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SIXTEENTH- CENTURY MEXICO

The Work of Sahagún

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To *Father Ángel María Caribay Kintana (1892-1967) and
Doctor Howard Francis Cline (1915-71), whose force-
ful presence in all discussions of the things of
New Spain not even time can stay.*

The Rhetorical Orations, or *Huehuetlatolli*,
Collected by Sahagún*

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Of all the material gathered by Sahagún, none is as rich in language or as revealing of the pre-Hispanic Indian mind and thought as the rhetorical orations, generally called *huehuetlatolli*. There are some eighty-nine such orations, all told, scattered throughout the Madrid and Florentine codices, making these the richest repository of *huehuetlatolli* in all Nahuatl literature. Sixty make up Book 6 of the Florentine Codex, there is one in Book 12 of this same codex, and there are two in the "Primeros Memoriales." The twenty-six remaining orations can

* All translations of texts from Spanish and Nahuatl contained in this chapter are by the author. When they are from the Florentine Codex, the Nahuatl text of the Dibble and Anderson edition is cited by book and page number.

be found in corresponding texts of the Madrid and Florentine codices.¹ (See Tables 9-14, pages 100-107 in this chapter.)

The authenticity of these orations—which was debated by a number of Sahagún's contemporaries who saw, or wished to see, Indians as barbarians—is unquestionable to us today precisely for the reason that Sahagún himself gave in his prologue to Book 6: "... it is not possible for the human mind to invent what is written in this book, nor is there a man living capable of inventing the language contained in it" (Sahagún 1956:2:54).

There are two other collections of *huehuetlatolli* of importance, one gathered by Fray Andrés de Olmos in the sixteenth century (Bautista 1600) and one attributed to Carochi in the seventeenth century (Garibay 1943).² It is noteworthy that the three great Nahuatlatoles among the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century friars—Olmos, Sahagún, and Carochi—collected these texts. The two best Nahuatl grammars extant are those of Olmos (1875) and Carochi (1892), and had Sahagún's not been lost, it is highly probable that his would have been added to the list. Indeed, anyone concerned with the fine points of the Nahuatl language as well as the ancient traditions of the Nahuas, as were these three, would be interested in the stylistic, linguistic, and conceptual intricacies of the *huehuetlatolli*.

What exactly are *huehuetlatolli*? Molina, in his dictionary (1970), defines the term as "ancient history of sayings of the elders." Fray Juan Bautista, who published the orations collected by Olmos in 1600 with a rather free translation, entitled the book *Huehuetlatolli, O Pláticas de los Viejos*, and this has generally been the accepted meaning of the word. Both Garibay (1943:3; 1953-54:1:401ff; 1963:140) and León-Portilla (1959:17-18), who refer to them as "didactic discourses," adhere to this interpretation and call them "Orations of the Elders" or "of the Old Men." Garibay (1943:3) defines them as "orations and doctrinal precepts by means of which the ancient Mexicans instructed the children in good morals and in what could be called the practice of social forms," and León-Portilla (1963:192) as "didactic discourses, or exhortations addressed to the boys of the *Calmecac* or *Telpochcalli*, as well as to adults, upon such occasions as marriage and funeral rites, for the purpose of inculcating moral ideas and principles."

In his *Historia de la Literatura Náhuatl*, in the chapter entitled

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"Discursos Didácticos," in which he discusses the *huehuetlatolli*, Garibay (1953-54:1:427) omits an analysis of the first nine chapters of Book 6 of the Florentine Codex, which are the prayers to the gods, giving as his reason that "it is not directly relevant to my subject." By the same token, in his introduction to the *huehuetlatolli* collected by Carochi, to which he himself gave the title "Huehuetlatolli, Documento A," he describes this group of texts as "not properly a *huehuetlatolli* but a miscellany of forms used in social intercourse" (Garibay 1943:3). In fact, it contains such texts as the salutations of a woman stopping by the house of her kinsman on her way to market; congratulations to a newly married couple and a series of orations by various people involved in this important event, including the matchmakers; orations to a ruler and his wife on the birth of their child; an oration addressed to a deceased ruler and one of condolence to his lords; a series of salutations by children to their elders and the elders' replies; and one by the elders to some singers, among others. Of the forty-eight separate texts, most of them fairly short, that comprise this series of orations, exactly two deal with the rearing of children. Nevertheless, Garibay (1953-54:1:440) states that "their didactic character, their antiquity and the form in which they are preserved, prompted me to give them the title, *Huehuetlatolli*."

Similarly, the *Huehuetlatolli* of Olmos contains an oration on the occasion of one woman visiting another, a salutatory oration from a lord to a ruler, an oration of consolation from one lord to another dealing with a mishap that befell the latter, an address made by the lord of Texcoco to the people, another by the lords of Tlaxcala concerning the governing of the city, and others of a like nature, interspersed with what might be called "didactic discourses," such as those of a father to his son and a mother to her daughter, which deal with the social and moral aspects of their compartment.

In Book 6 of the Florentine Codex, too, the majority of the orations are nondidactic in character. In addition to the nine prayers to the gods at the beginning of the book, there is a series of orations delivered on the election of a new king which cover seven chapters of the book, and an extensive cycle of discourses, extending over eighteen chapters, dealing with marriage, pregnancy, childbirth, the naming of the child, and so forth, ending with the child's entrance into the *calmecac*, or *telpochcalli*.

Occasionally an instructive note is sounded in these orations, such as when the young groom is advised of his responsibilities as a husband, but as compared with the orations of the parents to their sons and daughters instructing them in a correct way of life and proper conduct in society—which, incidentally, span a scant six chapters in this book—they could scarcely be called didactic. The same is true of the *huehuetlatolli* of the merchants found in Book 9, as well as others found in the Madrid and Florentine codices, which we will consider in more detail below.

Since the nine prayers in Book 6 are so patently nondidactic, why, if they are not relevant to the material contained in the book, as Garibay states, did Sahagún include them? Moreover, why did he place them at the beginning of the book and not put them at the end, or in an appendix, as he did with addenda in other books? Furthermore, we must ask, why is the “Huehuetlatolli, Documento A” almost entirely given over to discourses presented on social occasions, and why do we find texts of a similar socially ceremonial nature making up the bulk of the *Huehuetlatolli* of Olmos?

