.⁸⁷⁴

⁸⁷³ *El pueblo de San Miguel Nonoalco solicitando el paternal amparo de S. M. El Emperador, a fin de conservar sus terrenos de comunidad, junio de 1866, AGN, Gobernación, Siglo XIX, Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas 138, Volumen 7 (file without number).*

⁸⁷⁴ *Manuel Pérez por el barrio de Zihuateotzin en el pueblo de Santa Ana Chantempan Departamento de Tlaxcala pide que el ayuntamiento de aquel pueblo le devuelva 250 pesos calor de unos terrenos de la propiedad del barrio, vendido por este a los empresarios del ferrocarril y de los que el ayuntamiento dispuso, 1866, AGN, Gobernación, Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas, Volumen 7.*

In another interesting case taken by the JPCM, one of the *vocales* of the *Junta*, made a visit to a jail in Cuernavaca in order to evaluate the conditions of the prisoners in the local jail. After his visit, the official wrote an interesting report to the *Junta* asking for improving the conditions of the prisoners in order to make the prison a place for reformation where the individuals could receive at least a “taste of human dignity.”⁸⁷⁵ In conclusion, we can state that the cases archived and received by the JPCM demonstrated the interest that their members had in offering aid for several of the problems that afflicted certain marginalized sectors of imperial Mexican society.

At this point the pertinent question to ask is what does the activities of the JPCM reveal about the intellectual activity of Faustino Chimalpopoca? How can we assess the intellectual influence that Chimalpopoca had on Indigenous Peoples and their communities, and what influence did he have on Emperor Maximilian’s decisions? Moreover, what does his leadership on the JPCM reveal about his mentality and his role as a Nahua intellectual?

According to the documentation, it is likely that Chimalpopoca had directly influenced Emperor Maximilian in creating the *Junta Protectora*. Prior to the creation of the JPCM, Chimalpopoca indeed conducted several official visitations to indigenous communities in order to assess the problems that they faced at that time. Thus, Chimalpopoca wrote several reports about the problems that these communities faced. These reports reveal the methodical process through which Chimalpopoca processed the information that he obtained from interviewing the members of these communities. After this, Chimalpopoca wrote several reports that included *ocursos*, or legal representation documents, and copies of land titles. Finally Chimalpopoca added to these reports and included an unofficial legal verdict, and a legal opinion about the possible solution to the corresponding issue. Several of the cases compiled by the JPCM referred to problems that involved illegal appropriation of indigenous lands, or abuses committed by *hacendados* or wealthy entrepreneurs against their laborers, most of them of indigenous descent.⁸⁷⁶

⁸⁷⁵ *Dictamen de la Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas con motivo de los males que sufren los presos de la cárcel de Teloloapan del Departamento de Cuernavaca*, 3 de septiembre de 1866, AGN, Gobernación, Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas, Volumen 7, Expediente 213.

⁸⁷⁶ This can be illustrated by a series of documents currently housed in the AGN, under the classification Fondo: Gobernación-Siglo XIX, Sección: Segundo Imperio. For instance, see the following cases: *Pleito de los de Calpulalpan*, enero 3 de 1865, AGN, Gobernación, Segundo Imperio, Caja 41, Expediente 005. *Pleito interpuesto por los vecinos del pueblo de San Cristobal Nexquipaya*, 12 de febrero de 1865, AGN, Gobernación, Segundo Imperio, Caja 27, Expediente 076 A; *Los de Tupaltepec contra la Hacienda de los Pozos por despojo*, marzo 13 de 1865, AGN, Gobernación, Segundo Imperio, Caja 32, Expediente 105; *Los pames contra las autoridades del pueblo y los ricos de sus pueblos por maltratarlos*, (document without date), AGN, Gobernación, Segundo Imperio, Caja 32, Expediente 104. In this mentioned document the Pame people also offered to adhere to the imperial army in retribution for reviewing their case. *El vecino Baltazar Temazcalac por un problema que tiene por el acceso al agua en contra de los dueños de la Hacienda de Don José María Teisiere, quien no los deja tener acceso al agua*, AGN, Gobernación, Segundo Imperio, Caja 35, Expediente 56.

Since the JPCM was inexistent at the time that these reports reached the cabinet of the emperor, Faustino Chimalpopoca resolved to conduct these complaints directly in consultation with the Emperor Maximilian by using the public hearing process that the emperor had promoted upon his arrival to Mexico. Based on this evidence, it is plausible that Emperor Maximilian realized that land problems, as well as the use of water resources, and the abuses that the population claimed to endure at the hands of *hacendados* and “the local wealthy people” from the region, as the petitioners described in their complaints, remained a real issue for the inhabitants of these communities. Before the overwhelming number of cases in which these problems prevailed and the increase in the number of petitioners requesting a public hearing with the Emperor, it is possible that Maximilian ordered the creation of the JPCM in order to alleviate some of the problems exposed by the petitioners or to better channel and review them before recommending action to the corresponding imperial authorities. This task must have eventually appeared so overwhelming as to need special handling by a special institution well versed and experienced in studying and acting in these disputes. Thus, the creation of the JPCM, led by the figure of Mr. Chimalpopoca, represented the best possible course of action in this process, since its new president had gained great familiarity and specific experience in solving these obstacles in favor of indigenous communities.

