

En la portada aparece el grabado del primer impreso checo sobre el Nuevo Mundo
Spis o nových zemích a o novém světě editado cerca del año 1506
(Cortesía de la Biblioteca de los Premonstratenses en Strahov, Praga)

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DE LA UNIVERSIDAD CAROLINA**

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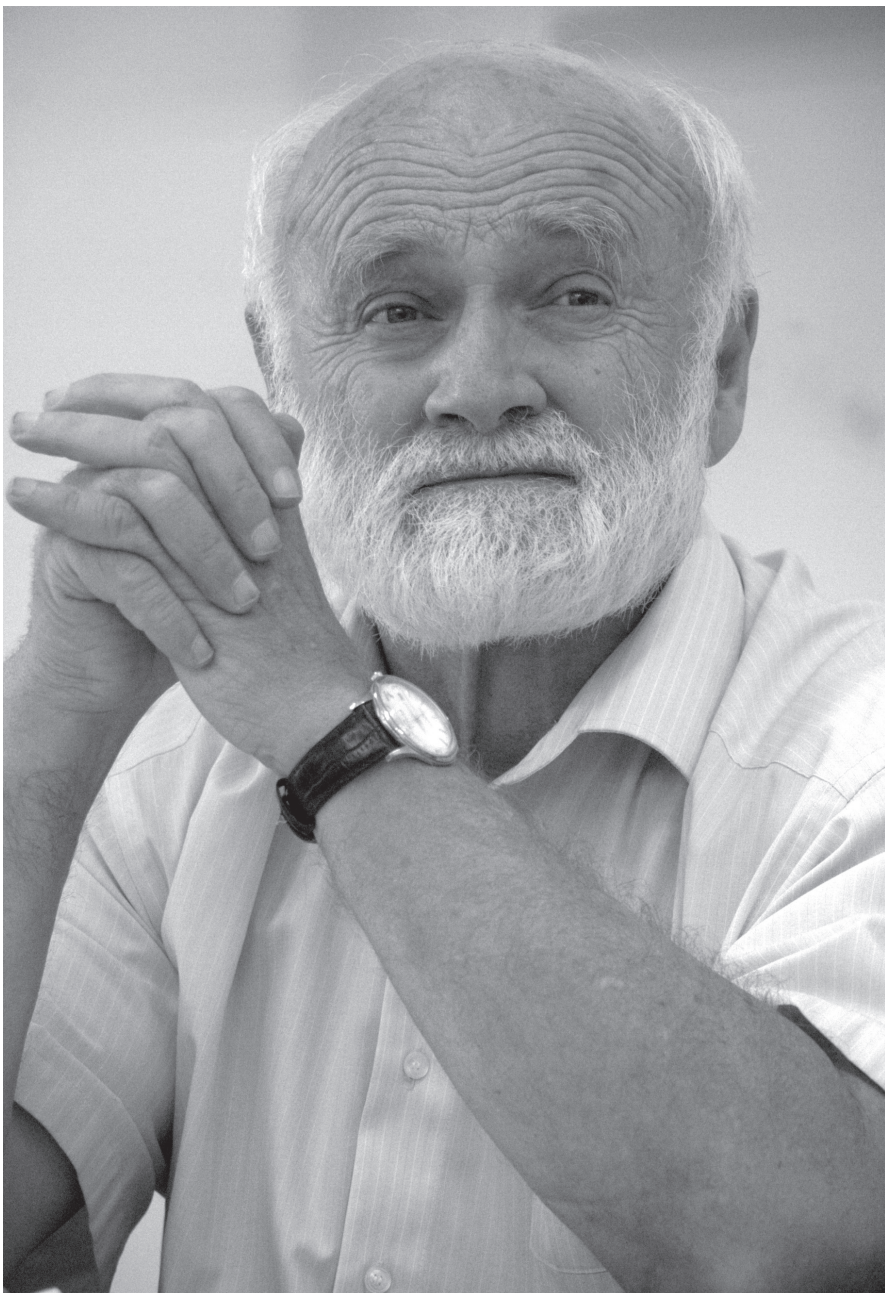
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Josef Opatrný, Simposio Caribe hispano y Europa, Praga, Centro de Estudios Ibero-Americanos, 7 al 8 de septiembre de 2017. Foto: Jiří Stibor

JOSEF OPATRNÝ, ESE HOMBRE INFATIGABLE, TRABAJADOR Y SOBREMNERA AMISTOSO: IN MEMORIAM (19 de noviembre de 1945 - 15 de abril de 2025)

El martes 15 de abril de 2025, en plena Semana Santa, el mundo americanista checo –y muy pronto también el de sus amigos en el extranjero– quedó estupefacto. Josef nos abandonó a todos sin advertencia, inesperadamente, en el apogeo de sus capacidades y logros profesionales, algunos meses antes de celebrar su 80 cumpleaños.

No es necesario volver a repetir el contenido de los curriculums publicados con ocasión de sus 60 y 70 aniversarios en 2005 y 2015, respectivamente¹, ni el más reciente de 2020 al ser galardonado con la medalla de plata de su alma mater, la Universidad Carolina, que coincidió con su 75 cumpleaños²: en todos se encontrará el resumen de sus méritos profesionales, así como sus actividades en los campos académico, pedagógico y de divulgación realizadas hasta aquellas fechas.

Por eso, permitásenos ampliar esos datos ya publicados con otros, referentes a los últimos cinco años de su trayectoria vital y ensancharlos con el panorama de su capacidad organizadora, ejercida a través de simposios internacionales que hicieron de Praga un importante centro europeo de estudios del Caribe y de la historia de la emigración centroeuropea a América Latina (un listado aún inédito que cubre una treintena de años desde 1990). Asimismo, haremos referencia a unos galardones recientes y los completaremos con un par de notas de carácter personal.

De manera muy sintética: Josef Opatrný, discípulo y estrecho colaborador del profesor Josef Poliřenský –fundador del Centro de Estudios Ibero-Americanos de la Universidad Carolina de Praga– lo sucedió en la dirección de dicho centro de investigación, cargo que ejerció entre 1981 y 2018, es decir, durante casi cuatro décadas. En ese periodo, y particularmente a lo largo de casi treinta años (1990-2018) encabezó el Centro como departamento universitario independiente dentro de la Facultad de Filosofía, con una carrera propia de estudios iberoamericanos: primero como especialización vinculada a otros programas (románicos, historia o etnología), y posteriormente como programas autónomos de máster y, más tarde, también

¹ Para una biografía más detallada de Josef Opatrný y su bibliografía hasta el año 2015 véase sucesivamente Simona BINKOVÁ – Frantiřek VRHEL, “Josef Opatrný, Director del Centro de Estudios Ibero-Americanos, Sexagenario”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia* 39, 2005 (publ. 2006), pp. 11-21, y el volumen de homenaje dedicado a su 70 aniversario en la revista *Dvacáté století = The twentieth century* 8, 1/2016, Simona Binková – Markéta Křířžová – Václav Kotrman (eds.), Praha 2016, particularmente su curriculum resumido de Markéta KŘÍŘŽOVÁ – Simona BINKOVÁ, “Across the Ocean See. Life Jubilee of Professor Josef Opatrný”, pp. 11-16 y las mismas, “Professor Josef Opatrný’s Bibliography”, pp. 211-219.

² Simona BINKOVÁ, “El profesor Josef Opatrný recibe galardón de la Universidad Carolina en su septuagésimo quinto cumpleaños”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia* 48/1, 2020, pp. 9-13.

de doctorado. Gracias a su gestión, se consolidó así una formación académica completa, con cientos de egresados, en una etapa marcada por un notable auge del interés de los jóvenes por los estudios latinoamericanos.

Desde 1986 asumió, además, la dirección del anuario *Ibero-Americana Pragensia* –hoy convertida en revista semestral– y de su colección *Supplementa*, de periodicidad irregular, que reúne actas de simposios y monografías y cuenta ya con más de cincuenta volúmenes. Resulta especialmente significativo que esta publicación, que desde su fundación en los años sesenta del siglo XX desempeñó un papel esencial no solamente en el ámbito centroeuropeo sino que actuó también como puente con la iberoamericanística “occidental europea” y la latinoamericana³ –llegando a acoger desde su primer número estudios de prestigiosos americanistas en español y, en ocasiones, en portugués– se cerrara simbólicamente con su volumen 50, en el mismo año del fallecimiento de Josef: no como consecuencia de su partida, sino, paradójicamente, anticipándola.⁴

Por su amplia trayectoria y reconocidos méritos, Opatrný fue invitado a integrar el consejo editorial o asesor de diversas revistas especializadas en historia de América Latina, como *Cuban Studies*, *Revista de Indias*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Tiempos de América*, *Revista de Historia, Cultura y Territorio* o *Tzintzun*. *Revista de Estudios Históricos*, así como de editoriales académicas de prestigio, entre ellas Doce Calles.

La vida profesional de Josef Opatrný estuvo muy ligada también con la Asociación de Historiadores Latinoamericanistas Europeos (AHILA), logrando incorporar así la iberoamericanística checa a un contexto internacional global ya desde antes de la Revolución de Terciopelo. Fue miembro del Comité Coordinador de AHILA desde 1988, miembro del Comité Ejecutivo de AHILA entre 1990-1993 y desde 1993, coordinador del grupo de trabajo internacional formado en el marco de AHILA con el enfoque en la historia de Cuba. Entre 1996 y 1999 fue vicepresidente de AHILA. Por las cuatro décadas de su labor intensiva en la Asociación, a principios del presente año (2025) fue nombrado miembro honorario de AHILA, un reconocimiento que le alegró particularmente.

Al lado de los honores de máximo nivel recibidos ya anteriormente como la *Orden de Isabel la Católica*, en 2002, y la *Orden de Mérito Civil*, en 2008, ambas por el Rey de España, y la *Orden de Águila Azteca*, del gobierno de México en 2018, recibió otros más recientes en el campo académico: la medalla de plata de la

³ Para el papel de “puente” entre las dos Europas ver el análisis de Horst PIETSCHMANN, “Comentarios sobre la historiografía ibero-americana en Centroeuropa”, *Dvacáté století = The twentieth century* 8, 1/2016, Simona Binková – Markéta Křížová – Václav Kotrman (eds.), Praha 2016, pp. 19-25.

⁴ Igualmente la serie de *Supplementa de Ibero-Americana Pragensia* parece extinguirse. Lamentablemente no se ha llevado a cabo ni un proyecto soñado de Josef Opatrný a la cúspide de su carrera: el de una voluminosa publicación colectiva sobre los *Cinco siglos de historia de las relaciones checo-latinoamericanas*, ya parcialmente redactada. Debí reunir y contextualizar los resultados dispersos y aún los más recientes sobre el tema, basados en investigaciones de archivos. En el último tiempo, varias personas acabaron de percibir en Josef un sentimiento de tristeza general palpable al ver el ocaso de muchos proyectos suyos que años antes funcionaban y a los que había dedicado toda su vida profesional.

Universidad Carolina en 2020 y la prestigiosa medalla de la fundación Josef Hlávka en 2021, destinada a personalidades de suma importancia pertenecientes a las universidades públicas checas que por su contribución de toda una vida a los conocimientos del área de su especialización se hacen acreedores de dicha distinción. En 2023 fue nombrado profesor emérito de la Universidad Carolina y para el presente año 2025 sus colegas españoles habían planeado su nombramiento de doctor *honoris causa* de la Universidad de la Laguna, Tenerife.⁵

Por otro lado, Opatrný recibió varios premios del área de literatura de no ficción. El último de ellos fue el Premio de Miroslav Ivanov, entregado en 2023 por el conjunto de su obra dirigida al gran público.

Mucho tiempo le dedicaba también a los comentarios de temas americanistas en los medios de comunicación tanto en la radio, la televisión y prensa, así como en conferencias para un público más especializado organizadas por el Instituto Cervantes o en los círculos de la Sociedad Iberoamericana de la República Checa (Česká iberoamerická společnost), sucesora de la Sociedad Latinoamericana a la que Josef Opatrný había presidido durante años. Era gran amigo del presidente actual de la Sociedad, Bohumír Janský, de la Facultad de Ciencias Naturales, y en cuyo círculo debía pronunciar una conferencia exactamente un día después de su fallecimiento, hecho que obviamente ya no pudo llevarse a cabo.

Formaba asimismo nexos laborales y de amistad entre el ambiente académico y el de la diplomacia, las embajadas y el Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. El 29 de mayo de 2025 se le rindió homenaje póstumo durante la 30 entrega del Premio Iberoamericano, destinado a premiar a los estudiantes de carreras universitarias de toda la República Checa ligadas con la historia, cultura y lenguas española y portuguesa, organizado por las embajadas del mundo ibérico e iberoamericano. La entrega de los premios, patrocinada por la Universidad Carolina, los diplomáticos y representantes del gobierno, fue realizada por primera vez sin la presencia de su cofundador, Josef Opatrný.

Se le recuerda con respeto y amistad en varios centros académicos de España como el CSIC, la Universidad de Castellón y la de Extremadura,⁶ permanece en la memoria de colegas y amigos de Alemania,⁷ Francia,⁸ Hungría⁹, EE.UU.¹⁰ y otros países, con quienes solía encontrarse regularmente en los simposios de cubanólogos y caribeñistas en Praga u otros sitios, o con temas diferentes que le interesaron durante las últimas décadas y por eso no hay manera de nombrarlos a todos. Ni a todos

⁵ Información personal de Manuel de Paz Sánchez. En este momento, se prepara, a modo de homenaje, un volumen de estudios escritos por sus colegas.

⁶ El amplio grupo de Consuelo Naranjo Orovio del CSIC; profesores y estudiantes de doctorado alrededor de José Antonio Piqueras de la Universidad de Castellón; Sigfrido Vázquez Cienfuegos de Cáceres. Compare por ejemplo, Sigfrido VÁZQUEZ CIENFUEGOS, “El guía en la niebla: Josef Opatrný, maestro y amigo”, *Dvacáté století = The twentieth century* 8, 1/2016, Simona Binková – Markéta Křížová – Václav Kotrman (eds.), Praha 2016, pp. 33-35.

⁷ Horst Pietschmann, Michael Zeuske.

⁸ Nathan Wachtel, Paul Estrade.

⁹ El finado Adán Anderle, Mónika Szente-Varga.

¹⁰ Allan y Lourdes Kuethe.

los amigos checos, historiadores, algunos de los cuales ya no están entre nosotros, colegas de estudios románicos u otras disciplinas para quienes el despacho del Profesor Polišenský –primero– y luego el de Josef Opatrný, sin importar su ubicación (el de Hybernská 3, Palacio Špork naturalmente el más emblemático por ser el más duradero y concurrido) representaba un oasis de apaciguamiento y amistad sin condiciones en los tiempos héclicos de la época moderna.

Unas relaciones de cariño duraderas surgieron también gracias al programa de verano establecido entre la Universidad Carolina y el TEC (Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores) de Monterrey, México que se desarrolló ininterrumpidamente desde el año 2000 hasta la pandemia del covid, realizado en el Centro de Estudios Ibero-Americanos y coordinado por Josef Opatrný, con asistencia en cada serie anual de entre veinte hasta sesenta estudiantes de varios campus mexicanos del TEC.¹¹

Igual impacto personal, humano y profesional, lo han exteriorizado repetidamente los ex-estudiantes de máster, de doctorado, o incluso los aficionados a la historia fuera del ámbito académico. Testimonio de ello han sido sus exequias el día 25 de abril a las que asistieron un sinnúmero de personas, con una sorprendente y cuantiosa participación de gente joven, dispersa ya en varias áreas profesionales; también lo fue la tarde conmemorativa al profesor el 16 de junio, en la Universidad Carolina, en el gran aula del palacio Špork que tantos años estuvo ligada con la carrera profesional de Josef Opatrný.

La vida terrenal de Josef llegó a su final, sin embargo, su huella queda y quedará no solamente en su obra y méritos, sino también en los recuerdos de los que lo apreciaban y querían mucho, su gran familia iberoamericanista, que unánimemente coinciden en subrayar su carácter amigable y extraordinariamente humano.

En nombre de todos nosotros: ¡Gracias, profesor! ¡Gracias, José, por todo!

por Simona Binková, Praga

¹¹ Por parte del TEC, el iniciador del contrato fue Zidane Zeraoui. La profesora acompañante de los estudiantes durante más de quince años y coordinadora de los cursos por parte del TEC fue Luz Araceli González. Compare Zidane ZERAOUÍ – Luz Araceli GONZÁLEZ, “Recuerdos de un hombre especial... Josef Opatrný”, *Dvacáté století = The twentieth century* 8, 1/2016, Simona Binková – Markéta Křížová – Václav Kotrman (eds.), Praha 2016, pp. 28-32. Ambos venían a Praga cada año no solamente con motivos del curso, sino repetidamente también fuera de las fechas para pasar sus vacaciones, o el sábado. El amor por Praga y la relación íntima de amistad con Josef Opatrný han sido un factor decisivo. Asimismo, muchos de los ex-participantes del curso de verano volvían durante sus viajes posteriores a Europa con familia, parejas e hijos a Praga para saludar al profesor Opatrný. En ambos casos, hay evidencia de esos encuentros todavía en marzo de este año, siempre vividos con gran alegría por el profesor.

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* Lamentablemente, el listado de artículos de divulgación producidos sobre todo después de 2022 contiene lagunas que en la brevedad no se han logrado resolver. Prescindimos también de todas las reseñas en revistas científicas.

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**ARTÍCULOS
Y ESTUDIOS**

**ARTESANÍAS LATINOAMERICANAS: PATRIMONIO
BIOCULTURAL, TRABAJO DE LAS MUJERES
Y SOCIONATURALEZAS NEOLIBERALES**

THE LAST MAYA CHUJ POTTERS: HANDMADE POTTERY TRADITION IN NORTHWESTERN HUEHUETENANGO, GUATEMALA

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Abstract

Guatemala is known to the world for the legacy of the Maya culture. Different communities maintain this heritage through their oral traditions, gastronomy, costumes, and other cultural manifestations which are, despite the colonial rupture, still part of their daily life and their worldview. We present the results of the first study on pottery production using native techniques in the Chuj area, municipality of Nentón, department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala. It is a tradition preserved in the high mountains of the western part of the country, which uses the technique of coiling. Local women are the main agents of this traditional craft that is gradually being lost. The objective of this research was to identify a link between the communities and their traditions as part of their cultural resistance. It is important to record, analyse, and compare their ancestral knowledge for the future.

Keywords: pottery; traditional techniques; Maya; Chuj; Guatemala.

Resumen

Guatemala es conocida ante el mundo por el legado de la cultura Maya. En la actualidad diferentes comunidades mantienen esta herencia a través de su tradición oral, trajes, manifestaciones culturales, gastronomía, entre otros elementos que son parte de su cosmovisión, a pesar de la ruptura colonial. En este sentido, presentamos en el siguiente artículo los resultados de un primer acercamiento a la producción de cerámica con técnicas originarias en el área Chuj, municipio de Nentón, departamento de Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Una tradición que se conserva en las elevadas montañas de esta parte occidental del país, aplicando la técnica de enrollado, donde las mujeres son las protagonistas y conocedoras de este proceso de manufactura que se va perdiendo con el paso del tiempo. Por tanto, el objetivo de esta investigación es identificar un vínculo de las comunidades y sus tradiciones, parte de la resistencia cultural de estos pueblos. Es importante registrar, analizar y comparar sus conocimientos ancestrales para el futuro.

Palabras clave: cerámica; técnicas tradicionales; mayas; Chuj; Guatemala.¹

¹ Special thanks to Mrs. Juana Lucas, Mrs. Magdalena Lucas, and Mr. Pedro Lucas for their support in the development of the research, for opening the doors of their home, and for their kind hospitality. We also wish to thank the anthropologist Julio Ildelfonso Hernández Ochoa, for his support with the technical process of the recording, through videos and photographs, and the Chaculá Region Archaeological Project, PARCHA. We are also grateful for the support we have received from the Agency for Science and Development APVV-23-0528, and from the Scientific Grant Agency VEGA 1/0804/25, both at the Comenius University in Bratislava.

Introduction

The Chuj are a Mayan group that lives in the Sierra de los Cuchumatanes, a mountainous and forested part of western Guatemala with a cold climate. The Chuj region is a transition zone between territories: it is in-between the forests of the high mountains of Guatemala to the south and east, the Usumacinta basin to the north, and the Lacandon jungles to the west. The Chuj live mainly in the municipalities of San Mateo Ixtatán, San Sebastián Coatán, and Nentón, although there are small communities in other parts of this region and some Chuj have migrated to Mexico, mainly after the Civil War,² because their region is close to the border of Chiapas.

There is evidence of pre-Columbian occupation of this area from the Preclassic to the Postclassic periods, as attested archaeological sites described in the works of the first scholars who visited this region, such as Eduard Seler,³ and Carlos Navarrete,⁴ Franz Termer,⁵ and Oliver La Farge.⁶ The earliest researchers visited some archaeological sites and Chuj villages the early decades of the 20th century and wrote about local customs and culture. Navarrete's later studies were important in identifying



Figure 1. View towards the mountains in San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala.
Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

² Mario TEJADA, *Historia Social del Norte de Huehuetenango*, Ciudad de Guatemala 2002.

³ Eduard SELER, *Die alten Ansiedlungen von Chaculá im Distrikte Nenton des Departements Huehuetenango der Republik Guatemala*, Berlin 1901.

⁴ Carlos NAVARRETE, *Esculturas de Chacula, Huehuetenango, Guatemala*, Ciudad de México 1979.

⁵ Franz TERMER, *Etnología y Etnografía de Guatemala*, Ciudad de Guatemala 1957.

⁶ Oliver LA FARGE, *La costumbre en Santa Eulalia, Huehuetenango en 1932*, Ciudad de Guatemala 1994.



Figure 2. Location map of the municipalities of the Chuj group. Image available at http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1870-57662006000100004.

the pre-Columbian salt trade route of San Mateo Ixtatán and in highlighting the continuity of its production today.⁷ More recently, some further surveys and archaeological investigations of pre-Columbian sites took place in the area.⁸ Thanks to these efforts, the Chuj region has been an important source of archaeological, ethnohistorical, and anthropological information.

The conquest of this area by the Spanish took place in early decades of the 16th century. In 1523, Gonzalo de Alvarado, Pedro de Alvarado's brother, was sent to subdue the Mam⁹ communities and later the territories inhabited by the Chuj and the Q'anjobal, who were relocated into different communities. The main centre of the Chuj people was (and still is) San Mateo Ixtatán, where the Spaniards built the main Catholic church on top of what used to be a Maya religious centre and put Dominicans in charge of its operation.¹⁰ The present roads that cross San Mateo Ixtatán and continue towards the border of Gracias a Dios with Chiapas, Mexico, and the Cuchumatanes in the other direction, are the same routes that have long been used as a passage through the highlands, linking communities from both sides of the border. We have from 1886 records of disputed territories, when the inhabitants of San

⁷ Carlos NAVARRETE, "El origen de la sal en la tradición oral de San Mateo Ixtatán, Guatemala, y la peregrinación de los zapalutas", *Diario de campo, Sal y Salinas: un gusto ancestral* 51, 2008, pp. 143–153.

⁸ John E. CLARK – Mario TEJADA – Donaldo CASTILLO et al., *Prospección Arqueológica de la Cuenca Superior del Río Grijalva en Huehuetenango Guatemala, Reporte Final de la Temporada de Campo 1999*, Ciudad de Guatemala 2001.

José Luis GARRIDO, *Proyecto Arqueológico de Rescate Caserío Yixquisis, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Informe Final*, Ciudad de Guatemala 2012.

⁹ TEJADA, *Historia*, p. 93.

¹⁰ TEJADA, *Historia*, p. 92.



Figure 3. View of one of the platforms of the archaeological site in San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.



Figure 4. Main salt source at San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

Mateo came to settle in small villages in the area of Nentón, which was attractive due to its proximity to the border with Chiapas.¹¹ In recent times, the Civil War led to a resettlement of various groups in the area, which is why we find a number of villages populated by Chuj speakers, such as El Aguacate, very close to the border. Currently, this is an area with a mixed population: people came here from different places driven by political and economic conditions. This process of mixing started with the relocation of the indigenous people in the colonial times but, driven by various factors, continues to this day.

Trade has been playing an important role in the economic and social systems of the communities. In recent decades, agriculture is here – like in many highlands around the country – one of the main sources of living, whereby the main local crops are coffee, garlic, broccoli, onions, potatoes, carrots, beans, and maize.¹² Of special significance is also the trade in black salt produced around San Mateo Ixtatán. Each family focuses on a specific agricultural and domestic production, including crafts such as pottery making, which is the main focus of this paper.

Handmade pottery production in Guatemala

Traditions of handmade pottery developed in Guatemala in several regions. After colonisation, their main purpose was to cover the demand for vessels of daily use. As a craft and a trade, the techniques are learned within the nuclear family and pottery is made in the potters' houses. This is thus local production for local needs. In each region, we find local specifics ranging from the use of slightly different raw materials and forms all the way to local trade; this is determined by differences in the economic and cultural dynamics. Termer¹³ mentions that pottery production was a subsistence activity. The production of vessels for various functions reflected the needs of the population, which is also why the possibility of selling pottery was important, especially in large cities. Nowadays, two important centres of pottery trade near the current Guatemala City are the municipalities of Chinautla and Mixco, whereby the latter tend to focus on the manufacture of griddles (*comales*).¹⁴

Since the 1960s, the Centro de Estudios Folklóricos (Centre of Folkloric Studies, CEFOL) of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala has been documenting various cultural manifestations and crafts around the country. With respect to pottery production, pre-Colombian artifacts stand out: they were modelled and rolled without the use of a potter's wheel. Later pottery, both glazed and painted, was

¹¹ Archivo General de Centro América (hereinafter only AGCA), Colonia, Caciques e Indios, exp. 2, fol. 10, Indios de Chaculá, Chaquial-Conquntique, Nentón, Huehuetenango, 31 May 1869.

¹² TEJADA, *Historia*, p. 187.

¹³ TERMER, *Etnología y Etnografía de Guatemala*, p. 82.

¹⁴ Claudia F. DARY, "Artes y artesanías tradicionales de Mixco", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 63, 1987, pp. 39–52; Charles R. ARROT, "Cerámica actual de Guatemala (Mixco Nuevo)", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 8, 1977, pp. 305–311; Robert S. SMITH, "Cerámica elaborada sin torno. Chinautla, Guatemala", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 8, 1977, pp. 341–346; Arturo TARACENA, "Apuntes sobre la cerámica de la Chinautla Actual", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 7, 1977, pp. 57–71.



Figure 5. Adobe oven in Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.



Figure 6. Majolica pottery from the Convent of Santo Domingo, Antigua Guatemala. Photo: Héctor Paredes, 2005 (Final Report).

influenced by techniques introduced during the colonial period, such as the potter's wheel, kilns, and the use of various elements such as lead for glazing.¹⁵

Within the context of the history of pottery in the region, one should mention the work of Ruben Reina and Robert Hill.¹⁶ They managed to map pottery production and its centres in Guatemala, describing in detail the production process as well as traditional forms and decorations in each region of the country.

The most common technique of pottery making seems to be coiling. It is widely used in traditional pottery centres in Guatemala, and it is documented that it has been in use already during the pre-Columbian period. In the Chuj region, we had the opportunity to see it. Because of the relatively remoteness of this region from the country's centres, the old tradition is preserved here even five hundred years after contact with the Spaniards and the potters' wheel. Most briefly, a piece of pottery is made by this technique by rolling a piece of pottery clay between the palms until an even clay roll is formed. This is then twisted into a circle according to the intended form of the vessel, another clay piece placed above it and attached to the middle, outer, or inner edge of the previous clay roll depending on whether the vessel wall is supposed extend straight upwards, outwards, or inwards. At first, the vessel looks like it is made of clay ropes spirally stacked on top of each other, but it is then

¹⁵ Aracely ESQUIVEL, "El aporte del área de artes y artesanías populares al conocimiento de la cultura guatemalteca (1967–2016)", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 87, 2017, pp. 44–79; Celso LARA, "Síntesis histórica de las cerámicas populares de Guatemala", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 57, 2002, pp. 202–216; Héctor PAREDES, "La cerámica Colonial del Ex-Convento de Santo Domingo, Antigua Guatemala: Una propuesta tipológica", in: Juan Pedro Laporte y Héctor Escobedo (eds.), *X Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala, 1996, 1997*, pp. 743–753; Luis LUJÁN, "La Mayólica", in: *Historia General de Guatemala III. Siglo XVIII hasta la Independencia*, Ciudad de Guatemala 1995, pp. 533–540.

¹⁶ Ruben E. REINA – Robert M. HILL, *The Traditional Pottery of Guatemala*, London 1978.



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|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. San José Petén | 14. Retalhuleu | 27. San Agustín Acasaguastlán | 40. Jutiapa |
| 2. Flores | 15. Sololá | 28. Lo de Mejía | 41. Trancas/El Barrial |
| 3. San Miguel Acatán | 16. Mazatenango | 29. Zacapa | 42. Zapotitlán |
| 4. San Sebastián Huehuetenango | 17. Santa Apolonia | 30. San Vicente | 43. Cobán |
| 5. Chiantla | 18. Chimaltenango | 31. Jocotán | 44. San Juan Chamelco |
| 6. San Pedro Jocopilas | 19. Antigua Guatemala | 32. Chiquimula | 45. Puerto Barrios |
| 7. Santa Cruz del Quiché | 20. Mixco | 33. San Luis Jilotepeque | |
| 8. Comitancillo | 21. Chinautla | 34. Jalapa | |
| 9. Santa María Chiquimula | 22. San Raimundo | 35. Casillas | |
| 10. San Marcos | 23. Escuintla | 36. Cuilapa | |
| 11. San Cristóbal | 24. Rabinal | 37. Santa María Ixhuatán | |
| 12. Totoncapán | 25. Salamá | 38. Guazacapán | |
| 13. Quetzaltenango | 26. El Progreso | 39. Santa Rosa | |

Figure 7. Map indicating the pottery centers reported by Reina and Hill. Drawing: Taken from Reina and Hill, 1978.

finger-pressed and smoothed, creating a homogeneous vessel wall. This process requires much skill and practice.

Traditional pottery production also covers the economic aspects, such as sale of the products, their use, and demand for particular vessels, but even the symbolism of some processes and religious vessels such as incense burners. This is deeply rooted in traditions. Maria J. Iglesias and Andrés Ruiz¹⁷ or Celso Lara¹⁸ speak in this context about the existence of pottery centres with ‘traditional techniques, that is, processes and techniques learned from generation to generation, which the

¹⁷ Maria Josefa IGLESIAS – Andrés CIUDAD, *Patrones de continuidad en la elaboración cerámica del altiplano oeste de Guatemala*, Madrid 1995.

¹⁸ LARA, “Síntesis”, pp. 202–216.



Figure 8. Vessels used in salt processing in San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

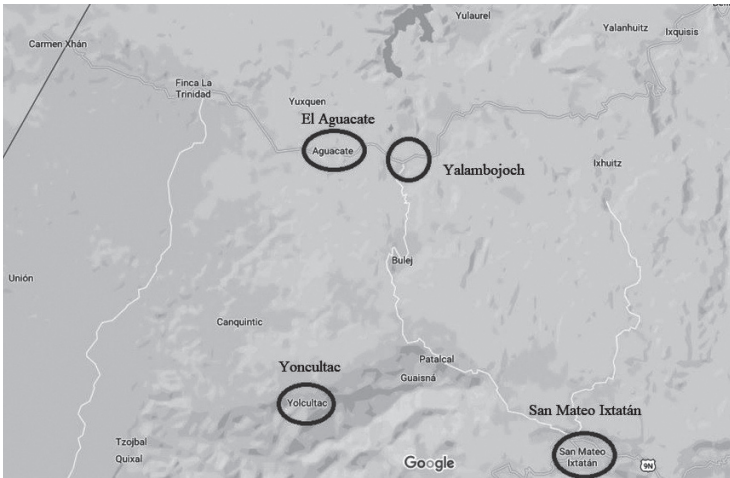


Figure 9. Location of sites visited. Map modified from Google Maps, 2019.

colonisation process did not completely erase'. It is significant to note that this work has always been mainly the domain of women.

As noted above, the production of ceramics responds to demand: it is aimed at a specific market, designed to function in a particular way. For example, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala, is well-known for its deposits of black salt, one of the most important natural resources of the region and one that has been

a crucial local trade commodity since ancient times.¹⁹ Our informants mentioned that traditionally, salt production has been linked to pottery production because large jars were needed for the salt-cooking process. San Mateo salt continues to be traded in the region to this day, although its market has shrunk.

Pottery plays a fundamental role in the daily and economic life of the current communities: it is used both for various domestic tasks and in the production of goods, but also sold in the regional markets.

In the following, we describe the main characteristics of ceramic production in four localities: the villages of El Aguacate, Yalambojoch, and Yoncultac, and the municipality of San Mateo Ixtatán, where we had the opportunity to study the actual process of ceramic production and record it step by step, starting with the extraction of the raw materials. In that way, we were able to compare our observations with previously published works. It should be noted that, prior to our study, these specific localities had not been the subject of any research. Our study is therefore intended as a contribution to the ongoing effort to describe and publish records of traditional practices which are in danger of disappearing.