As remarked above, Molina gives the meaning of *huehuetlatolli* as “ancient history or sayings of the elders.” The word is compounded of *huehue*, “old man” or “man of old,” and *tlatolli*, which Molina defines as “word, oration, or language.”

Thus *huehuetlatolli* can mean “the words of the elders” or “ancient,” the “orations of the elders” or “ancients,” or the “language of the elders” or “ancients.” In my opinion it has all these meanings. The *huehuetlatolli* were the rhetorical orations in general—the prayers, discourses, salutations, and congratulatory speeches—in which the traditional religious, moral, and social concepts handed down from generation to generation were expressed in traditional language—that is, rhetorical language. Hence Sahagún’s title to Book 6: “Of the Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy and Theology of the Mexican people, in which there are many niceties with respect to the elegance of their language and many fine things with respect to the moral virtues.” (Sahagún 1956:2:51). And just before Chapter 1 is the statement, “Here begins the sixth book containing the prayers with which they prayed to the gods and the Rhetoric, and Moral Philosophy and Theology in one and the same context.” (Sahagún 1956:2:55). “Moral Philosophy” in this case must

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be understood in the wider sixteenth-century sense of proper conduct, good manners, and correct behavior, as well as in its ethical sense.³ The term “rhetoric” is similarly broad. Sahagún obviously is not referring to the ancient Greco-Roman art of oratory but to the humanistic rhetoric of his own time, which enjoyed a wider range of subject matter and style. As Garibay states with respect to Sahagún’s use of these terms, as well as that of “theology,” “It is pure analogy and one cannot apply to the procedures of the Mexican people those that were taken from the Greeks” (Sahagún 1956:2:48).

Nevertheless, there is a striking similarity between the humanistic rhetoric of the Renaissance, in which the imitation of great orators was fundamental to rhetorical training, and the method used by the Aztecs, and this similarity could not have escaped the friars. As Fray Juan de Tovar explained to Fray Joseph de Acosta (García Icazbalceta (1947: 4:92): “. . . in order to preserve word for word [the orations and poems] as declaimed by the orators and poets, the young lords who were to be their successors were drilled in them and, with constant repetition they committed them to memory without changing so much as a word, taking as their method the most famous orations composed in each era in order to instruct the young men who were to be orators. . . .” Basing his statement on earlier sources, Clavijero (1958:2:273ff.) also affirms that “those who were destined to be orators were instructed from childhood to speak well, and they made them learn by memory the most famous discourses of their forebears, which had been handed down from father to son. They particularly employed their eloquence in embassies, in deliberations in council and in congratulatory orations to new kings.”

To speak well was fundamental to the education of the Aztecs. Pomar (n.d.:27) tells us: “To this house [calmecac] . . . came the sons of the king and of the other lords, and a few [sons] of commoners. They spent the day teaching them to speak well, to govern well, and to hear suits. . . .” And he goes on to say that the boys who went to the *telpochcalli* were taught the same things except for certain religious rites reserved exclusively for the priests. According to the Florentine Codex (Sahagún 1950-69:3:64), in the *calmecac* “they were thoroughly instructed in good speech [and] he who did not speak well, who did not greet people properly, they pricked [with maguey thorns].”

To the Aztecs, the importance of teaching a child to speak properly

and to greet people properly extended beyond the social amenities normally associated with good breeding, refinement, and civility, although these characteristics were highly valued by this once rough and barbaric people. In the child who learned to speak with eloquence, to turn a mellifluous phrase, were the seeds of the future orator who would be made to learn the discourses of the great orators in the past, the *huehuetlatolli*, in which many of the religious and social traditions and much of the knowledge and lore of the ancients were preserved. The picture codices contained only the bold outlines of religious concepts, historical events, and social practices, and this form of writing gives the lie to the old adage, "one picture is worth a thousand words." As Tovar so aptly expressed it (García Icazbalceta 1947:4:92), "Although they had diverse figures and characters with which they wrote, this was not as adequate as our writing to permit each one to say what was written, word for word, without variation; they [the words] could only agree [with the pictures] in concept." It was the words of the orators that brought alive and kept alive the traditions of the people. Thus Molina's definition, "ancient history or sayings of the elders," is figuratively, if not literally, correct. This is the essence of the *huehuetlatolli*, and nowhere is it better exemplified than in those collected by Sahagún.

Where did Sahagún collect them? Garibay (1953-54:1:426ff) has some contradictory things to say about Sahagún's sources which need to be reviewed in order to clarify this question. Fray Andrés de Olmos finished his *Arte de la lengua Mexicana*, to which the first part of his *huehuetlatolli* (the oration of the father to his son and the son's reply) was appended, on January 1, 1547, and Sahagún gathered the *huehuetlatolli* contained in Book 6 in the same year.⁴ Garibay thought, in view of these dates, that either Olmos and Sahagún had gathered the material in Texcoco in a collaborative effort or else that Sahagún had collected his *huehuetlatolli* under the supervision, and in emulation, of Olmos (Garibay 1953-54:1:426ff; Sahagún 1956:2:42). Probably because he could never satisfactorily explain away the notable discrepancies in style which, after a close study, would have to obviate the possibility of both series of *pláticas* coming from the same region, Garibay came to the conclusion, though he does not say how or why, that Sahagún gathered his material for Book 6 in Tlaltelolco (Sahagún 1956:2:43). In this opinion I concur. It is not certain where Olmos was

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in the years 1546-47, nor for that matter where Sahagún was. We know, however, that in 1545, the year of the great plague, Sahagún was in Tlaltelolco tending the sick and burying the dead. When the plague was on the wane, in 1546, Sahagún was felled by it and nearly died. Though we have no record of Sahagún's whereabouts in 1547, the year that he gathered the *huehuetlatolli*, it is highly probable that, after so debilitating an illness, he remained in Tlaltelolco. Garibay considers the possibility that Sahagún might have acquired these texts in Tepepulco, the first site of his later researches for the projected *General History*, but the stylistic differences between the "Amonestaciones de los Magistrados" of the "Primeros Memoriales" and the *pláticas* of Book 6 of the Florentine Codex negate this theory completely. In linguistic style and usage, indeed, Book 6 bears a strong resemblance to the texts of the Madrid and Florentine codices that Sahagún gathered in Tlaltelolco or Tenochtitlan or both. The material is unmistakably from the same region. Undoubtedly Sahagún knew about Olmos' work; possibly he was even influenced by him. But it is equally possible that, as an earnest student of the Nahuatl language and customs, he collected the *huehuetlatolli* in Book 6 on his own initiative and for his own purposes. There is no question that, in depth and scope, the *pláticas* that Sahagún gathered far exceed those of Olmos.