Hence, the creation of the JPCM is the direct result of the influence that Chimalpopoca had on Emperor Maximilian. Therefore, it seems that Chimalpopoca through his influence was able to express his concerns about the fate and the position that Indigenous People would occupy under the new imperial order. With the creation of the JPCM, Chimalpopoca could provide a solid judicial presence for the indigenous communities, something which seemed to be ignored or put aside by the justice systems under the previous presidency of Benito Juárez. The high number of files, complaints, petitions and visitations submitted to the JPCM demonstrate the large number of communities that felt that they lacked a voice within the Mexican justice system prior to the creation of this board. Moreover, the files and documentation of this *Junta* offers us evidence of the continued interest that Chimalpopoca had in understanding the importance that collective land had for indigenous communities, something no other contemporary political figure seemed to understand at that point.

In several cases, Chimalpopoca himself seemed to personally review the information that the petitioner or petitioners provided to the *Junta*. In many cases, Chimalpopoca had to examine and determine the authenticity of the documents or the legal evidence that these communities provided. This could seem a difficult task; however, by following this process, Chimalpopoca displayed his wide knowledge about history, law, procedures and indigenous historical documentation, as well as his critical thinking.

From his position as the president of the *Junta*, Chimalpopoca provided a final assessment to several, but not all, of the cases that reached the *Junta*. For instance, in one case, George Gamboa claimed to be a direct descent from the Moctezuma family, which was the reason

why he considered that he deserved to receive part of the inheritance that Bernardo Tovar Mendoza de Austria y Moctezuma had left behind after his death.⁸⁷⁷ In order to defend his request, Mr. Gamboa presented copy of a title of nobility as well as a coat of arms from the Austria y Moctezuma family that, according to him, proved his noble lineage.

By reading the case closely, it seemed very plausible that Mr. Gamboa was indeed a member of the Austria y Moctezuma family. However, the assessment and final ruling provided by Chimalpopoca denied Mr. Gamboa's argument. Chimalpopoca's arguments displayed the ample knowledge that he had about the history of indigenous nobility. Also, in order to support his discoveries, Chimalpopoca also presented a genealogical chart of the Austria y Moctezuma family in which, he argued, Mr. Gamboa remained excluded. As a conclusion, Chimalpopoca suggested to the members of the *Junta* that Mr. Gamboa should provide his baptism records in order to determine his relationship with the Austria y Moctezuma family.



Figure 21. Coat of arms provided by George Gamboa to prove his noble origins to the members of the *Junta Protectora*. 1866. Picture taken by the author.

By occupying his position at the head of the *Junta*, Faustino Chimalpopoca continued what Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma, Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque and Juan Rodríguez Puebla had done in the early nineteenth century: defending the right of Indigenous Peoples to have access to education, the right to have and administer their collective land and assets in the benefit

⁸⁷⁷ See Don Jorge Gamboa, vecino de la Ciudad de Guadalupe Hidalgo, sobre que se le considere con derecho a la sucesión testamentaria de Don Bernardo de Austria y Moctezuma, marzo de 1866, AGN, Gobernación-Siglo XIX, Segundo Imperio, Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas, Volumen 7, Expediente 168.

of their communities, and giving them a collective voice in a justice system characterized by its individualistic nature.

Additionally, the appointment of Mr. Chimalpopoca as the President of the JPCM had also influenced other indigenous groups to ally themselves to the Imperial Army.⁸⁷⁸ There are several accounts about the visits that Indigenous People from the northern regions of Mexico and also parts of the United States made to Emperor Maximilian.⁸⁷⁹ The purposes of the visits varied according to the groups and their needs. However, considering that the indigenous voices in both American and Mexican governments were purposely absent, the notice that Emperor Maximilian had appointed an indigenous lawyer as head of one of his imperial institutions created a very positive impression in other indigenous groups.

7.7 The Collapse of the Second Mexican Empire and its Intellectuals: The End of the “Rupture Generation”

The Second Empire in Mexico arose without the political or economic basis sufficient enough to subsist for a long period of time. Unfortunately for the empire, on May 31, 1866 Emperor Maximilian received a notification from French Emperor Napoleon about his decision to remove French troops from Mexico. This dramatic measure left the Emperor Maximilian without the support to continue his reign. Added to this circumstance, the Civil War in the United States had ceased and both consecutive Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson declared support for President Benito Juárez.

Before this situation, Empress Carlota left Mexico to France in order to appeal for aid that might keep the Mexican Empire standing. However, she received negative answers from Napoleon and eventually went to appeal to the Pope in Rome. Meanwhile in Mexico, José Miramón and Leonardo Márquez organized forces to substitute the French army, which remained under the command of Maximilian. Finally, in January of 1867 the French army left Mexico. Shortly after, Maximilian abandoned Mexico City and fled northward to Querétaro. This abandonment of the capital led by Maximilian represented practically the end of the official imperial activities. With the ceasing of governmental and bureaucratic activities the empire quickly fell and so did its many institutions.

After Maximilian surrendered to the republican troops in Querétaro, the Juárez regime placed him on trial and judges found him guilty of treason, usurpation of the public power,

⁸⁷⁸ For instance, see *Los gobernadores de cinco pueblos pames solicitan audiencia*, (no date), AGN, Gobernación, Segundo Imperio, Caja 32, Expediente 104, f. 9r.