Research methodology

We have made our first visit to the village of El Aguacate in the municipality of Nentón (Huehuetenango, Guatemala) in 2014. This is a place far away from everything, nestled among the mountains, which also means that the locality benefits from favourable security conditions. There, we had the opportunity to record the process of pottery making and firing.²⁰ It was the beginning of a project aimed at finding also other places in the region where we could study the local pottery culture. A year later, we were able to return and make new observations in the villages of Yalambojoch and Yoncultac, until we finally reached the municipality of San Mateo Ixtatán at the heart of the Chuj region.

This research sparked my personal interest especially when I found how little research on traditional pottery from the western region of Huehuetenango has been done so far. People in this region speak the Chuj language, which belongs to the Q'anjob'alan branch of the Mayan language. Chuj has currently only about 40,000 speakers who also share some other cultural characteristics, including the dominance of women in pottery making.

El Aguacate, Yalambojoch, Yoncultac, and San Mateo Ixtatán form a specific cluster in a part of Huehuetenango department that is rather secluded and isolated in the border mountains. This is what initially also led me to believe that the ancient traditions of pottery making could be preserved there to this day. My interest was also driven by the concern that with the passage of time, this knowledge would be lost without any record. We could thus lose these ancient manufacturing techniques that have been passed down from generation to generation quite irretrievably. It was

¹⁹ NAVARRETE, "El origen", pp. 143–153.

²⁰ Dora GARCIA – Paola TORRES, "Análisis de materiales cerámicos", in: Ulrich Wölfel y Paola Torres (eds.), *Proyecto Arqueológico de la Región de Chaculá, Reporte de Actividades de Campo de la Temporada 2014*, Ciudad de Guatemala 2014.

clear that this tradition is indeed dying out because it took much effort to find potters who still use the traditional methods and designs. In each of the four villages, we found one informant (all four names are anonymous). In all cases, it was a woman recommended by the community for her art and knowledge. In each place, we had also found a local person who had the support of the community to help us conduct our research. That person was then our point of contact who also helped us with interpreting between Chuj to Spanish (because none of the potters spoke Spanish). We asked all our subjects for their consent with being interviewed, photographed, and recorded on video, and they all gave their consent.

Rather than interview, we observed the study participants and asked them to explain the function of each instrument they used and each step they performed. We have also inquired about technical details such as the amount of clay, temperature, the time of the day when certain things are done, and duration of each part of the process. In this way, we were trying to learn the technique, which turned out to be rather complex. Our participants were 30 to 50 years old, mothers, and even grandmothers, housewives who carry out different household chores and engage also in other activities to support the family economy.

These women were not really our ‘informants’: rather, they were our teachers in exactly the sense meant by Tim Ingold when he spoke about the meaning of anthropological research. We did not come to explore, we came to learn ‘what they can show us of the world’.²¹ The main method was thus observation of the participants, that is, my personal presence during all the processes, which was enabled by the participants’ openness and trust. The other important tool of this research was video recording by my companion Julio Ildefonso Hernández Ochoa, the anthropologist who documented the entire process from beginning to end. Although this may seem intrusive, after a little while the presence of the camera was almost not felt. The atmosphere was relaxed and informal, which allowed us to obtain data more naturally. We were grateful for this because it allowed us to make the very first documentation of these local practices. In the following, we present below a summary of the main characteristics of the long process of local pottery making, an activity that requires much time and effort from the extraction of raw materials to the final product.

The pottery making process

The raw materials

The process starts with the extraction of clay. According to our informants, the local sites with suitable clay in the nearby mountains have been used for generations. This region is abundant in different types of soils and minerals.²² The clay is brown, sometimes with a reddish hue. In San Mateo Ixtatán, grey clay is also used, which after firing results in white ceramics.

²¹ Tim INGOLD, *Anthropology: Why it Matters*, Cambridge, 2018.

²² Miguel Ángel TORRES, *Diagnóstico socioeconómico, potencialidades productivas y propuestas de inversión, Municipio de San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango*, Ciudad de Guatemala 2007.

The clay is soaked and foreign elements removed. Then it is mixed with a mineral temper consisting mainly of calcite (*b'ax* in the Chuj language), a type of rock common in the region that is crushed and finely ground on grinding stones or in a mortar. In San Mateo, potters use as temper grey river sand, which is sifted for refinement. Vessels made with this material are not fireproof. Clay mixed with the temper is kneaded and stored to be used later. It should be noted that each region has its own sources of raw materials so that, for example, in volcanic areas potters use of various types of specific sands and minerals.²³



Figure 10. Mud sources of Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.



Figure 11. Scouring sand. Photo: Julio Hernández.

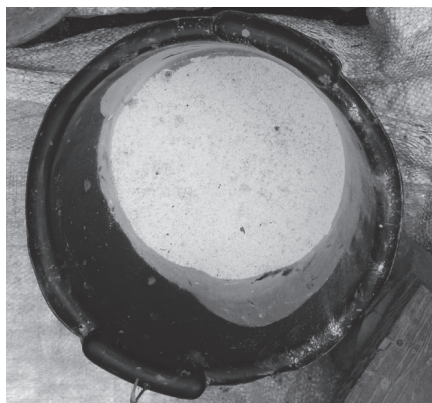


Figure 12. Calcite temper. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 13. Mineral temper used in Rabinal, Baja, Verapaz, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

²³ REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, p. 29; Italo A. MORALES, “Panorama General de la Cerámica Popular del Oriente de Guatemala”, *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 13, 1980, pp. 61–102; Aracely ESQUIVEL, “Magia en las manos: cerámica en Trapiche de Agua, Salamá”, *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 83, 2015, pp. 113–148.

Instruments and tools

The potters use a great variety of instruments and containers of different sizes and shapes to keep the clay and the tempers, but also as the base for working on the pottery pieces. It is interesting to note that these bases are sometimes made of broken vessels. It is a form of reuse reported also in Chinautla and other production centres,²⁴ although nowadays some potters use modern elements such as plastic or metal containers. Although the hands of these women perfectly model each piece, they also use for the smoothing process various tools from natural materials with little or no modification, such as small wooden sticks or smooth river stones, but pieces of cloth are also sometimes used. A common element used by the potters is a thick wooden base (circular, rectangular, or square) of considerable size to accommodate the work.

The instruments and tools, and materials used are typical of each region. For example, in the municipality of Chinautla, potters use chicken feathers to make incisions, spoons from the local gourd (*morro*), and ‘*piedra de rayo*’,²⁵ a traditional name for obsidian, a rock of volcanic origin from the Central Highlands of Guatemala, which has been widely used since the pre-Columbian times. In other places in the eastern part of the country, potters use not only chicken feathers, smooth, round, or oval river stones, and corn cobs, but also elements such as the ‘*yagual*’, a ring-shaped object made from the fibres of the stem of the banana plant, which is used as a base on which the vessels are modelled.²⁶ The use of such readily available local natural resources significantly reduces the production costs.



Figure 14. Tools used in Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.

²⁴ SMITH, “Cerámica elaborada”, pp. 341–346; REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, pp. 29–44.

²⁵ TARACENA, “Apuntes”, pp. 57–71; SMITH, “Cerámica elaborada”, pp. 341–346.

²⁶ MORALES, “Panorama”, pp. 61–102.

Work on a pottery piece

This process starts with the choice of a base, which takes the form of dish or bowl with a concave shape. Due to modern influences, these bases are nowadays made of metal or plastic, but in the past, the potters would have used old vessels, gourd or wood. Then the potter separates a suitable amount of clay and forms a ball with her hands and with the help of the base, which she has been covered with powdered calcite to prevent the clay from sticking. Once the base of the vessel is modelled, the potter makes clay coils, sticking them continuously and successively along the contour of the base until the walls of the vessel are raised. The potter models with piece with her fingers until the desired shape is reached. The most common shape of those we had the chance to observe was a pitcher.

Once the basic modelling is finished, the potter starts to smooth the whole piece using the abovementioned instruments. At this point, the potter also shapes the neck and the lip. For some other shapes, such as plates and bowls, the process is



Figure 15. Process of making a pitcher in San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 16. Rolling process, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 17. Rolling process, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 18. Rolling process, modeling the neck of a pitcher, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 19. Rolling process, modeling of the neck and lip of a pitcher, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 20. Smoothing process of a pitcher, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 21. Smoothing process, using a wooden stick, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 22. Smoothing process of a pitcher, Yalambojoch village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.



Figure 23. Smoothing process, using a piece of cloth, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 24. Application of handles of a pitcher, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 25. Application of handles of a pitcher, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 26. Decorative applications, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.

simpler: the shape is modelled on the base and the details and various finishes are then added using fingers and fine sticks. Finally, in the case of pitchers, the handles are modelled and attached to the finished vessel. This basic process has been observed in most of the traditional pottery centres in Guatemala since the 1960s,²⁷ which indicates that this is a widely known and widespread tradition.

Further treatment of the vessels and decorations

In all the cases we have observed, the potters did not use any slip, coating, or paint. In San Mateo, they mentioned that sometimes they would apply a colour bath made with other colours of clay. In the vessels observed in this study, decorations were always impressed in the wet clay, that is, before firing. These consisted of incisions made with sticks or their fingernails. The designs were geometric and placed on the upper part of the piece and the lip. Other decorations included representation of certain animals, such as birds. After firing, the pots were subjected to a final seasoning aimed at improvement of their functionality. This is the process the potters call ‘curing’: it consists of application of a maize gruel coat to the whole vessel. This seals the pores and make the pots more resistant and impermeable, an ancestral secret that has been passed down for generations. In other places, such as Rabinal and Totonicapán in western Guatemala, potters use also other decorative elements and paints, such as indigo with glue to produce bright colours such as red, yellow, and blue.²⁸

²⁷ REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, pp. 22–24; TARACENA, “Apuntes”, pp. 57–71; MORALES, “Panorama”, pp. 61–102.

²⁸ Roberto DIAZ, “Cerámica Coloreada de Rabinal”, *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 2, 1972, pp. 1–8; Rosa María ÁLVAREZ, “Cerámica de Rabinal”, *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 5, 1976, pp. 31–46; IGLESIAS – CIUDAD, *Patrones*, p. 228.



Figure 27. Surface finish of a pitcher.
Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 28. Incised decorative figures, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 29. Making incisions with a toothpick, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 30. Decoration of incisions on the lip of the vessel, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 31. Decorative applications, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 32. Process of 'curing' of vessels with maize atol, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.

In Totonicapán, local potters use lead, which gives the local pottery a glazed appearance and a characteristic greenish colour. The use of lead glaze is a technique learned during the colonial period: it was adopted as part of production of majolica ceramics, a tradition that spread in the main cities of Colonial Guatemala.²⁹ The result is a mixture of several techniques and materials used in pottery making. Other decorative variants are found in Santa Apolonia in the Central Highlands of Guatemala, where the decorative motifs and designs are white on red, whereby the colours are obtained from different types of clay. In Santa María Chiquimula and in Chinautla, in the eastern and central Guatemala, pottery decorations are red on white.³⁰



Figure 33. Ceramics from Totonicapán, Guatemala.
Photo: Milan Kováč.

It is interesting to note that both in all previous studies and in our observations in this area, the presence of incised geometric designs, curved lines, dots, and triangles is constant. In Rabinal in northern Guatemala, for example, these motifs represent rivers, mountains, and stars.³¹ In Chinautla, near Guatemala City, the process of making incisions in pottery is known as *labrado*, but when decorations are painted the process is called *floreado*, because the patterns represent flowers and plants, albeit in a very abstract way.³² Such decorative elements that refer to various parts of nature are found also in the Chuj pottery. In fact, it seems they are a lasting legacy of the Maya view of the cosmos and its symbolic representation in patterns.³³

²⁹ LUJÁN, “La Mayólica”, pp. 533–540.

³⁰ REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, pp. 70–77; TARACENA, “Apuntes”, pp. 57–71.

³¹ ÁLVAREZ, “Cerámica”, pp. 31–46.

³² TARACENA, “Apuntes”, p. 58.

³³ Dorie REENTS-BUDET, *Painting the Maya Universe: Royal Ceramics of the Classic Period*, London 1994.



Figure 34. Triangular incised designs, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 35. Chinautla Polychrome pottery. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

Open firing

One of the characteristic features of traditional pottery making is the firing of vessels that is done outside, over open fire, and mainly in the morning hours to avoid the wind. It is important to note that before firing, the vessels must undergo a drying process lasting two to three weeks, depending on the weather. Sometimes, they are placed in the sun or near a bonfire for faster drying.

First, a decent amount of dry wood located and placed so as to form a bed on which the vessels are placed for firing. Then the vessels are covered with more wood but also bark, leaves, or branches, forming a kind of kiln with constant temperature. In the Yoncultac village, we found a variant where the firing was also



Figure 36. Drying process of the pieces in the hearth, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 37. Burning process in San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 38. Burning process of the vessels, covered with wood bark and maize cobs, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 39. Burning process in the village El Aguacate, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.



Figure 40. Burning process in Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.

done on the kitchen fire but even there, the pieces were covered with tree bark. The length of firing varies depending on the temperature reached, but in general it takes 20–25 minutes. Then the fired pieces are then carefully removed with the help of sticks and allowed to cool.

Studies on pottery production in other centres (such as Reina and Hill³⁴ but also others) describe a very similar firing process. In Salamá, in northern Guatemala, pottery is also made with simple instruments, without the potter's wheel, and the vessels are fired outside using open fire.³⁵ In other places, for instance Rabinal and Chinautla, potters apparently use also other kinds of natural fuel, such as pine bark or cow dung.³⁶

³⁴ REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, p. 24.

³⁵ ESQUIVEL, "Magia", pp. 113–148.

³⁶ DÍAZ, "Cerámica", pp. 1–8; TARACENA, "Apuntes", p. 59.

Firing always carries the risk of the vessels breaking because of some mistake. For instance, during our stay in El Aguacate we saw that all vessels broke after the firing. Our informant indicated that this happens because there were ‘many people watching’, which is why potters prefer to fire their vessels alone and in the morning hours. Similar beliefs and preferences in other places were found, such as Cobán and other places in Alta Verapaz.³⁷

The shapes

The vessels are always for domestic use: local potters make a great variety of pitchers, pots, and jars, especially for cooking and storing either food or water and other liquids. Some forms of pitchers tend to feature representations of birds (such as ducks or hens). Depending on their intended use, the pitchers can have between one to four handles and their size also varies. For example, in San Mateo, large vessels are made for the processing of salt. Other popular forms include griddles (*comales*) for baking maize tortillas and toasting other foods. *Pichachas*, which are a type of colander, are used for washing the maize after nixtamalization and also for processing other foods. In Yoncultac, we heard potters talking also about making figurines of animals and other more decorative elements. Aside from that, they also make whistles in the shape of a small bird with four holes: these are used to scare away animals from the crops.

In centres such as Chinautla, Mixco, and Salamá, in the northern and central part of Guatemala, there seems to be a high demand for pots, pitchers, *comales*, and the like for the preparation of traditional local dishes.³⁸ For example, potters in Santa Apolonia make a type of large bowl called *apaste*, which is used to cook large amounts of food, which is why it is still produced in most parts of Guatemala.³⁹ In the east, in Santa María Chiquimula, it is known as *tamalera*, which refers to its function of cooking *tamales*. Other dishes are called according to their use, for instance jars (*tinajeras*), which are used to store and carry water.

A special non-domestic pottery product we found in all the places we visited was the incense burner, which is used mainly for ceremonies and to carry fire to the sacred mountains. It has a cup-like shape with a pedestal and it is made with calcite temper to make it fire-resistant. Other kinds of pottery for ceremonial use are reported from Rabinal and Chinautla, where different types of censers and candlesticks are also made. In Cobán and Alta Verapaz, the censers have a smaller base and bands attached to the top for easier manipulation. The incense burners are mostly known as *braseros* (braziers), because of their function of burning resins (*copal*).⁴⁰ Of all the forms of pottery we had encountered, this could be one of the most significant because it is still used as part of religious practice by various both Mayan and non-Mayan groups. The burning of offerings in internal spaces is a tradition

³⁷ REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, pp. 121–127.

³⁸ ESQUIVEL, “Magia”, pp. 113–148; ARROT, “Cerámica” pp. 305–311; REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, p. 29.

³⁹ REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, pp. 50–64.

⁴⁰ ÁLVAREZ, “Cerámica”, pp. 31–46; REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, p. 27.



Figure 41. Variety of shapes made in the village Yoncultac, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 42. Forms of vessels, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 43. Large pitchers for domestic work, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.



Figure 44. Comal shape for cooking maize tortillas, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.

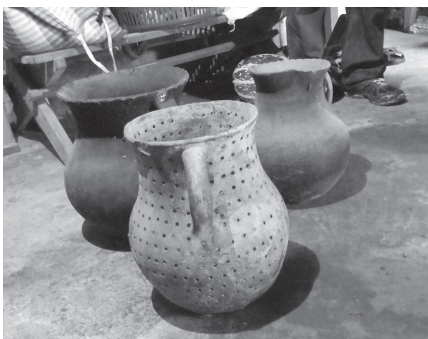


Figure 45. Shape of 'pichacha' or strainer. Photo: Private archive of Dora García



Figure 46. Bird-shaped whistle, Yoncultac village, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 47. Incense burner shape, called ‘pech’ in Chuj language. San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.



Figure 48. Making of a censer, San Mateo Ixtatán, Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Photo: Julio Hernández.

that clearly goes back to pre-Columbian times.⁴¹ Diego de Landa mentions that the native peoples had ‘the custom of entering the temples to pray and burn copal’.⁴² Other sources also make reference to this subject⁴³.

Pottery making as a craft, early records and more recent study

Diego de Landa mentions that ‘by trade, the Indians were potters and carpenters’.⁴⁴ On the other hand, Pedro Cortez y Larraz mentions that each household was engaged in a different task. Still, it was the women who made the plates, bowls, and jars.⁴⁵ These are some of the first records of pottery production during the colonisation process. This specialised craft was the domain of women in certain households. In fact, most of the abovementioned sources report that women are the main protagonists of this craft and trade. In general, women seem to have a closer relationship to pottery because they use pottery dishes to make food for themselves and their families and to process maize. Pottery making was thus a productive activity, a way of meeting the needs of a certain group.⁴⁶ This in turn allowed for the development of other specialised activities such as the preparation of food and other resources, such as salt in the case of San Mateo Ixtatán.

The pottery craft thus plays a key role in a chain of economic development. It became the vehicle of survival of knowledge and symbolism related to pottery since

⁴¹ Alejandro PASTRANA, “La obsidiana en Mesoamérica”, *Arqueología Mexicana, La Producción Artesanal en Mesoamérica* 14/80, 2006, pp. 49–54.

⁴² Diego de LANDA, ed. Angel Ma. Garibay, *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán*, Mérida 1993, p. 55.

⁴³ Allen CHRISTENSON, *Popol Vuh*, Ciudad de México, 2012; Simón OTZOY C., *Memorial de Sololá: Edición facsimile del manuscrito original*, Ciudad de Guatemala 1999.

⁴⁴ LANDA, *Relación*, p. 46.

⁴⁵ Pedro CORTEZ Y LARRAZ, *Descripción Geográfico Moral de la Diócesis de Goathemala* II, Ciudad de Guatemala 1958, pp. 202–204.

⁴⁶ Linda MANZANILLA, *Unidades Habitacionales Mesoamericanas y sus áreas de actividad*, Ciudad de México 1986.

before the Colonial Period. This permanence was enabled not only by transmission between generations but also by the commercial potential of pottery. Lara⁴⁷ included this kind of traditional ceramics among vessels belonging to the pre-Columbian tradition precisely because of characteristics such as those we have presented in the previous section. Studies of the Center of Folklore Studies of Guatemala draw a distinction between traditional ceramics and ceramics that incorporates some of the techniques that started spreading during the Colonial Period, such as the use of glaze, potter's wheel, and specialised kilns.⁴⁸

In general, one can study pottery production in Guatemala as a manifestation of traditional popular culture understood as 'all those manifestations that are developed within the people of a given country, with their characteristics, that express the conception of the world and the life of these social groups'.⁴⁹ One could add that such cultural manifestations are transmitted through oral tradition, there is no institutional body regulating them, and they are the result of certain historical events that emerged within a particular socioeconomic context. In the case of contemporary traditional Maya pottery, its development takes place within a context of acculturation, where traditional and novel techniques tend to mix.⁵⁰ But in the specific case of the coiling technique, oral tradition enabled a survival of some ancestral knowledge and skills exercised within individual families and specifically by women.

History shows that during the Colonial Period, the most important pottery centres developed close to the main cities, for example in Santiago de los Caballeros (currently La Antigua Guatemala), which was the site of the first formal ceramic workshops.⁵¹ This helps explain why traditions and original local knowledge are better preserved in places farther away from large population centres. The region where we conducted our research is indeed a very distant place, in the mountains accessible through difficult roads, which naturally leads to a level of isolation from foreign influences. For example, it is known from past records that in Chinautla, close to Guatemala City, vessels used to be made by the coiling technique⁵² as well, but current production already relies on potter's wheel and moulds. Elsewhere, too, small-scale pottery production has decreased and in some cases practically disappeared, as in the municipality of Mixco, also very close to the capital. This is due to the introduction of new products, such as English and Chinese ceramics, which was introduced during the 19th century.⁵³ It should also be noted that pottery production centres respond to tourist demand, so their production includes not only items for domestic use but also ornamental objects (vases, religious figures, toys, among others). These centres thus have a much larger market than the small-scale domestic and regional market for ceramics from western Huehuetenango that we present in

⁴⁷ LARA, "Síntesis", pp. 202–216.

⁴⁸ Aracely ESQUIVEL, "El aporte del área de artes y artesanías populares al conocimiento de la cultura guatemalteca (1967–2016)", *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 87, 2017, pp. 44–79.

⁴⁹ LARA, "Síntesis", p. 202.

⁵⁰ LARA, "Síntesis", pp. 205–207.

⁵¹ LUJÁN, "La Mayólica", pp. 533–540.

⁵² SMITH, "Cerámica elaborada", pp. 341–346; REINA – HILL, *The Traditional*, p. 121.

⁵³ DARY F., "Artes", pp. 39–52.

this work, but as noted above, this is often at the cost of loss of the traditional production methods.

Craft production also needs to be considered from the perspective of division of labour, artisanal specialisation, and the establishment of areas of activity,⁵⁴ which implies a certain social order and cooperation between communities. Several factors play an important role: the producers, the means of production, the principles of work organisation, the products, their sale, and the final consumers.⁵⁵ The process of making handmade pottery presented here reflects all these factors. Pottery production in the region is in decline due to the introduction of new plastic and metal containers, which are cheaper and more durable. On top of that, the young generation is not very interested in learning this craft: that is largely due to poverty in the region, which pushes locals to search for other means of subsistence. In 2014, a pot, depending on its size, sold for 5 to 20 quetzals (Guatemala's currency), which is equivalent to about 0.60 to 2.40 euros. That is a very low price that hardly expresses the hard work put into making these items and, in current economic situation, it does not stimulate further economic development of this craft.



Figure 49. Current pottery in Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

⁵⁴ MANZANILLA, *Unidades*, p. 15.

⁵⁵ MANZANILLA, Linda, “La producción artesanal en Mesoamérica”, *Arqueología Mexicana* 14/80, Ciudad de México 2006, pp. 28–35.

Trade in this locally made pottery is limited to small regional markets; only rarely do potters manage to sell their products a little further away. This is compounded by a shift in customers' preferences, which is, as noted above, influenced by the introduction of utensils from aluminium or other more durable materials. In this context, it should be noted that the places we have investigated are in a different position than the best-known pottery centres of Guatemala, such as Chinautla, Totonicapán, Antigua, or Rabinal.⁵⁶ These places have better sales opportunities stemming from tourist demand. On the other hand, this increased demand had also led to manufacture of other decorative, recreational, and religious forms, which are produced in much greater quantity thanks to the use of potter's wheel and other technologies. In effect, therefore, what one sees there is loss of some part of traditional pottery-related knowledge.

Let us now return to the definition of folk art as reflecting the 'conception of the world and life of these social groups'.⁵⁷ How much did it change? In this study, We tried to show that the Chuj potters of Huehuetenango perpetuate their conception of the world through their craft. This is expressed, for example, in their be-



Figure 50. Ceramics made in Chiapas, Mexico. Photo: Private archive of Dora García.

liefs surrounding the firing of the pots, where they avoid the presence of many people, or in the continued production of braziers (incense burners), which have spiritual connotations. In San Mateo Ixtatán, local potters have also mentioned that, although pottery production has decreased, many women have a special affection for the clay pots of their ancestors (grandmothers or mothers), keeping them as

⁵⁶ ESQUIVEL, "El aporte", pp. 44–79.

⁵⁷ LARA, "Síntesis", p. 202.



Figure 51. Girls from Yoncultac village watching their mothers in the process of making pottery.
Photo: Julio Hernández.

family heirlooms; similar emotional attachment has also been reported in Chiapas, Mexico.⁵⁸

This is not to say that, in the area we have studied, the pottery craft had survived in a ‘pure’ form: history necessarily leads to changes. In our case, changes took place due to colonisation and acculturation, which have continued in our recent history through policies that detach the ‘classic’ Maya culture from the Maya communities of today. Arturo Taracena notes that ‘In the political discourse, there is an attempt to make pre-Columbian history a closed utopia around the Mayan origin’ allegedly supported by the supposed ‘historical vacuum of the 10 and 15 centuries’⁵⁹ which enabled a survival of the ‘ancient’ Maya culture in our recent history. This erroneous concept inadvertently allows the perpetuation of racism in Guatemala, thus jeopardising the continuity of ancestral knowledge of these groups and linguistic communities. They may not disappear, but they change due to constant pressure of

⁵⁸ Socorro del PILAR JIMÉNEZ ALVAREZ – Francisca ZALAUQUETTE ROCK, “Tecnología alfarera doméstica del Ejido Lacandón, Chiapas”, *The Korean Journal of Hispanic Studies* 7/2, 2014, pp. 33–63.

⁵⁹ Arturo TARACENA, “La Civilización Maya y sus Herederos. Un Debate Negacionista en la Historiografía Moderna Guatemalteca”, *Estudios de Cultura Maya* 27, 2006, pp. 43–55.

the globalised market,⁶⁰ which leads to integration of foreign elements or romanticisation of purchase of ‘exotic’ pieces.

This is a complex issue. In this study, we tried to outline a number of approaches to this subject and highlighted the importance of making this type of anthropological record. The title of our work is clear in that it refers to the ‘last’ Chuj potters. We have encountered many young women who are losing interest in this work. It is easy for them to get cheap plastic containers, and they want to spend their time doing different things. It is quite possible that we have had the privilege of meeting indeed the last women who have this knowledge that is no longer being transmitted to the next generation.

Conclusions

Work on this study has been a unique experience. Our present intention is to publish the initial results of this research that began some years ago (the field part of the study was conducted in 2014 and 2015) in a region from which there is so far little information on pottery making. We wanted to highlight the survival of an ancient technique, the coiling method, which to the best of our knowledge we were the first to record in these localities. Coiling is a traditional way of making pottery that survived thanks to an orally transmitted tradition among women in the mountains of the western part of Huehuetenango. Their traditional knowledge covers numerous aspects of this craft: the materials, tools, and techniques, but also the traditional shapes and designs unique to this region.

A comparison with other traditional pottery centres shows many similarities. Locally specific are the types of clay that is used, the type of tempers characteristic of each region, pigments, but also some shapes, such as the cup shape of the censer we have recorded and the large pots for the production of salt. In the area we have studied, the shapes respond mainly to local demand for cooking and storage vessels. This has aided the continuity of transmission of the technique for generations. Although in other places, pottery is made to be sold to tourists, in our specific case it is not. This hand-made pottery is truly local and reflects the worldview and culture of this Maya group.

We tried to be guided by the goals of anthropology as defined by Tim Ingold: ‘All study calls for observation, but in anthropology we observe not by objectifying others but by paying attention to them, watching what they do and listening to what they say. We study with people, rather than making studies of them.’⁶¹ Although the ideology of racism in Guatemala had led to a devaluation of this type of pottery production, to seeing it as inferior, the complexity of making each piece is impressive. The process requires unique knowledge about the type of clay and other materials to be used, the way of placing the coils, and fine work with fingers in the smoothing process. The firing is also based on transmitted experience: one needs to finely estimate when the right temperature is reached and when exactly the vessels should

⁶⁰ Celso LARA, “Globalización cultural e identidad nacional en la Guatemala contemporánea”, *Tradiciones de Guatemala* 62, 2004, pp. 7–10.

⁶¹ INGOLD, “Anthropology”.

be taken out of the fire. Such fine manual work imprints a unique character to each piece, each piece embodies both hard work and a long tradition. It is also a way in which the present-day Maya are a valuable source of information: they can help us understand the historical development of their society and culture. Our research could be compared to studies in other localities, because this traditional pottery making technique has been recorded throughout Guatemala but also near the border in Chiapas, Mexico. Further studies of this technique could help identify specific aspects of continuity of the Maya culture and its variability within the different groups that speak different languages.

(Written in English by the author)

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ADEMÁS DEL CONTENIDO DEL NÚMERO

LA “REPÚBLICA DE LOS LETRADOS”: EL VIEJO Y EL NUEVO MUNDO (INTERSECCIÓN DE LOS CONTACTOS DE JOSÉ CELESTINO MUTIS Y LOS DE TADEO HAENKE)¹

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Resumen

En este estudio partimos de los reales (y también posibles) contactos, sea directos o indirectos, del eminente botánico español en Nueva Granada, José Celestino Mutis, y del bohemio Tadeo Haenke con otros personajes destacados de la ciencia europea. Intentamos seguir y describir las redes intelectuales de la época de la Ilustración que no solamente unían los focos de la ciencia en Europa, sino que atravesaban el Atlántico. **Palabras claves:** Ciencia de la Ilustración; botánica; metalurgia; José Celestino Mutis; Tadeo Haenke; Carlos Linneo; Joseph Banks; Nikolaus Jacquin; Ignaz von Born; los hermanos Elhuyar; Alejandro de Humboldt; redes intelectuales; el Caribe; Nueva Granada; Nueva España; Perú; Europa; siglo XVIII.

The ‘Republic of Letters’: The Old and the New World (The Intersection of the Contacts of José Celestino Mutis and Tadeo Haenke)

Abstract

In this study, we start from the real (and also possible) contacts, whether direct or indirect, of the eminent Spanish botanist in New Granada, José Celestino Mutis, and the Bohemian Tadeo Haenke with other prominent figures of European science. We attempt to trace and describe the intellectual networks of the Enlightenment era that not only connected the centers of science in Europe but also crossed the Atlantic.

Keywords: Science of the Enlightenment; botany; metallurgy; José Celestino Mutis; Thaddäus Haenke; Carl Linnaeus; Joseph Banks; Nikolaus Jacquin; Ignaz von Born; the Elhuyar brothers; Alexander von Humboldt; intellectual networks; the Caribbean; New Granada; New Spain; Peru; Europe; 18th century.

Dos eminentes botánicos europeos en América del Sur, siglo XVIII

El español José Celestino Bruno Mutis y Bosio (1732 Cádiz - 1808 Santa Fe de Bogotá), además de médico y experto en otras disciplinas científicas, actuó en el virreinato de Nueva Granada desde el año 1760. En varias ocasiones propuso a la Corona de España una expedición botánica por el Nuevo Reino de Granada que no

¹ Este trabajo es resultado del proyecto KREAS (Creatividad y adaptabilidad como condiciones del éxito de Europa en un mundo interrelacionado), No. CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16_019/0000734 financiado por el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional.

se inició sino hasta 1783 y a cuya frente estuvo por lo menos los primeros años. Permaneció en el Nuevo Mundo hasta su muerte.

El naturalista originario de Bohemia Tadeo Haenke (1761 Chřibská, en alemán: Kreibitz - 1816 Cochabamba), también médico, químico, apto en música etc., participó en la expedición “científico-política” dirigida por Alejandro Malaspina a América, Oceanía y las Filipinas, entre 1789 y 1794. Después de finalizada la expedición, Haenke se quedó en América del Sur prosiguiendo sus exploraciones, primero al servicio del Rey de España, y luego, por su cuenta. Aplazó su vuelta a Europa hasta su fallecimiento.²

Las dos expediciones fueron financiadas y apoyadas por la Corona. Ambos científicos eran contemporáneos y su mayor interés era la botánica, pero, ¿pudo darse un contacto directo entre ellos? y, por otro lado, ¿cuáles eran sus redes intelectuales?

Desde ya podemos excluir el conocimiento personal mutuo ya que cuando Haenke pasaba por Madrid de ida a ultramar, Mutis ya estaba asentado en el virreinato de Nueva Granada desde hacía unos treinta años. Tampoco pudieron haberse encontrado durante las actividades llevadas a cabo por la expedición Malaspina, a pesar de lo amplio de su trayectoria que cubrió los virreinatos del Río de la Plata, del Perú, de Nueva España y otras regiones, así como la capitania general o gobernación de Chile, puesto que de los destinos laborales de la expedición se había excluido el virreinato de Nueva Granada, según le escribió a Mutis, Luis Née, el botánico principal de la expedición Malaspina: “Santafé es del número de los países en donde no iremos, y por consiguiente, me veo privado de la amable y sabia conversación de vuesa merced.”³ La única excepción fueron los puntos extremos del territorio —donde atracó la expedición naval— en Guayaquil y Panamá, que en ese entonces pertenecían a dicho virreinato; no obstante, esos puertos quedaban demasiado alejados de la región donde residía Mutis.