Although, as Sahagún states, "the first turf was cut" for his *General History* in Tepepulco, where he went in the year 1558 (Sahagún 1956:1:105), it would appear that, methodologically speaking, he had already made a beginning when he gathered the orations in 1547. The *pláticas* he took down were those of the nobles and wealthy merchants, rendered in rich and elegant language, probably the best example we have of Nahuatl rhetorical style. His informants, then as later, would have to have been principales, as he called them: priests, high-ranking dignitaries in civil and military affairs, former rulers, and the very wealthy merchants who themselves enjoyed the status of nobles. Only those who had heard the *pláticas* over and over, or had been trained in them, could have remembered them with such accuracy.

The *huehuetlatolli* of Sahagún, both those contained in Book 6 of the Florentine Codex and those found in other parts of the Florentine and Madrid codices, fall into the following general categories:

PRAYERS TO THE GODS

There are twelve prayers to the gods, eleven of them to Tezcatlipoca, ruler of heaven and earth and all mankind, who capriciously bestowed riches or poverty, sickness or health, honor or disgrace, and just as capriciously took them back. In these supplications he is invoked in time of plague to remove the pestilence, in time of want to send riches and abundance, in time of war to help vanquish the enemy, and in time of sickness to abate the suffering. He is also called upon to aid a newly elected ruler in his task of governing, to provide a new ruler when the old one dies, and to remove a bad king by doing away with him. In addition he is supplicated in two prayers by a confessor on behalf of a confessant, one text of which also contains the priest's admonitory oration to the confessant.

Seven of the prayers, and one to Tlaloc asking for rain in time of severe drought, were, as the texts state, rendered by priests. They are in Book 6, together with the prayer to Tezcatlipoca by a newly elected king. One of the confession prayers is in Book 1, and in Book 3 there are two prayers by a layman requesting relief from poverty and illness.

The nature and powers of Tezcatlipoca are nowhere more sharply etched than in these texts. There are, first of all, the names by which he is invoked: Tloque Nahuaque, literally "Lord of the Near, Lord of the Close," figuratively the supreme lord, the lord who is everywhere, in everything, upon whom all depend.⁵ Other names are: Yohualli Ehecatl, "Night, Wind," that is, invisible and impalpable; Moyocoyatzin, "Capricious One"; Monenequi, "Tyrannical One"; Titlacahuan, "Our Master" (literally "we are his slaves"); Teimatini, "Knower of People"; Techichihuani, "Adorner of People"; Yaotl, "The Enemy"; Necoc Yaotl, "The Enemy on Both Sides"; Moquequeloa, "The Mockler"; Ipalnemoani, "Giver of Life" (literally "by virtue of whom one lives"); and Teyocoyani, "Creator of Man." They bespeak awesome and frightening powers, an arbitrariness against which man is powerless.

Nevertheless, as these prayers reveal, the pre-Hispanic Indian accommodated himself fairly well to these conditions. A certain pattern of interplay between man and deity emerges in these supplications, with the burden placed on the god. In the prayer to Tezcatlipoca in time

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of plague, the catastrophe is viewed by the priest as a punishment visited upon the people, a manifestation of the deity's wrath. In a nicety of logic, the priest tells the god that "our tribute is death . . . all come to pay the tribute to death on earth" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:4); this being so, the priest asks why Tezcatlipoca does not permit each one to die in the manner fated for him, allowing those destined to suffer an ordinary death to go to Mictlan, the "Region of the Dead," below, and the warriors destined for death in battle, to Tonatiuh Ichan, the "House of the Sun."

Similarly, in the prayer in which Tezcatlipoca is asked to alleviate poverty, the priest beseeches "the lord of plenty, the lord of sweetness, of fragrance, of riches, of abundance" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:8) to give the poor and needy some respite from their misery, if only for a brief time. Since the deity can dispense and remove riches at will, what harm can it do for the poor to enjoy them for a while? Should their wealth make them heady, he can always strip them of it and give it to others who are more deserving.

Once again, in the prayer to Tlaloc, in time of drought, after describing the dire conditions of the people wracked by famine, the priest remarks that it would be better if the land were ravaged by plague or by war, for as those who die are given food offerings as provisions for their journey into the beyond, they would thus be provided with something to eat.

In the prayers that treat of the affairs of government, on the death of a king Tezcatlipoca is requested to choose a new ruler, who is regarded as the deity's representative on earth, to be mother and father to the "orphaned" city and, once elected, to guide him and prevent him from ruling badly. But if he cannot, or will not, then the god is asked at least to send him to the field of battle where he can die an honorable death and go "as a precious jade, a turquoise, an armlet" to the House of the Sun (Sahagún 1950-69:6:20). In the prayer in which Tezcatlipoca is asked to remove a bad king, besotted with privilege and power, this theme is amplified. The priest urges the deity to punish the offender at once, offering such alternatives as poverty, misery, or illness, although, says the priest, it would be better by far that the god mercifully put "his heart and body to rest" and let him go to join his ancestors in Mictlan, the Region of the Dead. The king himself, in a superb rogation charac-

terized by an excess of humility, tells Tezcatlipoca that there are better people born under the same sign as he, destined from birth to rule, to become "the drums and flutes" of the lord. But since this is the way the deity has willed it, the king will govern the people in accordance with the guidance of the lord. Whichever road he indicates, the king will follow, the implication being that if the king rules badly it is because the deity, for reasons of his own, has so willed it.

In the series of orations having to do with confession, the priest, defending the penitent, reminds Tezcatlipoca that the confessant has placed himself in danger by exposing his transgressions, for they may arouse the deity to anger. The lord must keep in mind that what is done is done, and there is no undoing it, that a man's acts are predetermined from birth and are not entirely of his own doing.

The relationship between man and the aloof, arbitrary god who held his fate in his hands is less subtly, but more graphically, revealed in a short oration in Book 3 by a person afflicted with an illness. He makes a vow to Tezcatlipoca that if he is cured, he will spend all he has in his service. When he does not recover he becomes vexed with the god and calls him a bugger. To which the text comments, "Some he [Tezcatlipoca] cured, he was not angered by this, but others died" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:12).