⁸⁷⁹ *Orden suprema para que los fondos del ayuntamiento se eroguen los gastos que ocasione la permanencia en esta ciudad de los comisionados de las tribus Mascoguas y Kipapus*, 1865, AHDF, Ayuntamiento, Hacienda y fondos municipales, Volumen 2109, Expediente 170.

filibustering which led these judges to sign Maximilian's execution decree of October 3, 1865.⁸⁸⁰ The Emperor was finally executed on June 19, 1867. Although the Imperialist troops resisted a few months longer against the Republicans, the reality soon became apparent that the imperial plan was dead. On July 15, 1867, President Benito Juárez entered Mexico City, which represented the formal re-establishment of the Democratic Republic of Mexico.

Little is known about what actually happened to Faustino Chimalpopoca after these events. On September 6, 1867 his name appeared on a list, published by the *Monitor Republicano*, in which he was condemned to serve 2 years of confinement as a punishment for supporting the French Intervention.⁸⁸¹ There is no further documentation to corroborate if Chimalpopoca actually served his sentence. María Teresa Sepúlveda stated that one of Chimalpopoca's daughters, Concepción Oscoy, said: "Cuando entraron los liberales, buscaron a Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca para fusilarlo, pero se ocultó en un sótano; saquearon la casa y rompieron los muebles. Allí habían ocultado las alhajas más costosas de muchas iglesias."⁸⁸²

This statement seems to contradict the official resolution that only charged Chimalpopoca with two years of imprisonment, not with execution. It is uncertain if Faustino Chimalpopoca remained in Mexico or exiled himself as his friend José Fernando Ramírez and others had done.

It is not until 1873, when Chimalpopoca reappeared in the historical record and completed a copy of the land titles from the town of Santa María Nativitas, Texcoco. Although Chimalpopoca did not make this copy public, it is the first information about him that we are able to find after he supposed condemnation and imprisonment order. This date suggests that Chimalpopoca once again returned to his active work as copyist, translator and professor, probably due to the death of President Benito Juárez a year before. In the same year, his name appeared again in a note published by the *Siglo Diez y Seis* newspaper. The note confirmed that the *Colegio de San Gregorio* was a restored school with a campus in the town of Tlahuac. In the chart corresponding to the authorities of this campus Don Manuel María Herrera y Pérez, presbyter, appeared as the rector. For the section of preparatory studies, Presbyter Marcelo A. Gómez appeared as the professor for the Nahuatl language, while Faustino Chimalpopoca once again conducted the classes in the history of Mexico.⁸⁸³

⁸⁸⁰ See *Causa de Fernando Maximiliano de Habsburgo que se ha titulado Emperador de México y sus llamados generales Miguel Miramón y Tomás Mejía: sus cómplices por delitos contra la independencia y seguridad de la Nación, el orden y la paz pública, el derecho de gentes y las garantías individuales* (México: Imprenta Literaria de la Viuda de Segura e hijos, 1868), 383.

⁸⁸¹ "Nota," martes 10 de septiembre de 1867, *El Monitor Republicano*, Año XVII, Número 4737, 2.

⁸⁸² Colección Gómez Orozco, Vol. 145, Biblioteca del Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City, as cited in María Teresa Sepúlveda y Herrera, *Catálogo de la Colección de documentos*, 14.

⁸⁸³ "San Gregorio. Colegio restaurando en esta capital con el plantel de Tlahuac," miércoles 12 de febrero de 1873, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, Séptima Época, Año XXXII, Tomo 55, Número 10, 263. It is interesting to note that within this list of professors, Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque appears as an instructor of painting. It is unclear if this Pedro Ixtolinque is one of the children of Pedro Ixtolinque senior or if this note includes a typo.

It is evident that at this point the refashioning of the *Colegio de San Gregorio* resulted from an attempt from the recently returned Jesuit order to once again become involved in matters concerning education, as they had before. However, this school also opened doors to a new campus in Tlahuac, a rural area on the outskirts of Mexico City. It is no surprise that the town for this new campus was chosen as Tlahuac, the hometown and place of origin of Faustino Chimalpopoca. The studies that the new campus of the school offered remained the basics: primary school and preparatory training. Although the effort to bring education to the rural areas of Mexico City through the reopening of the *Colegio* remained a positive attempt, history demonstrated that the later nineteenth century college never reached its past glories.

Between the years of 1873 and 1882, I have been unable to find any further information about Mr. Chimalpopoca. During this period of time he probably continued working as private instructor or as legal advisor. It was not until early April, 1882 and under the presidency of the liberal President Manuel González Torres, when Chimalpopoca's name again appeared again in the newspaper. This time the note informed its reading public that Mr. Faustino Chimalpopoca had died intestate, and that the judge, following a rigorous procedure, requested that any member of the public who considered that they deserved a part of the goods that Mr. Chimalpopoca left behind, come forward to claim them within a period of thirty days.⁸⁸⁴

7.8 Conclusion to Chapter 7

The beginning of the nineteenth century was characterized by a series of determinant events for the course of Mexico's history: from the creation of the Cortes of Cadiz in 1812, the independence of Mexico, the existence of two Mexican empires, two separate foreign invasions, including the loss of half of the territory, to mention only a few. During this period of time, we find that Nahua intellectuals in Mexico City remained highly active and deeply involved in issues that concerned both the nation and their own interests as Indigenous Peoples.