En la etapa posterior, ambos científicos, Mutis y Haenke, se movieron por áreas extensas, que empero no colindaban las unas con las otras.

Queda la posibilidad de que hubieran entrado en contacto por escrito. La amplia correspondencia de Mutis, en gran medida conservada y publicada, podría representar un campo de investigación de este tema. Sin embargo, no hay huellas de un contacto directo de este tipo entre ambos. A pesar de ello, no se puede descartar que hubiesen conocido por lo menos las obras impresas de uno y otro, o hubiesen recibido informaciones por parte de terceras personas.

² Los dos han sido objeto de numerosos estudios y publicaciones de sus obras. En adelante vamos a citar los más relevantes para este tema.

³ Carta de Luis Née a José Celestino Mutis, Guayaquil, hacia el 22 de octubre de 1790, copia, publicada en José Celestino MUTIS, *Archivo epistolar del sabio naturalista don José Celestino Mutis*, Guillermo Hernández de Alba (ed.), Bogotá 1968-1975, 4 tomos (en adelante vamos a referirnos a esta 1ª edición), aquí tomo IV, carta 301, pp. 74-76. Existe también una segunda edición: José Celestino MUTIS, *Archivo epistolar del sabio naturalista don José Celestino Mutis*, Guillermo Hernández de Alba (ed.), Bogotá 1983, 4 tomos. La carta está citada también en *La expedición Malaspina*, Madrid 1987-1995, 9 tomos, aquí tomo III: *Diarios y trabajos botánicos de Luis Née*, pp. 245-247.

Así encontramos una mención sobre Haenke (al parecer, y por lo que hemos detectado hasta ahora, la única que el naturalista español habría recibido acerca del joven bohemio) en la misma carta citada de 1790, dirigida a Mutis por Luis Née:

Don Antonio Pineda, principal encargado de la historia natural de esta expedición, da a vuesa merced sus más finas expresiones. Don Thadeo Haenck [!], botánico, se agregó con nosotros en Valparaíso. Vino por tierra desde Montevideo, y ha formado un herbario bueno de la cordillera.⁴

En adelante, vamos a prestar atención a los eventuales nexos profesionales de ambos con otras personas destacadas en las ciencias naturales del siglo XVIII en un sentido amplio. Nos referiremos a Carlos Linneo, Joseph Banks, Nikolaus Jacquin, Ignaz von Born, los hermanos Elhuyar, Alejandro de Humboldt, entre otros.

Carlos Linneo (1707-1778) y Carlos Linneo hijo (1741-1783)

La figura del renombrado científico, botánico y zoólogo sueco, y sus obras *Systema naturae* (1735), *Genera plantarum* (1.ª edición 1737 y otras seis siguientes durante la vida del autor, siempre aumentadas) y *Species plantarum* (1753), con las que introdujo la nomenclatura botánica binominal, han sido un punto de referencia obligatorio para todos los naturalistas contemporáneos y posteriores. Sin mencionar a muchos eminentes personajes de su época (J.-J. Rousseau, J. W. Goethe) quedamos en un mundo restringido a la botánica.

Con José Celestino Mutis lo unía una relación de las más continuas y duraderas, no sólo a nivel profesional, sino también de amistad, según se desprende de la copiosa correspondencia mutua. Mutis le enviaba a Linneo dibujos y descripciones de plantas, e incluso colecciones de plantas secas, y Linneo las intentaba a clasificar y las incluía en las ediciones de sus obras. A una de ellas la nombró *Mutisia* en honor a su amigo.⁵

Existen varias conmovedoras muestras de amistad entre ambos. Linneo (a sus sesenta y dos años) le escribió a Mutis:

¡Ojalá volvieras salvo a Europa! [...] Ojalá en esta vida me fuera dado verte personalmente siquiera una vez [...]. Ciertamente, si volvieras, por causa tuya, me atrev[er]ía

⁴ Carta de Luis Née a José Celestino Mutis, Guayaquil, hacia el 22 de octubre de 1790, copia, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. IV, carta no. 301, pp. 74-76, aquí p. 76. Citada también en *La expedición Malaspina*, t. III, pp. 245-247.

⁵ Carta de Carlos Linneo a José Celestino Mutis, Upsala, 20 de mayo de 1774, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. IV, carta no. 264, pp. 24-26. Acerca de la relación amistosa compare también Bartolomé RIBAS OZONAS, “José Celestino Mutis, amistad y colaboración con Carlos Linneo”, *Monografías de la Real Academia Nacional de Farmacia*, 2009, pp. 123-149. La Real Academia Nacional de Farmacia: Portal Publicaciones [14 de noviembre de 2021], accesible de: <https://core.ac.uk/reader/230312892.pdf>. Para la relación de ambos (en un contexto amplio) compare la obra minuciosa de José Antonio AMAYA, *Mutis, apóstol de Linneo: Historia de la botánica en el virreinato de la Nueva Granada (1760-1783)*, Bogotá, 2005, 2 vols., especialmente el capítulo 4. Para la relación con los naturalistas suecos compare ibidem, el capítulo 3 y 5, y también Gabriel GIRALDO JARAMILLO, “Don José Celestino Mutis y los naturalistas suecos”, *Humanismo* 60-61/8, 1960, pp. 47-63.

a emprender un viaje a España, a pesar de lo que me lo impiden la vejez y la muerte que no puede tardar!⁶

La correspondencia entre Mutis y Linneo continuó aún hasta el final de la vida de este último, quien se vio afectado de apoplejía y luego de perlesía. Más adelante Carlos Linneo hijo, también botánico, fue su intermediador. En una de sus cartas, además de muchas otras preguntas especializadas, hizo referencia a la planta que su padre había llamado *Mutisia*, y le pidió una nueva remesa de la misma porque la flor del ejemplar original había resultado maltratada.⁷

En la siguiente carta, proveniente de Linneo hijo, Mutis recibió la triste noticia del fallecimiento de Linneo padre, y el deseo de mantener la amistad entablada entre ellos:

El 10 de enero del presente año [1788], el más fatal día para mí, he perdido a mi amado padre. [...] Nada pudo venir a suavizar mejor el sentimiento de un hijo así privado de tal padre, como la contemplación de aquel tesoro de raras y hermosas plantas que tú habías destinado para él. No puedo describirte la grata sensación con que en este verano realicé la tarea de examinarlas. Olvidé por algún tiempo la amargura de mi pena, y casi me olvido de mí mismo. Me faltan palabras para expresarte mi agradecimiento. [...] Muy feliz seré si tú me permites heredar tu amistad con mi padre.⁸

En adelante, le informa a Mutis sobre la intención de continuar las investigaciones de su padre, así como las remesas de sus resultados:

Este año he preparado un *Supplementum* al *Systema Vegetabilium*, en el cual encontrarás tu nombre como descubridor de muchas plantas raras.⁹

Por su parte, Mutis le dedicó a Linneo padre un emotivo recuerdo tras su fallecimiento:

Puedo decir que el inmortal Linneo que me honró hasta su muerte, fue el instrumento de conservar yo tal afición, pues estuve a pique de renunciar a ella y regalar mis manuscritos a la Academia de Stocolmo, luego que me vi burlado en el Ministerio español.¹⁰

⁶ Carta de Carlos Linneo a José Celestino Mutis, fragmento correspondiente al 10 de abril de 1769, copia, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. IV, carta no. 263, pp. 23-27, aquí pp. 24-25.

⁷ Carta de Carlos Linneo hijo a José Celestino Mutis, Upsala, 6 de noviembre de 1777, traducción de Mutis, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. IV, carta no. 265, pp. 28-30, aquí p. 30.

⁸ Carta de Carlos Linneo hijo a José Celestino Mutis, sin lugar y fecha [1788], traducción, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. IV, carta no. 266, pp. 30-32, aquí pp. 30-31.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

¹⁰ Carta de José Celestino Mutis a Francisco Martínez Sobral, Mariquita, 19 de diciembre de 1789, copia, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. I, carta no. 303, pp. 502-507, aquí p. 504.

En el contexto de Linneo cabe recordar también el nombre de Tadeo Haenke. Tampoco él y Linneo pudieron haber tenido un contacto directo, en este caso por una gran diferencia de edad, sin embargo, Haenke fue un fervoroso admirador de Linneo y de su taxonomía botánica.

Desde joven, Haenke conocía el *Calendarium Florae* (tesis académica, defendida y publicada en 1756 en Uppsala) de Linneo que describía el proceso de vida de las plantas de Suecia conforme a la estación del año y se propuso reunir informaciones semejantes para la zona de Bohemia, con base en sus experiencias anteriores, en su *Blumenkalender*.¹¹ De hecho, en el prólogo hace una referencia explícita al “inmortal” Linneo y a dicha obra.¹² Con esa publicación que incluyó también los resultados de su participación en una expedición científica de 1786 a los Montes Gigantes (en checo: Krkonoše, y en alemán: Riesengebirge), organizada por la Real Sociedad de Ciencias Checa, Haenke entró a formar parte de los botánicos respetados.

Antes de su participación en la expedición Malaspina, preparó para la prensa la principal obra de Carlos Linneo *Genera Plantarum*, considerada su octava edición, y la primera póstuma, la cual acompañó de una introducción aclaratoria.¹³ El libro salió impreso en Viena, dos años después de la partida de Haenke al ultramar. Se dice que al naufragar cerca de Montevideo en el navío que lo transportaba a América del Sur, Haenke salvó su vida y, entre las pocas cosas salvadas del naufragio estaba una edición anterior del mismo libro de Linneo.¹⁴

En una carta oficial de 1810, después de haber pasado ya veinte años al servicio de España en ultramar y consciente de la importancia de su labor científica, Haenke presentó, con gran seguridad en sí mismo, varias objeciones al requisito de la Corona de volver a Europa (algunas objetivas, como las guerras):

Mis propios escritos y colecciones que presentaré, y con que daré cuenta de mi comisión, serán el más seguro convencimiento de que no ha sido demasiado el tiempo que he empleado en disquisiciones y descubrimientos tan numerosos, y para los que apenas bastarían muchos Linneos, muchos Pitones de Turnefort¹⁵, u otros sabios reputados por padres de la Botánica moderna que, connaturalizados con las plantas, diesen toda su atención al único objeto de examinar sus propiedades, en provincias tan dilatadas y con climas tan varios y diferentes.¹⁶

¹¹ Información básica en František KHOL, *Tadeáš Haenke, jeho život, dílo a listy ze zámořských krajín* [Tadeo Haenke, su vida, obra y cartas del ultramar], Praha 1911, p. 16. Para el escrito de Haenke ver Taddäeus HAENKE, “Blumenkalender für Böhmen, im Jahre 1786”, *Abhandlungen der Böhmisches Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, 1. Folge, 3. Band, 1787, pp. 94-135.

¹² *Ibidem*, pp. 96 y 133.

¹³ Carl von LINNÉ, *Caroli a Linné Ord. Stellae Polaris Equitis Genera Plantarum: Eorumque Characteres Naturales Secundum Numerum, Figuram, Situm Et Proportionem Omnium Fructificationis Partium. Juxta Thunbergii Emendationes Digesta*, 8ª ed., vol. I, II. Curante Thaddaeo Haenke, Vindobonae 1791. El prefacio de Haenke [pp. XXII-XXIV] describe y explica sus intervenciones en el texto.

¹⁴ KHOL, *Tadeáš Haenke*, p. 23 (según las cartas de Haenke enviadas a Bohemia).

¹⁵ Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1656-1708), botánico francés. Probablemente el primero antes de Linneo definió el género de las plantas y la diferencia entre el género y la especie.

¹⁶ Carta de Tadeo Haenke al Gobernador Intendente [Joseph González de Prada], Cochabamba, 13 de marzo de 1810, publicada en *La expedición Malaspina*, t. IV, *Trabajos científicos y correspondencia*

Aquí, Haenke ya no vacila al compararse con los botánicos más renombrados, predecesores suyos. Sin embargo, puede ser que en 1810 adoptara esta postura nada modesta para justificar su larga y menospreciada estancia en América, y además, deseara voltear la atención de las autoridades de la colonia y de la metrópoli hacia su contribución a la ciencia –no sólo en botánica, sino que también en otros campos como resalta en otras cartas suyas–.

Alejandro de Humboldt (1769-1859) y Aimé Bonpland (1773-1858)

Los dos naturalistas, uno prusiano y otro francés, viajaron juntos entre 1799 y 1804 por España y América y coincidieron con la Real Expedición Botánica del Nuevo Reino de Granada.

Sobre su anhelo de conocer a Mutis, observa Juan Pablo Llinás, refiriéndose al año 1801:

[Humboldt] no pudo resistir el deseo de ir a Santa Fe de Bogotá para ver a Mutis, anciano de 72 años y amigo de Linneo [...], se embarcó en el Río de la Magdalena por el cual navegó 45 días entre las más horrendas tempestades y los más peligrosos saltos y cataratas.¹⁷

De la relación amistosa y llena de respeto mutuo da testimonio la correspondencia posterior entre Mutis y Humboldt, y eventualmente Bonpland y Mutis.¹⁸ Más tarde, ya póstumamente, Humboldt le dedicó a Mutis una entrada en la *Biographie Universelle ancienne et moderne*.¹⁹

de Tadeo Haenke, María Victoria Ibáñez Montoya (ed.), Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa – Lunweg Editores – Museo Naval, 1992, pp. 235-236 (citada en adelante como IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*). También en KHOL, *Tadeo Haenke*, p. 92 (con una transcripción nada impecable).

¹⁷ Juan Pablo LLINÁS, *Mutis: El hombre y sus sueños*, Bogotá 1982, pp. 121-122. Citado según un periódico alemán encontrado entre los papeles de Mutis después de su muerte. Fuente evidente: Carta de Alejandro de Humboldt a su hermano Guillermo/Wilhelm, Conteras en Ibagué, Reino de la Nueva Granada, 21 de septiembre de 1801. Para una edición moderna en español de esta carta ver Alejandro de HUMBOLDT, *Cartas Americanas*, Charles Minguet (ed.), Caracas 1980, carta no. 31, pp. 81-85. Semejante tono ver en carta de Alejandro de Humboldt a Domingo de Tovar y Ponte, Huayaca, 2 [de agosto] de 1802, ibidem, carta no. 34, pp. 90-92. Sobre Mutis (y Humboldt) ver también Ángela María PÉREZ MEJÍA, “Mutis o la trampa de la *Mutisia Clematis*”, *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico* 34/46, 1997, pp. 28-59. Más recientemente sobre la relación compare Bartolomé RIBAS OZONAS, “José Celestino Mutis, amistad y colaboración con A. v. Humboldt”, *Monografías de la Real Academia Nacional de Farmacia* [on-line], 2009, pp. 151-172. La Real Academia Nacional de Farmacia: Portal Publicaciones [29 de diciembre de 2021], accesible de: https://bibliotecavirtual.ranf.com/es/catalogo_imagenes/grupo.do?path=6026624. Sólo cuidado con que en varias ocasiones, el autor le atribuye erróneamente a la Expedición Malaspina la circunnavegación del globo lo que no es cierto, a pesar de que éste fue uno de los objetivos originales, que sin embargo no se ha cumplido.

¹⁸ Compare p. ej. MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. II, passim. Especialmente cartas no. 367, pp. 141-142; no. 372, pp. 155-156; no. 375, pp. 159-160; no. 377, pp. 164-165; no. 384, pp. 175-176. También MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. III y IV, passim.

¹⁹ Ver *Biographie Universelle ancienne et moderne*, T. 30, 1821, pp. 499-506 (y ediciones posteriores actualizadas). Agradezco esta información a Miguel Ángel Puig-Samper.

Además, los dos viajeros europeos le dedicaron a Mutis el manuscrito y dos ediciones de su obra *Plantas equinoxiales*, o sea la *Geografía de las Plantas*.²⁰ Esta misma obra pasó a ser en su tiempo y también después, objeto de apasionadas polémicas sobre su originalidad o plagio. En primer plano de las polémicas aparece la figura del naturalista colombiano, discípulo y estrecho colaborador de Mutis Francisco José de Caldas quien habría hecho su aporte en la misma materia ya antes del encuentro con Humboldt y Bonpland en 1801/1802²¹. Lo curioso es que en ciertos autores el nombre de Tadeo Haenke también aparece en el mismo contexto. Sobre la probabilidad del conocimiento al menos indirecto entre Humboldt y Haenke reflexiona Hanno Beck:

Cabe admitir con seguridad que Haenke y Humboldt sabían mutuamente de sus respectivas estancias y de sus viajes, y hay que pensar que estuvieron en contacto ya sea por correspondencia o por medio de algunas otras personas; sin embargo hasta el presente no se han podido encontrar documentos al respecto. [...] No se ha aclarado hasta qué punto Humboldt vio los trabajos de Haenke en archivos o en algún otro lugar.²²

Por el contrario, hay quienes sostienen que Humboldt examinó parte del herbario de Haenke en Madrid, que los dos se habían encontrado en Lima personalmente

²⁰ Para ese tema compare Alberto GÓMEZ GUTIÉRREZ, “Alexander von Humboldt y la cooperación transcontinental en la *Geografía de las plantas*: una nueva apreciación de la obra fitogeográfica de Francisco José de Caldas”, *HiN – Alexander von Humboldt im Netz. Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt-Studien* 17/33, 2016, pp. 24-51 [consultado 1 de abril de 2022], accesible de: <https://www.hin-online.de/index.php/hin/article/view/238/442>.

²¹ Existen varias ediciones de las cartas en las que el resentido Caldas escribía a Mutis, como también una carta de apoyo explícito de Caldas remitida por Mutis a Humboldt, todas con el tema de la planeada –y no efectuada– participación de Caldas en el viaje de Humboldt desde Quito a México. Véase especialmente Diego MENDOZA (ed.), *Expedición botánica de José Celestino Mutis al Nuevo Reino de Granada y Memorias inéditas de Francisco José de Caldas*, Madrid 1909. El problema surgido entre Humboldt y Caldas fue motivo de preocupación para Mutis en varias cartas redactadas en mayo de 1802. Ver MUTIS, *Archivo*, Tomo II, sobre todo pp. 174-176. Las quejas celosas de Caldas sobre la presencia en la expedición humboldtiana hacia Nueva España, radicaban en la esogencia de un chico criollo de la alta sociedad de Quito, que no tenía preparación y experiencia en las ciencias naturales, lo que había suscitado rumores entre sus coetáneos e incluso llegó a ser objeto de investigaciones modernas. Caldas esperaba ser el escogido para dicho tramo del viaje. Por todas, remitimos a Teodoro HAMPE MARTÍNEZ, “Carlos Montúfar y Larrea (1780-1816), el quiteño compañero de Humboldt”, *Revista de Indias* LXII/226, 2002, pp. 711-720. Acerca de la importancia de las actividades y la obra tanto literaria/escrita como cartográfica de Caldas en general ver ante todo Mauricio NIETO OLARTE – Santiago MUÑOZ ARBELAEZ – Santiago DÍAZ-PIEDRAHITA – Jorge ARIAS DE GREIFF, *La obra cartográfica de Francisco José de Caldas*, Bogotá 2006. Un intento reciente de la interpretación de la relación con Caldas desde los diarios de Humboldt ver en Christiana BORCHART DE MORENO, “«El favor de la Corte abre todas las puertas». Aspectos políticos del viaje americano de Alexander von Humboldt” [on-line], *HiN – Alexander von Humboldt im Netz. Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt-Studien* 20/39, pp. 11-28, [consultado 2 de diciembre de 2022], accesible de: <https://www.hin-online.de/index.php/hin/article/view/284/546>.

²² Hanno BECK, *Alexander von Humboldt*, Ciudad de México 1971, pp. 220-221. Allí cita también a Renée Gicklhorn y su opinión de que Humboldt había “adoptado muchas ideas de Haenke”. *Ibidem*, p. 221.

o que Humboldt se aprovechó de los conocimientos de Haenke para definir su geografía de plantas.²³

Al margen de esta polémica, baste decir que, sin lugar a dudas, Humboldt tuvo alguna noción sobre Haenke, esto lo prueban sus comentarios acerca de las variadas actividades del segundo: su participación en la expedición Malaspina, su posterior estancia en Cochabamba y alrededores, sus observaciones acerca de la presencia de la cinchona y otros géneros en aquellas regiones, llamándole “ce botaniste infatigable” y comparando sus propias observaciones con las de él.²⁴

Incluso ya mucho antes, desde La Habana en 1801, apuntaba Humboldt:

Haenke todavía está en Chile [¡!], después de haber viajado con Malaspina por todo el mundo. Nadie en el mundo es más rico en plantas. [...] Ahora estoy totalmente convencido de lo que no creía en Inglaterra, sin embargo, lo deduje ya a partir de los herbarios de Ruiz y Pavón, Née y Haenke, que desconocemos más de $\frac{3}{5}$ de todas las especies de plantas que hay.²⁵

Según Schwartz, durante su estancia en Lima, entre octubre y diciembre de 1802, Humboldt debió de haber leído el escrito de Haenke sobre la historia natural de Cochabamba y sacado apuntes para su uso.²⁶ Esta breve referencia se ha podido comprobar con la lectura de los diarios manuscritos de Humboldt preservados y digitalizados en la Biblioteca de Estado en Berlín. Allí, Alejandro de Humboldt incluyó extractos de lo que él denominó *Memoria de la Provincia de Cochabamba* de Tadeo Haenke con importantes informaciones sobre el origen del texto y su propio acceso al mismo. En el documento se pone diciembre de 1798 como la fecha de la

²³ Para estos temas ver la mordaz polémica entre Juan A. Ortega y Medina y Jaime Labastida a lo largo de varias publicaciones: Alejandro de HUMBOLDT, *Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España*, estudio preliminar de Juan A. ORTEGA Y MEDINA, Ciudad de México 1966, p. XXVII. Jaime LABASTIDA, *Humboldt, ese desconocido*, Ciudad de México 1975, p. 18, e idem, *Humboldt, ciudadano universal*, Ciudad de México 1999, p. 11, continuada por Juan A. ORTEGA Y MEDINA, “Otra vez Humboldt, ese controvertido personaje”, *Historia Mexicana* 25, no. 3, enero-marzo 1976, pp. 423-454, incluida también in: María Cristina González Ortiz – Alicia Mayer (eds.), *Obras de Juan A. Ortega y Medina*, vol. 4. *Humboldt*, Ciudad de México 2015, pp. 275-300, [consultado 30 de mayo de 2022], accesible de: https://historicas.unam.mx/publicaciones/publicadigital/libros/644/644_04_05_ControvertidoPersonaje.pdf.

²⁴ Al. de HUMBOLDT – A. BONPLAND, *Essai sur la géographie des plantes, accompagné d'un tableau physique des régions équinoxiales*, Paris 1807, pp. 45, 55, 63, 64.

²⁵ Carta de Alexander von Humboldt a Karl Ludwig Willdenow, Havana, 21 febrero de 1801, ff. 3r y 5v, ed. Ulrich Paßler en colaboración con Klaus Gerlach e Ingo Schwarz [on-line]. Edition humboldt digital, ed. Ottmar Ette, Berlin, Version 8 del 11.05.2022, [consultado 30 de mayo de 2022], accesible de: <https://edition-humboldt.de/v8/H0001181> (la traducción es nuestra; en original: “Haenke ist noch in Chili, nachdem er mit Malaspina die ganze Welt bereist. Reicher an Pflanzen ist niemand in der Welt. [...] Ich bin nun völlig überzeugt, was ich in England nicht glaubte, aber schon aus Ruiz und Pavon, Née’s und Haenken’s Herbarium schloß, daß wir nicht $\frac{3}{5}$ aller existirenden Pflanzenspecies kennen.”)

²⁶ Ingo SCHWARZ (ed.), *Alexander von Humboldt-Chronologie*, referencia al 23 de Octubre de 1802 [on-line], Edition humboldt digital, ed. Ottmar Ette, Berlin. Versión 8 del 11.05.2022, [consultado 31 de mayo de 2022], accesible de: <https://edition-humboldt.de/v8/H0014877>.

redacción del mismo; el envío al intendente Francisco de Viedma aparece registrado el 4 de junio de 1799 quien a su vez lo despachó al primer ministro de Estado, Francisco de Saavedra junto con diecinueve cajas de productos de la región.²⁷ Humboldt manifiesta que el acceso a la lectura de ese manuscrito le había sido intermediado en Lima por el P. Cisneros “de El Escorial”.²⁸

Otros autores posteriores resaltaron la intermediación de los escritos haenkenianos a Humboldt gracias al barón de Nordenflicht,²⁹ quien supuestamente habría sido anfitrión del prusiano en Lima.

El virrey Avilés dispuso que Humboldt fuese alojado en la casa y laboratorio del Barón de Nordenflicht. Humboldt se familiarizaría allí con las obras de Haenke y Cosme Bueno, y con apuntes de Malaspina y La Condamine, que aparecen señalados en su diario, amén de otras fuentes e instrumentos que servirían para observar diversos

²⁷ Alexander von HUMBOLDT, *Tagebücher der Amerikanischen Reise VIIbb et VIIIc: Quito (Pichincha [!, recte Pichincha], Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Chimborazo, Altar) – Cuenca – Coxo – Amazona – Caxamarca – Lima – ? à Carthago u. ?* [on-line], manuscrito. Digitalisierte Sammlungen der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, [consultado 7 de junio de 2022], accesible de: https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN779884310&PHYSID=PHYS_0121&DMDID=DMDLOG_0001. Aquí concretamente nos referimos a “Extrait des travaux du Mr. Tadaeus Haenke”, ff. 104r-105v. Habrá que dársele una nueva lectura. De todas maneras, la digitalización de los numerosos manuscritos de Alejandro de Humboldt representa un paso adelante sin precedentes.

²⁸ Ibidem, f. 104r. Se trata del Padre fray Diego de Gasco Cisneros Becerra (1737 Hinojosa del Duque, España - 1812 Lima, Perú) de la Orden de los Jerónimos del monasterio de El Escorial que desde 1772 hasta su muerte vivió en Lima. Suele ser caracterizado como una de las personas más cultas de Lima en su época, colaborador entre otro del periódico *Mercurio Peruano*. Para su biografía y diferentes aspectos de su actuación ver varios estudios de Francisco Javier CAMPOS Y FERNÁNDEZ DE SEVILLA, “El padre Diego Cisneros, intelectual ilustrado, bibliotecario, librero del Nuevo Rezado y fundador de la moderna librería de San Marcos”, *Revista del Archivo General de la Nación* 31/1, 2016, pp. 209-239; idem, “El padre jerónimo Diego Cisneros, los libros prohibidos y *El Mercurio Peruano*”, *Boletín de la Academia Peruana de la lengua* 54, julio-diciembre 2012, pp. 13-61; idem, “El monje jerónimo español fray Diego Cisneros, el Santo Oficio de Lima y el Inquisidor General”, *Anuario Jurídico y Económico* 42, enero 2009, pp. 513-530, y otros.

El texto de Haenke fue publicado por primera vez tan solo parcialmente bajo el título “Introducción a la Historia Natural de la Provincia de Cochabamba y circunvecinas” y en entregas posteriores dedicadas a temas concretos de su estudio en el *Telégrafo Mercantil*, primera revista de Buenos Aires, en 1801-1802. Parece que Haenke redactó dos autógrafos seguidos con diferente fecha (diciembre de 1798 y febrero de 1799, así por lo menos Victor A. RAMOS – R. N. ALONSO, “Tadeo Haenke: primer naturalista del Virreinato del Río de la Plata”, *Anales de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias Exactas, Físicas y Naturales* 70, 2018, pp. 117-146, notas 14 y 15. Allí mismo Fig. 6, p. 128, que reproduce la portada de uno de los manuscritos de esta obra en la Biblioteca Nacional, Buenos Aires, si bien allí deberían hallarse dos versiones, véase no. 47 y no. 68, según Pedro N. ARATA, “Observaciones críticas sobre unos manuscritos de Tadeo Haenke existentes en la Biblioteca Nacional”, *Biblioteca* I, tomo 1, 1896, pp. 97-110, especialmente pp. 97-98. Un testimonio acerca del envío del trabajo de Haenke a Madrid junto con los dichos cajones de material botánico hay que consultar en el Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, sign. Estado, 81, no. 34. Es obvio que también hubo copias manuscritas de su obra en otros lugares.

²⁹ Fürchtegott (también Timotheus, Timoteo, Thaddeus) Leberecht, barón de Nordenflicht (1752-1815), encargado de la expedición minera alemana al Perú, en 1778. Información fundamental en Renée GICKLHORN, *Nordenflicht und die deutschen Bergleute in Peru*, Leipzig 1963. Existen estudios posteriores.

fenómenos naturales. Asimismo, tuvo acceso a muestrarios de minerales y plantas disecadas. Mediante estas colecciones de los tres reinos de la naturaleza, Humboldt pudo realizar importantes estudios.³⁰

Humboldt cita a Haenke en varias cartas suyas, diarios, etc., que poco a poco van publicándose y que aún no hemos podido consultar en su totalidad.³¹ Sería un tema para un estudio aparte.³² Sin embargo, basta para comprobar que Humboldt con certeza conocía el nombre y por lo menos algunas obras de Haenke, ya que en varias ocasiones se refirió a él, a sus escritos y a sus mediciones, manifestando mucho respeto a su labor.

Por otro lado, hasta ahora no hemos registrado referencias directas de Tadeo Haenke sobre su coetáneo prusiano quien posteriormente alcanzaría más fama universal (y quien le sacó ventaja, entre otras circunstancias, por haber vuelto a Europa, haber realizado numerosas publicaciones durante su vida gracias a su avanzada edad y, en general, su renombre dentro de la sociedad europea).

³⁰ VV.AA., *Historia ambiental del Perú. Siglos XVIII y XIX*, Lima 2016, p. 54 apoyándose en otros autores como Estuardo NÚÑEZ – Georg PETERSEN (eds.), *Alexander von Humboldt en el Perú: diario de viaje y otros escritos*, Lima 2002; Scarlet O'PHELAN, “Humboldt en el Perú y sus recursos naturales: entre la plata y el guano”, *Revista Histórica* 45, 2011, pp. 363-384. Ibidem, p. 44 apoyándose en Sandro PATRUCCO, “Feliz siglo de la Historia Natural. Expediciones científicas del siglo xviii en el virreinato del Perú”, in Scarlett O'Phelan (ed.), *El Perú en el siglo XVIII. La Era Borbónica*, 2a ed. corregida y aumentada, Lima 2015, pp. 449-474.

³¹ Alexander von HUMBOLDT, *Die Jugendbriefe Alexander von Humboldts 1787-1799*, Ilse Jahn y Fritz G. Lange (eds.), Berlin 1973 (Beiträge zur Alexander-von-Humboldt-Forschung, 2), allí el documento no. 71. Idem, *Briefe aus Amerika 1799-1804*, Ulrike Moheit (ed.), Berlin 1993 (Beiträge zur Alexander-von-Humboldt-Forschung, 16), allí el documento no. 41. Idem, *Von Mexiko-Stadt nach Veracruz: Tagebuch*, Ulrike Leitner (ed.), Berlin 2005 (Beiträge zur Alexander-von-Humboldt-Forschung, 25), p. 20. Alexander von HUMBOLDT – Samuel Heinrich SPIKER, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Ingo Schwarz en colaboración con Eberhard Knobloch, Berlin 2007 (Beiträge zur Alexander-von-Humboldt-Forschung, 27), p. 52. Todas estas referencias citadas a partir de la voz Haenke, Thaddaeus [on-line]. Edition Humboldt digital, ed. Ottmar Ette, Berlin, Version 8 del 11.05.2022, [consultado 18 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <https://edition-humboldt.de/v8/H0011580>.

Otra fuente importante –sea con resultados positivos, o negativos– serían, sin duda, los diarios de Humboldt guardados en Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, citados aquí en la nota 26. Igualmente, Estuardo NÚÑEZ – Georg PETERSEN G., *El Perú en la obra de Alejandro de Humboldt*, Lima 1971.

³² Recientemente, hemos podido averiguar la más antigua referencia hasta ahora de Alejandro de Humboldt a Tadeo Haenke, ya de 1792. Se trata de una reseña de la obra de Johann JIRASEK – Thaddaeus HAENKE – Abbé [Tobias] GRUBER – Franz GERSTNER, *Beobachtungen auf Reisen nach dem Riesengebirge*, Dresden 1791, en la que una gran parte, de más de 120 páginas, le correspondía a Thaddaeus HAENKE, “Die botanischen Beobachtungen auf der Reise nach dem böhmischen Riesengebirge”, pp. 31-159, sobre las plantas que recolectó en Bohemia norte todavía antes de partir a América. La detallada reseña de Humboldt (firmada con la sigla H-t), dedicada principalmente a la contribución de Haenke, fue publicada en *Annalen der Botanick* 1 (1792), pp. 78-83. Humboldt apreció la diligencia e industria de su colega botánico esperando con impaciencia los resultados de lo que Haenke recogería en Perú y Chile, o sea sabía ya de su partida para la expedición española. Hemos comentado este asunto en Simona BINKOVÁ – Josef OPATRŇY, “Tadeo Haenke: su origen, juventud y formación”, in Benita Herreros Cleret de Langavant (ed.), *La construcción del conocimiento en la época ilustrada: la mirada científica de Thaddaeus Haenke*, Santander 2025, pp. 39-50, especialmente pp. 47-48.