COURT ORATIONS

There are nine court orations. Seven of them, which are in the Florentine Codex, Book 6, were delivered on the occasion of the election of a new king, and two, in the "Primeros Memoriales," were declaimed in the court of justice. The orations having to do with the election of a new ruler include those addressed to him on his accession; those made by him, or by a noble or high-ranking dignitary versed in the arts of oratory, in his behalf; an oration by the king to his lords and nobles; one by a dignitary to the lords and nobles extolling the king's address; and finally, one to the king on their behalf. The court orations constitute a whole ceremonial.

In the first oration to the new king, which is quite long, and which as Sahagún's title states, contains "*cenca ohovi in machiotlatolli: cenca quaqualli in tenonotzaliztlatolli*" ("very abtruse metaphors and excellent

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words of counsel") (Sahagún 1950-69:6:47), the king is told that Tezcatlipoca put a "sign" or a "mark" on him, that he marked him with "black ink, red ink," for this exalted position. It was ordained that, because he was "the thorn, the maguey shoot" his forebears left planted in the earth, he would take up "the load, the carrying frame," the burden of government, which they set down when they departed. Like Tezcatlipoca whom he represents, his power is absolute, and he can be arbitrary and capricious: he can speak and listen with compassionate "lips and ears of the lord," or he can strike with "his fangs and claws." Thus he is urged to

Receive, speak to those who come in anguish,
 who come to receive what is fated for them . . .
 Take, reach for, arrive at the truth,
 for it is said, and it is true,
 that you are the substitute, the surrogate, of the
 Lord of All, the Supreme Lord,
 you are his drum, you are his flute;
 from within you he speaks (Sahagún 1950-69:6:50).

Thus he is cautioned to rule with dignity, restraint, and justice; he is not to frighten people with a show of power, but to use his vast powers judiciously.

After hearing a less weighty and more conventional oration of felicitation, the king, or someone speaking in his behalf, thanks the speakers for their "words of motherliness and fatherliness" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:61), the treasure of wisdom handed down to them which, like the swaddlings of a child, will fortify him and guide him in governing the people. It is not known what is fated for him. Perhaps his reign will be long and successful, the result of having ruled wisely, but perhaps he will rule badly and in a brief time the deity will remove him from office. As in all matters, it will be as the deity wills.

By far the longest and possibly the most informative oration of this series is that delivered by the king to the noble men and women, high functionaries, and great warriors, two-thirds of which is devoted to the evils of pulque. Its prolixity together with its severity of tone indicate that excessive drinking must have been a serious problem among the Aztecs. Pulque is likened to "a whirlwind, a cyclone that covers everything with evil, with wickedness" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:68). It is the

root of all other transgressions, such as thievery and adultery. It makes people liars and braggarts, it reduces them and their families to poverty, and it crazes them. Hence inebriation, like thievery and adultery, is punishable by death. The king enjoins his subjects to devote themselves to the rigors and discipline of the battlefield and the military where

“. . . the mother of the Sun, the father of the Sun, are born, come into being,
the Tlacatecatl, the Tlacochealcatl [the two high military commanders]
who provide drink, who provide food,
for the Sun and the Lord of the Earth” (Sahagún 1950-69:6:72).

If a man is a coward, however, he should devote himself to the cultivation of his lands to produce food for himself and the people. Eventually, one of them may be called to take the king's place or to govern in some other capacity in military or civilian affairs, and only a life of temperance and moderation in all things will make him fit for the task.

Two orations end this series, and, with it, the investiture ceremony. The first is addressed to those present—the nobles, lords, and warriors—and the second to the king on their behalf, lauding the newly elected king's words, “the precious jades, the precious turquoises” that he strewed before them, the teachings of the ancients which must serve as their guideline in life (Sahagún 1950-69:6:79).

In the first brief oration of the two in the “Primeros Memoriales” that belong in this series, a group of high functionaries and magistrates report to the king the cowardly conduct of a young warrior and suggest the sentence of death. The king agrees; they kill him and then report back to the king that the deed is done.

The second is an extremely lengthy oration involving four judges who speak successively to the people—lords, nobles, and commoners alike—about the neglect of their duties and their deplorable conduct. Parts of this text are dull and repetitious, and, excepting the oration of the fourth judge, none has the elegance and grace of the orations found in the Florentine Codex and other parts of the Madrid Codices. Nevertheless, it contains a great deal of ethnographic information, particularly with respect to the duties that the various high functionaries were expected to perform and the punishment for their neglect: either cutting off their locks (hairstyle was a symbol of rank), exile, or death.

ORATIONS OF PARENTS TO OFFSPRING

The series of orations rendered by a king, or noble, and his wife, to their children are six in number, and all are in Book 6 of the Florentine Codex. Four of these are addressed by the father to his sons. In the first, he instructs them in their duties as possible future rulers, exhorting them above all to be diligent in their devotions and in the propitiation of the gods, which will help them merit the kingship or else some high rank, for they were born to govern. Their task is to see to the ritual dancing and singing which give pleasure to the gods. They should also give attention to the crafts—featherwork, goldsmithery, and stonecutting—which in time of difficulty can buy food and drink for the people. He particularly exhorts them to see to the cultivation of the fields. “Where have I seen that one breakfasts, one dines on nobility?” he asks.

The sustenances of life . . .

are what walk, what move, what rejoice, what laugh . . .

In all truth it is said, they are the lords, they are the rulers, they are what conquer (Sahagún 1950-69:6:91).

In the second oration, the young men are urged to live lives of true humility, as did their ancestors who achieved great wealth and honor. Their way of life was an example, “a light, a torch, a mirror,” which they left to all (Sahagún 1950-69:6:107). To be meek, they are told, is to be noble and honored. True humility is rewarded with position, rank, and glory.

The third oration of the royal or noble father to his sons is on chastity and is probably the single most informative text on the Aztec concepts of purity and purification. The father enjoins his sons to lead chaste lives, or, should they marry, to be moderate in their sexual relations, because only the chaste or temperate are pleasing to the gods. According to this text those classed as pure, whose “hearts are as jades” (Sahagún 1950-69:6:113), were the small children, the virgin youths, and the celibate priests and priestesses; those who died by drowning or were struck by lightning, who went to dwell in Tlalocan; and those who died in battle and went to the House of the Sun. The last two were regarded as having been marked for their fate by the gods of these places. It would appear from this text that death by drowning, being struck by lightning, and

death in battle constituted acts of purification that made the individual desirable to the gods and eligible for those places of eternal delight and glory.