In this chapter, I reviewed the intellectual activity that Faustino Chimalpopoca had from the first half of the nineteenth century to almost the end of the same century. The personal and professional life of Mr. Chimalpopoca as we have seen became marked by a series of events that determined the future directions of Mexico. In spite of several ups and downs in the political life of the country, which also influenced the life and career of Mr. Chimalpopoca, he continued carrying on his intellectual activities regardless of the wars, political chaos, and personal economic fortunes. These actions ranged from practicing law, defending private interests such as serving as the legal representative for writing a will, or by representing indigenous communities and their landholdings under the turmoil that began in the aftermath the *Reforma* (1854-1876).

During all this time, Mr. Chimalpopoca proved himself always aware about the necessity of keeping records, either by creating copies of documents or by leaving evidence before

⁸⁸⁴ "Convocatoria," 14 de abril de 1882, *Diario del Hogar*, Tomo I, Número 163, 4.

notaries. Mr. Chimalpopoca's sense of history, tradition and legacy probably took shape during his early years as student in the *Colegio de San Gregorio*. It is possible that by being an enrolled student there he had realized and embraced his indigenous identity and how it had a special meaning within the collectiveness of the rest of the school's students. Being an indigenous person during colonial times had a special meaning, but this significance changed as fast as the political fortunes of the nation did. For instance, the rights and obligations that Indigenous Peoples enjoyed during the last years of the eighteenth century dramatically changed in three decades after the issuing of the Constitution of Cadiz in 1812.

Mr. Chimalpopoca epitomizes the image of a nineteenth century intellectual: well versed in several languages such as Latin, Greek, French, and Nahuatl. He also worked as lawyer, historian, copyist, transcriber and translator. During his entire life, Chimalpopoca put all of this knowledge in practice by representing, giving a voice to, and defending the interests of collective indigenous organizations. By being a lawyer, Mr. Chimalpopoca realized that one of the major changes that indigenous communities had to face under the new liberalist establishment was their native languages' loss of power. Chimalpopoca perceived that the erosion and lack of importance that the Nahuatl language, as well as other languages, suffered during the first decades of the nineteenth century in the justice and bureaucratic system represented only the beginning of a series of problems that indigenous communities would face from then onwards. The Nahuatl language stopped being considered a *lingua franca* in tribunals and similar early national courts. As a lawyer with experience in land disputes, Chimalpopoca quickly realized that this meant a problem for future disagreements between indigenous communities and individual non-indigenous landowners. Probably inspired by this realization, or by a strong sense of historical consciousness concerning the abrupt and drastic changes of the era, Mr. Chimalpopoca started a prolific career as copyist: copying and translating several documents, from land titles, to maps, and historical documents.

Being a witness of how the Nahuatl language lost power abruptly within the justice and political systems, probably encouraged Mr. Chimalpopoca to create and preserve diverse Nahuatl materials in order to let people know about the beauty and complexity of this indigenous language, as well as the historical importance and the semantic meaning that a whole language had for Indigenous People. In this effort, Mr. Chimalpopoca fought hard to praise the Nahuatl language revealing that it was eloquent and elegant, comparable to Latin and Greek, so that people could understand the complexity of Nahua culture and respect the importance of land and community for Nahua people. During this process, Mr. Chimalpopoca probably exaggerated the tone of his translations, embellishing the language and its meaning. Still, these mistakes can also be explained by the complexity of transcribing 16th century documents and difficulties in understanding classical Nahuatl. In any case, when nobody in the intellectual sphere seemed to be preoccupied by losing such an important indigenous language, Mr. Chimalpopoca appeared on the political and cultural scene, warning the political class about the importance of looking at

the indigenous communities and their culture, and to include them into the newly established government and social system.

By being a teacher of the Nahuatl language and also by occupying several positions in government, Chimalpopoca probably realized the general ignorance that people in general, and particularly politicians, had towards Indigenous Peoples. Probably encouraged by these negative sentiments, he composed and published the manuals to teach the Nahuatl language from basic levels; materials which Angel Maria Garibay praised as useful didactic materials during the first decade of the 20th century.⁸⁸⁵ Even current language instructors have found Chimalpopoca's manuals usable for classrooms. Based on this evidence, we can consider that Mr. Chimalpopoca probably published this material so that the general public could understand the complexity of the concepts that being indigenous meant for Nahua people. Moreover, the career that Mr. Chimalpopoca followed in the public life also reinforced this hypothesis.

Probably one of the most dramatic changes for indigenous communities occurred with the issuing of the *Lew Lerdo* in 1856. As I reviewed in this chapter, several indigenous communities organized and sought the judicial help of Mr. Chimalpopoca in the tribunals. Later documentation reveals that Chimalpopoca did not hold President Juarez in high esteem. Mr. Chimalpopoca probably wondered how an indigenous president could attack indigenous assets and properties. It is at this point when we can clearly see the generational disruption that existed between an indigenous person educated under the colonial system, and another whose education resulted from different early national policies and traditions, the result of individual liberalism that came with independence. It is at this moment when we can see the break of a generation of indigenous intellectuals occurring.

With the establishment of the Second Mexican Empire, Chimalpopoca probably saw the return of several of the forms and institutions that he found familiar and reassuring. Also, the social liberalism promoted by Maximilian's policies most likely coincided with the ideas that Chimalpopoca had about collective justice. By being appointed as the president of the JPCM, Chimalpopoca continued with his labor as a rescuer of documents and as a qualified lawyer well versed in indigenous land disputes. By occupying this position he also had the opportunity to display all of the knowledge that he had cultivated in the defense of what he considered justice.