Expertos en mineralogía y metalurgia y otros científicos en botánica

En la época de la Ilustración, en el campo de diferentes ciencias naturales, los lazos profesionales –directos, o indirectos– cobraron fuerza. Ya adujimos algunos ejemplos y vamos a seguir con otros. A la cabeza de una expedición mineralógica en el Perú, el mencionado barón de Nordenflicht formaba parte de un círculo de expertos relacionados con el español Fausto de Elhuyar (1755-1833, futuro director de Minería de la Nueva España y, más tarde, director General de Minas de España), su hermano Juan José (1754-1796, enviado en 1783 con un objetivo semejante a Nueva Granada) y muchos más españoles y alemanes a los que unía una experiencia común: los estudios en la Academia de minería en Freiberg, en Sajonia, en aquella época una institución prestigiosísima en ese ámbito.

Tanto las clases teóricas de Abraham Gottlob Werner (1749-1817, representante de la escuela neptunista), como las prácticas realizadas en muchas regiones del Imperio de los Habsburgo austriacos influyó enormemente en la formación de esa generación de alumnos. Nordenflicht coincidió por lo menos en 1778 con los hermanos Elhuyar que visitaron Freiberg incluso en otros tiempos y en un rol diferente más importante. En 1789, estuvo matriculado allí el español Andrés Manuel del Río (1764/65-1849), pensionado en París y escogido en 1786 –entre otros– para acompañar a Fausto de Elhuyar a Europa central. Posteriormente, estuvo activo en Nueva España (en 1794 pasó a ser el primer catedrático de mineralogía del Colegio de Minería en México). Su compañero de clases en Freiberg fue Alejandro de Humboldt, presente allí entre junio de 1791 y febrero de 1792 (y en otras ocasiones y fechas posteriores).

Queda probado que esos personajes (Fausto de Elhuyar y Haenke; y también Fausto de Elhuyar, Nordenflicht y Humboldt) se habían conocido y respetado.

Durante la expedición de Malaspina, Haenke no dejó de aprovechar la oportunidad de viajar desde Acapulco a la Ciudad de México para encontrarse con numerosos expertos en minería de Bohemia y Sajonia y, particularmente, con Fausto de Elhuyar y su esposa Juana Raab, cuya familia había conocido en Viena y a quien había sido encomendado ya desde Europa por muchas “partes”).³³

Sabemos ya que Humboldt se hospedó en la casa de Nordenflicht en Lima, mientras que en México colaboró en los años 1803 a 1804 con Fausto de Elhuyar y sus colegas en el Colegio de Minería. Prácticamente todos los mencionados conocían o personalmente, o por su fama de haber inventado y practicado “un nuevo” método de amalgamación de la plata tan codiciado por España con el fin de aplicarlo en sus colonias, al consejero imperial barón Ignaz von Born (1742-1791).³⁴ A él se

³³ La literatura es abundante. La referimos sumariamente en Simona BINKOVÁ, “Lazos personales –lazos profesionales (Centroeuropa – España – Hispanoamérica: finales del siglo XVIII y principios del XIX)”, in: Josef Opatrný (ed.), *La expedición de Alejandro Malaspina y Tadeo Haenke* (= Ibero-Americana Pragensia, Supplementum 14), Praga 2005, pp. 93-124. Allí ver la numerosa bibliografía precedente, de autores como R. Gicklhorn, A. de Gálvez-Cañero y Alzola, J. J. de Izquierdo, A. P. Whitaker, J. Palacios Remondo, J. Polišenský, O. Kašpar, V. González Claverán, V. Ibáñez-Montoya. Igualmente hay nuevos estudios referentes a esta amplia problemática que excede la extensión de este estudio.

³⁴ Sobre Born, además de los autores citados en la nota anterior, especialmente en el ámbito de la ciencia centroeuropa, véase también Josef HAUBELT, *České osvícenství* [La Ilustración en Bohemia],

dirigían las autoridades españolas cuando les recomendaban a sus becarios visitar las minas “austriacas” (a saber, de Bohemia, Austria y Hungría). Por otra parte, fue Born quien apoyó la participación del joven Haenke en la planeada expedición Malaspina.³⁵ Este, una vez ya en ultramar, no se olvidó de su benefactor y le remitió varias cartas con información sobre su complicado viaje para alcanzar al grupo de Malaspina en Chile y también la continuación hacia Lima y Guayaquil. Las siguientes noticias ya no alcanzaron a Born entre los vivos.³⁶

Un detalle probablemente menos recordado es que al haber sido nombrado miembro de la Academia de Ciencias Sueca y de la Real Sociedad de Londres, Ignaz von Born se había carteadado igualmente con Carlos Linneo y Joseph Banks, representantes de dichas instituciones.

Born fue elegido como miembro extranjero de la Real Academia de Ciencias Sueca en 1771. Se conservan al menos tres cartas entre Born y Linneo, todas de los años 1771 y 1772,³⁷ de las que se deduce que había otra, no conservada, en ese periodo. Según una de las cartas a Linneo, Born pensaba dedicar su nueva publicación

Praha 1986, pp. 291-312 e idem, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia* IV, 1970, pp. 179-197.

³⁵ Comp. su reproducción en IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*, pp. 239-240.

³⁶ Dos cartas de Tadeo Haenke a Ignaz von Born, Lima, el 5 de junio y el 12 de septiembre de 1790, ms. en alemán, se conservan en Literární archiv Památníku národního písemnictví (LA PNP – Archivo literario del Monumento de literatura nacional), Praga, fondo Haenke, Tadeáš, caja 6/CH/11 (2/F/19). Vienen traducidas al español y publicadas en IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*, pp. 124-128. De la segunda se desprende que habían existido otras dos cartas anteriores (y probablemente extraviadas), enviadas desde Montevideo y Buenos Aires. Renée GICKLHORN, *Thaddäus Haenkes Reisen und Arbeiten in Südamerika*, Wiesbaden 1966, p. 181, opina que la primera carta de Lima estuvo destinada a Jacquin (tomando este dato probablemente de KHOL, *Tadeáš Haenke*, p. 59. Allí, en las pp. 59-62, se publican las dos cartas en alemán). Otra carta de Tadeo Haenke a Born, mientras tanto fallecido, acompaña la destinada a Ritschl (31. 6. 1791), así al menos IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*, pp. 173-174. Una carta más, de San Blas, el 10 de octubre de 1791, ha sido identificada también como destinada a Born según HAUBELT, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, p. 180. Muchas de las cartas de Haenke pasaban por varias manos antes de llegar a sus destinatarios, el punto importante solía ser Cádiz (sucursal de la compañía comercial Hiecke, Zincke, Rautenstrauch con sede en Nový Bor, Bohemia del Norte, que se encargaba de reenviar las cartas de Tadeo a sus padres, hermanos y amigos). Abundantes referencias se encuentran en cualquier literatura sobre Haenke.

³⁷ Ver tres cartas conservadas en Uppsala University Library, fondo Linnaean correspondence. Cronológicamente la primera es la de Carlos Linneo a Ignaz von Born, s.l., el 30 de junio de 1771. Ver en ALVIN, Platform for digital collections and digitized cultural heritage, [consultado 5 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:233166>. Lamentablemente no se indica el contenido de la carta. La otra es de Ignaz von Born a Carlos Linneo, Praga, 15 de septiembre de 1771, ms. latino (evidentemente la primera de Born a Linneo, agradeciéndole la nominación de miembro de la Real Academia de Ciencias Sueca por recomendación de otro científico, Johan Jacob Ferber. Expresa también su admiración desde joven de su gran obra. Ver en ALVIN, Platform for digital collections and digitized cultural heritage, [consultado 5 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:233052>. La tercera, de Ignaz von Born a Carlos Linneo, Praga, 1 de enero de 1772. Born agradece su carta [no conservada] en la que Linneo confirmaba la llegada de los fósiles remitidos por Born. Ver en ALVIN, Platform for digital collections and digitized cultural heritage, [consultado 5 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:233155>.

de *Lithophylacium Bornianum*, conocida también como *Index Fossilium*,³⁸ a la Real Academia de Ciencias Sueca. En el prólogo a su texto publicado encontramos referencias a Linneo: “In mineris denominandis magnum potissime Linnaeum secutus sum” y varias alusiones a sus descripciones de minerales, algunas de ellas sacadas explícitamente de su *Systema naturae*³⁹. En su obra, Born ya podía incluir su título honorífico de “Societatis Regiae Holmensis Socius” y también apareció la planeada dedicación a la Academia Sueca con un texto ensalzador y explicatorio.⁴⁰

En 1774, Born también fue nombrado miembro de la Real Sociedad de Londres.⁴¹

A Tadeo Haenke le apoyó igualmente otro personaje eminente de las ciencias naturales asentado en Viena, Nikolaus Joseph Jacquin (1727-1817), fervoroso seguidor del sistema de Linneo. Jacquin mismo había participado entre 1756 y 1759 en una expedición austriaca a las Indias Occidentales como botánico encargado de recolectar plantas exóticas para el palacio del emperador en Schönbrunn. No solamente visitó numerosas islas caribeñas, sino también las costas de la actual Colombia y Venezuela. Es autor, entre otras muchas obras, de *Enumeratio systematica plantarum, quas in insulis Caribaeis vicinaque Americae continente detexit novas, aut jam cognitae emendavit* (1760) y *Selectarum stirpium americanorum historia* (1763) que Haenke como su discípulo, sin dudas, conocía. Igualmente José Celestino Mutis conocía la obra botánica de Jacquin. En sus apuntes, observaciones, o comparaciones de las especies encontramos más de un centenar de referencias a su nombre.⁴²

No podemos dejar de lado los contactos personales entre Mutis, uno de los personajes centrales de nuestro estudio, y el menor de los hermanos Elhuyar, Juan José, al igual que sus nexos, experiencia y prácticas europeas.

Juan José de Elhuyar (1754-1796), hermano de Fausto y quien sería el futuro director General de Minas en el Nuevo Reino de Granada, estuvo junto a él en los estudios en París, en Sajonia (Freiberg); en las estancias en Viena, y por aparte en Suecia (el descubrimiento de tungsteno/wolframio). Hizo también prácticas en Bohemia, Eslovaquia y Hungría, donde conoció a Born, Nordenflicht y otras personas. Fue al Nuevo Reino haciéndose muy amigo de Mutis, quien lo llamaba “botánico por recreación”⁴³, y los dos, además de contactos personales, mantuvieron abundante correspondencia continua.⁴⁴

³⁸ Ignác Antonín BORN, *Index Fossilium*, Praegae 1772.

³⁹ Carolus LINNAEUS, *Systema naturae*, Leiden, 1ª ed. 1735, y posteriores, siempre aumentadas y corregidas. Born trabajó con la edición “holmensis” [i.e. de Estocolmo] de 1768. Ver BORN, *Index*, p. 1. Se trata de la 12ª ed., la última controlada por el autor y la primera donde utilizó la denominación binaria también para los minerales.

⁴⁰ BORN, *Index*, la portada, la página dedicatoria, el prólogo y más referencias.

⁴¹ Para los círculos centroeuropeos de Joseph Banks ver más abajo.

⁴² José Celestino MUTIS, *Diario de observaciones de José Celestino Mutis, 1760-1790*, Guillermo Hernández de Alba (ed.), 2ª ed. [Bogotá] 1983, 2 vols., passim.

⁴³ MUTIS, *Diario de observaciones*, vol. 2, p. 667. La cita exacta es: “Por la tarde salí a pasear a pie acompañado de mi amigo Elhuyar, que se va aficionando a la botánica por recreación, renovando las especies de su instrucción en esta parte en París”.

⁴⁴ Para la etapa “europea” de Juan José de Elhuyar comp. la misma literatura indicada más arriba referente a Fausto. Para la correspondencia con Mutis, comp. más de una treintena de cartas de Mutis enviadas desde Mariquita, entre los años 1785 y 1789 (ver MUTIS, *Archivo epistolar*, T. 1, passim). La mayoría

Sería, o es raro que las carreras de Juan José de Elhuyar y de Haenke no se hayan cruzado, ni directa, ni indirectamente. Ambos compartieron ciertos periodos en Europa central, sobre todo en Viena, realizaron especializaciones muy cercanas durante su formación –aunque no exactamente al mismo tiempo–, y tuvieron, tanto en Europa como en América del Sur, profesores y benefactores en común, por ejemplo, Ignaz von Born. Es cierto que el mayor de los Elhuyares se estableció en Nueva Granada un poco antes de que Haenke participara en la expedición Malaspina, y cuando Haenke se asentó en Cochabamba, Juan José de Elhuyar ya había muerto. Aún así, el hecho de que Haenke buscara a Fausto de Elhuyar en México y nunca intentara ponerse en contacto con Juan José, y viceversa, que Fausto no le hubiera hecho mención alguna a su hermano sobre el joven protegido de Born y sus variadas actividades en el campo de ciencias desarrolladas en América del Sur, suena poco probable. En este momento, no hay testimonios que demuestren lo contrario.

Joseph Banks (1753-1820)

Es otro personaje de referencia obligatoria en el campo de botánica de la época. De 1768 a 1771 participó en la primera expedición alrededor del mundo de James Cook y desde 1778 fue presidente de la Real Sociedad en Londres y director del Real Jardín Botánico en Kew. La gran obra botánica de su coautoría se ha editado tan solo recientemente de manera completa bajo el título *Banks' Florilegium*⁴⁵, sin embargo, su pericia y conocimientos, así como sus colecciones y biblioteca cobraron fama universal cuando aún vivía. “Después de la de Banks, en Londres, jamás había visto una biblioteca botánica tan grande como la de Mutis,” dice Humboldt con admiración tras el encuentro personal con ambos, Banks y Mutis.⁴⁶

Para volver a los círculos centroeuropeos: el nombre de Ignaz von Born aparecía en la correspondencia enviada a Banks primero indirectamente, ya desde 1779. Luego le llegaría una carta directa de Born, proveniente de Viena, que databa el 8 de febrero de 1791 (es evidente que hubo anteriores, hoy ignoradas) que incluía un retrato de Born dedicado a Banks (“l’occasion de renouveler pres de vous le souvenir [...] j’ose vous offrir mon portrait gravé ici a Vienne.”)⁴⁷

de ellas trata de enfermedades y remedios, la menor parte toca asuntos de mineralogía y metalurgia, o botánica (aparecen los nombres de Born y Jacquin, entre otros). Un estudio muy detallado de la etapa “americana” de Juan José es de Bernardo J. CAYCEDO, “El sabio D’Elhuyar”, *Berceo* 75, 1965, 2ª. parte (Conclusión), pp. 131-150; la 1ª. parte dedicada a los estudios en Europa rectifica varios errores de autores anteriores, ver Bernardo J. CAYCEDO, “El sabio D’Elhuyar”, *Berceo* 70, 1964, pp. 55-85. Ambas partes también [on-line]. Dialnet [consultadas 10 de enero de 2023], accesibles de: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=61469>; y <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=61495>.

⁴⁵ Ver *Banks' Florilegium*, London: Alecto Historical Editions in association with the British Museum (Natural History), 1980-1990, 34 tomos. La información sobre la edición [consultada 24 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <https://www.alecto-historical-editions.com/pages/about-banks-florilegium>.

⁴⁶ Carta de Alejandro de Humboldt a su hermano Guillermo (Wilhelm), Contreras de Ibagué, 21 de septiembre de 1801, en: HUMBOLDT, *Cartas Americanas* 31, p. 74.

⁴⁷ Carta de Ignaz von Born a Joseph Banks, Viena, 8 de febrero de 1791, ms. francés, British Museum London, Mss. Add. 8097, ff. 375-376, frecuentemente citada. Su texto completo puede verse p. ej. en HAUBELT, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, pp. 190-191. En ese entonces, Born ya había conocido la carta

En la misma carta Born le informaba a Banks de la participación de Haenke en la expedición Malaspina y sus progresos.

Sin embargo, Haenke también ya se había dirigido a Banks directamente. Parece ser que su primera carta fue fechada en Lima, en septiembre de 1790, informándole de las exploraciones botánicas⁴⁸ (y que ha sido clasificada como “un estudio botánico compacto”⁴⁹).

La otra se originó durante el viaje de la expedición Malaspina fuera del continente americano, escrita en Sydney, el 15 de abril de 1793.⁵⁰

Una carta más de Tadeo Haenke, de Cochabamba, fechada el 1 de marzo de 1809 y destinada “al Presidente de la Sociedad Botánica y de Historia Natural de Londres”, debió estar dirigida a Banks, aunque no se le nombrara. Ese puesto en aquella época seguía ejerciéndolo el mismo Banks, sin que este hecho se mencionara con claridad en la literatura haenkeniana.⁵¹

de Haenke fechada el 5 de junio de 1790 de Lima: eso corrobora la teoría de que realmente Born era su destinatario.

⁴⁸ Carta de Tadeo Haenke a Joseph Banks, Lima, 13 de septiembre (en original *Idibus Septembris*, que algunos autores erróneamente datan del 15 de septiembre) de 1790, ms. original en latín, British Museum London, Ms. Add. 8098, ff. 53-56. La edición latina y fotorreproducción del original ver en HAUBELT, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, pp. 191-197, y en IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*, pp. 128-129 (junto con la traducción al español, ibidem, pp. 129-132).

⁴⁹ HAUBELT, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, p. 189.

⁵⁰ Carta de Tadeo Haenke a Joseph Banks, Sydney, Cove, Nueva Gales del Sur, 15 de abril de 1793, ms. latín. La única referencia a la localización de la carta que actualmente consideramos correcta es: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Handschriftenabteilung, signatur: Slg. Darmstaedter Amerika 1791: Haenke, Thaddäus; 1-2. La referencia se puede ver [on-line]: Kalliope-Verbund, [consultado 26 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <http://kalliope-verbund.info/DE-611-HS-1462034>. Véase una breve referencia al contenido de esta carta en HAUBELT, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, p. 187, y sus ediciones en latín (y traducción al español) en IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*, pp. 141-144. Ambas basadas en Josef KÜHNEL, *Thaddaeus Haenke: Leben und Wirken eines Forschers*, München: R. Lerche 1960 (= Veröffentlichungen des Collegium Carolinum. Hrsg. von der Historisch-philologischen Sektion. Bd. 9), pp. 216-219. Una mayor atención prestaron a esta carta Victoria IBÁÑEZ – Robert J. KING, “A letter from Thaddeus Haenke to Sir Joseph Banks”, *Archives of Natural History* 23/2, July 2010, pp. 255-259. Hay que advertir aquí de la errónea y/o controvertida catalogación de la misma carta en el Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Nürnberg) que la atribuye a Banks (en inglés) y como destinatario pone a Haenke: ver Brief von Joseph Banks an Thaddaeus Haenke, Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Nürnberg), Historisches Archiv, Signatur: VI. Reisende. Holland. Sydney-Cove, 15.04.1793. – 1 Brief, Englisch.– <http://kalliope-verbund.info/DE-611-HS-1655265>, mientras que otro ítem de la misma base de datos pone informaciones correctas del autor y lengua (en latín) y destinatario: ver Germanisches Nationalmuseum (Nürnberg), Historisches Archiv; Signatur: VI. Reisende. Holland. Brief von Thaddaeus Haenke an Joseph Banks. Haenke, Thaddaeus (1761-1817) [Verfasser], Banks, Joseph (1743-1820) [Adressat], Sydney-Cove, 15.04.1793. – 1 Brief, Latein. – Brief Inhaltsangabe: Betreffend seine Reise nach Neu-Holland. Objekteigenschaften: Handschrift DE-611-HS-1701807, <http://kalliope-verbund.info/DE-611-HS-1701807>. Todas referencias [on-line]. Kalliope-Verbund, [consultadas 26 de abril de 2023], accesibles de: <http://kalliope-verbund.info>. Sería útil revisar y eventualmente corregir las citaciones en esta base de datos para evitar referencias paralelas, algunas de ellas erróneas.

⁵¹ Carta de Tadeo Haenke al Presidente de la Sociedad Botánica y de Historia Natural de Londres, Cochabamba, el 1 de marzo de 1809, mencionada de esta forma en IBÁÑEZ MONTOYA, *Trabajos científicos*, “Inventario del fondo Tadeo Haenke en el Real Jardín Botánico de Madrid”, p. 200. La

La “República de los Letrados”

Queda evidente que las redes intelectuales de la época de la Ilustración se hacían patentes también en el campo de las ciencias naturales. En adelante, brevemente presentaremos algunas citas más de varios protagonistas incluidos en este estudio, sacadas de su correspondencia y que explícitamente manifiestan su anhelo de mantener el intercambio de conocimientos y contactos enriquecedores con sus compañeros de profesión. Si bien la distancia era un obstáculo, por lo menos podían mantener la comunicación por escrito. Al mismo tiempo, se sentían honrados de pertenecer a esta comunidad de la “República de Letras”, ofreciendo sus propias investigaciones a favor de la ciencia en general. Además, estos lazos primariamente académicos, llenos de respeto, en algunos casos evolucionaron en sentimiento de amistades duraderas.

Aparte de los testimonios aducidos arriba, se pueden referir otros, también muy elocuentes.

Por ejemplo, ya en 1772 Ignaz von Born se despedía de Carlos Linneo en su carta con las palabras: “Vale, meque clientibus tuis et discipulis addictissimis adnumera!”⁵²

J. C. Mutis en su carta a Francisco Martínez de Sobral, médico de cámara del rey Carlos IV, del 19 de diciembre de 1789 escribía:

Pienso ya seriamente ir volviendo sobre mí, desprendiéndome de asuntos que aunque importantísimos a la Real Hacienda y a este Reino, ni aumentan sueldo ni satisfacciones, antes bien me quitan mi salud y el sosiego de mi carrera literaria, retardando **mis correspondencias con los sabios extranjeros de Europa** que han hecho sonar mi nombre con alguna gloria **en la República de las letras**. [...] ⁵³

Desde Upsala, el 6 de noviembre de 1777, el ya mencionado Carlos Linneo hijo en la carta a J. C. Mutis, confesaba:

considero cuánto necesito y cuán útil me sea [...] **un extendido comercio literario con los eruditos de Europa**. Será para mí de mucho gusto, **si logro entablarlo también contigo**. En el año siguiente pienso hacer una nueva edición del «Systema Naturae», y también un suplemento. Si para este tiempo me quisieras mandar algunas plantas, me será de suma complacencia, quedando a mi cuidado citarte en las que hallare nuevas.⁵⁴

carta iba acompañada de una “Lista de un envío a la Sociedad Botánica Londinense (SBL) por Tadeo Haenke vía Federico Thiesen, de la Fragata Favourite”. Ibidem, p. 201.

⁵² Carta de Ignaz von Born a Carlos Linneo, Praga, 1 de enero de 1772. Ver en ALVIN, Platform for digital collections and digitized cultural heritage, [consultado 5 de abril de 2023], accesible de: <https://www.alvin-portal.org/alvin/view.jsf?pid=alvin-record:233155>.

⁵³ Carta de J. C. Mutis a Francisco Martínez de Sobral, médico de cámara del rey Carlos IV, 19 de diciembre de 1789. En: Federico GREDILLA, *José Celestino Mutis*, Bogotá 1982, pp. 89-92 (la negrita en este y los siguientes casos es nuestra).

⁵⁴ MUTIS, *Diario de observaciones*, T. 1, p. 359.

O Louis Née en su carta a Mutis de 1790:

y por consiguiente, me veo privado de **la amable y sabia conversación** de vuesa-merced; ya que no puedo lograrlo **personalmente**, a lo menos que pueda lograrla **literariamente**.⁵⁵

Similarmente, Tadeo Haenke a Joseph Banks desde Lima en 1790, le destinaba su carta a él “y a sus amigos literarios” (“tibi, tuisque **litteratis amicis** non ingrata ea fore suspiceo”).⁵⁶

Conclusión

A pesar de ignorarse, o de no existir pruebas de una relación profesional ni por escrito entre Mutis y Haenke, los dos formaron parte de unos círculos intelectuales, sobre todo en el campo de las ciencias naturales, que se conocían mutua –aunque no siempre personalmente–, intercambiaban (o, por lo menos seguían) entre sí novedades, se complementaban y enriquecían la suma total de conocimientos de la naturaleza y hacían parte de lo que llamamos la “República de los Letrados”.

Un pequeño testimonio indirecto de esto apareció en 1818 en Madrid, no mucho después de la muerte de ambos protagonistas de nuestro estudio, con ocasión de la recuperación de las colecciones de J. C. Mutis reunidas en Nueva Granada y su colocación en Madrid tanto en el Real Museo de Ciencias Naturales (anteriormente Real Gabinete de Historia Natural) como en el Real Jardín Botánico. La noticia vino acompañada de una breve biografía de Mutis y de alusiones al reconocimiento de su labor por parte de sus contemporáneos, y no falta en el contexto una mención a Tadeo Haenke.

Con estas sabias disposiciones la Europa, que hace ya tantos años que desea con ansia disfrutar de los trabajos científicos del infatigable Mutis, logrará en breve satisfacer en parte sus deseos, y aquel conseguirá también que se añadan nuevos elogios á los que hace ya tiempo le tributaron el hijo del inmortal Lineo, Haenke, Cavanilles, Humboldt y cuantos sabios han tenido proporción de admirar sus profundos conocimientos y su laboriosidad sin eemplo.⁵⁷

Con eso, la temática de la interrelación y de la continuidad de los estudios científicos en el siglo XVIII de seguro no se da por agotada, y es muy probable que puedan encontrarse otros ejemplos y citas.

Además, es sintomático, aunque menos evidente, el interés iluminista en el saber naturalista y geográfico que habían reunido los jesuitas en América.⁵⁸ Otros temas

⁵⁵ Carta de Luis Née a José Celestino Mutis, Guayaquil, hacia el 22 de octubre de 1790, copia, publicada en MUTIS, *Archivo*, t. IV, carta no. 301, pp. 74-76, aquí p. 76.

⁵⁶ Carta de Tadeo Haenke a Joseph Banks, Lima, 13 de septiembre de 1790, citada aquí en la nota 48. Para la citación concreta nos referimos a HAUBELT, “Haenke, Born y Banks”, p. 191.

⁵⁷ Ver *Gaceta de Madrid* 42, Martes 7 de Abril de 1818, p. 349.

⁵⁸ Para el contexto de la expedición de Malaspina y Haenke comp. p.ej. Simona BINKOVÁ – Carlos LAZCANO SAHAGÚN, “La herencia jesuítica y la Ilustración: el caso de la geografía y cartografía

de investigación a futuro podrían ser las Academias y/o Sociedades (Económicas, Científicas), su papel en general y la membresía de los científicos en el extranjero (casos de Born, Jacquin), o en Bohemia, la Sociedad Científica (fundada en 1769, conocida desde 1784 como la Real Sociedad Científica Checa, entre los fundadores figura Ignaz von Born y Haenke, que fue miembro desde su juventud). En España, el Real Jardín Botánico y el Depósito Hidrográfico (hoy Museo Naval); en el Reino Unido, la Real Sociedad en Londres y el Real Jardín Botánico en Kew. Sin dudas, estos lugares sirvieron para establecer nexos y contactos profesionales y personales. Cabe mencionar, además, a las autoridades de administración central y a las autoridades de administración colonial (virreyes, gobernadores, intendentes) que también contribuyeron al desarrollo de la ciencia. Habría pues una infinidad de temas más para seguir el tema propuesto.

(Escrito en español por la autora)

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**MATERIALES
Y BREVES ESTUDIOS**

IMMIGRATION FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA TO BRAZIL IN THE 1920s AND 1930s: A PROBE INTO THE SOURCES FOR THE SÃO PAULO REGION¹

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to investigate some sources relevant to a study of migratory flows between former Czechoslovakia and Brazil, with focus on the region of São Paulo, and to explore and present some aspects of the daily life of the Czechoslovak community in that region in the 1920s and 1930s. The research is based on two sets of data: the on-line archives of the *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite* journals and on-line archives of the Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo.

Keywords: Czech/Czechoslovak immigration; Brazil; Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo; *Folha da Manhã*; *Folha da Noite*; 1920s and 1930s.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es hacer un estudio de caso de algunas fuentes para los flujos migratorios entre la antigua Checoslovaquia y Brasil, con especial enfoque en la región de São Paulo, así como aspectos de la vida cotidiana de la comunidad checoslovaca en esta región durante el período de los 1920s y 1930s. La investigación se hizo a través de dos bases de datos: los archivos en línea de las revistas *Folha da Manhã* y *Folha da Noite* y los archivos en línea del Museo de la Inmigración del Estado de São Paulo.

Palabras clave: inmigración checa/checoslovaca; Brasil; Museo de la Inmigración del Estado de São Paulo; *Folha da Manhã*; *Folha da Noite*; 1920s-1930s.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to explore some so far little-used Brazilian sources which open new avenues for the study of the migratory flows between the former Czechoslovakia and Brazil during the interwar period, with special respect to the region of São Paulo. These sources capture aspects of the daily life of Czechoslovak community in the region during the period under study. A more general objective of our joint investigation was to enrich the existing source base for the study of the

¹ This paper is one of the outputs of the Cooperatio Program provided by Charles University, research area History, implemented at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, and a research project running in January–April 2023 as part of the UNIGOU Academic Internships Program 2023 entitled ‘Migration from Central Europe to Brazil (1850–1938)’. The project was coordinated by Markéta Křížová and had as participants Felipe Antonio Honorato and Lucas de Souza Lima.

trans-Atlantic migration from Central Europe. Emigration from Central Europe (here specifically the Czech Lands/Czechoslovakia) to South America (in this case to Brazil, which was after Argentina second most popular destination for Czech/Czechoslovak migrants) is less well documented and not as frequently studied as the mass resettlement to the United States. Yet it can form a good case study that has a lot to contribute to the study of migration in the broadest context. It had various specific features stemming from the political and economic conditions in both the land of origin and the place of destination but also many features found in other migrations. All this can stimulate thinking about the causes, course, and results of migration processes during the Modern Era.

Existing research on this subject is based mostly on archival sources available in the Czech Republic, such as statistics, correspondence, memoirs, and articles in newspapers and journals.² Our aim was to explore the potential of other sources, located in Brazil and recently made accessible to researchers worldwide thanks to digitalisation. At the same time, our present study demonstrates that these newly accessible sources present certain problems regarding their use and processing, which is why cooperation with Brazilian scholars was crucial.

The research focused on the region of São Paulo, which was since the late 19th century a preferred destination for numerous groups of migrants from Europe, including the Czech Lands. São Paulo state was the centre of Brazilian economy thanks to both industry and intensive agriculture. Existing information on migrants from the Czech Lands, such as their numbers, names, place of origin, employment in the new country etc., was sketchy and limited to start with. To supplement it, we needed to use a combination of sources. For the purpose of this text, we used two databases: the on-line archives of the journals *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite*³ and the on-line archives of the Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo.⁴

The period we focused on was determined by practical circumstances: both *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite* came into existence in the 1920s, and the results found in the archives of the Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo were

² For the older period, see Monika BAĎUROVÁ – Bohumil BAĎURA, “A Emigração dos Países Tchecos ao Brasil antes de Originarse a República Tchecoslovaca”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia* 31, 1997, pp. 41–68; Ivo BARTEČEK, “Československá kolonizace v Brazílii” [Czechoslovak Colonisation in Brazil], *Češi v cizině* 3, 1988, pp. 237–251; Simona BINKOVÁ, “El interés por el Brasil en la literatura checa y eslovaca entre las dos guerras mundiales”, in: Josef Opatrný (ed.), *Emigración centroeuropea a la América Latina IV*, Prague 2006, pp. 123–141 (which contains some additional bibliography); Natália KOVÁČOVÁ, “História e presença da imigração tcheca e eslovaca para o Brasil”, (M.A. thesis), Palacký University in Olomouc, 2017. Some source material, mostly memoirs and personal documentation, are also located in the Museum of Emigration to Brazil, a private institution established in 2010 in the town of Ralsko-Náhlov in Central Bohemia, see: *Emigrationmuseum.cz, Krajské muzeum vystěhovalectví do Brazílie a muzeum Horních vsí v Brazílii* [on-line], 2025, [consulted 10 December 2024], accessible from: <https://www.emigrationmuseum.cz>.

³ The *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite* archives can be accessed through *Folha de S.Paulo: Acervo Folha* [on-line], [consulted 15 October 2024], accessible from: <https://acervo.folha.com.br/index.do>.