In contrast to the severe tone of these exhortatory addresses is the tender oration of the father to his daughter in which he tells her that the world is a place of great affliction mitigated only by a few pleasures; that she should give herself to a life of devotion and always comport herself in the manner becoming a noblewoman; that she should be diligent in learning and discharging her womanly tasks of weaving and preparing food; and finally that she should accept unhesitatingly and with good grace the husband chosen for her.

Finally, there are two parallel orations, one by the father to his son, the other by the mother to her daughter, instructing them in such mundane matters as the proper way to walk, talk, dress, eat, and how to conduct themselves in society generally, in which moderation in all things is stressed, the rule par excellence of Aztec life.

As Sahagún notes in his titles, these orations are rich both in language and in teachings and invaluable in what they reveal of the norms of conduct of the Aztecs. There is an emphasis on abstemiousness, austerity, proper conduct, and a regard for the opinions of others that bespeaks a rigidity controlled society.

ORATIONS OF THE MERCHANTS

With one exception only, the sixteen orations of the merchants which appear in Books 4, 5, and 9 of the Florentine Codex and in the corresponding texts of the Madrid Codices revolve around the three main events in a merchant's life: his departure for far-off regions, his return, and his sacrifice of slaves in propitiation of the gods. As in the case of the orations having to do with the newly elected king, these, too, are ceremonial in nature.

Three orations pertinent to the departure ceremony are found in Book 4 under the sign Ce Coatl, 1 Serpent, considered an auspicious day for departing, and there are five additional orations delivered on the same occasion in Book 9. The ceremony takes place before a large gathering at a feast given by the merchant who will lead the group. Those going out on the road for the first time, as well as the veterans, are addressed in

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a series of orations delivered by a merchant-elder, their mothers and fathers, and the old men and women of the community. They are exhorted to endure the hardships and perils of the road with courage and fortitude and if death is to be their fate, to meet it with valor, for death on the road for a merchant, like death in battle for a warrior, held the promise of a glorious afterlife in the House of the Sun. Devotion to the gods and humility toward others are stressed over and over again; the novices are instructed to serve their elders, to be humble toward them, to know their places always, and the experienced merchants are told to look after the youths and guide them. The leader of the group is particularly exhorted not to desert his companions, for whom he is responsible, along the way. A last exchange between the leader of the group and the elders and kin, in which he thanks them for their precious words and asks them to watch over his household, and the final farewell to the group, end this series of orations.

The next series was delivered when the merchant returned, at a ceremony symbolically called "the washing of the feet" (Sahagún 1950-69: 9:27ff.), which took place on two successive days and consisted of much eating, drinking, and speechmaking. On both occasions the returning merchant is addressed with extreme severity, despite his generosity and the obvious success of his trading expedition, not to mention his safe return. The elders question him closely about the honesty and diligence by which he acquired his goods. They speak to him so harshly, we are told, that they reduce him to tears. These are only ceremonial tears, however, for it quickly becomes clear that we are dealing with a set piece which, though ostensibly calculated to humble a merchant who has returned rich and prosperous from his journeys, is actually a reverse form of laudation. According to these texts, any merchant who made a display of his wealth ran the risk of being stripped of it by Moctezuma and put to death. Hence the merchants are cautioned again and again by the elders against any show of arrogance and ostentation, regardless of their riches (and the implication in these texts is that the merchants were extremely wealthy) and enjoined to lead sober and austere lives, dedicating themselves to the hardships of the road. Thus, we are told that the merchant-elders

"... admonished him [the merchant], they proffered him [words] full of sticks and stones, the words of the elders.

They heaped reprimands upon him that were like icy water, stinging nettles,
 painful words that penetrate like a burning, a smoking stick.
 They lashed out at him thus, so that his life would be longer"
 (Sahagún 1950-69:9:42).

The last two series of orations in Book 9 concern the preparations for the sacrificing of slaves in the fiesta of Panquetzaliztli, a celebration the merchants shared with the warriors. They start with the announcement of the returned merchant's vow to sacrifice slaves. This is followed by the counsel of the merchant-elders on the order of rites, the details of the feast that will accompany the event, their inspection of the preparations, and their final words to the merchant containing the traditional exhortation to lead a life of humility, morality, and religious devotion.

Finally, there is an eloquent oration in Book 5, the Book of Omens, rendered by the merchant-leader to his group when they have heard the cry of a *huactli*, or laughing falcon—an omen that one of them would die, fall ill, be devoured by wild beasts, or else that they would be robbed, or that their goods would be carried off by the water. These, he tells them, are the hazards of their calling, and they should prepare themselves to die courageously and with dignity, and thus bring honor to those who come after them.

ORATIONS RELATIVE TO THE LIFE CYCLE

There are some forty orations relative to the life cycle of which thirty-four are in Book 6 of the Florentine Codex, five in Book 3 and one in Book 4; the last six have corresponding texts in the Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace. With one exception, they are all orations of the nobles. Since the majority are in Book 6 of the Florentine, it will be assumed, unless otherwise indicated, that this is the source for the text under discussion.

Pregnancy

There are three series of orations on the occasion of the pregnancy of a newly married woman, beginning with the announcement of the event

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to the respective families, soon after conception, by two elders speaking on behalf of the prospective father. The second includes the felicitations to the pregnant woman by a member of the husband's family, when he gives her her first instructions on caring for herself and "the precious stone, the quetzal feather" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:135) she is carrying in her womb; an address to the parents of the couple by the same man; their reply;⁶ and a short oration by the pregnant woman thanking them for their congratulatory and instructive words. The third series takes place during the last months of pregnancy when the families gather together for the purpose of engaging a midwife; it consists of an exchange of orations between the family and the midwife concerning the serious task that lies ahead, and the latter's instructions to the pregnant woman for a successful delivery, which include numerous superstitious beliefs concerning pregnancy and childbirth.

Childbirth

At the time of childbirth the pregnant woman is regarded as a warrior going into battle. There is a series of four orations by the midwife starting with one to the parturient woman during a delayed delivery urging her to fight her battle courageously. When she does, and the child is born, the midwife shouts the war cry which signifies, according to the text:

"... that the woman had fought her battle well,
 that she had been a valiant warrior,
 that she had taken a captive,
 that she had captured a child" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:167).