What is currently left from the archive of the *Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas* gives us a great deal of information about the intellectual mentality that Chimalpopoca as its president had towards specific issues. Although several cases submitted to the JPCM did not reach resolution, the fact remains that the current archive is a repository of a large number of indigenous documents from the 16th through the 19th century Mexico. Thus, the JPCM represented a means through which Mr. Chimalpopoca continued gathering, reviewing,

⁸⁸⁵ See McDonough, *The Learned Ones*, 112.

receiving, translating, housing and giving voice to documents that otherwise would not have reached any official institution during the Second Mexican Empire. As a Nahua intellectual, Mr. Chimalpopoca represented his class and provided a voice to all the Indigenous People that 19th-century modernization shamefully left behind.

Conclusion

“The Rupture Generation:” Nineteenth-Century Nahua Intellectuals in Mexico City, 1780-1882

The goal of this present dissertation has focused on examining the main characteristics of indigenous intellectuality as a long term phenomenon among Nahua people in Mexico City. Thus, this work has presented a few parameters that may contribute to our better identification, appreciation and understanding of the intellectual work of Nahua peoples during the early decades of the nineteenth century in the capital of City. Through the historical evidence presented in this study, this dissertation has given evidence of the spheres of action in which Nahua intellectuals acted throughout determined periods of history.

As I presented in the first sections of this work, early nineteenth-century Nahua intellectuals displayed a series of characteristics that far exceeded the official historiographical denomination of them as simply “*indios letrados*.” The careers and works of Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, Juan Rodríguez Puebla, Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma and Faustino Chimalpopoca demonstrate a long process in which they transformed their knowledge into concrete actions within the prevalent colonial or independent justice systems.

The main characteristics that these individuals held and displayed as intellectuals resided in their wide familiarity of Western-styled knowledge in combination with their own self recognition about their Mesoamerican roots. Additionally, these Nahua individuals received education under the sponsorship of Spanish colonial authorities in the capital of New Spain. As a consequence, these individuals also adopted westernized knowledge that they learned from their attendance at colonial educational institutions. Their condition as students within these cloisters also provided these Nahua individuals with vital information about the functioning of several colonial institutions. In this sense, the higher education that these Nahua individuals received exposed them to learning other languages besides their maternal Nahuatl language. For instance, the reviewed documentation demonstrated that these Nahua intellectuals learned and held high proficiency in the Spanish language, and in Latin, Greek, French and/or English. The access that these Nahua intellectuals had to literary works written by their Nahua intellectual predecessors, as well as the contact that they had with the new political and philosophical ideas from Europe, placed them in a threshold between two spheres of action: the Mesoamerican and the Spanish ones.

By considering the Nahua intellectual phenomenon as a universal human experience, we can approach an understanding of the guidelines provided by Antonio Gramsci’s works about the definition for the “organic” intellectual.⁸⁸⁶ Based on the theoretical precepts suggested by

⁸⁸⁶ See Antonio Gramsci, *La formación de los intelectuales*.

Gramsci, we can identify the ideological origins which may help us understand the particular case of the Nahua intellectuals referred to in this study.

Also, through the analysis of their biographical information, we can appreciate how Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla, Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma, and Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca all shared a series of characteristics based on the time period in which they were born and the way in which they gained access to education. They also shared common aspects about social class, education, and political participation rooted in their Mesoamerican ethnic background. As indigenous inhabitants of Mexico City, these Nahua individuals related to each other based on their common experiences since the social system prevailing in the Spanish colony kept forced them into semi-segregated social circles. For instance, these Nahua individuals gained access to education in institutions that focused on the exclusive education of Indigenous Peoples in the territory, such as the *Colegio de San Gregorio* and the *Academia de San Carlos*, both schools settled in Mexico City.

Once these individuals gained access to these educational cloisters, they developed bonds of common identity with the rest of their classmates and professors and several of them shared life experiences in common as Indigenous Peoples. Considering that these individuals entered into these educational institutions during the last decades of the Spanish colonial era, they also collectively belonged to one of the last generations of young Indigenous Peoples who were educated under these semi-segregated cloisters sponsored by the colonial regime.

The transition that New Spain as a colony experienced during the process of its independence from Spain remained as one of the major political changes that this group of individuals shared in common. Even before this major event of independence, Spain also sustained a series of changes and events that allowed their subjects in the Americas play a role that they had never tried before. For instance, the French invasion of the Spanish Peninsula in 1808, and the consequent imposition of Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain and the overthrowing of King Ferdinand VII, drove both the Spaniards from the peninsula and the inhabitants of the Spanish Americas to play a more active role in Imperial politics that had no previous antecedent. The formation of several representative *juntas* and Cortes in the Americas placed the inhabitants of the Spanish colonies in a position of power that they had never experienced before. In these *juntas* and Cortes the participation of members from diverse *castas*, such as *mestizos*, *peninsulares*, *indios* and *mulatos* provided these members and their communities with their first intense experience about government and sovereignty beyond their local communities. The members of the “rupture generation” still remained young mostly in the condition of students when these events occurred, which prevented them from actively taking part of any political action inspired by these events. Nevertheless, these major political changes paved the way for a new social context in which these Nahua intellectuals developed.