⁴ The archives of the Museu da Imigração do Estado de São Paulo can be accessed through *Museu da Imigração do Estado de São Paulo: acervo digital* [on-line], [consulted 15 October 2024], accessible from: <http://www.inci.org.br/acervodigital>.

also most numerous for this decade. This period is also significant from the perspective of studying migration from Central Europe in more general terms. Immediately after the founding of Czechoslovakia in 1918, emigration from the country has ceased for a short time and some people who had settled overseas before World War I even returned to the newly established republic. But various economic and social pressures led to a renewal of emigration in the early 1920s. At this time, Latin America became more attractive than previously, because a number of states that earlier welcomed migrants (such as USA) adopted various quotas and restrictions (the Immigration Act of 1924). Brazil, too, started to tighten its immigration policy in response to the growing immigration pressure. In 1921, Epitácio Pessoa's government made a proof of adequate finances an obligatory condition of immigration but, even so, Brazil remained one of a few large American states without immigration quotas.⁵

Sources of the Immigration Museum of São Paulo

The Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo (Museu da Imigração do Estado de São Paulo) was established in 1993 in the former Hospedaria de Imigrantes, an accommodation facility for the newly arrived migrants in Brás, in the Mooca neighbourhood of São Paulo. The building was erected in 1887 to support the large-scale immigration that was taking place in the state of São Paulo in response to immigration incentives that were implemented throughout Brazil. Massive immigration naturally also led to high numbers of immigrants in need of lodging and medical assistance. The Brazilian government therefore first provided temporary accommodation to these persons in various buildings belonging to the military, such as the Arsenal of the Navy in Santos, a city with the largest port through which immigrants were arriving, and in the Military Hospital in São Paulo, which welcomed those arriving in the state capital. But these facilities soon proved insufficient and various immigrant hostels were established to house and concentrate foreigners immediately upon their arrival.⁶

Founded in 1887, the Hospedaria de Imigrantes hostel underwent renovations in 1908, 1936, and 1950. The building was massive, occupying nearly a city block, and had its own railway platform for the arriving immigrants. Accommodations, which were on the upper floor, consisted of simple rooms with limited privacy, where immigrants slept in bunk beds. On the ground floor were offices, bureaus de change, a medical area, kitchens, dining halls, and storage areas.⁷ The hostel also had its own small hospital and a post office. After arrival, immigrants had their luggage collected and inspected, and underwent a medical screening to check

⁵ Jeffrey LESSER, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil and the Jewish Question*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1995, p. 24.

⁶ Rosa UDAETA, “Nem Brás, nem Flores: Hospedaria de Imigrantes da cidade de São Paulo (1875–1886)”, Ph.D. thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2013, pp. 79–82.

⁷ Maria Izilda Santos DE MATOS – Sênia BASTOS, “Portugueses em São Paulo. Registros e ingressos (1912): Hospedaria do Imigrante – listas de bordo e livros de registro”, in: Fernando de Sousa, Ismênia Martins – Izilda Matos (eds.), *Nas duas margens. Os portugueses no Brasil*, Porto 2009, pp. 277–278.

for contagious diseases or health problems. Once formally registered, they could stay in the *hospedaria* until they found a more permanent place to settle.⁸ To facilitate immigrant employment, the government had opened an office of the Official Agency for Colonisation and Employment in the *hospedaria* in 1905. After 1911, this agency was assisted by the Official Placement Agency, affiliated with the State Department of Labor. Its aim was to assist newcomers in finding employment: in the city, these were mainly positions for craftsmen, while rural areas provided employment to farmers.⁹

In terms of organisation, the immigrants were divided into categories: subsidised and non-subsidised newcomers, foreigners, and nationals coming from other Brazilian states. The main entry points for immigrants into Brazil were the ports of Santos and Rio de Janeiro, which is why the *hospedaria* was located between the railway lines connecting São Paulo with these two cities. Data indicate that between 1888 and 1978, the hostel accommodated 1.9 million foreigners of over 70 nationalities and 1.6 million national workers. The usual length of stay was one week: then the immigrants moved on to their new place of employment. The hostel could house up to 8,000 people, although it was designed for just 4,000 persons. Between 1930 and 1945, it faced restrictions both due to Getúlio Vargas' 'nationalisation' policies for the labour force and due to the persecution of certain ethnic groups related to the Axis during World War II (e.g., the Japanese, Italians, and Germans). Such measures led to a relative increase in the number of national migrants housed there, which were coming from the interior or northeast of Brazil.¹⁰

After World War II, the hostel received a new wave of European immigrants who had been displaced by the war. Seeing that the main hostel in Brás could not accommodate so many refugees, the government was forced to use a number of granaries to meet the demand. In the 1950s and 1960s, Brazil had undergone significant industrialisation, which went hand in hand with efforts to develop the interior. This modernisation drive included the construction of highways, industrial centres, as well as the establishment of the capital, Brasília, during the mandate of President Juscelino Kubitschek. An important turning point came in 1968, when the reception, screening, and placement of immigrants and migrants previously handled by the Secretariat of Agriculture came under the auspices of a newly created Secretariat of Social Promotion. The policymakers realised that by now, majority of migration took place within the country (i.e., internal migration had exceeded immigration), leading to the formation of the slums and growing social inequality in peripheral areas and states of the country. Henceforth, the purpose of the hostel was

⁸ The bureaucratic mechanisms upon the arrival of the immigrants were described in detail during the epoch, see C. R. CAMERON, "Colonization of Immigrants in Brazil", *Monthly Labor Review* 33/4, 1931, pp. 36–46.

⁹ Paulo Cesar GONÇALVES, "A Hospedaria de Imigrantes de São Paulo: um novo espaço para o recrutamento de braços europeus pela economia cafeeira", in: Lená Medeiros de Menezes – Fernando de Sousa (eds.), *Brasil-Portugal: Pontes sobre o Atlântico. Múltiplos Olhares sobre a E/Imigração*, Rio de Janeiro 2017, p. 255.

¹⁰ Odair PAIVA, "Hospedaria de Imigrantes de São Paulo", *Navegar: Revista de Estudos de E/Imigração* 2/3, 2016, pp. 59–76.

to accommodate and assist these marginalised individuals: this led to the conclusion of its original activities in the 1970s.¹¹

Although the *hospedaria* concluded its original activities in the 1970s, it was only in 1986 that it became the Immigrant Historical Centre under the auspices of the State Secretariat for Social Promotion. The Immigration Museum was established here in 1993 by the State Secretariat for Culture. One of its tasks is to administer the entire preserved historical collection. In 2014, the museum reopened after a massive reconstruction with a new permanent exhibition entitled ‘Migration: Experiences, Memories, and Identities’. The museum now regularly hosts various events and temporary exhibitions in order to engage with local communities and to showcase the diverse ethnic groups that passed through the *hospedaria* and contributed to the cultural formation of Brazil. It promotes various educational and school programmes in partnership with public educational institutions in the country, contributes to the integration of various immigrant communities that have settled in Brazil, and collaborates on further cultural activities.¹²

The collection of the Immigration Museum is rich and diverse, containing a variety of objects, documents, photographs, and records pertaining to the lives of immigrants who arrived in São Paulo in the 19th and 20th century. It includes items acquired from the organisations that operated in the building of the former *hospedaria*, but also various things donated by migrants and their descendants, such as luggage, furniture, household items, work tools, personal records, and clothing. Aside from these, one also finds immigration documents such as disembarkation records and passenger lists from the ships that brought immigrants to Brazil. The museum’s digital collection includes enrolment records, boarding lists, applications, letters of invitation, iconography, cartography, and newspapers, all belonging to the public archive of the State of São Paulo. Since 1993, this archive has been growing, adding not only various accounts and life stories from the time newcomers arrived in Brazil but also materials related to their later experiences. The archive even includes a collection of oral history documents: interviews with migrants and their descendants. To assist researchers, the museum offers an on-line course on conducting research using the migration documents which are on-line.¹³ Still, it seems that these collections are not exploited to the maximum of their potential. Nelly Freitas in her review of the permanent exhibition noted that ‘the particular characteristics are not really captured [...] because no distinction is made between the different groups. It is not shown how everyone has contributed, and still contributes, to the identity of

¹¹ PAIVA, “Hospedaria de Imigrantes de São Paulo”.

¹² For a review of the museum (in English and Portuguese) with an outline of its history, see Nelly de FREITAS, “Museu da Imigração do Estado de São Paulo”, *The American Historical Review* 124/5, 2019, pp. 1800–1805. A summary of challenges currently facing the museum is found in Thiago HARUO SANTOS, “Escrita em tempos de pandemia: participação em museum a partir da experiência do Museu da Imigração do Estado de São Paulo”, *Simbiótica* 8/2, 2021, pp. 92–113 (again with a summary of the museum’s history).

¹³ See also the handbook by Henrique TRINIDADE ABREU, *Acervo digital do Museu da Imigração* [on-line], São Paulo 2018, [consulted 10 May 2023], accessible from: https://museudaimigracao.org.br/assets/download/ebook/MUSEU-DA-IMIGRACaO_EBOOK_Acervo-Digital-compressed.pdf.

São Paulo or what conflicts took place when these immigrants were inserted into the host society of today and yesterday'.¹⁴ This is why focus on one particular immigrant group is so important.

Our research had shown that the digital search tools one can use to remotely access the digitalised collections lack precision and include errors found in the original documents. For instance, files containing the name records were originally filled by hand by the officers, some include typos and, even more importantly, sometimes different terms are used to refer to the same nationality. Thus, when searching for keyword 'Tchecoslováquia', we ended up having to search for 'Slovaquia' in various formats, because there were so many variants of spelling Czechoslovakia, including 'T. eslovaquia' (in the case of Anna Schilder and her family records),¹⁵ 'T. slowaquia' (in the case of Francisco Bendl records),¹⁶ and 'T. slovaquia' in various other instances. There were, of course, also various occasions of misspelling family and personal names, which complicated the pairing of the records with other available sources.

All in all, we found in 76 files a total of 122 name records of either families and couples travelling together or persons accompanied by others who were registered under the same file (in case of families and couples, the files always have the husband/father, or in his absence mother, as main person).¹⁷ We also found two reimbursement requests (the official term was 'Requerimentos SACOP') addressed by the immigrants to the Secretariat of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works (Secretaria de Agricultura, Comércio e Obras Públicas, acronym SACOP) in order to be refunded for the money spent on tickets. This provision was instituted to make the immigration to Brazil more attractive and to draw into the country some much-needed manpower. They are a rich source of information, because many contain information such as images of passports, signatures, and employment records. (The two requests made by Czechoslovak migrants are discussed in more detail below.)

Other records found in the archives of the Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo in general show that migration from the former Czechoslovakia to Brazil involved mostly male workers of various trades and skills. From the 122 records found, only two of the persons named had achieved higher education: Francisco Bendl, an agronomist (arrived in Itararé in December 1922)¹⁸ and Walter Namsnam, a construction engineer (arrived in the *hospedaria* in October 1923 from the Brazilian state of Alagoas. (In this case, the family name was most probably corrupted by the clerk who did the recording, and it was not possible to ascertain the real surname).¹⁹ Other immigrants were metalworkers, farmers, carpenters, and the like.

¹⁴ FREITAS, "Museu da Imigração", p. 1802.

¹⁵ Archive of the Museu da Imigração, São Paulo (hereafter AMI), Livros de registros, book 94, família 74170, p. 268.

¹⁶ AMI, Livros de registros, book 94, família 78780, p. 301.

¹⁷ As an example, see Maria Satzke family's files, in AMI, Livros de registros, book 94, família 52430, p. 130.

¹⁸ AMI, Livros de registros, book 94, família 78780, p. 301.

¹⁹ AMI, Livros de registros, book 96, família 31060, p. 9.

The records listed a total of 101 males and 33 females, with only 19 of the 76 files listing families or couples traveling together or someone accompanied by another person.

This finding confirms existing knowledge of trans-Atlantic migration patterns. Contrary to the popular image of families huddled at railroad stations and in ports around piles of baggage containing all their worldly possessions, most migrants were young, unmarried men (and to a lesser degree women). This general profile could become more pronounced in times of economic crisis (as were the 1920s and 1930s), when money simply would not suffice for the fare of the entire family. But it is clear that many of those who set off to São Paulo did not envisage a permanent emigration: their plan was to work overseas for some time to acquire capital to use in their home country or to supplement the family income. Of course, plans could change. Some of those who wished to stay permanently returned within a few years to their country of origin because the promises of the agents and authorities of the host country failed to correspond to the reality of everyday life. Others who wanted to return soon realised that their savings would barely suffice for a return ticket and they had to stay. But even in cases when whole families planned to emigrate, the younger members were often sent ahead and only after they found work and a place to stay, the rest of the family followed. Moreover, the occupational profile indicates that overseas migration was usually undertaken by people who were qualified in a particular craft, not by the poorest classes who only could find employment only in the least qualified jobs.²⁰

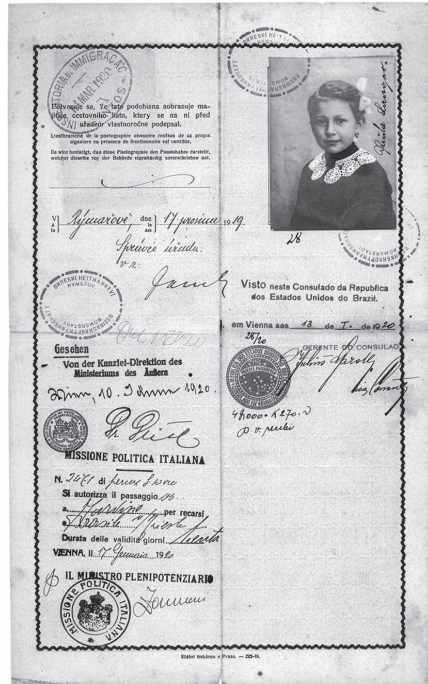
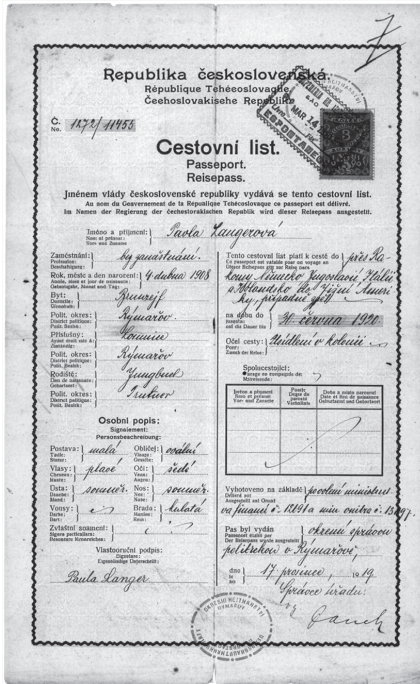
Two cases among the files of the Museum demonstrate the difficulties faced by researchers who investigate immigration from the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, such as Czechoslovakia or the Balkans. Wenceslau Hradec, a 38-years-old mechanic, arrived in the *hospedaria* in April 1923 from the Paraná state with his family. While he declared a Czechoslovak citizenship, his wife Anna, their two children Rodolpho and Anna, his sister Joanna, and his brother-in-law Frantz were all registered as Austrian nationals.²¹ Sebastião Stern, a 47-years-old man, arrived in the *hospedaria* in May 1921 from Gaibodar (sic!), Serbia, yet while he registered as Yugoslavian, his entire family (a wife and five sons) is listed as Czechoslovak citizens.²² It can be presumed that at least for registration in the *hospedaria*, nationality of the arrivals was not determined by self-declaration but by a passport. The same applied to reimbursement requests: for instance, the reimbursement request of Josef Langer and his family shows he came via Trieste, Italy, to the port of Santos in 1920, and digitised documents in the archives include the family's passports, which were all issued by the Republic of Czechoslovakia.²³

²⁰ See in this respect the article by Markéta KRÍŽOVÁ, "Between 'here' and 'over there': Short-term and circular mobility from the Czech Lands to Latin America (1880s–1930s)", *Hungarian Historical Review* 7/2, 2018, pp. 191–218.

²¹ AMI, Livro de registros, book 95, family 45450, p. 93.

²² AMI, Livro de registros, book 93, family 76570, p. 249.

²³ AMI, Requerimentos SACOP, Pedido de restituição de passagem de Trieste a Santos, Langer Josef, June 19, p. 1920.



◁▷ Passports of Josef Langer, his wife and three children.

Source: AMI, Requerimentos SACOP, Pedido de restituição de passagem de Trieste a Santos, Langer Josef, June 19, 1920.

The study of emigration from the Czech Lands is thus made more difficult by the fact that after the collapse of the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, the assignment of citizenship (often based on the place of birth and/or language) by the successor states could result in a confusing documentation. It is also important to keep in mind that the transatlantic labour migration often involved prior migration within Europe. For instance, southeastern Europe – that is, the territory where in 1918 the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (aka Yugoslavia) was established in 1918 – had been since late 19th century a popular destination especially for young artisans. Later, many of them migrated across the ocean from the Yugoslav ports and although the important port of Trieste was, along with the adjacent region, in 1920 annexed to Italy, the migration pattern did not change.²⁴ Since Czechoslovakia did not have direct access to the sea, those who planned to migrate to America had to use either the northern ports, mainly Hamburg and Bremen, or the southern ones, mostly Trieste. In other cases, labour migrants originally heading to Yugoslavia decided on the spot to continue further, across the Atlantic.

²⁴ See Ulf BRUNNBAUER, *Globalizing Southeastern Europe: Emigrants, America and the State since the Late Nineteenth Century*, Lanham 2016.

Josef Langer and his family's passports are also important in showing that the main port of departure for Czechoslovaks from Europe to Brazil was the port of Trieste. Although it now belonged to Italy, the region was part of the former Austro-Hungarian empire. Langers' passports also feature authorisations issued by the Italian and Brazilian diplomacy in Vienna, which can help clarify how the family got to Trieste. In fact, Vlastimil Kybal, a Czech diplomat who worked in Brazil, mentioned in a speech given to students at Pedro II School (Rio de Janeiro) in November 1925 that one can travel from Trieste to Prague via Vienna.²⁵

In these migration movements, *Hospedaria de Imigrantes* functioned as a kind of triage centre of the potential workforce. As noted above, between the early years of the 20th century and the 1940s, Brazil had undergone a period of rapid industrialisation. This led to an increased demand for workforce and subsequent growth of immigration. It was a time of a rapid expansion of the railway network, development of ports and industries, and growing coffee production (São Paulo was the main producer of the commodity in Brazil). Not surprisingly, São Paulo was thus an attractive destination for European immigrants. Initially, in the 1880s and 1890s, they were brought to replace the slaves and work in the plantations; later, from the 1920s onwards, they were increasingly employed in the industry.²⁶ The data about Czech immigration in the archives of the Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo reflect this. One of the items in the records kept by the museum is 'farmer', which reflects who was the farmer employing or receiving these immigrants, individuals, families, or group of immigrants in Brazil. This field is not filled in all the files, but withing those where it is, two farmers' names stand out. In 1923, Tolpho Leite Barros from Pirajebú was responsible for employing eight immigrants or groups/families of immigrants. In 1921, the company of 'S. Vidal & irmão' from 'M. Prado' was responsible for receiving five immigrants, or rather a group/family of immigrants, although it is unclear from the documents whether they were employed by the company or just received on a temporary basis.

Interestingly, both of the reimbursement requests, from Josef Langer and João Konstansky, also have covers of the Secretary of Agriculture, in particular its Directorate of Lands, Colonisation, and Immigration. The Langer's request explains that he and his family left the *hospedaria* for employment at the farm of Orozimbo Augusto de Almeida Loureiro,²⁷ while Konstansky's request shows that he and his family were settlers in the 'Veado' farm.²⁸ These documents clearly document chain migration as a basic pattern of the transatlantic networks.²⁹ More importantly, they

²⁵ Vlastimil KYBAL, *Um anno no Brasil: Artigos, conferencias e discursos sobre a Tchecoslovaquia e suas relações com o Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro 1926, p. 79.

²⁶ Milton SANTOS – Maria Laura SILVEIRA, *Brasil – território e sociedade no início do século XXI*, Rio de Janeiro 2012, pp. 212–214.

²⁷ AMI, Requerimentos SACOP, Pedido de restituição de passagem de Trieste a Santos, Langer Josef, June 19, 1920.

²⁸ AMI, Requerimentos SACOP, Pedido de restituição de passagens do porto de Buenos Aires ao porto de Santos, João Konstansky, December 30, 1925.

²⁹ On the importance of chain networks in the making of permanent and temporary expat communities in the New World see Jochen KREBBER, "Creed, Class, and Skills: Three Structural Limitations

could serve as a starting point for mapping the specific life stories of migrants before and after their coming to Brazil.

The Czech community in São Paulo as reflected on the pages of *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite*

The Czechoslovak community in São Paulo was relatively large and compact. As such, it was capable of sustaining its own means of communication in the form of journals and newspapers in Czech. Similar to other places where Czechoslovak emigrants had settled, these journals served helped to reinforce a sense of collective identity and provided useful information on everyday matters, advertisements etc.³⁰ At the same time, leaders of the community tried to communicate with the majority society via local newspapers in Portuguese. On top of that, the references to Czechoslovakia and the Czech community in São Paulo that appeared in the two journals we investigated as part of our project also reflect something more, namely the efforts of Vlastimil Kybal, the Czechoslovak envoy to Brazil in 1925–1927).³¹

Historian by profession and originally employed at Charles University (Prague), Kybal belonged to the circle of academics linked to the first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk who after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic entered the state service. His first posting as ambassador was to Rome (1920–1925). It was followed by a post in Brazil with accreditation for Argentina (1925–1927), a post in Spain with accreditation for Portugal (1927–1933). Finally, he was posted to Mexico with accreditation for Central America (1935–1939). When he took up his post in Brazil, Kybal was determined to promote especially the commercial exchange between the two countries. Nevertheless, upon his arrival in the country, after the diplomatic post had been vacant for almost a year, Kybal realised that Czechoslovakia, although enjoying prestige, was very little known among the general population in Brazil. As Kybal later explained in his autobiography, written in the 1950s when he was in exile in the United States and published only in 2020, he tried to achieve his goal by active and intensive promotion of Czechoslovakia in the Brazilian press.

The Czechoslovak embassy under his direction flooded the leading Brazilian newspapers with articles. ‘This campaign was very successful. Just in Rio [de Janeiro], the political newspapers have published between mid-April and late December 1925 a total of 364 articles in 17 different newspapers.’³² Aside from short reports on current happenings, Kybal also supplied the papers with longer and more detailed articles on Czech politics, culture, and economy. To some extent, he also engaged in

of Chain Migration”, in: Annemarie Steidl – Josef Ehmer et al. (eds.), *European Mobility: Internal, International and Transatlantic Moves in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries*, Göttingen 2009, pp. 69–77.

³⁰ See Anežka BAĎUROVÁ, “Comienzos de la historia de las revistas de compatriotas checoslovacos en América Latina, 1920–1923”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia* 16, 1983, pp. 279–289.

³¹ For Kybal, see Jaroslav HRDLIČKA, *Historik a diplomat Vlastimil Kybal* [Historian and diplomat Vlastimil Kybal], Prague 2020.

³² Vlastimil KYBAL, *Paměti* [Memoirs], ed. Jaroslav Hrdlička – Jan Blahoslav Lášek, Prague 2020, vol. 2, pp. 170–171.

polemics with German newspapers in Brazil, which in Kybal's view 'vilified' the new republic. On one occasion, he even entered in a heated argument with a German senator from Hamburg, a certain Mr. Burchard.³³ Kybal later republished over twenty of his longer articles in two volumes.³⁴

For example, Kybal recalls: 'for the 7th of March 1925, I wrote [...] and published on 14 March in a popular opposition newspaper *O Jornal* a brief article entitled "O presidente Masaryk", in which I tried to sketch with several brief strokes of my pen the moral portrait of the president and his fight for independence in collaboration with world democracies.'³⁵ It is apparent that various local papers in the São Paulo region republished those promotional texts, especially in the context of Kybal's official visit to São Paulo in October 1925. The official reason for the visit was to make contact with 'the oldest Czech colony in Brazil' and to join the celebrations the 30th anniversary of Slavia, the oldest Czech social association in the whole of Latin America. Kybal also used this opportunity to promote a closer cooperation among the Czechs themselves and to advocate the establishment of a Czech-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce that would further facilitate the increased economic cooperation between Czechoslovakia and Brazil.³⁶ This demonstrates the importance of immigrant groups for the political representation of their mother countries. The migrant communities were viewed as envoys and representatives of their country of origin. Sometimes, this even had an impact on their daily lives: in the case of the Czechs, it took the form of competition with the German settlers, whose role in São Paulo region and the whole of Brazil was considerable.³⁷

The presence of Czechs in São Paulo was also reflected on the pages of *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite*, two journals that started to appear in the 1920s. They were founded by Olival Costa and Pedro Cunha, two journalists who had previously worked for *O Estado de São Paulo*, another important Brazilian newspaper. *Folha da Noite* was first published on the 19th of February 1921. Four years later, in July 1925, was launched its morning edition, *Folha da Manhã*.³⁸

In the 1920s, immigration to the São Paulo state was growing fast. This increasing presence is also reflected in the pages of *Folha da Manhã*. On 14 June 1929, the newspaper published what seems to have been the pilot article of a new

³³ KYBAL, *Um anno*, p. 4.

³⁴ KYBAL, *Um anno*; also Vlastimil KYBAL, *Segundo anno no Brasil: Artigos, conferencias e discursos sobre a Tchecoslovaquia e suas relações com o Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro 1927.

³⁵ Kybal, *Paměti*, vol. 2, p. 171.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

³⁷ For the German settlers in Brazil in this period, see for instance Nancy MITCHELL, "Protective Imperialism versus Weltpolitik in Brazil. Part 1: Pan-German Vision and Mahanian Response", *The International History Review* 18/2, 1996, pp. 253–278.

³⁸ On January 1, 1960, *Folha da Manhã*, *Folha da Tarde*, and *Folha da Noite* have merged and formed a daily paper called *Folha de São Paulo*. The website of the last-named journal includes the archives of the oldest issues. For the history of these journals, see Fabiane Barbosa MOREIRA, "Os valores-notícia no jornalismo impresso: análise das 'características substantivas' das notícias nos jornais *Folha de São Paulo*, *O Estado de São Paulo* e *O Globo*", M.A. thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, 2006, pp. 85–86.

section called ‘Typos de S. Paulo’ (The types of São Paulo). Its author signed himself as ‘Belmonte’, which was a pseudonym of Benedito Carneiro Bastos Barreto (1896–1947), a caricaturist, illustrator, painter, and journalist, who was deeply involved in the public life of São Paulo during that time.³⁹ The article, entitled ‘Começando’ (Beginning), includes the following observation:

Thirty years ago, São Paulo knew only the Italian and the Portuguese. It knew only its own race. Nowadays, the city knows the universe. The Japanese and Chinese, Latvians and Germans, Lithuanians and Hungarians, Czechs and Croats, Kalmyks, Greeks, Russians, Poles, Syrians... It all came down to this, after the war, with them bringing their religions and pieces of their climate. [...] And the climate of São Paulo became multimode and disordered [...].⁴⁰

Belmonte then went on to define the city of São Paulo as ‘the popular edition of the League of the Nations’ and ‘a cocktail of races furiously shaken by the century’.⁴¹

It is interesting to note that the article differentiates so clearly between the Italian and Portuguese immigrants, who are described as São Paulo’s ‘own race’, and all the other immigrants. It is also curious how Belmonte associates the new waves of immigrants with the idea of disorder. The expression loosely translated as ‘it all came down to this’ (in Portuguese ‘se despençou pra cá’) can be in this context interpreted as a highly pejorative way of referencing the arrival of the new immigrants in the city.

The notion of otherness that surrounded the new migratory flows arriving in São Paulo was present also in Juca Pato’s column. ‘Pato’ was a famous cartoon character that appeared in the *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite*. Created by the abovementioned Belmonte, this fictional character had a humorous column in the newspapers where ‘the criticism and aspirations of the São Paulo middle class’ were presented in a sarcastic way.⁴² On 5 February 1928, Juca Pato’s text targeted the situation of some Brazilian women married to Syrian men.⁴³ According to Pato, they had to endure slavery and live with other ‘wonders’ incompatible with present-day Brazil: one can see this as a criticism of Brazil’s past. Making a clear reference to stereotypes, Pato targets the notion of marriage between Brazilians and Syrians, wondering how women born in Brazil can unite with such strange people. He includes in this list of ‘strange people’ the Syrians, Poles, Jews, Lithuanians, but also the Czechs.

The image of the newcomers was thus not always positive. While the Brazilian government continued its efforts to attract European immigrants throughout the 1920s, one can also see a mounting dissatisfaction within the Brazilian society with

³⁹ Zelia Lopes da SILVA, “O traço de Belmonte desvendando São Paulo e o Brasil (1922–1924)”, *Art-Cultura* 9/15, 2007, pp. 163–179.

⁴⁰ BELMONTE, “Começando”, *Folha da Manhã*, June 14, 1929, p. 5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴² Marissa GORBERG, “Um olhar sobre as caricaturas de Belmonte (1923–1927)”, (Ph.D. thesis), Escola de Ciências Sociais da Fundação Getúlio Vargas 2018, pp. 147–166.

⁴³ Juca Pato, *Folha da Manhã*, February 5, 1928, p. 5.

the increased competition of migrants, who were culturally and linguistically distinct and willing to accept lower wages. This attitude was then reflected in the press. For example, on 3 January 1927, two work colleagues of certain Olavo Tarxo – allegedly a Czechoslovak citizen although the name does not sound Slavic – stabbed him with a knife on the Wilson Avenue.⁴⁴ All three men were the employees of the Companhia Antártica Paulista, a famous Brazilian beverage producer and, as the headline of the article (‘Por questão de serviço’) notes, the crime was motivated by work-related issues.

On 15 September 1927, *Folha da Noite* reported an incident that took place in the Lapa neighbourhood of São Paulo. In the house number 18 of Água Branca Avenue, there was a cabaret attended ‘almost exclusively’ by Germans, Hungarians, and Czechoslovaks.⁴⁵ According to the article, the place was noisy and its customers rowdy, which annoyed the people who lived nearby. Otto Gruber, who lived next door, reported the situation to the police, and the authorities called Adão Burger, the cabaret’s owner, to the police station for an explanation. Angry with Otto Gruber, Adão Burger and two other Czechoslovak citizens named in the text as André Mingassi and Alexandre Dage (which are certainly corruptions of their original names) went to Gruber’s home. Here two police officers, forewarned about Burger’s plans, were waiting for them. Adão Burger and his accomplices then engaged in a fight with the police officers. The article has a xenophobic tone: aside from highlighting that the cabaret was attended ‘almost exclusively’ by Germans, Hungarians and Czechoslovaks, it also remarks that while the police are proactive and strict in downtown São Paulo with the Brazilians, they turn a blind eye to cabarets owned by ‘internationals’ and to the disorder they create in the suburbs.

It should be mentioned in this context that between the 1920s and 1930s, policing and maintenance of public order in Brazil had undergone a significant transformation driven by pressure from the general public. The military police established what was known as the ‘policia de costumes’ (‘behaviour police’), which focused suppressing prostitution, idleness, and gambling. São Paulo was the first city to establish a moral police force; it played a crucial role in the fighting prostitution and patrolling designated areas in order to keep undesirable behaviours out of sight of the upper class and bourgeoisie. The ‘success’ in controlling prostitution by removing it from public view quickly led to the adoption of the same policy by the police in Minas Gerais.⁴⁶

On 10 December 1926, *Folha da Manhã* printed an article called ‘The Mysterious Murder (‘Mysterioso assassinio’), which informed about a dead male body found in the São Caetano avenue close to Silva Bueno Street. The police estimated that despite the bad smell and general business of the avenue, the corpse had been there for six days before someone noticed it and informed the authorities. Once the

⁴⁴ [anon.], “Por questão de serviço”, *Folha da Manhã*, January 3, 1927, p. 3.

⁴⁵ [anon.], “‘Tempo quente’ na Lapa”, *Folha da Noite*, September 15, 1927, p. 6.

⁴⁶ Lucas Carvalho Soares de Aguiar PEREIRA, “Prostituição e polícia: mulheres e homens na mira do policiamento moral em Belo Horizonte, MG, Brasil (c. 1920/1930)”, *História* 38, 2019, pp. 1–24; Maria Lourdes SILVA, “Policia de costumes, drogas e educação na capital federal nos anos 1920-30”, *Revista Teias* 23, 2010, pp. 3–22.

police found in one of the murdered man's pockets a letter in Czech, they suspected the victim was of Czechoslovak origin. Further inquiries in houses around the crime scene established that a man called Antonio Slobado (most likely a corruption of the common Czech surname 'Svoboda') hosted in the weeks before his murder four 'Hungarian or Czech' men. Slobado lived one kilometre from the crime scene, which, as the article noted, was information of relative value but one that 'could not be omitted'. This was perfectly in line with stereotypes already present in this paper regarding the Hungarians and Czechs.⁴⁷

On the other hand, there were articles specifically dedicated to Czechoslovakia on the pages of *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite* which attest to the above-mentioned efforts of Czech representatives, chiefly the envoy Vlastimil Kybal, to promote the Czechoslovak cause in Brazil. These texts often mentioned prominent political figures, such as the President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Edvard Beneš, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Masaryk's successor in 1935. In 1926,⁴⁸ and again a year later, *Folha da Manhã* reported on the celebration of Masaryk's birthday (on 8 March), organised by Sociedade Brasileira Tcheco-Slovaca in Rio de Janeiro. In 1927, the celebration was held at the Radio Society and the list of attendees included had the well-known Brazilian professor Roquette Pinto.⁴⁹ Similar articles published in subsequent years⁵⁰ presented Masaryk as an important academic, the father of the Czechoslovak Republic, and 'the most popular character in Central European political and diplomatic circles'. Especially praised was 'his great work in the cause of national resurgence'.⁵¹

On 1 November 1927, *Folha da Manhã* brought an article on a music festival organised by the Czech Union (União Tcheca) to commemorate the independence day of Czechoslovakia.⁵² On 28 October 1933, Sociedade Slavia held in its headquarters located in the Pedro Lessa Street a musical soirée and a ball to celebrate the independence of Czechoslovakia. These celebrations also featured a performance of Antonín Dvořák's Slavonic Dances.⁵³ Slavia also used to organise annual commemorations of the 'martyrdom' of Jan Hus, a Bohemian religious reformer who was burned at stake in 1415; in 1929, *Folha da Manhã* published a brief article about this on its front page. These commemorative events included a choir performance, recitation of Hussite poetry, a lecture on Hus' life by Václav Kresta, then the Czechoslovak consul in São Paulo, the singing of national anthem of Czechoslovakia, and

⁴⁷ [anon.], "Mysterioso assassinio", *Folha da Manhã*, December 10, 1926, p. 4.