Then the midwife addresses the child, welcoming him into the world, a harsh and unlovely place as she paints it, and performs the rite of cutting the umbilical cord and the consecration of the boy to the field of battle, or the girl to a life beside the hearth. This is followed by the bathing of the infant and an incantation invoking Chalchiuhtlicue, goddess of water, to exorcise the evil and filth with which the child was born.

Here again, we are dealing with a ceremonial, and now follow numerous congratulatory orations: from the midwife to the new mother; from the two families to the midwife on her successful delivery of the child and her reply cautioning the families against becoming presumptuous

because of the birth of the baby; orations by a noble elder of the city as well as those by ambassadors of neighboring states addressed to the two families and to the infant with the reverence due a future ruler. Including three orations of the commoners, there are twelve on the congratulatory theme. They follow a general formula, if not a particular order, and more or less the same ground is covered in all of them: a precious stone, a quetzal feather, has been born into a world full of pain and affliction. The child is the hair, nails, thorn, spine—that is, the offshoot—of his ancestors, and in him their glory is brought to life once more. What is fated for him? Will he live or will he die before reaching maturity? Will he bring glory to his ancestors or shame?

Following these is another series of orations at the time of the name-giving. In a brief account of this ceremony in Book 4, under the sign Ce Cuauhtli, a favorable sign for this event, there is a short oration to the child by the old men and women, welcoming him into the world, and one to the mother instructing her in caring for herself and the baby during the first weeks after parturition. In Book 6 are the incantations and orations of the midwife four days after birth, when she again bathes the child to purify him or her and also performs the name-giving ceremony and the placing of the child in the cradle for the first time.

Infancy and Childhood

The orations dealing with this portion of the child's life are seven in number. The first is delivered by the parents soon after the child's birth when the boy or girl is promised either to the calmecac and consecrated to Quetzalcoatl and the priesthood, or to the telpochcalli and consecrated to Tezcatlipoca and the military. At the time the boy or girl is actually entered in the school, the parents invite the instructors of the telpochcalli or the priests from the calmecac to a feast in their home where, in a series of brief orations found in the appendix to Book 3 of the Florentine Codex, the parents turn the child over to the priests or warriors to be educated. They accept the charge without guaranteeing the outcome, for, as they tell the parents, the boy or girl will develop in accordance with the fate determined by the sign under which he or she was born. Ending this group of orations are those to the boy by his

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father and to the girl by an old woman, in Book 6, in which they are told that they must now leave the comforts of their home and dedicate themselves to a life of devotion to the gods, austerity, obedience, and learning.

Marriage

In a series of oratorical exchanges between father and son and the father and the masters of the telpochcalli, which are too brief properly to be classed as orations, the decision is reached that the boy should marry and permission is granted that he leave his school. A prospective bride is chosen for him at a gathering of the family and kin, matchmakers are dispatched to ask for her hand, and after four visits to the girl's family and what Sahagún designates as "much specchifying," little of which is included in these texts, the bride's family gives its consent. Properly speaking, three orations are attendant upon the occasion of marriage. In the first, addressed to the bride by a member of the groom's family before she is carried to the groom's house for the wedding ceremony, she is told that she is now separating herself forever from her childhood and her family. She must now comport herself as a proper married woman and discharge her marital duties with diligence. The remaining two are delivered after the wedding ceremony, and they contain more specific words of counsel to the bride and groom by their respective in-laws.

Death

There are two orations to the dead. One, in Book 6 of the Florentine Codex, is addressed by the midwife to the woman who has died in childbirth with the child a captive in her womb and who became deified at the moment of her demise. In it the midwife eloquently bids her farewell and sends her off on her well-earned journey to the glorious House of the Sun where she will join her sister *mocihuaquetzque*, women warriors, who carry the sun on its course from midday to sundown. The second oration is contained in the appendix to Book 3 of the Florentine Codex and in the corresponding text of the Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace. It contains the words spoken to one who has died an ordinary death and is destined to go to Mictlan, the final abode of all, "a place

without a chimney, place without a vent" (Sahagún 1950-69:3:39), and also contains some words of condolence to the bereaved family.

MISCELLANEOUS

Lastly, there are two orations which do not fit into any of the other categories. Both are short. One, which occurs in Book 5, "The Book of Omens," contains the words of comfort spoken by a *tonalpouhqui*, a soothsayer, to someone who has heard a wild beast howl in the night, which was regarded as an omen of death or disaster. He advises the person in question not to place the blame upon the animal but to accept his fate as the will of the lord. The other, in Book 12, is Moctezuma's speech to Cortés on his arrival in Mexico-Tenochtitlan, an oration of great elegance and dignity in which the Indian monarch bows to his fate and welcomes Cortés as the next ruler of the land and successor to the throne that he, Moctezuma, has only been holding for him.

As Sahagún himself notes in the titles, both in Nahuatl and in Spanish, that he gave these prayers and orations, they are replete with exquisite figures of speech and elegant phrases. Indeed, no study of *huehuetlatolli* would be complete without some comments on style, but this is a subject that requires and deserves a separate consideration and wider treatment than can be given at this time.

Briefly, the rhetorical orations are characterized by the extensive use of metaphor, complementary phrasing, synonyms, and redundancy, as the reader may have noted in some of the texts and phrases quoted. In the majority of cases the words or phrases are paired and thus give a definite rhythmic pattern to the oration. Nahuatl rhetoric is richly poetic and imaginative.

Observe, for example, the paired words and phrases and the use of metaphor in the following text from the prayer to Tlaloc, in time of drought and famine:

"The sustenances of life are no more, they have vanished;
the gods, the providers, have carried them off,
they have hidden them away in Tlalocan.
They have sealed in a coffer, they have locked in a box

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their verdure, their freshness,
the cuphea, the fleabane, the purselane, the fig-marigold . . ."
(Sahagún 1950-69:6:36).

Particularly to be noted are the metaphors formed of two words (occasionally more) which together have a single meaning, a type of figure characteristic of the Nahuatl language.