The previously mentioned political transformations also affected the way these Nahua intellectuals continued with their lives in Mexico City. Their experiences started from the abolition of the *casta* system, which erased the term *indio* as a judicial figure, to the legal attempts that the government of the city led in order to dissolve the independent entities of the *parcialidades indígenas*. The sharing of these events in common influenced the way these Nahua intellectuals developed and constructed not only their own collective identity, but these circumstances also determined the roles that they each decided to play facing these changes. All these experiences of life, as well as this group's sharing of a common ethnic identity, remained as important social elements that identified them as the members of a specific generation of Nahua intellectuals in Mexico City.

Thus, the term "rupture generation" serves in this dissertation as a movable and heterogeneous category to identify these individuals as a specific group who experienced the major transitions of these political systems: i.e. from being segregated indigenous members of a colony, to reconstructing their identity as citizens of a newly declared republic. On the other hand, the social changes caused by the independence of Mexico from Spain, placed these Nahua intellectuals into a new social and justice system in which they had to redevelop and redefine the place that they and their communities would occupy in this new system.

During this period of transition, despite the fact that these Nahua men were still young individuals at the time that this major political transitions occurred, these Nahua intellectuals always expressed their opinions and made public the effects that these changes brought to the indigenous communities in Mexico City. For instance, at their early ages both Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, as student of sculpture in the *Academia de San Carlos*, and Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla, as student in the *Colegio de San Gregorio*, expressed the opinion that they had towards the current political situation of the peninsula and New Spain. Pedro Patiño presented a drawing that he entitled *The Burden Bearer* in which Patiño Ixtolinque expressed his concerns about how the Bourbon Reforms had affected indigenous communities. This drawing presented an open criticism to the royal regime in Spain that had extracted the economic resources held in indigenous *cajas de comunidad* in order to settle expenses that Spain had generated in its many wars. Later on, Juan Rodríguez Puebla also produced his first intellectual work. The document that Juan Rodríguez published under the pseudonym of the *Indio Constitucional* followed the format of a pamphlet. In this document Juan Rodríguez offered open disapproval to both the implementation and the negative effects that the Bourbon Reforms had on the indigenous population of the Americas. Later on, both Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque and Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla also created other works through which they also criticized other current issues.

For instance, in 1817 Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque executed a bas-relief that he entitled *El Rey Wamba rehusa la corona y es amenazado por uno de sus electores*. In this work Patiño Ixtolinque disapproved the role that King Ferdinand VII had taken towards the autonomous role that both the *juntas* and the Cortes held during his absence. However, the fact that Pedro Patiño

considered the most aggravating detail remained King Ferdinand VII's repudiation of the Constitution of 1812 and the liberties that this document had recognized for all the Spanish subjects, both in the peninsula and in the Americas. Seconding this argument, Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla published his next pamphlet, using the same pseudonym, in which he presented similar arguments criticizing the negative response that Ferdinand VII had towards both popular sovereignty and collective participation.

Years later, the political participation that Francisco de Mendoza had in matters concerning the defense of collective property for Indigenous Peoples demonstrated the interests and active roles that this Nahua intellectual took in favor of indigenous communities. The role that Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma played in the defense of the economic autonomy of indigenous communities revealed the social recognition that he enjoyed as a leader of the community, not only among indigenous communities in Mexico City, but also in regions outside the capital city. The available documentation also reveals the interest that Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma had also in protecting communal property among indigenous communities from places far from the capital. In this endeavor Mendoza y Moctezuma was not alone since Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque and Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca also eventually joined him in their efforts to contribute to the defense of indigenous communal property. On the other hand, Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla occupied himself mainly in improving the education that the *Colegio de San Gregorio* provided to indigenous communities. In order to achieve this enterprise, Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla transformed the curriculum of the school and sought to provide its students with urban social skills for their advancement as graduated students.

In the consequent decades of the nineteenth century, and after his colleagues had passed away, Faustino Chimalpopoca decided to keep alive the memory of several historical materials that preserved the history of indigenous lives and their historic territories. Faustino Chimalpopoca witnessed the way in which the country conducted its new policies of "equality" and how these implementations and new laws had affected indigenous communities. The decline of the Nahuatl language as a *lingua franca* in both the bureaucratic and justice spheres after the third decade of the nineteenth century in Mexico responded to a series of political principles rooted in the theory of liberalism. The recent Mexican Republic held to the principles of civic equality, and the way in which Mexican authorities put this principle to practice focused on homogenizing the way people had access to diverse governmental institutions. One of the several effects of this policy led to the decline of the use of indigenous languages, such as the Nahuatl, as intuitively acceptable means of legal and bureaucratic communication. As a consequence of this situation, most of the documents written in indigenous languages stopped being used as acceptable forms of documentation in diverse spheres of the government due to the lack of interpreters and translators in the new court systems. Thus, given their lack of practical usefulness, these indigenous documents ran the risk of becoming lost or devalued. Faustino Chimalpopoca's interest in preserving Nahua historical documents followed from his self-perceived duty as intellectual historian.