⁴⁸ [anon.], "Uma festa para solenizar o aniversario do presidente da Republica da Tcheco-Slovaquia", *Folha da Manhã*, March 8, 1926, p. 5.

⁴⁹ [anon.], "O aniversario do presidente da Tcheco-slovaquia", *Folha da Manhã*, March 8, 1927, p. 5.

⁵⁰ [anon.], "O aniversario do presidente Masaryk e a gratidão nacional", *Folha da Manhã*, March 8, 1929, p. 5; [anon.], "Republica Tchecoslovaquia", *Folha da Manhã*, March 8, 1930, p. 6.

⁵¹ [anon.], "O presidente Masaryk – A nação tcheco-slovena festeja hoje o seu aniversario natalicio", *Folha da Manhã*, March 8, 1928, p. 5.

⁵² [anon.], "União Tcheca", *Folha da Manhã*, November 1, 1927, p. 5.

⁵³ [anon.], "O aniversario da independencia da Tchecoslovaquia", *Folha da Manhã*, October 19, 1933, p. 5.

similar things.⁵⁴ On 16 June 1929, *Folha da Manhã* featured an article on gymnastics ('O esporte gymnastico') which aimed at explaining to readers the goals of the Sokol (literally 'falcon'), a voluntary sports organisation very popular among the Czech migrants. The article presented it as 'school of strengthening and improving the body through physical culture' that developed the 'vigour of a race' to all its fullest potential. According to the article, the Sokol sporting programmes were recognised across Europe and many countries were following the Czechoslovakia's footsteps.⁵⁵ This text may have been published at the initiative of the local União de Gymnastica Sokol in an effort to present a positive image of its activities and, more generally, of the Czechoslovak community.

All in all, various articles tried to create not just a positive image of the Czechoslovak community in Brazil but also of Czechoslovakia. On 19 September 1926, *Folha da Manhã* published an article entitled 'In the empire of iron and coal' ('No império do ferro e do carvão'), which sang praises of the region of Moravia, presenting it as an industrial colossus. The article concludes by boasting that, in Moravia, chimneys have been spewing smoke without interruption for a century.⁵⁶

All this fits into the efforts of Czechoslovak diplomats in Brazil, who tried to create a positive image of their nation, culture, and Czechoslovaks in general to oppose the current stereotypes regarding immigrants. During the abovementioned celebration of Czechoslovak independence organised by the Czech Union in 1927, the Czechoslovak consul Václav Kresta was greeted enthusiastically, and the participants emphasised his efforts aimed at increasing the prestige of Czechoslovak community in São Paulo.⁵⁷ According to the Czechoslovak ambassador Vlastimil Kybal, immediately after his coming to Brazil he launched a campaign of promotion of Czechoslovakia in the press and at conferences. Kybal was convinced that his efforts brought positive results and he was able to actually improve the relations between both nations. One of the tangible measures of success was the foundation of the Czechoslovak-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in 1925.⁵⁸ In 1925, some articles published in *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite* covered preparations for its establishment. For instance, on 27 July 1925 *Folha da Manhã* reported about a meeting that took place the previous day in the Kiew Hotel in São Paulo. At this meeting, Carlos V. Srna, heading the session, asked for the moral support of the Czechoslovak community in the state of São Paulo, in the southern Brazilian

⁵⁴ [anon.], "Uma grande data da Tcheco-Slovaquia", *Folha da Manhã*, July 6, 1929, p. 1.

⁵⁵ [anon.], "O esporte gymnastico", *Folha da Manhã*, June 16, 1929, p. 13.

⁵⁶ Otto NOVAK, "No império do ferro e do carvão", *Folha da Manhã*, September 19, 1926, p. 5.

⁵⁷ [anon.], "União Tcheca", *Folha da Manhã*, 1 November 1927, p. 5. Kresta was rather active in promoting the Czechoslovak immigration to Brazil. He wrote a guide for the new arrivals, see Václav KRESTA, *Brazílie: Poučení pro československé vystěhovalce* [Brazil: Information for Czechoslovak emigrants], Prague: Masarykova akademie práce, 1928; and an information brochure specifically on São Paulo, see Václav KRESTA, *Stát São Paulo: Informace československým exportérům a vystěhovalcům* [The state São Paulo: Information for Czechoslovak exporters and emigrants], Praha 1931.

⁵⁸ Vlastimil KYBAL, *Um anno*, pp. 10–11.

states, and elsewhere in the country, in the process of creating and establishing the chamber.⁵⁹

Aside from the promotional articles, one also finds in the press various announcements that shed light on the everyday life of Czech migrants. For example, marriages involving Czech citizens in many neighbourhoods of São Paulo were reported by both *Folha da Manhã* and *Folha da Noite*. We thus find announcements of marriage between Miguel Ferher, a 27-years-old Czech, and Olga, a Russian citizen, in the Bella Vista neighbourhood (January 1931),⁶⁰ the marriage between Anna Kopecky from Czechoslovakia and José Wagner, a Brazilian from Brusque (Santa Catarina state) in the Mooca neighbourhood (June 1932),⁶¹ or the marriage of Leo Tiltscher from Czechoslovakia and Maria Willsch, born in Chropaczow, Poland, in the Vila Mariana neighbourhood (December 1932).⁶² One should note that oftentimes these were marriages that went across ‘national’ lines but were still concluded between persons who had been classified as ‘not our own race’ in the pilot text of the ‘Typos de S. Paulo’ series quoted in the first part of this text. (The marriage of Anna Kopecky and José Wagner seems to be an exception but the surname Wagner may indicate a German nationality.) The fact that many of the marriages were across national groups challenges the accepted image of compactness of expatriate communities: if that were the case, one should see a predominance of marriages within a national community. But it may have been the result of the enforced coexistence of immigrant groups which were all to some extent segregated from the majority Brazilian society.

Conclusion

The quotations from contemporary sources presented above enable us only brief and sketchy glimpses into the lives of Czechoslovak migrants to the São Paulo region in the short period of 1920s and 1930s. Our aim here, however, was not to present an exhaustive portrayal of their lives. In the present text, we merely outline some preliminary results of what is planned to be a longer and sustained cooperation in migration studies between Czech and Brazilian scholars. Although limited, the sources we worked with have contributed to our knowledge of the migration patterns, mechanisms of integration of the new arrivals into the host society, but also the efforts of expatriate communities to introduce themselves in a positive way to the host society.

(Written in English by the authors)

⁵⁹ [anon.], “Camara de Commercio Tcheco-Brasileira”, *Folha da Manhã*, July 17, 1925, p. 2.

⁶⁰ [anon.], “Edital de proclamas – Juízo do Paz do districto de Bella Vista”, *Folha da Noite*, January 29, 1931, p. 7.

⁶¹ [anon.], “Edital de proclamas – districto da Moóca”, *Folha da Manhã*, June 9, 1932, p. 15.

⁶² [anon.], “Edital de proclamas – districto de Villa Marianna”, *Folha da Manhã*, December 12, 1932, p. 10.

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THE CONQUEST, COLONISATION, AND FIRST GOVERNORS OF THE *ESTADO DO MARANHÃO* DURING THE SPANISH MONARCHY (1580–1640)

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyse the importance of the conquest, colonisation, and installation of the first governors of the *Estado do Maranhão* in the context of Portugal's annexation to the Spanish Monarchy. The conquest, colonisation, and creation of a new territory in Maranhão was one of the main milestones of the six decades during which Portuguese America belonged to the Spanish Monarchy. It was an enterprise previously planned on a political stage, in which the indigenous people played an important role, and it took shape in America through a political process that defined how the space in question would be organised, colonised, and occupied.

Keywords: Brazil; Spanish Monarchy; conquest; Maranhão; governors.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la importancia de la conquista, colonización e instalación de los primeros gobernadores del *Estado do Maranhão* en el contexto de la anexión de Portugal a la Monarquía Hispánica. Es posible afirmar que la conquista, colonización y creación de un nuevo territorio en el Maranhão fue uno de los principales hitos de los 60 años de pertenencia de la América portuguesa a la Monarquía Hispánica. Fue una idea previamente elaborada desde el centro político, donde los indígenas desempeñaron un papel importante, y que tomó forma en el territorio americano a través de un proceso político que definió la forma de organizar, colonizar y ocupar el espacio.

Palabras clave: Brasil; Monarquía Hispánica; Conquista; Maranhão, Gobernadores.

Introduction: The Union of Crowns between Spain and Portugal

The death of King Dom Sebastião in the 'battle of three kings' at Alcácer Quibir in 1578 led in Portugal to a succession crisis which culminated in a factual incorporation of the Portuguese kingdom and its colonies into the dominions of the Spanish Crown under the rule of Philip II.

Between 1581 and 1640, Portugal joined the Spanish Monarchy through a personal union, that is, the two states were ruled by one single monarch. This development took place due to certain historical developments such as squabbles among potential heirs, grandchildren of Manuel I of Portugal, to the Portuguese crown. Eventually, Portugal came to be ruled by a viceroy appointed by the Philip II of

Spain and Lisbon's loss of status of capital city.¹ On the other hand, the Portuguese nobles who supported the Castilian monarch, Philip II, in his aspiration to the Portuguese throne, established a pact with the Spanish Crown: in exchange for supporting Philip's claim, their status and position would be maintained, which led to a level of a certain stability and balance. In return, Portugal and its overseas territories continued to be treated as separate units.² During the period of the union of crowns, the Spanish monarch thus guaranteed the unity of the whole while protecting the distinctness of its components.³

The first consequence of this union was the incorporation of Portugal into a large group of territories that formed the 'Catholic Monarchy' united by a Christian identity. Another effect of the union, however, was that the Portuguese kingdom found itself drawn into the wars which the Habsburgs were waging against the Protestant world⁴.

The dynastic union of Portugal and Spain was finalised by commitments made at the Cortes (assembly of representatives of the estates) held in Tomar in 1581, where Philip II of Spain was crowned Philip I of Portugal.⁵ At this occasion, it was guaranteed that Portugal would be integrated into the Spanish Monarchy by dynastic aggregation, in other words, that it would retain its distinct characteristics.⁶ The king thus ruled over both Spain and Portugal but maintained their distinct customs, laws, and administration.⁷ Jurisdiction, too, was delimited at this assembly; in particular, it was agreed that the political and judicial functions would only be granted only to the natives of the Portuguese kingdom, so the government, positions in state administration, and the administration of Portuguese colonies could not be handed over to foreigners.⁸ It was then within the framework of this union of crowns that global networks were established which transformed the Modern Era by a circulation of goods, knowledge, and political agendas.⁹

The integration of Portugal into the Spanish Monarchy meant that the Portuguese overseas possessions, including the territory we know today as Brazil, became

¹ John ELLIOT, *España, Europa y el mundo de ultramar (1500–1800)*, Madrid 2010, p. 37.

² *Ibidem*, p. 37.

³ Francisco Carlos COSENTINO, *Governadores gerais do Estado do Brasil (séculos XVI–XVII). Ofício, regimentos, governação e trajetórias*, São Paulo 2009, p. 107.

⁴ Pedro CARDIM, *Portugal y la Monarquía Hispánica (ca. 1550 – ca. 1715)*, Madrid 2017, p. 50.

⁵ Philip II of Spain was crowned Philip I of Portugal, which also meant that Philip III of Spain became Philip II of Portugal and Philip IV of Spain was Philip III of Portugal. In this article, I use the Castilian nomenclature of monarchs.

⁶ Fernando BOUZA, *Portugal no tempo dos Filipes: política, cultura, representações (1580–1640)*, Lisboa 2000, p. 113.

⁷ Stuart SCHWARTZ, *Sovereignty and society in colonial Brazil: the High Court of Bahia and its judges, 1609–1751*, Berkeley 1973, p. 48.

⁸ Wilmar da Silva VIANNA JÚNIOR, "O Governo-geral no tempo dos Filipes", *Dimensões* 20, 2008, p. 48.

⁹ José Manuel SANTOS PÉREZ, "La América portuguesa en la encrucijada. Circulación de personas entre Brasil, la América Hispana y la Corte de los Habsburgo en los años de unión de coronas", in: José Manuel Santos Pérez – Ana Paula Megiani – José Luis Ruiz-Peinado Alonso (eds.), *Redes y Circulación en Brasil durante la Monarquía Hispánica*, Madrid 2021, p. 39.

part of the Castilian Crown.¹⁰ Portugal thus gained certain advantages but also inherited the disputes in which the Spanish were engaged and their adversaries and competitors.

This was the context in which the annexation of Portuguese America to the Spanish Crown took place. During the period of the union of crowns, in 1581–1640, this region grew both in size and in significance. The importance of these overseas territories was mainly due to their strategic position. The territory now known as Brazil was important for Habsburg possessions in South America, functioning as a buffer zone to defend the mineral wealth of Spanish America but also making sure that Spanish ships could sail unmolested to India around the south of the continent. This helped the Spanish increase their global commercial influence.¹¹

During its rule of the territory, the Spanish Crown had introduced in the *Estado do Brasil* various measures aimed at an institutional consolidation of the territory, which attests to the importance which the Habsburgs ascribed to this region. This institutional reform took place in three main areas: finances, where changes aimed at obtaining more revenue, justice, where a new court of appeals (*Tribunal da Relação*) was established with jurisdiction over the entire territory, and finally military, where the reform aimed at a better protection of the main settlements against foreign attacks. The territory was also to be defended by a new defensive line along the coast. The importance of coastal defences is readily apparent when we look at the 1581 map below, where the *Estado do Brasil* is still basically just a strip of land facing the Atlantic.

1. The conquest and colonisation of Maranhão

The growing significance of Portuguese America in the late 16th and early 17th century went hand in hand with its territorial expansion. At this time, under Spanish Habsburg rule, one can also observe the creation and establishment of colonial bureaucracy which aimed at a further expansion of the rule of the Crown.¹² One of the territories that became the focus of these efforts was Maranhão, whose conquest and colonisation was accomplished during the first years of the reign of Philip III.¹³ It began with defensive operations against the foreign powers which were trying to colonise this territory. These operations were successful and led to the foundation of the *Estado do Maranhão* as a unit separate from the *Estado do Brasil*. The *Estado do Maranhão* covered a vast territory stretching over large parts of what are

¹⁰ Oscar MAZÍN, “Architect of the New World: Juan de Solórzano Pereyra and the Status of the Americas”, in: Pedro Cardim – Tamar Herzog et al., *Polycentric Monarchies. How did Early Modern Spain and Portugal Achieve and Maintain a Global Hegemony?*, Sussex 2012, p. 28.

¹¹ VIANNA JÚNIOR, “O governo”, p. 51.

¹² Pilar PONCE LEIVA – Alexander PONSEN, “Administration and government of the Iberian empires”, in: Fernando Bouza – Pedro Cardim – Antonio Feros (eds.), *The Iberian World, 1450–1820*, London 2020, p. 312.

¹³ José Manuel SANTOS PÉREZ, “La conquista y colonización de Maranhão-Grão Pará, el gran proyecto de la Monarquía Hispánica para la Amazonia brasileña (1580–1640)”, *Revista de Estudios Brasileños* 6/11, 2009, p. 34.



Figure 1. Approximate situation in Portuguese America in 1581.¹⁴

nowadays the Amazon states of Brazil: Amazonas, Amapá, Pará, and Tocantins, as well as Maranhão, Ceará, and Piauí.¹⁵

As mentioned above, in early 17th century several foreign powers started to show interest in this territory: mostly the French but also the English, Dutch, Italians, and the Irish, who established settlements near the mouth of the Amazon River and in the territory of Maranhão. It was the French, however, who formed the most formidable competition to Spanish colonial aims. They managed to create so-called Equinoctial France, the most dangerous French attempt to colonise Portuguese America. It centred around a fort on the island of São Luis, at the mouth of Maranhão River¹⁶ (as seen in map 2, which depicts the situation in 1613).

This French colonising attempt was led by Daniel de la Touche, a Protestant nobleman who was after initial successes appointed by the French king Henry IV appointed ‘lieutenant general of all the lands between the Amazon and the Orinoco’.

¹⁴ All maps have been taken from: Geacron [accessed on 20 February 2025], accessible at <https://geacron.com>.

¹⁵ Alirio CARDOSO, “Amazônia e a carreira das Índias: navegação para o norte da América portuguesa na época da Monarquia Hispânica”, *Revista de Índias* 264, p. 390.

¹⁶ SANTOS PÉREZ, “La Conquista”, p. 36.



Figure 2. Approximate situation in Portuguese America in 1613.

eventually captured and taken to Portugal, where he was imprisoned in the Belém tower until 1620.

The Crown, or rather Diego de Meneses, the governor-general of *Estado do Brasil* at the time,¹⁷ became aware of the French presence in the area and started to gather information on how these territories could be conquered and secured for the Habsburg Crown:

By letter of your majesty dated 19 January 1611, you have ordered me to report on the conquest of Maranhão, to assist you in resolving on a suitable course of action [...] I have sent the captain and sergeant major Diogo de Campos Moreno to Rio Grande to find out more about the state of things [...] It seems to me since the day I arrived that this was a highly important and necessary journey. It had to be done both because of the usefulness for Your Majesty's treasury when that area is colonised, and because it would be the last bastion to prevent the attacks of corsairs of this coast and thwart their interests which they further by continuing to come to that coast every year [...]. After making the aforementioned conquest, the lands should be divided in captaincies; the coast is extensive, so it would benefit their development and

¹⁷ Diego de Meneses was governor-general of the *Estado do Brasil* between 1608 and 1612.

maintenance, and the captaincies could help each other and defend against enemies [...]. And regarding how journey and the conquest should be made, it always seemed to me that it should not be done at great costs or with armies of people, because the people who are to be conquered cannot be subdued by force but by inventiveness and skill. The less people come there, the more the locals will trust what we tell them, and they will be easily subjected because those people defend themselves not by force but by fleeing [...].¹⁸

The conquest of the territory was planned during the administration of Diego de Meneses (1608–1612) and concluded by Gaspar de Sousa (1612–1617), both governors of the *Estado do Brasil*. Expeditions were organised by the Portuguese authorities in Pernambuco in an attempt to conquer the region held by the French. The first two expeditions, led by Pero Coelho de Sousa¹⁹ and the Pernambucan Captain Alexandre de Moura,²⁰ have failed.²¹ Eventually, however, the French fort was

¹⁸ *Per carta de V. M. de 19 de janro de 611 me manda o informe e de meu parecer sobre a conquista do maranhão pera se poder resolver no q conuem a mesma conquista [...] mandei ao Capitão e sargto mor diogo de Campos ao Rio grande a saber o estado em q de presente estuão as cousas [...] me parece e pareço sempre do dia q aqui cheguei, q era a tornada importantissima e de necessidade deuia faser sse tanto pella utillidade q a faz(end)a de V.M. recebe e recebera quando aquella parte se pouoasse, quanto por ser a derradeira pedra de euitar os Cossarios desta Costa q só oie tem aquella acolheita e pollos intereses q dali leuão continuação todos os annos em grande numero a uir áquella costa [...] de se auer de repartir as terras fasendo sse a dita conquista forçado he q seia porq como a costa he tão estendida, para o sustento e augmento do mesmo sitio, em capitánias, e lugares q se possão socorrer hus aos outros e com isso se ficão conservando sem os inimigos lhe poder faser noio nem ter lugar onde parem [...] he a forma em q se deue faser a iornada e conquista a qual me pareço sempre, se não deuia faser com grandes custos nem exercitos de gente porque como a gente q se uai conquistar se não pôde sugeitar per força senão per invenção, e manha, quanto menos poder uir o gentío em nós, e nos q'o uão conquistar, tanto mais se fiarão do q lhe disseremos, e assi se redusirão facillissimamente por que não ha gente q se deffende per força, senão por fugir [...].* Rodolfo GARCIA, “Correspondência do Governador D. Diogo de Meneses (1608–1612)”, *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* LVII, pp. 76–80. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

¹⁹ Pero Coelho de Sousa was made captain-Major (*capitão-mor*) and played an important role in the conquest of the captaincy of Ceará. *Pero Coelho de Sousa* [on-line], BRASILHIS Database, [consulted on 20 February 2025], accessible at: <https://brasilhis.usal.es/es/personaje/pero-coelho-de-souza-souza>.

²⁰ Alexandre de Moura, a captain and head of the captaincy of Pernambuco, participated in a commission of experts created by Philip III to deal with issues concerning Maranhão. He also cooperated with the fleet sent from Olinda to take the fort of São Luis do Maranhão from the French. In the end, he was appointed the captain of Maranhão. *Alexandre de Moura* [on-line], BRASILHIS Database, [consulted on 20 February 2025], accessible at: <https://brasilhis.usal.es/es/personaje/alexandre-de-moura>.

²¹ Guida MARQUES, “En los confines del imperio hispano-portugués. La conquista del Marañón y del Gran Pará durante la unión ibérica”, in: Carlos Martínez Shaw – José Antonio Martínez Torres (eds.), *España y Portugal en el mundo (1581–1668)*, Madrid 2014, p. 252. The first expeditions are described in sources kept at Archivo General de Indias (en adelante solo AGI), Patronato, 272, Ramo 2, fols. 1–39.

conquered in 1614–1615 thanks to several military expeditions led by Alexandre de Moura, Diogo de Campos Moreno,²² and Jerónimo de Albuquerque.²³

In early 1615, the governor general sent reinforcements in the form of a fleet of seven ships and about 600 soldiers that left Olinda and arrived in São Luís in November, captained by Alexandre de Moura. The governor-general of the *Estado do Brasil*, Gaspar de Sousa,²⁴ had asked for and received a permission to temporarily move the main city from Salvador de Bahia to Pernambuco so as to be in a better position to coordinate the conquest from a location closer to Maranhão,²⁵ although Philip III had actually expected de Sousa to travel to Maranhão to direct the military actions in person, as he told him on several occasions²⁶.

Eventually, a peace agreement that included a surrender of Fort of São Luís to the Portuguese was signed on 2 November 1615.²⁷ Daniel de la Touche, the Protestant nobleman who had founded the fort, had surrendered and was taken to Portugal, where he was imprisoned in the Belém tower until 1620.

Some Creole families were crucial in carrying out this conquest of Maranhão, mainly families from the captaincy of Pernambuco who were able to gain access to the highest positions.²⁸ But the indigenous people were also crucial: the Portuguese knew that they would not be able to expel the French without native warriors from the northern Brazilian captaincies who had the necessary knowledge of the terrain. The army that left Pernambuco in October 1615 numbered a total of 900 men, whereby most of them were indigenous warriors.²⁹ Even in more general terms, the cooperation of the indigenous peoples was vital. In this context, it is important to note that in Portuguese America, the indigenous peoples and their contribution was

²² Diogo de Campos Moreno held the post of sergeant-major (*sargento-mor*) of the *Estado do Brasil* during the government of Diogo Botelho. Philip III reappointed him to the same post in 1613, when he was sent to help with the conquest of Maranhão. Alongside Alexandre de Moura, he took part in the campaigns of 1614–1615 whose goal was to take the fort of São Luís from the French. He is believed to be the author of *Livro da Razão do Estado do Brasil* (1612), *Diogo de Campos Moreno* [on-line], BRASILHIS Database, [accessed 20 February 2025], accessible at: <https://brasilhis.usal.es/es/personaje/diogo-de-campos-moreno>.

²³ Jerónimo de Albuquerque held the post of captain of the captaincy of Rio Grande in 1603–1610. During the campaign to conquer the Maranhão, in 1614–1616, he was reappointed to the same position. *Jerónimo de Albuquerque* [on-line], BRASILHIS Database, [consulted on 20 February 2025], accessible at: <https://brasilhis.usal.es/es/personaje/jeronimo-de-albuquerque-maranhao-o-moco-o-sardo>.

²⁴ Gaspar de Sousa was governor-general of the *Estado do Brasil* in 1612–1616. In 1613–1615, he made the necessary arrangements for the operation to conquer the fort of São Luís de Maranhão and the rest of the region. He also received a permission from Philip III to administer revenues from brazilwood and thus pay for part of the expedition. *Gaspar de Sousa* [on-line], BRASILHIS Database, [accessed 20 February 2025], accessible at: <https://brasilhis.usal.es/es/personaje/gaspar-de-sousa>.

²⁵ CARDOSO, *Maranhão na Monarquia*, p. 143.

²⁶ These requests are documented in a collection of recapitulated letters between Gaspar de Sousa and Philip III, where the king urges de Sousa to take personal command of the conquest. João Paulo SALVADO – Susana MÜNCH MIRANDA, *Cartas para Álvaro de Sousa e Gaspar de Sousa (1540–1627)*, Lisboa 2001.

²⁷ CARDOSO, *Maranhão na Monarquia*, p. 134.

²⁸ SANTOS PÉREZ, “La Conquista”, p. 43.

²⁹ CARDOSO, *Maranhão na Monarquia*, p. 158.

formally recognised since the 1550s. The Portuguese, like the Castilians, formally treated the indigenous peoples of America as ‘foreigners’; if, however, they abandoned their cultural forms and accepted Christian conversion, they could legally become ‘vassals’, that is liege subjects of the king.³⁰

Maranhão was important due to several factors. First of all, it was part of the defences of the northern coast of the *Estado do Brasil* and, secondly, the Habsburg monarchs were worried that the Dutch could establish their foothold in this territory, of which little was previously known.³¹ Immediately after the conquest, a colonisation plan was therefore implemented through a series of measures aimed at an effective occupation of the territory.³² These measures included official advertising aimed at repopulating the region (colonisation by families), the building of sugar mills, a military plan, a religious action to convert indigenous people, and an administrative reform of the region.³³ Aware of the possible return of enemies and of the Crown’s conviction that the Amazon could be the gateway to Potosí, an expedition was sent to complete an effective conquest of the territory and in 1616, this small army managed to reach the mouth of the Pará and Amazon rivers, which resulted in the founding of the city of Belem do Pará.

As can be seen in Map 3, forces of the Spanish Crown have by 1618 managed to occupy the entire northern coast of the Portuguese American territory.

But the most interesting notion that emerged from the Iberian Peninsula in 1618 had to do with creating a government of Maranhão that would be separate from the government of the *Estado do Brasil*, naturally after the territory was under control. On 1 February 1618, Luis de Sousa³⁴ was still in Pernambuco organising the conquest as ordered by the king:

[...] and that was the main reason why I ordered Don Luis de Sousa to reside for some time in Pernambuco, so that from there he could send the necessary supplies and provisions to the captains and soldiers who assist in those conquests [...].³⁵

At the same time, Philip III created a sort of consultative council in Lisbon, consisting of Gaspar de Sousa, Diego de Meneses, and Alexandre de Moura. They were asked to see whether it was necessary to appoint a separate governor for the *Estado do Brasil*:

³⁰ Pedro CARDIM, “Os povos indígenas, a dominação colonial e as instancias de justiça na América portuguesa e espanhola”, in: Ângela Domingues – Maria Leônia Chaves de Resende – Pedro Cardim (orgs.), *Os indígenas e as justiças no mundo ibero-americano (Sécs. XVI–XIX)*, Lisboa 2019, p. 40.

³¹ CARDOSO, *Maranhão na Monarquia*, p. 141.

³² MARQUES, “En los confines”, p. 255.

³³ SANTOS PÉREZ, “La Conquista”, p. 43.

³⁴ Luis de Sousa was governor-general of the *Estado do Brasil* between 1617 and 1621.

³⁵ [...] *E essa foi a principal rezao por que ordenei a Dom Luis de Sousa fosse residir algum tempo em Pernambuco, para que dalli pudesse mandar os socorros e provisoes necessarias aos capitais e soldados que assistem naquelas conquistas [...]*. Archivo General de Simancas (en adelante solo AGS), Secretarías Provinciales, 1516, 11v–12v. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.



Figure 3. Approximate situation in Portuguese America in 1618.

[...] in the city of Lisbon, there are some people who can give good advice on this, such as Gaspar de Sousa, Don Diego de Menezes, and Alexandre de Moura [...] if it is convenient to appoint a separate governor in Maranhão so that with his assistance the conquest of those provinces may be better pursued [...] and in case it seems convenient to appoint a separate governor, what jurisdiction he should have, and what the costs would be, and what other necessary expenses it would mean for the government, seeing that in the present state these expenses cannot be covered by income [...].³⁶

Traditionally, that is, in historiography based on the work of Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, the author of *Historia Geral do Brasil* (1854–1857), it has been

³⁶ [...] em essa cidade de Lisboa estam algumas pessoas que poderao dar boa informação disso, como sao Gaspar de Sousa, dom Diº de Menezes e Alexandre de Moura [...]. Se convira por se logo governador separado no maranhao ha pa q com sua asistencia se prosigua melhor a conquistas daquelas provincias [...] e em caso que pareça conveniente por se logo ali Governador separado, que districto ha de ter, e donde se podem tirar a despesa que se ha de fazer com ele, e os mais gastos necessarios para aquelle governo, visto que no estado presente nao pode haver ali o rendimento necessario para estas despesas [...]. AGS, Secretarías Provinciales, Libro 1516, fls. 11v–12v. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

believed that the separation of Maranhão from the *Estado do Brasil* was decided later, because Varnhagen claimed that it ‘was only effectively decreed by royal charter on June 1621’.³⁷ Documentation found in the Archivo General of Simancas nevertheless tells us that the decision to create a separate government of Maranhão was taken on 20 June 1618:

[...] I consider it good that the government of Maranhão should be separate from that of Brazil, and the governor there ought to be a person who has experience of the people and of those lands; I encourage you to look to the opinion of Gaspar de Sousa [...]. And considering how important it is for the service of the said lands, members of religious orders will be sent to those parts so that they may deal with the increase of our Holy Faith and the preservation of the people there, and we will celebrate holy masses [...].³⁸

As noted above, the decision to separate the administration of this region was driven by the aforementioned threat of foreign invasions and local instability. But it also had geographical reasons, because the winds and sea currents made sailing between Maranhão and the *Estado do Brasil* difficult,³⁹ while the new state’s connection with Lisbon was easier.

The native peoples played a key role in the process of conquest and colonisation of Maranhão. It was thanks to the indigenous people, especially the Tupinambá, that the Castilian and Portuguese colonisers were able to explore Portuguese America. They adopted their language, customs, and their expansion routes. When conquering the territory, they followed in the footsteps of a Tupinambá group, which facilitated the conquest and subsequent religious conversion of the natives.⁴⁰ This region, including its main population centres, São Luis and Belém, long remained characterised by small settlements dependent on indigenous labour, with a strong presence of missionaries, and the Tupi language was the main means of communication.⁴¹

2. The first governors of Maranhão

The new *Estado do Maranhão* had the same powers as the *Estado do Brasil*. In practice, the exercise of power continued to be based on pacts and negotiations aimed at accommodating the interests of both the Crown and the power centres in

³⁷ Francisco VARNHAGEN, *História Geral do Brasil*, São Paulo 1981, p. 456.

³⁸ [...] e tei por bem q o governo do Maranhão se separe do Brasil, e porque convem q o governador q ali ha de haver seja pessoa que tenha experiencia de gentio e daquelas terras, vos encomendo q vejais o parecer de Gaspar de Sousa [...]. E considerado quam importante he ao servicio de ditas e meu envianrense desse santos religiosos aquelas partis para tratarem do agmento de nossa sancta fee, e da conservação do gentio de las, e celebraremos officios divinos [...]. AGS, Secretarias Provinciales, Libro 1516, fls. 78–78v. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

³⁹ CARDOSO, “Amazônia”, p. 392.

⁴⁰ Pablo IBÁÑEZ BONILLO, “Procesos de guerra justa en la amazonía portuguesa (siglo XVII). La influencia indígena en la construcción de las fronteras coloniales”, in: Domingues – Chaves de Resende – Cardim (orgs.), *Os indígenas*, p. 257.

⁴¹ Stuart SCHWARTZ, “Patterns of conquest and settlement of the Iberian Americas”, in: Bouza – Cardim – Feros (eds.), *The Iberian World*, p. 335.

the territory, including royal officials and local authorities.⁴² The capital of Maranhão was located in São Luis, which is also where the first governor appointed for the newly created territory, Diego de Cárcamo,⁴³ a man of Spanish origin, was expected to arrive. In fact, however, he never assumed his post.