Metaphor	Literal Meaning	Metaphorical Meaning
<i>Atl, tepetl</i>	Water, mountain	City
<i>Teuhtli, tlazolli</i>	Dirt, filth	Evil, vice
<i>Mixtitlan, ayauhtitlan</i>	Out of the clouds, out of the mists	A wonder
<i>Cuitlapilli, atlapalli</i>	Tail, wing	The common people
<i>Iztlaactli, tencualactli</i>	Saliva, spittle	Falsehood
<i>Petlatl, icpalli</i>	Mat, seat	Authority, the throne

Over and over one meets the same figures and the same phrases but always with some slight variation. That they are the product of the indigenous mind and culture, as Sahagún stated, is undeniable; they never could have been invented by a Spaniard. The rounded periods, the attention to detail, the emphasis on austerity, the preoccupation with death recall the monumentality, the realism, and the severity of Aztec sculpture. While the orations appear to be set in an established framework, within that framework they move and flow with a high degree of freedom and imagination. To us they seem repetitious, but to those who depended upon them for the transmission of their traditions, the set phrases could never fail to call up the desired images. This, primarily, was their purpose.

The classification and syntheses presented here of the rhetorical orations, or *huehuetlatolli*, collected by Sahagún demonstrate that these were not didactic discourses, as Garibay and Leon-Portilla define them, nor, in Soustelle's words (1956:223), "precepts of the elders" ("*preceptos de los ancianos*"), but were the orations handed down from generation to generation and delivered on key occasions, both religious and secular, for the purpose of perpetuating and preserving the religious, social, moral, and even historical traditions of a people whose form of picture writing was inadequate for this task. The series of orations on the investiture of the king, those on the departure and return of the mer-

TABLE 9
PRAYERS TO THE GODS

Addressed to	Subject	Orator	Florentine Codex	Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace	Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy
Tezcatlipoca	Want	Layman	3:11	137v	
Tezcatlipoca	Illness	Layman	3:12	138r-39v	
Tezcatlipoca	Plague	Priest	6:1-5		
Tezcatlipoca	Want	Priest	6:7-10		
Tezcatlipoca	War	Priest	6:11-15		
Tezcatlipoca	Election of king	Priest	6:17-20		
Tezcatlipoca	Replacement of dead king	Priest	6:21-25		
Tezcatlipoca	Removal of bad king	Priest	6:25-28		
Tezcatlipoca	Confession	Priest	1:8-11	49r-51v	
Tezcatlipoca	Confession	Priest	6:30-31		
Tezcatlipoca	Aid in ruling	Newly elected king	6:41-45		
Tlaloc	Drought	Priest	6:35-40		

TABLE 10
COURT ORATIONS

Addressed to	Subject	Orator	Florentine Codex	Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace	Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy
King	His election	Lord or noble	6:47-55		
King	His election	Lord or noble	6:57-59		
Lords and nobles	Gratitude for good wishes	King	6:61-62		
Lords and nobles	Gratitude for good wishes	Lord or noble on behalf of king	6:63-65		
Lords and nobles	Exhortation to moral life	King	6:67-77		
Lords and nobles	Lauding the oration of king	Lord or noble	6:79-82		
King	Gratitude for king's counsel	Elderly lord	6:83-85		
King	Cowardly warrior	Group of lords and nobles			65r
Lords, nobles, and commoners	Neglect of duties and immorality	4 judges			61v-64v

TABLE 11
ORATIONS OF PARENTS TO OFFSPRING

<i>Addressed to</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Orator</i>	<i>Florentine Codex</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy</i>
Sons	Duties as future rulers	Royal father	6:87-92		
Son	Humility	Royal father	6:105-11		
Son	Chastity	Royal father	6:113-19		
Son	Conduct in society	Royal father	6:121-26		
Daughter	Way of life	Royal father	6:93-98		
Daughter	Conduct in society	Royal mother	6:99-103		

TABLE 12
ORATIONS OF THE MERCHANTS

<i>Addressed to</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Orator</i>	<i>Florentine Codex</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy</i>
Novice merchant	Departure	Old merchants	4:61-64	216v-18v	
Veteran merchant	Departure	Old merchants	4:65-67	218v-20r	
Merchants and families	Departure	Merchant-leader	9:12		29f-29v
Merchant	Departure	Merchant-elder	9:13		29v
Merchant	Requesting he take son	Parents of novice	9:14		29v-30r
Novice merchant	Departure	Parents	9:14		30r
Merchant-elders	Departure	Merchant-leader	9:15		30r
Merchants	Departure	Merchant-elders	9:15		30r-30v
Merchant-elder	Return: 1st day, "washing of feet"	Returning merchant	9:27, 28		33f, 33v
Merchant	Return: 1st day	Merchant-elder	9:27, 29		33v-34f
Merchant	Return: 2d day	Merchant-elder	9:42-43		38f-38v
Merchant-guests	Vow to sacrifice slaves	Merchant	9:52-53		40v-41f
Merchant	Preparations for sacrifice of slaves	Merchant-elders	9:55-57		41f-41v
Group of merchants	Hearing a laughing falcon—evil omen	Merchant-leader	5:153-54	244v-45r	

TABLE 13
ORATIONS RELATIVE TO THE LIFE CYCLE

Addressed to	Subject	Orator	Fiorentine Codex	Madrid Codex	
				Royal Palace	Royal Academy
Families of married couple	Announcement of pregnancy	2 old men on behalf of husband	6:135-36		
Husband	Announcement of pregnancy	Elder on behalf of families	6:136-39		
Pregnant woman	Prenatal care	In-law	6:141-43		
Families of married couple	Prenatal care	In-law	6:143-44		
In-laws	Gratitude for their words	Parents of pregnant woman	6:144-46		
Old men	Gratitude for their words	Pregnant woman	6:146-47		
Families of married couple	Engaging midwife	Old man	6:149-50		
Midwife	Request for services	Old woman	6:151-52		
Families of married couple	Acceptance of case	Midwife	6:152-55		
Women kin	Care of pregnant woman	Midwife	6:158		
Parturient woman	Delivery	Midwife	6:160		
Infant	On his birth	Midwife	6:167-69		
Infant	Cutting of umbilical cord	Midwife	6:171-73		
Chalchiuhtlicue	Bathing the newborn baby	Midwife	6:175-77		
Mother of baby	Successful delivery	Midwife	6:179		