During the period of the French intervention in Mexico, Faustino Chimalpopoca visualized the appointment of Emperor Maximilian as an opportunity to reestablish the legal instances that worked in favor of indigenous communities, which the new republican system had promptly abolished. Since diverse reforms that the new government implemented had already affected the way Indigenous Peoples administered and held property, Emperor Maximilian, deeply influenced by Faustino Chimalpopoca's advice, created the *Junta Protectora de las Clases Menesterosas*. Although this *junta* intended to alleviate the problems that afflicted the pauperized groups in the country, in reality the *junta* mostly worked towards the resolution that indigenous communities sought regarding their communal land rights. In other words, it can be interpreted that the creation of the *Junta Protectora* represented the culmination of the efforts of Mr. Chimalpopoca and his generation of Nahua intellectuals in the reestablishment of legal instances that could serve as intermediaries between indigenous communities and government institutions.

Through the study of the work produced by Pedro Patiño Ixtolinque, Juan de Dios Rodríguez Puebla, Francisco de Mendoza y Moctezuma, and Faustino Galicia Chimalpopoca we can see a common trend in their shared interest in defending their communal rights during a period of time when the independent system of government threatened their collective identity. The works produced by these intellectuals also revealed their efforts for re-elaborating and re-constructing their collective identity as Indigenous Peoples during this period of major political and social changes.

The ancestral knowledge that these Nahua intellectuals had about their history and their self recognition as the legitimate inhabitants of the country confirmed the Mesoamerican roots that they had acquired during their early years. This self recognition in addition to the familiarity with western theories about natural law, the principles of *ius gentium*, and the concepts of sovereignty and popular participation played an important role in the way these intellectuals decided to act in public spheres toward the defense and discussion of issues of their collective concern. All of these Nahua intellectuals' actions within public spheres also enabled them to produce a series of historical documents that give us evidence of the way and the means in which they confronted a new political system rooted in the theoretical open suppression of differences in terms of legal rights.

The intellectual manifestations created by these Nahua individuals represent the continuation of an ancient Mesoamerican intellectual tradition that, after the time of the Spanish conquest, remained exposed to western intellectual principles. These Nahua intellectuals represent the complex process of synergy in which both Mesoamerican and Western elements took part in the creation of a nineteenth-century Nahua intellectual tradition. Consequently, in the specific case of Mexico City, the indigenous representatives of this phenomenon displayed their knowledge in both traditional Mesoamerican ways and also through their familiarity and understanding of the colonial institutions established by the Spanish authorities.

Throughout this complex process that started approximately during the early decades of the sixteenth century, and that lasted until the third decade of the nineteenth century, several Nahua intellectuals in Mexico City developed their own collective identity through the creation of a diverse literature and other types of work. Nevertheless, Nahua intellectuals from the early nineteenth century also developed their own political identity based on a particular historical context. This Nahua intellectual position can be understood as an emergent political identity that can be defined as “[a series of social elements that are] required to belong to a political community. [...] The identification with those rules creates a common political identity among persons otherwise engaged in many different enterprises and communities.”⁸⁸⁷ The common bond that these Nahua intellectuals had with the rest of their indigenous community members did not reside upon an idea of a common good, but rather on a series of characteristics that shaped their identity as members of an indigenous community.

Through the analysis of the works produced by these Nahua intellectuals we can also observe the way in which they took part in the shaping on their newly recognized citizenship. Following the republican definition of citizenship, based on the active participation and involvement of individuals from diverse political identities, the works produced by these Nahua intellectuals sought to actively participate in the shaping of the contemporary Mexican political system. Through the revision of these Nahua intellectuals’ works we can realize the way in which they actively engaged in political and social discussions that both affected and concerned them as members a larger indigenous community. In the great majority of these works, Nahua intellectuals expressed their concerns about specific elements of the policies enforced by the newly established Mexican political system. However, at the same time they always recognized the legitimacy of the prevalent political system at work. Joined to this idea, the principles of active participation and social representation remained as a constant element throughout the works produced by these Nahua intellectuals. This position resulted from both a long tradition of popular participation in colonial indigenous government, and also from the new ideas that political systems could be improved by the constant participation of their citizens. In this sense, Nahua intellectuals recognized their power and influence and they exercised them in their participation in social matters, either representing their individual interests or by defending communal indigenous concerns.

As members of a “rupture generation” that witnessed the major transformation of the political and social system in the territory, these Nahua intellectuals reflected in their works their own fears and hopes towards the Constitution of Cadiz and the values it promoted. Similarly, they also expressed the preoccupation that the declaration of independence of Mexico from Spain brought to Indigenous Peoples in Mexico. Both the witnessing and participation of these Nahua intellectuals in the republican political system in Mexico after the second decade of the nineteenth century revealed their high political consciousness. This phenomenon of participation

⁸⁸⁷ Chantal Mouffe, “Citizen and Political Identity,” *October*, Vol. 61, (Summer, 1992): 28-32, 31.

and their engaging in issues that affected or influenced their indigenous communities also gives evidence to one of the multiple characteristics identifiable among all intellectual spheres.