Diego de Cárcamo had been an official of António, the Prior of Crato, who was a rival of Philip II in his fight for the Portuguese throne. Cárcamo played a significant role in the negotiations that led to the instalment of the Castilian monarch to the throne in August 1580.⁴⁴ As a native of Córdoba, son of Pedro de Tovar and married to Antonia de Vilhena, he also had important links with the Portuguese bureaucracy.⁴⁵

In February 1620, he was appointed to the post of governor of Maranhão. From this title, he made a series of requests⁴⁶ including that slaves from Angola be sent to him. This shows his familiarity with local situation, since at that time the numbers of slaves imported to Portuguese America had significantly increased thanks functioning connections with Africa. The growing Brazilian economy demanded slave labour and supported slave trade. The slaves came from military operations in Africa, which produced large numbers of war captives who were subsequently sent as slaves to Brazil. It is estimated that in 1580–1640, their number rose to about 250,000.⁴⁷

Diego de Cárcamo also made petitions for his family, requesting an *encomienda* of the Order of Avis for himself, his children and grandchildren:

[...] he intends to grant him the right to testament the encomienda de las Galveas of the order of Avis, which your majesty has now ordered him to nominate, in his son João de Cárcamo or in one of his grandsons, and that Your Majesty orders his grandson Diego to receive the habit of the order of Avis with a pension of twenty thousand reais in the same encomienda [...].⁴⁸

In October 1620, several months after he was appointed to the post of governor, we still find Cárcamo making requests, this time asking for lands in Maranhão:

[...] He asks His Majesty to grant him the mercy of sending him a provision to take twenty leagues of land for himself [...].⁴⁹

⁴² PONCE LEIVA – PONSEN, *Administration*, p. 313.

⁴³ Diego de Cárcamo, although appointed governor of Maranhão by Philip III, eventually died in Lisbon before taking office. *Diego de Cárcamo* [on-line], BRASILHIS Database, [accessed 20 February 2025], accessible at: <https://brasilhis.usal.es/es/personaje/diogo-de-carcamo-carcome>.

⁴⁴ AGS, Estado, 425, Letters of 8, 14, and 23 August 1580.

⁴⁵ CARDOSO, *Maranhão*, p. 153.

⁴⁶ AGS, Secretarías Provinciales, 1474, fls. 84v–85v.

⁴⁷ Roquinaldo FERREIRA – Pablo Miguel SIERRA SILVA, “Portugal, Spain, and the transatlantic slave trade”, in: Bouza – Cardim – Feros, *The Iberian World*, p. 384.

⁴⁸ [...] *pretende lhe faça merce que possa testar da comenda das Galveas da orden de Avis q VMgd lhe mandou ora nomear, em seu filho dom João de Carcamo ou em hu de seus nettos, e que a seu netto dom Diogo mande VMgd lançar o habito da orden de Avis com vinte mil rs de pensão na mesma comenda [...]*. AGS, Secretarías Provinciales, 1552, fls. 213–213v. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

⁴⁹ [...] *Pede a Vmagne lhe faça merce mandar passar provisão para elle poder tomar perasy vinte legoas de terra [...]*. AGS, Secretarías Provinciales, 1473, fl. 323. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

The lands would be handed over to him as long as this step did not hurt the interests of any third party (meaning a European colonist with rights).

In the end, Diego de Cárcamo never assumed his post in the Maranhão. The reasons are not quite clear but it is well possible it was due to his advanced age and his previous connections with the prior of Crato. The importance of his involvement lies in the fact that the first person to be appointed to this post was Spanish, which shows that the Crown viewed the issue of colonising the Amazonian territory as its own agenda. In these early stages, the political and military initiative and colonisation of this region were taken away from the Portuguese, among other things because of doubts as to whether this region was within the line agreed in the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494.⁵⁰

From the 1620s onwards, one can thus follow the administrative formation of a new state in the northern regions of Brazil. Its main centres were São Luís, the capital, Belém do Pará, and the fort of Santo Antônio de Gurupá. From these points, the Portuguese and Spanish colonisers fought the indigenous peoples and competing European forces in an attempt to maintain their dominance in this territory. The conflicts were of a lasting nature and compounded by conflicts with the native population in the interior. According to a letter from the secular council of Cartagena de Indias dated 14 December 1623, the colonists continued to enslave the native population:

[...] Around the river of the Marañon and the great river of the Amazons, there lives an infinite multitude of Carib Indians who eat human flesh, wage continual wars against each other, and those who are taken captive are eaten or sold for the same purpose, and those who are rescued by the Portuguese and Castilians are given to them as their perpetual slaves. In these conquests and discoveries, there are also wars between these Indians and the Castilian and Portuguese Spaniards [...].⁵¹

Rather eloquent are requests for further native slaves, justified as follows:

[...] This city of Cartagena and its province is in great need of Indian service because of the large number of Indians who have died of labour, smallpox, and other diseases. [...].⁵²

⁵⁰ SANTOS PÉREZ, “La Conquista”, p. 42.

⁵¹ [...] *En el Rio del Marañon y en el gran Rio de las Amazonas ay infinita multitud de yndios carives que comen carne humana los quales traen continuas guerras unos contra otros y los que se cautivan se comen y venden entre si para el mismo efecto, y los que deste genero rescatan los portugueses y castellanos que dan por sus esclavos perpetuos. En estas conquistas y descubrimiento ansimismo ay guerras entre esos yndios y los spañoles castellanos y portugueses [...]*. AGI, Santa Fe, fl. 63. 14 December 1623. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

⁵² [...] *esta ciudad de Cartagena y su provincia esta muy necessitada de servicio de yndios por la grande suma de ellos que an muerto con trabajos, viruelas y otras enfermedades*. AGI, Santa Fe, fl. 63. 14 December 1623. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

Interactions between the colonial society and the native population were tense. The indigenous people of the Maranhão-Pará territory resisted enslavement with special tenacity.⁵³ Contacts between colonial intermediaries and the indigenous population took place in the frontier zones where settlements, such as hamlets (*aldeias*), villas, and sugar mills, were maintained. That is where agreements were made and goods exchanged, although the general level of violence was high. These frontier posts also served as places of illegal captivity of the indigenous people⁵⁴.

In 1624, the Crown appointed the second governor of the northeastern territory, Francisco Coelho de Carvalho, who belonged to an important family network of the Albuquerque Coelhos, who were the donatary (i.e., Crown-appointed) captains of Pernambuco, which thus belonged to them. Networks such as those created by the families of donatary captains kept expanding their influence and locals relied on them for facilitating settlement and the expansion of Crown's jurisdiction in the territory. In this process, such families, which came to form the local elite, made use of indigenous workers, who remained the source of prosperity but also to some conflicts with the Crown.⁵⁵

The first member of this family to hold an important post in this territory was Feliciano Albuquerque de Carvalho, who was appointed captain of Paraíba in 1595. His son Francisco Coelho de Carvalho was appointed to the same position in 1608, but later rose even higher when he served in 1624–1636 as the first governor general of the *Estado do Maranhão*. By this time, the family's position in this region was fully consolidated, as attested by the fact that several of Francisco Coelho's descendants rose to top posts.

The years that followed the conquest of Maranhão were filled with petitions from soldiers and persons close to the Albuquerque family who participated in the campaign and asked for royal grants from the Crown.⁵⁶ Moreover, Francisco Coelho de Carvalho was authorised by royal charter to favour his own family: he granted the lordship of Cumá (in the bay of São Luis) to his brother Antonio, while the lordship of Caeté (located between São Luis and Belém do Pará) went to his son Feliciano. That, however, did not sit well with Álvaro de Sousa, son of the previous governor general Gaspar de Sousa, who had the privilege of choosing a lordship since 1622 and likewise chose the captaincy of Caeté.⁵⁷

The usual length of appointment to the post of governor was three years⁵⁸ but one can see that Francisco Coelho held the post for 12 years (1624–1636), thus far exceeding the usual length of appointment several times. Nevertheless, we can see that by 1635 there were attempts to replace him. In a letter of June 1636 with

⁵³ CARDIM, "Os povos", p. 40.

⁵⁴ IBÁÑEZ BONILLO, "Procesos", p. 250.

⁵⁵ SCHWARTZ, "Patterns", p. 331.

⁵⁶ SANTOS PÉREZ, "La conquista", p. 43.

⁵⁷ Alberto GALLO, "Aventuras y desventuras del gobierno señorial en Brasil", in: Alicia Hernández Chávez – Ruggiero Romano – Marcello Carmagnani (coords.), *Para una historia de América II. Los nudos*, Ciudad de México, 1991, pp. 230–231.

⁵⁸ Roberta STUMPF, "Os provimentos de ofícios: a questão da propriedade no Antigo Regime português", *Topoi (Rio J.)* 15/29, 2014, p. 631.

a heading ‘the appointment of persons for the governorship of Marañon’ the vice-reine of Portugal drew attention to the fact that Coelho’s time in the post had ended long ago and a new governor should be appointed:

Princess Margaret notes in her letter of 13 October 1635 that His Majesty had ordered in another letter of the 6th of last month that since the Governor of the Marañon has served in that position for nine years, and the time for which he was appointed has ended six years ago, he should immediately be proposed to His Majesty as a subject [...].⁵⁹

Francisco Coelho de Carvalho was succeeded by Jácome Raimundo de Noronha, who had served as a provider major (*provedor-mor da Fazenda*; in effect a minister of finance) of Maranhão from 1620, as governor of the captaincy of Pará from 1630, and in 1636–1638 as a self-proclaimed governor of Maranhão. He had proclaimed himself acting governor with the support of the chambers of São Luis and Belém after the death of Francisco Coelho in 1636.⁶⁰ In fact, Jácome Raimundo de Noronha engaged in a struggle with Francisco Coelho de Carvalho already in 1634, when he wrote to the Court accusing him of excesses including fraud involving the Majesty’s treasury, but also more generally of ‘insults, aggravations, and threats’.⁶¹

The last governor during this period was Bento Maciel Parente, who served as a war captain-at-sea (*capitão de mar e guerra*) in the campaign for the conquest of Maranhão in 1615–1616, captain major (*capitão-mor*) of the captaincy of Pará in 1621–1637, and finally as the governor of Maranhão from 1638 until his death in 1642. When the Dutch took over the territory of Maranhão, Bento was banished first to Pernambuco and later to the fort of Rio Grande, where he died in 1642.⁶² Portuguese defeat at this occasion was not due lack of troops or weapons. The blame falls squarely on the shoulders of Maciel Parente, who neglected the defence of the Fort of São Felipe, because he was more concerned with protecting his sugar mills and factories in the captaincy of Cabo do Norte.⁶³

3. Conclusion

The conquest and colonisation of the territories in the north of what is now known as Brazil, which formed the *Estado do Maranhão* was highly valuable, mainly because it boosted the defensive potential of Portuguese America with respect to protecting the territories of Spanish America against an attack by foreign powers from the north. Moreover, the colonisation of this new territory led to the creation of a new administration, and thus also new administrative positions and grants to

⁵⁹ *La señora Princesa Margaritta refiere en una carta suya de 13 de outubro de 635, que Vmd lo mando por otra de 6 del passado, que por quanto el Gov^r del Marañon ha nueve años que sirve aquel cargo, y seis que tiene acavado el tiempo por que fue proveydo, y que le proponga luego a Vmd sugettos [...]*. AGS, 1478, fls. 353–353v. Translated by Sergio Moreta Pedraz.

⁶⁰ SANTOS PÉREZ, “La conquista”, p. 43.

⁶¹ AGS, Secretarías Provinciales, 1478, fls. 109r–110r.

⁶² CARDOSO, “Maranhão”, p. 267.

⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 267.

important people who acted as the agents of administration in this region, including, as we have seen, the post of governor.

In terms of jurisdiction, the conquest and colonisation of the new territory were decided by the Spanish Crown but, although planned in Madrid and Lisbon, they were implemented by officials sent to the area: hence the importance of the governors, first of the *Estado do Brasil* and then of the *Estado do Maranhão*. Above all, though, the process was carried out by inhabitants of the territory themselves, especially the indigenous population, which gave the ‘new’ *Estado do Maranhão* its distinctive identity.

By sending a governor separate from the governor of the *Estado do Brasil*, the Crown wanted to spread its power by creating a new level of administration that would make the territory directly dependent on Madrid, and not on Bahia. This was done by creating an increasingly solid hierarchical bureaucracy with the figure of the governor of the *Estado do Maranhão* at its head.

In this way, the Crown created two separate political units, the *Estado do Maranhão*, to the north and the *Estado do Brasil*, to the south. This administrative division was then preserved in Brazil well into the eighteenth century (1770).⁶⁴

(Written in English by the author)

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⁶⁴ Rafael CHAMBOULEYRON, “Conquista y colonización de la Amazonia portuguesa (siglo XVII)”, in: José Manuel Santos Pérez – Pere Petit, *La amazonia brasileña en perspectiva histórica*, Salamanca 2006, p. 12

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MAKING MAYA MYTHS: FRAGMENTS OF NEW WORLD CIVILISATIONS AND THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL TURN¹

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Abstract

The nineteenth century interest in the exotic spread along new scientific fields, as an *epistemological turn*, a radical change in people's interpretation of the spatiotemporal order of things. This article outlines some changes in perceptions of ancient writings preserved in archives in Europe and America, the spoken languages and the ruined monuments buried under the jungle in Mexico and Central America, under the early interpretations focused on *mythology*.

Keywords: anthropology; epistemological turn; mythology; the Maya; Mexico; Guatemala.

I. Introduction

In the nineteenth century, one can observe a resurgence of interest in the exotic. It spread far and wide, taking a variety of forms including collecting, storing, and different ways of presenting the exotic. In numerous European and American cities, it went hand in hand with the foundation of new museums, libraries, and archives, and the creation of encyclopaedic publications. All these functioned rather as depots of random objects and ideas, sometimes without clear or systematic criteria for grouping and displaying the objects. This activity took place against a complex background. What was collected were not only exotic items from the nations' own past but also from their internal peripheries and colonised territories abroad. Interest in such items naturally resulted in the formation of various societies and networks of collectors, antiquarians, artists, bibliophiles, printers, and editors, who were passionate about studying and trading old, exotic, or 'primitive' objects and stories. Some were also engaged in the production of copies, facsimiles, replicas, or even – once trafficking became temptingly profitable – forgeries.

Nineteenth-century fascination with the exotic was associated with new archival techniques and museography, but even more strongly with the formation and

¹ I have presented a shorter version of this paper at the international symposium *Mayan Civilization and Japanese Myth: Land's Memory Woven by the Modern World's Knowledge* that took place in the Hakushika Memorial Sake Museum, Kobe, Japan, on 9 November 2019. I would like to thank Dra. Sachie Kiyokawa from project 'Comprehensive reconsideration of "myth" and its social significance in the modern world' as well as the Research Center for Promoting Intercultural Studies (Promis), which co-sponsored the workshop.

expansion of scientific fields related to the study of folklore, mythology, epigraphy, philology, archaeology, and eventually with the rise of anthropology in its modern form as a scientific discipline. These emerging disciplines developed at universities but also in libraries, laboratories, private studies, and cabinets of curiosities. In such places, 'exotic' objects were stored, examined, and sometimes transformed and arranged for public viewing. At the same time, there arose movements and specialisations known as, for example, Oriental or American studies.² In some ways, the entire phenomenon was a new taste of the world.³

This phenomenon, this shift in tastes and preferences, could be viewed as an *epistemological turn*, a radical change of the basis underlying people's interpretation of the spatiotemporal order of things, persons, and places on a global scale. To help us understand this shift, this article outlines some specific changes in nineteenth-century knowledge and perceptions of Central American landscapes, peoples, craftwork, and images. By the mid-nineteenth century, renewed attention was paid to objects that had been taken from different locations in Central America. Some were then stored in European libraries and cabinets decades or even centuries earlier, but now they were interpreted in novel ways, giving rise to new organisational schemes for thinking about them and displaying them. Suddenly, Central America came to be seen as the birthplace of an exceptional ancient civilisation and exploration of that civilisation became an exciting and popular enterprise.

Ancient cities with their sculptures and decorated buildings were gradually brought to light in the tropical forests by adventurers, travellers, and amateur archaeologists who came there in search of the only pre-Colombian civilisation in America that was known to have developed a complex writing system. The specific aesthetics demonstrated in the carved stones, columns, sculptures, walls, and buildings which were slowly emerging from beneath tangled foliage and fallen rocks evoked a sense of shared excitement. Various evidence of this shared aesthetic sense was now discovered throughout the jungle between Honduras and Yucatan but also in various drawings or inscriptions that had been kept in the collections of libraries and archives in Europe and America. Subsequently, various previously 'lost', i.e., unidentified and half-forgotten, and fragmentary evidence of the centuries-long process of cultural development in Central America were found scattered all over the world. The findings were of a wide variety of types, from ancient writings (both originals and copies) preserved in libraries in Rome, Saxony, Madrid, Paris, Guatemala, Merida, and Mexico City, all the way to the ruined monuments buried under the tropical forest in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras. Even the living languages, rituals, and beliefs the peoples of Central America were somehow

² A well-known explorer of the recently discovered Central American civilisation, Jean-Frédéric Waldeck, considered himself to be the first 'Americanist', see Michael D. COE, *Breaking the Maya Code*, New Yorks 2012, p. 86. The first international congress of Americanists took place in Nancy (France) on 18 July 1875; it was organised by the *Société Américaine* in France. The *Société's* first gathering in the Americas was the XI International Congress of Americanists, held in Mexico City in 1895.

³ See, for example, Joseph Friedrich zu RACKNITZ, *A Rare Treatise on Interior Decoration and Architecture: Joseph Friedrich zu Racknitz's Presentation and History of the Taste of the Leading Nations by Joseph Friedrich zu Racknitz*, Los Angeles 2020.

related to the aforementioned finds in the jungles and to the old texts. Some of those texts received special attention because they appeared to contain partial translations of unknown writing systems into Latin characters, thereby promising to be the ‘Rosetta stones’ of the newly discovered civilisation.

Around this time, one can also see the emergence of the study of mythology as an academic subject. In some of the early interpretations of old writings and in the new reports from travellers, we can see that some of their authors focused specifically on uncovering the religion, ritual life, gods, and the ‘soul’ of the people who built the cities and wrote the documents. Mythology became one of the first intellectual objects in the exploration of this freshly discovered non-Western American civilisation. The question I want to answer in the following is why mythology/religion was considered a relevant epistemological framework during these early steps towards categorisation of civilisations within the narrative of world history.

The very first steps took place around 1810, when Napoleon’s invasion of Spain threw that country’s American colonies into a political limbo. At this point, we can see two large processes at work. First of all, explorers and scholars were collecting and analysing fragments from Central America’s ancient civilisation, then piecing them together to learn more about these peoples and their lives. At this point, Central America itself was fragmented, piecing itself together, and trying to figure out what it wanted to be. Both efforts continued into the twentieth century. In the end, the world’s conception of that ancient civilisation was – just like the modern nations that now occupied the same territory – a human construct whose leading figures had engaged in some degree of mythmaking along the way.

II. Images and words from the tropical forest

Although some of the objects that attracted such interest during the nineteenth century had been seen before by travellers and curious people, few images and descriptions were in circulation among the American and European public. As an example, let us consider the process by which the wider public in America and Europe learned about the lost ancient city near the present-day Palenque, in the province of Chiapas. The lost city (hereinafter referred to simply as ‘Palenque’)⁴ was first reported and explored in 1784 by Joseph (José) Antonio Calderón, who was soon,

⁴ The name of the site remained undefined along the nineteenth century. Reports tended to refer to a ‘site near Palenque’, see Antonio del RÍO, *Description of the Ruins of an Ancient City, Discovered near Palenque, in the Kingdom of Guatemala in Spanish America* [on-line], London 1922 [1787], Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021]. Accessible from: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044095049060&view=image&seq=1>; but for instance, the naturalist Constantine Samuel Rafinesque-Schmaltz in 1832 referred to it by the name ‘Otulum’, see George E. STUART, “The Beginning of the Maya Hieroglyphic Study: Contributions of Constantine S. Rafinesque and James H McCulloch, Jr.”, *Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing* 29, 1989, p. 21; COE, *Breaking*, p. 93. Locally, the site was – like others in the area – known simply as the ‘houses of stone’ (‘casas de Piedra’) (Guillaume DUPAIX – José Luciano CASTANEDA, *Antiquités mexicaines. Relation des trois Expéditions du Capitaine Dupaix, ordonnées en 1805, 1806, et 1807, pour la Recherche des Antiquités du Pays, notamment celles de Mita et de Palenque...*, Paris 1834, p. V; Joseph Antonio CALDERÓN, “Informe (1784)”, in Ricardo CASTAÑEDA PAGANINI (ed.), *Las Ruinas de Palenque*, Guatemala 1946, pp. 22–29.

in 1786, followed by Antonio del Río.⁵ Calderón's report included drawings of some of Palenque's abandoned buildings, while Antonio del Río's 1786 expedition, which included the artist Ricardo Almendáriz, produced several drawings of images that had been carved into walls. Additional drawings and paintings were produced by the architect Antonio Bernasconi in 1785 and in 1807 by Guillaume Joseph Dupaix and his artist José Luciano Castañeda. A couple of decades later, in 1831–1833,⁶ Jean-Frédéric Waldeck made lithographic images of the same site.⁷ Frederick Catherswood, during an 1839 expedition where he accompanied John Stephens, drew dozens of pictures of not only Palenque architecture but also many other sites from Honduras to Yucatan. Several images from their two trips through Central America and Yucatan were published in two popular books called *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan* (1841), and *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan* (1843). Teobert Maler took the first photographs of the monuments from 1877 until his death in 1917 in Yucatan. He sometimes collaborated with Alfred Maudslay, a British archaeologist who published photographs and drawings which the two had produced not only in Chichen Itza (in the 1880s), but also at other sites that had been recently explored for the first time, such as Copán in Honduras and Quirigua in Guatemala.

Even as the public's excited attention was drawn to such illustrations of rediscovered ancient Central American cities, scholars were rediscovering or re-examining old documents from that region. Codices were found in storage in Dresden, Paris, and Madrid, while other documents had been preserved locally, in libraries from Mexico to Guatemala. In the case of some of the codices, it turned out that their pedigree was truly impressive. For example, Coe's intuition is that the Dresden Codex is one of the items which Cortés had collected in 1519 when visiting the Cozumel Island and then sent to Spain as part of the royal fifth, that is, as a sort of tax, proved to be correct.⁸ In 1739, the Dresden Codex was acquired from a private collection in Vienna by Johann Christian Goetze, director of the Royal Library of the court of Saxony. Images of this codex had inspired Baron von Racknitz to publish a painting entitled 'Mexican Taste' as part of his remarkable *Presentation and History of the Taste of the Leading Nations* (1796–1799).⁹ Alexander von Humboldt reproduced five pages in his *Vues des Cordillères* in 1810.¹⁰ A few decades later, in 1829–1830, Edward King, Viscount of Kingsborough, published in *The Antiquities of Mexico* watercolours which Agostino Aglio made of the entire Dresden Codex

⁵ CASTAÑEDA PAGANINI (ed.), *Las Ruinas de Palenque*; RÍO, *Description of the Ruins*.

⁶ Waldeck also reworked Almendáriz's drawings for publication, see COE, *Breaking*, p. 92.

⁷ For a deeper analysis, see Omar LÓPEZ, *Nociones sobre los primeros pobladores del sureste: la representación del "indio" en el pensamiento de exploradores, eruditos y viajeros en la provincia de Chiapa, (1784–1840)*, [Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation], Ciudad de México 2021.

⁸ COE, *Breaking*, pp. 89–90.

⁹ RACKNITZ, *A Rare Treatise*, 2020. A view of the plate called 'Mexican Taste' is available in Olivia Horsfall TURNER, "World views – revisiting an 18th-century survey of global style", *Apollo*, the 9th of July 2020.

¹⁰ Alexander von HUMBOLDT, *Vues des cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*, [on-line], Paris, 1810, Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k61301m/fl.item.texteImage>.

and many other Mexican codices.¹¹ Then, in 1880, Förstemann published a complete chromophotographic copy of the Codex with comments and suggestions about the numbers and calendric signs.¹²

Meanwhile, the French orientalist León de Rosny had found another codex in the National Library in Paris in 1859 and published a facsimile of it (the ‘Paris Codex’) in 1864.¹³ A different find, which came to be known as the Madrid Codex, is a document composed of two parts or fragments. It is also known as the *Troano* or *Trocortesiano* after Juan de Tro y Ortolano, a descendant of Cortés. De Tro owned one of the fragments, which he showed in 1866 to Abbot Charles Etienne Brasseur de Bourbourg, a key personage in the early efforts to recover and study old documents. Afterwards, another fragment, known as the Cortesiano, was found in Madrid and published by Brasseur in 1869.¹⁴

Other documents, too, had survived both the conquistadors’ plundering and the ravages of time, and they were now being rediscovered. One example was the annals of Yucatan, which Coe called ‘the quasi-historical and semi-prophetical Books of Chilam Balam’.¹⁵ Written by unknown authors in the native Maya idiom of Yucatan in Latin characters, these texts were discovered and published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Two additional texts which resurfaced at this time turned out to be particularly important to mythologists – and thus to this article. The first was the *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán*, written by Diego de Landa, a sixteenth-century bishop of Yucatan. The second, known as *Popol Vuh*, was written early in the eighteenth century by unidentified Indian writers under the supervision of Fray Francisco Ximénez, a priest of Chichicastenango, Guatemala; this treatise was allegedly based on a native text in K’iche’ (which has not been identified). The text of *Popol Vuh* was in both Spanish and in a local language known as K’iche’ or Quiche, which the authors transliterated in Latin characters.

Both Diego de Landa and Father Francisco Ximénez had been involved, with assistance of literate Indians, in evangelising areas where the native elites collaborated with Spanish priests and missionaries. As the title of his *Relación* suggests, de Landa was active in Yucatan, whose inhabitants spoke a language called ‘Maya’. He wrote the *Relación* in 1566.¹⁶ The original did not survive but a fragmentary copy made around 1660 was discovered in 1861 in the Madrid Archives of the Academy of Geography by Brasseur (the same abbot to whom Juan de Tro y Ortolano had shown the first fragment of the Madrid Codex). Brasseur published the *Relación* soon afterwards, in 1864. The wide variety of different types of information in the *Relación* made it a very important source for anthropologic, epigraphic, and historical studies.

¹¹ COE, *Breaking*, pp. 90–91.

¹² COE, *Breaking*, p. 111; Paul SCHELLHAS, “Representation of Deities of the Maya Manuscripts”, *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, IV/1, Cambridge 1904.

¹³ COE, *Breaking*, p. 105.

¹⁴ COE, *Breaking*, p. 109.

¹⁵ COE, *Breaking*, p. 80.

¹⁶ Although the text was written in Spain when Landa faced trial, it was based on notes taken in a Franciscan monastery in Yucatán, where native Americans were trained to support the Spanish evangelisation efforts. See COE, *Breaking*, pp. 104–109.

It contained basic information about the old numeral system and the calendar or, to be more precise, about a combination of different time-counting systems. Perhaps most importantly, Landa's explanation of the ancient glyphs for the names of days (transliterated into Latin characters) was the starting point for decoding at least some of the glyphs that had been found in various codices and on monuments.¹⁷

The abovementioned Francisco Ximénez had been active in the highlands of Guatemala, between Quetzaltenango and Chichicastenango, where many people spoke K'ich'e (the language used in the *Popol Vuh*) or other closely related languages. As we shall soon see, the *Popol Vuh* is an extract from a corpus known as *The Art of Three Languages: Cakchikel, Quiché, and Tzutuhil* (in Spanish *Arte de las tres lenguas cakchiquel, quiche y tzutuhil*), which Ximénez and his native collaborators prepared in 1701–1703 as part of their evangelisation work. This corpus also included 'arts' (dictionaries) and texts in other local languages, mainly Tzutuhil and Kakchikel.¹⁸ All remained almost unread until they were rediscovered in 1854 in Guatemala by Karl von Scherzer.

One of the discovered documents was a translation into contemporary Spanish and K'ich'e of what was, according to Ximénez, a K'iche' text. Ximénez and some native writers allegedly produced their translation in 1701–1703. The supposed original K'iche' source was probably written around 1550 but by Ximénez's times, it had been lost, and it has not been seen since. Von Scherzer published part of Ximénez's rediscovered translation in 1857 in a collection of Mexican antiquities.¹⁹ Shortly afterwards, Brasseur read Ximénez's original, recomposed an extract from it in French, and published that extract under the title *Popol Vuh* (1861). Brasseur's subtitle reflects the growing nineteenth-century interest in mythology: *Le Livre Sacré et les Mythes de L'Antiquité Américaine*. The *Popol Vuh* had since been translated into many languages.²⁰ Similarly, various other documents prepared by Ximénez and his collaborators had been bought and sold, reviewed, translated, and eventually published in Europe and America after their discovery by von Scherzer. Both the *Relación* and the *Popol Vuh* are translated and reprinted until the present day.

The impact of such findings on the nineteenth-century world owed much to the production of facsimiles and the publication of drawings, paintings, and photographs. We have already learned that in 1829–1830, decades before the discovery and publication of the *Relación* and *Popol Vuh*, Lord Kingsborough published

¹⁷ COE, *Breaking*, pp. 104–109.

¹⁸ Rosa Helena CHINCHILLA, "Introducción", in Francisco Ximénez, *Arte de las tres lenguas kaqchiquel, k'iche' y tz'utujil*, sf. Mcs, Chicago 1993, pp. IX–XXXII.

¹⁹ Karl von SCHERZER, *Las Historias del origen de los Indios de Guatemala, Traducida de la lengua Quiché al castellano para más comodidad de los ministros del S. Evangelio. Por el R. P. F. Francisco Ximenes*, Vienna 1857.

²⁰ Daniel G. BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods in the Kiche Myths, Central America", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 19, pp. 613–647, [on-line], Philadelphia, 1881. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: <https://archive.org/details/jstor-982803> 1881: 614; COE, *Breaking*, p. 103. For a fresh study on the issue, see Fumiko SUKIKARA, *Formación y transformación en la narrativa del Popol Vuh: las publicaciones y las prácticas de traducción al japonés, 1928–1971* [Unpublished Master Thesis], Ciudad de México 2019.

watercolour copies of the Dresden Codex and other similar texts. Kingsborough (an ‘eccentric Irishman’, according to Coe) invested all his savings into the publication of *The Antiquities of Mexico*, a massive folio series of old documents copied in watercolour by Agostino Aglio. Copies of the Dresden Codex were among the documents in the first seven folios of *Antiquities*.²¹

At that time, explorers and intellectuals were also becoming interested in the lives and languages of the current native inhabitants of Mesoamerica. Guillaume Dupaix was the first to suggest that the languages spoken by people in Yucatan and those in the highlands of Guatemala were related, but his notions were based on Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro’s studies of languages of the world. In Hervás y Panduro’s 1784 study, written in Rome, Huastec, Maya, and several others spoken in the dioceses of Chiapas and Guatemala are presented as separate languages named according to their geographical location.²² It is Hervás y Panduro’s later Spanish edition (1800) that gives the most information about the Maya language. He says that Chontal is spoken from Tabasco to Nicaragua along with several other languages, including Nahuatl. He also suggests that Chontal and other variants are probably connected to the Maya or “Yucatanana” language. This link was suggested to him by a Cakchi Indian from Guatemala who visited him in Rome.²³ Nevertheless, Hervás y Panduro also classifies some variants, such as Lacandon and Mame, as probably being part of Chiapanec, the ‘matrix idiom’.²⁴ This intuition about a link between those groups of languages occurred to Dupaix, Waldek, and others as well but by that time, Orozco y Berra had already established kinship between those languages, including Huastec (spoken in northern Veracruz), and decided to call them the Maya-Quiché (K’iche’) family.

All these scholars based their views not only on reports written by authorities of the Catholic Church and the Mexican Government but also on old documents

²¹ COE, *Breaking*, p. 91.

²² Lorenzo HERVÁS Y PANDURO, *Catálogo delle lingue conosciute e notizia della loro affinita e diversita. Opera del signor abbate Don Lorenzo Hervas*, [on-line], Roma, 1784, pp. 57–76. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: <http://bdh-rd.bne.es/viewer.vm?id=0000046751&page=1>; Lorenzo HERVÁS Y PANDURO, *Catálogo de las lenguas de las naciones conocidas, y numeración, división, y clases de éstas según la diversidad de sus idiomas y dialectos* [on-line], Madrid, 1800, pp. 289–290. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/catalogo-de-las-lenguas-de-las-naciones-conocidas-y-numeracion-division-y-clases-de-estas-segun-la-diversidad-de-sus-idiomas-y-dialectos-volumen-1-lengua-y-naciones-americanas--0/html/01d25bf6-82b2-11df-acc7-002185ce6064_9.htm.

²³ “Debido el descubrimiento de la afinidad de estas lenguas a la noticia que he logrado de la lengua cakchi, por medio de un indio cakchi llamado Domingo Tot Baraona, criado del R. P. Miguel Zaragoza, que con el empleo de procurador de su provincia del Orden de Predicadores de Guatemala, vino los años pasados a esta ciudad de Roma. El dicho Tot, que en edad de diez y seis años mostraba el despejo y talento que no son comunes y se alabarían mucho en jóvenes europeos de la misma edad, sabía perfectamente su lengua natural y la española, y no poco de la pocomana: por lo que pude cotejar estas lenguas con otras americanas, y hallé que en las palabras numerales, en otras muchas, y en no poco del artificio gramatical, se asemejaban a la lengua maya, que se habla en Yucatán [...]”, HERVÁS, *Catálogo de las lenguas*, pp. 300–304.