Addressed to	Subject	Orator	Fiorentine Codex	Madrid Codex	
				Royal Palace	Royal Academy
Midwife	Successful delivery	Old woman	6:179-80		
Families of married couple	Humility on birth of child	Midwife	6:180-82		
Infant	On his birth	Ruler, lord, or merchant	6:183-85		
Old men and women caring for baby	Care of child	Ruler, lord, or merchant	6:185-87		
Father of child	Felicitations	Ruler, lord, or merchant	6:187-88		
Infant and parents	On his birth	Ambassador	6:189-90		
Ambassador	Gratitude for oration	Old man	6:190-92		
Infant of commoners	On his birth	?	6:192-94		
Mother (commoner)	Successful delivery	?	6:194-95		
Father (commoner)	Felicitations	?	6:195-96		
Infant	On his birth	Old men	4:114	235r-35v	
Mother	Care of child	Old men	4:114-15	235v	
Chalchiuhtlicue	Name giving (boy)	Midwife	6:201-4		
Chalchiuhtlicue	Name giving (girl)	Midwife	6:205-7		
Quetzalcoatl	Promise of child to calmecac or telpochcalli	Parents	6:208-11		
Boy	Entering the calmecac	Old man	6:213-16		
Girl	or telpochcalli	Old woman	6:216-18		

TABLE 13, cont'd

<i>Addressed to</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Orator</i>	<i>Florentine Codex</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy</i>
Telpochtlatoque	Entering child in telpochcalli	Parents	3:49-50	152r-52v	
Parents	Receiving child in telpochcalli	Telpochtlatoque	3:50-51	152v-53v	
Priests of calmecac	Entering child in calmecac	Parents	3:59-60	156r-57r	
Parents	Receiving child in calmecac	Priest	3:60-61	157r-57v	
Son	Marriage	Father	6:127		
Father	Marriage	Son	6:127		
Telpochtlatoque	Permission to leave telpochcalli	Father	6:128		
Father	Permission granted	Telpochtlatoque	6:128		
Bride	Conduct as married woman	Old man	6:130		
Bride	Conduct as married woman	Old woman (in-law)	6:132		
Groom	Conduct as husband	Mother-in-law	6:133		
Parturient woman	Death	Midwife	6:164-65		
Deceased	Death	?	3:39-40	129r-30v	
Kin of deceased	Death	?	3:40		

TABLE 14
MISCELLANEOUS ORATIONS

<i>Addressed to</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Orator</i>	<i>Florentine Codex</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Palace</i>	<i>Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy</i>
Man	Howl of beast—bad omen	Priest	5:151-52		
Fernando Cortés	Welcome to Tenochtitlan	Moctezuma	12:42	243v-44r	

chants, as well as those on the occasions of marriage, pregnancy, and childbirth make it abundantly clear that the *huehuetlatolli* was an enculturistic and rhetorical device which played an integral part in these ceremonials. The numerous orations in which an orator speaks on behalf of a king, or noble, or the family, testify to the formal nature of these discourses, and the following statement made by the informant found in the orations of the merchants further substantiates this:

"And they (the elders) delivered their words, their utterances . . .
only accompanied by food and drink;
it was then that the words of wisdom came forth"
(Sahagún 1950-69:9:30).

Even the orations of the parents to their children, parts of which have the specific purpose of inculcating the children with the traditional mores and norms of conduct, have a formal quality. Although the texts do not specify this, they sound as though they might have been delivered before a group of people, possibly at a coming of age ceremony for which, as in the case of the announcement of pregnancy, all the kin gathered, and so were not intimate talks between the parents and their children.

To date, I have encountered the word *huehuetlatolli* only once in the Sahagún manuscripts (Sahagún 1950-69:9:42; corresponding to the Madrid Codex of the Royal Academy 38r), in one of the orations of the merchants, a text that has already been cited in these pages (see p. 93):

. . . *quinonotza, quimaca in teyo, in quauhyo, in ueuetlatolli*: They admonished him, they proffered him [words] full of sticks and stones, *the words of the elders* (or words of the ancients) . . .

Here the term *huehuetlatolli* is associated with counsel and correction, but the words of correction are traditional; the person addressed had done nothing wrong.

Thus, the *huehuetlatolli* were the rhetorical orations rendered on a diversity of ceremonial occasions. As an old man tells an envoy who brings greetings to a newborn child and his parents, they are,

" . . . [the words] which the men, the women of old left you,
handed down to you,
which are carefully folded away, stored away, in your entrails,
in your throat" (Sahagún 1950-69:6:190).

That is, they are both the "words of the elders" and the "words of the

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ancients," the traditions that were handed down from father to son. By the same token, as in the case of the prayers, they are both the language of the elders and of the ancients, the rhetorical, ritual, and ceremonial language of what these and other texts reveal to have been an inordinately ritualistic and ceremonial people.

NOTES

1. The books in the Madrid Codices that might have corresponded to 6 and 12 of the Florentine are missing from those manuscripts. Of the material contained in the "Primeros Memoriales," which was apparently the data Sahagún gathered in Tepepulco between 1558 and 1561, only a minimal part was later incorporated in the Florentine Codex, and this did not include the two *huehuetlatolli* cited here. H. B. Nicholson discusses the correspondence of texts in "Primeros Memoriales" and the Florentine Codex at length in his forthcoming article, "Sahagún's Primeros Memoriales, Tepepulco, 1558-1561," to be published in the *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Nicholson: in press).

2. At the end of this group of texts is the following statement: "These fragments of excellent Mexican were written by Don Miguel, Maestro de P. Oracio." Caribay (1953:1:440) thinks that P. Oracio is none other than P. Horacio Carochi, with which I am inclined to agree.

3. The term "moral" is derived from the Latin *moralis*, "custom, manner," and was sometimes used strictly in this sense, as for example, Acosta's *Historia Natural y Moral de las Indias* (Acosta 1962).

4. At the end of that book is the statement: "It was translated into the Spanish language by the said father Fray Bernardino de Sahagún thirty years after it was written in the Mexican language, in this year of 1577."

5. Carochi (1892: 419) defines the names as "apud quem sunt omnia, or qui est iuxta omnia," which Paredes (1910: 35) amplifies into "with whom and in whom we live; and who is near, present, and immediate to everything."

6. Sahagún says that the reply is made on behalf of the woman's parents, but this is not specified in the Nahuatl text (Sahagún 1956:2:166; 1950-69:6:144).