Another factor held in common among these Nahua intellectuals, members of the “rupture generation,” centered on their battle against the discriminatory republican system that negatively impacted indigenous communities after the declaration of the independence of Mexico. The analysis and critical approach that these Nahua intellectuals had towards the ideas promoted by early Mexican liberalism settled on the principles of equality that the same theory sustained. According to these Nahua intellectuals’ ideas, the political theory of liberalism preached the principles of equality, but not of equity, which resulted in the rejection and exclusion of certain sectors of the population, such as their indigenous communities. In any case, during the third decade of the nineteenth century, these Nahua intellectuals’ discourse based their rhetorical arguments on the flaws that the republican system offered for indigenous communities, which resulted in both their exclusion and their further marginalization. As a direct result of this peripheral condition, the principles promoted by political liberalism acted as means of prolonging colonialism through the open discrimination of Indigenous Peoples. In summary, I support the idea that the prevalent argument in all these Nahua intellectuals’ works reviewed in this current study declared the ignorance that the newly established political system had towards “*difference*” in general. Thus, in their works produced during the third decade of the nineteenth century these Nahua intellectuals called the attention of politicians to this exclusive and homogenizing character of the policies that the high political sphere sought to implement in Mexico City. Thus, these Nahua intellectuals constantly brought to the city authorities’ attention the deficient political system that promoted social hegemony. The members of the “rupture generation” argued that the city officials, instead of working toward considering the social differences that existed in Mexico City at that time, sought to implement a plan of homogenization regardless of the ethnic and social differences. These Nahua intellectuals considered that this pursuit of hegemony would result in a much wider system of social exclusion, which eventually would dispossess Indigenous Peoples from their means to participate as equals in the shaping of Mexican history.

The construction of this historical discourse depends on several factors. One of these elements is the social position and the access to governmental institutions that individuals have in any society. As the scholar Jonathan Friedman has asserted, the construction of historical discourse is positional, “[...] it is dependent upon where one is located in social reality, within society, and within the global process.”⁸⁸⁸ This historical discourse expressed through the works of these Nahua intellectuals reflected the way in which they constructed their collective identity and the perspective through which they interpreted their indigenous reality. So, these Nahua intellectuals conceived their own past, both individual and collective, in order to create their own

⁸⁸⁸ Jonathan Friedman, “Myth, History and Political Identity,” *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (May, 1992):194-210, 194.

self-identity, or “selfdom,” during a time when collective identities remained under construction. The early decades of Mexico as an independent country represented a major change for all the spheres of the society. The social transformation the Constitution of Cadiz brought about and the subsequent independence of Mexico generated a phenomenon of transformation of the collective identity.

During this process of change, as Friedman also suggests, a vast literature and materials emerge in order to redefine, relocate and reinforce old and new collective identities. This process of political transformation in Mexican history is not an exceptional historical phenomenon, which is the reason why we currently have vast documentation that testifies to the transformation of collective identities during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Through a series of nineteenth-century political and social debates written by diverse individuals of the political and social spheres, we can observe the way certain sectors of this society reconfigured their historical discourse in order to place their corresponding members into the new reality. The case of these Nahua intellectuals, as well as the indigenous social groups that they represented, cannot be excluded from this historical process. During the process of these political changes, these Nahua intellectuals remained active and produced their own discursive sources through which they revisited their Mesoamerican past and reconfigured their collective indigenous identity, as other groups of Mexican society did as well. In this process of re-defining themselves as Indigenous Peoples, these Nahua intellectuals also revisited and analyzed the impact that the Spanish domination had on their indigenous communities and the way that they had interpreted their own life, history, as well as their past and present. Through the analysis of their own history, as well as the critical approach to the process of European dominance, these Nahua intellectuals remained fully conscious about the colonial condition that the Spanish system had placed over them and their indigenous past.

From a historical perspective that their predecessors did not possess, these members of the “rupture generation” recognized and assessed the results that colonialism had both on their own history and on that of their indigenous communities. Through the analysis of their own history and the observation of their present, these Nahua intellectuals give evidence to the negative results that colonialism had on the spirit of Indigenous Peoples. Therefore, these Nahua intellectuals created works in which they exposed and condemned this process of subjugation. By recognizing the effects that colonialism had on the perception that people had about their own human condition and collective history, as Friedman suggested, these Nahua intellectuals placed their shared identity as a work under construction. Nevertheless, the exclusive nature of politics in independent Mexico, with its mission of creating a homogenized national identity, ignored the historical differences and rejected the postulations these Nahua intellectuals had expressed through their works.

In a period of time when Mexican official historiography took shape, several works, ideas and debates inserted into the newly formed historical argument. As a result of the shaping of this

historiographical construction, Mesoamerican iconographic representations became alienated from their historical makers, and various historical heroes and villains took shape. During this long process, indigenous communities remained excluded under a homogenizing system that denied the social and historical differences that prevailed among the newly named Mexicans. Although the history of Indigenous Peoples indeed took place within the new historical explanation of the past in Mexico, the history of the original inhabitants of Mexico City took a toll that none of the reviewed Nahua intellectuals intended. As a result, Mexican official historiography divested Nahua intellectuals, and as a consequence it removed Indigenous Peoples in general from them their power, diligence, and agency to create their own history and to interpret social developments from their own critical perspective. The political system that prevailed in Mexico after 1821 disarticulated the efforts that the members of the “rupture generation” presented in order to play a part in the history of a newly formed nation. Nevertheless, indigenous intellectuality continued during these years, under other forms and through another generation of intellectuals who wrote their history from a different perspective.

In the final analysis, as historians we have all been guilty of ignoring the participation that Nahua intellectuals had in the historical development of Mexico City. However, their works, ideas, and thoughts remained there, currently housed in diverse archives. As historians, our duty should be to constantly revisit our own ways of approaching history. It is my hope that this present dissertation contributes to the de-colonizing process begun by these Nahua intellectuals, and allows them in our present day to express their own voices, which we have kept silenced for so long due to our own reduced interpretations of history.