²⁴ See HERVÁS, *Catálogo de las lenguas*, p. 306. Today we know that Lacandon, Cendal, and Mame are variants of the so-called Maya, while Zoque and Chiapaneca belong to two other linguistic groups.

collected and preserved in private libraries.²⁵ At around the same time, Francisco Pimentel was taking the first steps in his effort to map the native languages of Mexico. He published his first partial results in 1862–1865. Orozco and Pimentel communicated about their progress and their work was based on an almost identical set of sources.²⁶ According to them, Maya K'ich'e language family included the aforementioned language that was spoken in distant northern Veracruz and actually closely related to languages spoken in the Yucatan peninsula, Tabasco, and Chiapas. Charencey and Berendt later noticed that this family also included several variants of languages spoken in Guatemala and Belize. Charles-Félix-Hyacinthe Gouhier, Comte de Charencey (1832–1916), a contemporary of Orozco and Pimentel, worked on the philology and folklore of the same populations but called them the Mam-Huastec linguistic group. His analysis was based on Brasseur's texts.²⁷

The synergy between eager exploration of jungles and archives and the publication of the resulting finds for consumption by a fascinated public continued unabated. Naturally, the scholars and explorers who found, studied, or published the old documents wanted to understand the ancient civilisation that once inhabited the area. Remains of old settlements were thus be revisited and excavated in search of more evidence, and these efforts led to new discoveries. Among those intrigued by the published reports were John Stephens and Frederick Catherwood, who visited various ruined and sometimes unknown cities in an area stretching from Honduras²⁸ to Yucatan (1839 and 1841). Later, there came Teobert Maler, in 1877–1912, and Alfred Maudslay, who explored this region in 1880–1907. In Yucatan, Edward Herbert Thompson, a consul and amateur archaeologist, explored the ruins of Chichen Itza from 1885 until 1926. Long-term research in this region was supported by numerous institutions including the Smithsonian Institute (founded in 1846) and the Carnegie Institution (created in 1902, with Sylvanus Morley as its first field representative from 1918 until 1936). Extremely significant was also the support of research and exploration provided by the recently opened Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which was founded in 1866 and later attached to the Harvard University. In Belize, it was Thomas William

²⁵ Orozco thanked the National Archive and the private archives of (among others) José Fernando Ramírez and Joaquín García Icazbalceta. He said that his method was based only on the authority of the authors of those documents because he himself did not know any of the languages. Manuel OROZCO Y BERRA, *Geografía de las lenguas y carta etnográfica de México: precedidas de un ensayo de clasificación de las mismas lenguas y de apuntes para las inmigraciones de las tribus*, Ciudad de México 1864, p. IX.

²⁶ OROZCO, *Geografía de las lenguas*; Francisco PIMENTEL, *Cuadro descriptivo y comparativo de las lenguas indígenas de México o tratado de filología mexicana*, Ciudad de México, 1874.

²⁷ Hyacinthe de CHARENCEY, [Charles-Félix-Hyacinthe Gouhier], “Recherches sur le Lois phonétiques dans les idiomes de la famille Mame-Huastèque”, [on-line], *Revue de linguistique et de philologie comparée*, tome 5, 1872, pp. 129–167. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/Livre:Revue_de_linguistique_et_de_philologie_compar%C3%A9e_tome_5.djv.

²⁸ At that time, a party that advocated the formation of a Central American nation contended against several national parties that aimed at the formation of separate nation states. The former party was finally defeated, so Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador became separate independent states.

Francis Gann who first engaged in systematic research: the Smithsonian published his first findings in 1918. In addition to Harvard, universities such as Pennsylvania University and Chicago University developed research programmes in the area.²⁹ In Mexico, Guatemala, and other parts of Central America, German scholars and explorers such as Eduard Seler, Karl Berendt, Karl Sapper, Walter Lehmann, and Franz Termer reported their findings both in German and in other languages (Beaudry & Hardy 2000). Some of these researchers also had relationships with local institutions, such as the National Museum of Mexico (founded in 1825).

Thus, the fascination with the so-called Maya had spread, formed, and became institutionalised in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Along the way, various explorers and scholars supplemented their collections of documents and remains of the past with linguistic and other studies of the contemporary inhabitants of Central America. Intersections between these lines of investigation sparked, among other things, a considerable interest in the mythology of Central American peoples – and that is our next subject.

III. From idols to mythology

As the eager explorers and savants examined the re-discovered fragments of Central America's past, the so-called Maya civilisation slowly took shape in the scientific and consciousness and an enduring, feverish search for evidence of this sophisticated ancient American people had begun. Early in this process, Humboldt provided the first survey of fragments available to him from a perspective that discerned and focused on categories such as calendars. Later scholars added further categories, such as cosmogonies or creation myths, traits of totemism and animism, theodicies and the names of divinities, and calendars or systems for counting and measuring time. The epistemological turn which we have been outlining can thus be described as a categorical shift. The new categories caught on and endured, as one can infer from the subtitle which Abbot Brasseur chose for his edition of the *Popol Vuh: Le livre sacré et les mythes de l'antiquité américaine* (Paris, 1861). These categories also endured in how sculptures that were previously generally described in displays as 'idols'³⁰ were now assigned to categories such as History and Mythology.³¹ A case in point is one of the 'idols' that was found in Copan and then

²⁹ For instance, the Newberry Library in Chicago, which holds the first copy of the document called the *Popol Vuh*.

³⁰ For a wider analysis, see Miruna ACHIM, *From Idols to Antiquity. Forging the National Museum of Mexico*, Lincoln, 2017. 'Idol' is a word that apparently used Don Gregorio, the owner of a hacienda where the remains of an ancient city, now known as Copan, had at that time lain undiscovered. The name Copan was probably taken from a nearby settlement ('half-a-dozen miserable huts', as Stephens described it) or possibly from a nearby river, but it could also be named after a rebel cacique who headed a rebellion in the sixteenth century. See John L. STEPHENS – Fredrich CATHERWOOD, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan*, [on-line], London, 1854, pp. 53–59 [First edition 1841]. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Incidents_of_travel_in_Central_America,_Chiapas_and_Yucatan.pdf.

³¹ See BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods".

moved to the Peabody Museum in Cambridge. Renamed ‘young maize god’, the erstwhile idol was relocated within the museum and became its icon.

Daniel Brinton, a physician and amateur archaeologist of ‘independent means’³², was probably the first person to summarise, in 1868, what was up to that point known about the mythology of the newly named Maya-Quiché civilisation. But he was not the only one and his ideas had been shaped by of the abovementioned scholars and explorers. He was most influenced by Brasseur, but a Prussian physician Karl Hermann Berendt also had an impact on him.³³ Berendt was a member of a family that came to own a number of coffee plantations in Guatemala (Europeans introduced the coffee plant to Central America in mid-nineteenth century, which is also when Berendt came to the Americas). As Berendt travelled through Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala, he visited archives in an attempt to find documents that would contain information about the ancient civilisation.³⁴ He also collected or made copies of documents available in several other archives.³⁵ Berendt, who once met Brasseur in New York in 1863,³⁶ published very little but sold his valuable archive to Daniel Brinton.

Brinton preserved Berendt’s archive, which consisted almost entirely of originals and copies of unpublished manuscripts. It included some of Brasseur’s originals, plus dictionaries found in Guatemala. The manuscripts (some were copies) on which Brinton based his interpretations of Central American mythology were written between the sixteenth and eighteenth century. Examples include four dictionaries, all written in Cakchiquel: a *Compendio of Names*; *Cakchiquel–Spanish*; the *Memorial de Tecpan-Atitlan*, and Thomas Coto’s *Cakchiquel Vocabulary*.³⁷ Brinton also mentions Landa’s *Relación* and the *Maya Dictionary of Motul* but his most important source was the *Popol Vuh*.

³² John M. WEEKS, “The Daniel Garrison Brinton Collection”, in: *The Penn Library Collections at 250: From Franklin to the Web*, Philadelphia, 2000, pp. 165–181.

³³ Daniel G. BRINTON, *The Myths of The New World: A Treatise on the Symbolism and Mythology of the Red Race of America*, [on-line], New York & London, 1868. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/19347/19347-0.txt>; BRINTON, “The Names of the Gods”.

³⁴ Berendt has no name for this civilisation and still applied the name ‘Maya’ only to the language spoken in Yucatan. See Karl H. BERENDT, “Report of Explorations in Central America”, *Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1867*, pp. 420–426, [on-line], Washington: 1867. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.a0005998810&view=image&seq=1&q1=Berendt>.

³⁵ WEEKS, “The Daniel Garrison Brinton”; BERENDT, “Report of Explorations”, pp. 48–49.

³⁶ Elizabeth F. WOLFE, “Contributions of Karl Hermann Berendt to Central American Anthropology”, *Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers* 61–62, 1982, pp. 1–19; Daniel G. BRINTON, “Memoir of Dr. C. H. Berendt”, *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 3, 1884, pp. 205–210.

³⁷ Thomas COTO, *Vocabulario de la lengua Cakchiquel*, v, *Guatimalteca / nuevamente hecho y recopilado con fummo estudio, traujo y erudicio por el Pe. F. Thomas Coto, predicador y padre de esta Prouja. de el S.Smo. Nombre de Jesus de Guatimala / en que se contienen todos los modos y frases elegantes con que los naturalas la hablan y dq. se pueden valer los ministros estudiosos para su mejor educacion y ensenanza*, 1651, [on-line], MSS 279 Series 8 Sub-Series 2 Sub-Series 1, Box: 36, Folder: 1. William Gates papers, MSS 279. L. Tom Perry Special Collections. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021], accessible from: http://archives.lib.byu.edu/repositories/14/archival_objects/53726.

In 1868, when Brinton published his abovementioned first book at mythology among ancient American civilisations, his image of the Maya was still influenced by the better-known Aztecs, although he was aware of the clear differences that could be seen in the *Sacred Book of the Quiches (Popol Vuh)*.³⁸ A decade later, on 4 November 1881, Brinton presented a broader view of Maya-Quiche (or Kiche) mythology in a communication he read to the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. First, he talked about the ‘Maya-Kiche stock’, noting that:

Even today, it is estimated that about half a million persons use these dialects. They are scattered over Yucatan, Guatemala and the adjacent territory, and one branch formerly occupied the hot lowlands on the Gulf of Mexico, north of Vera Cruz.³⁹

Following Berendt’s ideas, Brinton argued that the Maya of Yucatan is the purest language of the group and Mam is the most archaic variant among the about sixty languages still spoken at that time in Guatemala and southern Mexico (he included in that number some ‘metropolitan dialects’ of central Guatemala: Kiche, Cakchikel, Pokonchi, and Tzutuhil). Brinton believed that the glyphs were *mnemonic signs* which the Maya used to record their history and mythology. Unlike Ximénez, who was convinced that the text that came to be known as the *Popol Vuh* was a satire of Christianity, Brinton believed that it contained important information about native mythology.⁴⁰ He also asserted that the unknown native Kiche speaker who wrote it knew the ‘ancient records’.⁴¹

In his 1868 book that dealt with comparative mythology, Brinton found the notion of the supranatural ‘unseen’ world in the spiritual life of native American peoples:

It has been rendered spirit, demon, God, devil, mystery, magic, but commonly and rather absurdly by the English and French, “medicine.” In the Algonkin dialects this word is manito and oki, in Iroquois oki and otkon, the Dakota has wakan, the Aztec teotl, the Quichua huaca, and the Maya ku. They all express in its most general form the idea of the supernatural. And as in this word, supernatural, we see a transfer of a conception of place, and that it literally means that which is above the natural

³⁸ Brinton refers to the Natchez, a group that lived in the Lower Mississippi Valley, as a branch of the same people that later gave rise to the Huartecas and Mayas, see: BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 27. Afterwards, John Swanton stated that Natchez may be related to the Muskogean languages.

³⁹ BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 613

⁴⁰ BRINTON, “The Names of the Gods”, p. 614.

⁴¹ ‘The civilization of these people was such that they used various mnemonic signs, approaching our alphabet, to record and recall their mythology and history. Fragments, more or less complete, of these traditions have been preserved. The most notable of these is the National Legend of the Kiches of Guatemala, the so-called Popol Vuh. It was written at an unknown date in the Kiche dialect by a native who was familiar with the ancient records. A Spanish translation of it was made early in the last century by a Spanish priest, Father Francisco Ximenez, and was first published at Vienna, 1857. In 1861 the original text was printed in Paris, with a French translation, by the care of the late eminent Americanist, the Abbé Brasseur (de Bourbourg). This original covers about 175 octavo pages and is therefore highly important as a linguistic as well as an archaeological monument.’ BRINTON, “The Names of the Gods”, p. 614.

world, so in such as we can analyze of these vague and primitive terms the same trope appears discoverable.⁴²

What is this ‘supranatural’ that Brinton had found in the *Popol Vuh* and other sources? Brinton says that the *Popol Vuh* refers to powerful “gods” who are the source and cause of all things. He speaks even of the original couple that is invested with sexual and reproductive powers. In a later book, he notes that ‘we find numerous parallels in Grecian, Egyptian and Oriental mythology, this divinity is represented as embracing the powers and functions of both, sexes in his own person [...]’.⁴³ Examining the nature of those supranatural powers, he notes that:

The word *puz* is used in various passages of the *Popol Vuh* to express the supernatural power of the gods and priests, but probably by the time that Ximenez wrote it had, in the current dialect of his parish, lost its highest signification, and hence it did not suggest itself to him as the true derivation of the name I am discussing.⁴⁴

The ancestors *Xpiyacoc* and *Xmucane* are those who brought the humans, seeds, and other goods by their powers of organic (sexual) life.

Brinton also found traces of animism and totem worship,⁴⁵ two key concepts which the nascent anthropology used to describe the spiritual life of so-called ‘primitive world’.⁴⁶ For example, he says that the expression *vugh*, which can mean a type of fox,⁴⁷ probably expresses the admiration of small but clever animals that was common among the Algonkin and other hunting tribes of North America. On the other hand, Brasseur says that the term *vugh* is also related to the dawn of the day, and to myth of origins, because *vugh* is the darkness before the dawn. The names of other characters in *Popol Vuh* refer to animals as well; we find for instance an old man called a hog and his wife, who are both in possession of magical powers.

Thus we find here an almost unique example of the deification of the hog; for once, this useful animal, generally despised in mythology and anathematized in religion, is given the highest pedestal in the Pantheon.⁴⁸

⁴² BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 46.

⁴³ BRINTON, “The Names of the Gods”, p. 616.

⁴⁴ BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 617.

⁴⁵ BRINTON, “The Names of the Gods”, p. 625.

⁴⁶ Edward Tylor, the famous founder of modern Anthropology in England, established that ‘animism’ was the primitive form of religion, in contrast to Frazer, who stated that the origin of religion was the idea of the ‘soul’. Durkheim saw in *totemism* the elementary form of religion. See, Edward Burnett TYLOR, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom*, Cambridge 2010 [First Edition, 1871]; James George FRAZER, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion*, Cambridge 2012 [First Edition, 1890]; Émile DURKHEIM, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse. Le système totémique en Australie*, Paris 1968 [First Edition, 1912].

⁴⁷ Tlacuache is not a type of fox, but a marsupial called opossum, see also in BRINTON, *The Myths*, 617.

⁴⁸ BRINTON, “The Names of the Gods”, p. 620.

Brinton also confronts Brasseur's interpretation of the word *pizote* (coati), which Brinton translates as the sacrificial drawing of blood by pricking.

We should probably understand these and similar brute gods to be relics of a primitive form of totemic worship, such as was found in vigor among some of the northern tribes. Various other indications of this can be discovered among the branches of the Maya family. The Cakchiquels were called "the people of the bat (zoq')," that animal being their national sign or token, and also the symbol of their god (Popol Vuh, p. 225, 249). The tueur owl, chan or cumatz serpent, balam tiger, and geh deer, are other animals whose names are applied to prominent families or tribes in these nearly related myths.⁴⁹

Brinton continues:

In Maya the same word is found, Koh, and in the Codex Troano, one of the few original Maya manuscripts we have left, these masks are easily distinguished on the heads of many of the persons represented. Recent observers tell us that in the more remote parishes in Central America these hideous brute faced masks are still worn by the Indians who dance in accompanying the processions of the Church! Even yet, every new-born child among the Kiches, is solemnly named after some beast by the native "medicine man" before he is baptized by the Padre.⁵⁰

Brinton says that the best translation of another animal, the *gucumatz*, is a 'serpent decorated with feathers'. Based on Coto's vocabulary, Brinton says that *gux* is translated as heart, but apparently in the sense of Soul or Spirit:

It would be more correct therefore, to render these names the "Spirit" or "Soul" of the lake, etc., than the "Heart." They represent broadly the doctrine of "animism" as held by these people, and generally by man in his early stages of religious development. They indicate also a dimly understood sense of the unity of spirit or energy in the different manifestations of organic and inorganic existence.⁵¹

In his 1868 book, Brinton states that there is a word for "god" in the Maya language, namely *ku*. He adds that the 'Mayas had legions of gods' and, as in other traditions, the idea of a god refers to heaven or the sky, that is, to unseen agencies devoid of personality which become the object of prayers.⁵² In his communication from 1881, Brinton found in the *Popol Vuh* also other ways of referring to divinity. Briton says that *qabauil* in *quiche* (also *gabovil*, *gabuyil*, and other terms in Coto's

⁴⁹ BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods", p. 620.

⁵⁰ BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods", p. 621.

⁵¹ 'This was not peculiar to the tribes under consideration. The heart was very generally looked upon, not only as the seat of life, but as the source of the feelings, intellect and passions, the very soul itself. Hence, in sacrificing victims it was torn out and offered to the god as representing the immaterial part of the individual, that which survived the death of the body'. BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods", p. 623.

⁵² BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 47, based on LÓPEZ DE COGOLLUDO, *Historia de Yucathan*.

vocabulary) are all terms often used to refer to divinity. The notion is – aside from with magic, divining, and sorcery – associated with creation in expressions that include the term *naual* (a link with Aztec traditions) and *puz* or supernatural power, as noted above.⁵³ There is also a mythical place, identified by the term *Xibalba*:

The word Xibalba, Cakchiquel Xibalbay, Maya Xibalba, Xabalba or Xubalba (all found in the Diccionario de Motul, MSS.), was the common term throughout the Maya stock of languages to denote the abode of the spirits of the dead, or Hades, which with them was held to be under the surface of the earth, and not, as the Mexicans often supposed, in the far north.⁵⁴

Brinton's 1868 book included notes about calendars, which had attracted the interest of scholars ever since the re-discovery of the Sun Stone in 1790. He also connects calendars to the cardinal points and the shape of the world.⁵⁵ Glyphs and numbers are connected to calendric and astronomical texts, and even the names of days are connected to animals and other characters that feature in the *Popol Vuh*, such as *Balam* (tiger) and *Queh* (deer). Finally, all in all, Brinton identifies in the surviving relicts of Maya culture concepts of space, time, history, theodicy, and cosmogony.

Conclusion

Brinton's work was just the beginning of a lasting scientific and popular interest in the mythology of the peoples that inhabited this part of Central America. The subjects he was interested in, such as "supernatural" forces and "creation", "animism", "totem worship", "souls" and "spirits", "gods", "calendars", 'primitive geography',⁵⁶ and history in effect cover all the main topics of Maya research of that time and long afterwards. For example, in 1895 Eduard Seler⁵⁷ presented an analysis of the calendric signs in a Copan stela at the Americanist Congress in Mexico City. Seler had followed commentaries on Maya manuscripts (chiefly the Dresden Codex) that had been made by Ernst Förstemann. In a text published in 1902, Seler mentioned religious books that had calendric and astrological purposes and drew attention to the gods and goddesses shown in Mexican picture writings, and, in a specific style, also in the Maya Codex. In 1904 Paul Schellhas,⁵⁸ who studied Mayan

⁵³ BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods", p. 630.

⁵⁴ Brinton challenges Brasseur's interpretation according to which Xibalba was an ancient state in the Usumacinta valley with a capital in Palenque. BRINTON, "The Names of the Gods", p. 636.

⁵⁵ BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 68.

⁵⁶ BRINTON, *The Myths*, p. 68.

⁵⁷ Eduard SELER, et al., *Mexican and Central American Antiquities, Calendar Systems, and History*, [on-line], Washington, 1904. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021]. Accessible from: https://antropowiki.alterum.info/index.php/Eduard_Seler; Eduard SELER, "On the present state of our knowledge of the Mexican and Central American hieroglyphic writing" [on-line], *Transactions of the International Congress of Americanists*, 1902. Internet Archive, [Consulted 31 March 2021]. Accessible from: https://antropowiki.alterum.info/index.php/Eduard_Seler.

⁵⁸ Originally in German (1897), Schellhas text was published in English in 1904 under the supervision of Charles Bowditch, a Maya expert associated with the Peabody Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts. SCHELLHAS, "Representation of Deities of the Maya Manuscripts".

gods, collaborated with the Berlin Museum of Ethnology to make reproductions of reliefs found in the ruined cities. He had also worked on the available editions of Landa's *Relación*, the Maya codex, and other recently published documents. Harvard's Alfred Tozzer performed fieldwork among the Maya and Lacandonés in 1902–1904 and began teaching a seminar on the Maya entitled Anthropology 9 in 1905.⁵⁹ Tozzer published one of the first ethnographies of the contemporary Maya and Lacandonés,⁶⁰ describing the Lacandonés as the purest performers of the old Maya rituals compared to the more Christianised contemporary Maya of Yucatan. He compared the performances and paraphernalia used by Lacandonés with the images found in codices, colonial texts, carved stones, and painted or moulded ceramics. As a Harvard professor, he continued his archaeological work in the area and devoted years of his life to translating and studying Landa's *Relación*. In 1941, he published his translation of that work with both his own notes and notes by his late mentor, Charles P. Bowditch.⁶¹

In nineteenth-century texts, from Stephens to Berendt, we learn about several issues that variously troubled, fascinated, and entertained the people of that epoch. There was an unclear definition of international borders at that time, somewhat fluid boundaries between Catholicism and other beliefs, and various overlaps and tensions between the interests of the British, French, Prussian, and American governments in Mexico, Guatemala, and the 'other Honduras', the British Colony in the area. We hear of wars between political bands, a rebellion against abusive logging companies, and the cultivation of coffee, tobacco, sugar, fruits, and sisal or henequen. We learn about the landscape, soils, waters, flora, and fauna. We see that categories such as 'Aztec' or 'Maya' or classifications of linguistic families were not yet as stable as they would become in the following decades. Still, what the explorers – and the intellectuals who read their reports – found most interesting was the old American civilisation still hidden in and under the jungle. Nineteenth-century texts show that the hunt for remains of that civilisation extended to the contemporary peoples living near the archaeological sites and colonial towns, particularly in locations where Maya languages were still spoken. Expeditions were organised in search of locals who might be able to read the glyphs and for the remains of the old mythical thinking preserved in the stories and ritual life of the contemporary peoples. These subjects then helped form the agenda of anthropological research for the following generations of both amateurs and professionals.

(Written in Spanish and translated into English by the author)

⁵⁹ Philip PHILLIPS, "Alfred Marsten Tozzer, 1877–1954", *American Antiquity* 21/1, 1955, pp. 72–80.

⁶⁰ Alfred TOZZER, *A comparative Study of the Mayas and the Lacandonés*, Report of the Fellow of American Archaeology, 1902–1905, New York 1907.

⁶¹ Alfred TOZZER, *Landa's Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatan, a Translation (with 1154 Notes and Syllabus)*, Cambridge 1941.

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INFORMES

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP *HABSBURG SPHERES: BETWEEN SPAIN, CENTRAL EUROPE, AND COLONIAL LATIN AMERICA 1500–1700*
(Charles University, 4 July 2022, Prague)

On July 4, an international workshop entitled “Habsburg Spheres between Spain, Central Europe, and Colonial Latin America 1500–1700”, devoted to research into Habsburg spheres of influence in Spain, Central Europe and Latin Europe in the early modern period was held in the Špork Palace in Prague. The event, held in English, was both in person and online, and was organized by people from several universities, namely Monika Brenišínová (Charles University), Ondřej Lee Stolička (University of South Bohemia), and Manuel del Sol (University of Salamanca). These academics carry out research on grant-funded topics that are in some way thematically related to the workshop topic and were consequently presented there, either as incipient research projects or as results of ongoing research. Thus, the attendees had the opportunity not only to share their findings but also to meet and discuss the various research and methodological approaches applied by the different research teams. In this respect, the meeting also served as a real workshop, in which participants had the opportunity to figuratively take a peek under the hood of the projects at different stages of their development and at the same time share their experiences and recommendations in discussion of the projects.

The organizers jointly started the workshop at 11 a.m. and briefly greeted all its participants. After that, the keynote speaker, Rostislav Smíšek (University of South Bohemia), a specialist on the Habsburgs in the history of the Bohemian lands in the early modern period, took the floor with his contribution, “Margarita Teresa of Austria between Madrid and Vienna”. His lecture was followed by a presentation by Monika Brenišínová and Lillyam Rosalba González, two members of the GACR research project entitled “Hidden History. Representation of Women in the Era of Conquest and Colonization of the New World”, which is also conducted by several other members of the Center for Ibero-American Studies. After their input, the first part of the workshop began, chaired by Manuel de Sol. The first presenter was Kateřina Pražáková

(University of South Bohemia) with her paper, “The Image of the Spanish Royal Family in the Written Newspaper in the Second Half of the 16th Century”. From representations, the topic turned to international relations in Ondřej Lee Stolička’s (University of South Bohemia) paper, “The Imperial Embassy in Madrid Between the Peace of Westphalia and the Congress of Vienna”, from which the reflection on identities shifted in the paper by Marina Perruca Gracia (King Juan Carlos University), “Shaping Citizen Identities in ‘Spanish Naples’ (XVI–XVII)”. The morning session concluded with a paper by Héctor Linares González (Penn State University) entitled “Honor and Discord in the Military Orders Council. The struggle between Secretaries and Prosecutors for institutional precedence, 16th–17th Centuries”. The lunch break came after a short discussion following the papers presented.

The second session, chaired by Ondřej Lee Stolička, opened with a presentation by another member of the GACR project and PhD student at the Center, Anna Libánská, with her paper, “The Czech Translation of Sebastian Münster’s Cosmography”. After the literary presentations, Manuel del Sol (University of Salamanca) turned to the field of music in his paper, “Habsburg Court Music in the Imperial (New) World through the Military Orders (XVI–XVIII): Madrid, Vienna, Prague, Lisbon, Mexico”. Then the event moved back to the topic of international politics in the contribution by Sergio Ramiro Ramírez (Autonomous University of Madrid) “In the King’s Name: The Artistic Agency of Royal Secretaries and their Families at the Habsburg Courts”. Finally, Markéta Ježková (Czech Academy of Sciences) concluded the day-long event with her art history contribution, “Rudolf II and the Purchase of an Album of Albrecht Dürer’s Drawings from Madrid”.

*by anna libánská¹, Prague
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HISTORIA OCULTA: LA REPRESENTACIÓN DE LA MUJER EN EL VIEJO Y NUEVO MUNDO A NIVEL LOCAL Y GLOBAL

(Universidad de Salamanca, 18 de noviembre de 2022, España)

Frente al discurso binario que ha sido hegemónico en la conformación de una identidad europea y “occidental” –opuesta a la cultura “oriental”– el mundo hispano ocupa un lugar singular. Esto se debe, en primer lugar, al intenso contacto que España ha tenido con la cultura árabe y, en segundo lugar, a su interacción con las culturas africanas e indígenas, cuyo papel ha sido protagónico en los territorios donde se asentaron las colonias españolas en América desde los tiempos de la conquista hasta nuestros días. En este sentido, el lugar donde se realizó el workshop *Historia oculta: la representación de la mujer en el viejo y nuevo mundo a nivel local y global* fue significativo de cara al asunto que se abordó. La Universidad de Salamanca ha sido durante siglos un lugar donde se han producido todo tipo de fenómenos relacionados con la diferencia, el establecimiento de las identidades y la organización social hispana e hispanoamericana, cristalizados en forma de legislación, producción intelectual o representación artística. Por mencionar un ejemplo elocuente: fueron los abogados salmantinos en gran medida quienes asesoraron los temas jurídicos que regularon las relaciones sociales determinantes en América durante la colonia.

El lugar concreto en el que se realizó el workshop fue el Palacio Maldonado, donde actualmente funciona el Centro de Estudios Brasileños de la Universidad de Salamanca. Se trata de un edificio de estilo plateresco que perteneció a don Diego Maldonado Rivas (1555-1632), un importante diplomático salmantino. La fachada de la edificación presenta un conjunto heráldico conformado por cinco escudos cuya ubicación es significativa. El escudo de la familia Maldonado, a la cabeza, es seguido por los escudos de las familias Rivas, y en la parte más baja –la más cercana para quien ingresa al edificio– con el sello actual de la universidad, resguardado por su filacteria característica “SIGILVM UNIVERSITATIS STVDI SALMANTINI”, que nos recuerda las jerarquías implícitas del espacio donde se desarrolló este diálogo.

El evento se inauguró con las palabras de Jesús Félix Pascual Molina, profesor de la Universidad de Valladolid, quien presentó brevemente su perspectiva en torno a las relaciones de poder en las representaciones artísticas en la Edad Moderna, asunto que de una u otra manera tocaría todas las presentaciones posteriores. Pascual Molina puso sobre la mesa el problema transversal de la narrativa histórica desde su relación con las fuentes artísticas visuales –y podríamos añadir sonoras, para no excluir a los dos ponentes que trataron temas musicales en torno a la imagen, en la última mesa– es problemático y complejo. En el ejercicio histórico se producen todo tipo de relaciones intertextuales que a los investigadores del presente nos conciernen. Esto sucede en la medida en que el acto de interpretación de tales fuentes requiere de conocimiento, sensibilidad y creatividad para elaborar diálogos que articulen fuentes de diversa naturaleza, en discusión histórica y la narrativa que de esta se desprende.

El encuentro estuvo conformado por once intervenciones. Una de apertura, una de cierre y tres mesas temáticas con tres presentaciones en cada una. Las nueve presentaciones intermedias fueron el núcleo de la discusión del workshop y siguieron un hilo narrativo interesante, ya que articularon y a la vez vincularon tres asuntos neurálgicos para el desarrollo del tema del evento: la representación de la mujer en el entorno doméstico; la representación de la mujer en el entorno institucional (la academia, las cofradías y las hagiografías) y la representación racializada de la mujer en torno al siglo XVI. La primera mesa empezó por conectar acertadamente la charla de apertura con algunos estudios de caso concretos, yendo desde lo general hacia lo específico. La intervención de Monika Brenišínová, de la Universidad Carolina, titulada “Representación de las mujeres en el arte colonial” se destacó por sus reflexiones dirigidas hacia el lugar de lo femenino en el contexto hogareño en las colonias hispanoamericanas. La autora,

especialista en arte hispanoamericano, compartió los avances de su trabajo y elaboró el asunto de la representación desde los estereotipos a través de los conceptos de auto-estereotipos y hetero-estereotipos, como eje de discusión sobre la representación femenina. Lo anterior con un cierto énfasis en los matices de aprobación y reprobación moral de la época. Esta reflexión hizo de pivote con la presentación de cierre de la primera mesa, que se conformó en torno a la figura de Ofelia como modelo moral de virtud, cuyo rastreo histórico, a veinte siglos de distancia de Shakespeare –y a veinticuatro de nosotros, hoy–, da cuenta de una tendencia más o menos continuada en el juicio moral de los comportamientos femeninos en occidente.

La segunda mesa, vinculada con el asunto de la representación de la mujer en el arte institucional de los siglos XVI y XVII, presentó una serie de procesos de investigación, también enmarcados en el asunto de la construcción de narrativas desde lo visual. Así, se hizo una propuesta interpretativa en torno a Sor María Gertrudis Teresa de Santa Inés, conocida como el Lirio de Bogotá, un caso ampliamente documentado en el que las representaciones visuales juegan un papel importante y cuyas conexiones con algunos tipos iconográficos ofrecen unas relaciones intertextuales que permiten develar, a través de la imagen plasmada en el lienzo, un discurso visualmente interesante.

Por último, la tercera mesa amplió la discusión en varios sentidos. En primer lugar, asomó el asunto musical a través de las ponencias de Cecilia Isabel Galindo y Manuel del Sol, de la Universidad de Salamanca. La primera, además, fue una exposición llamativa por tratarse de la experiencia íntima y el vínculo afectivo en la vivencia

personal de una musicóloga de nacionalidad mejicana, que se reconoce a sí misma como estudiosa y a la vez heredera de los saberes y las expresiones consignados en el *Códice Florentino*. Se trata de uno de los pocos manuscritos elaborados por los pueblos indígenas americanos en tiempos de la colonia. La presentación se refirió superficialmente a asuntos de género y la presencia de la música en la iconografía contenida en el código desde una perspectiva cuasi-autoetnográfica. A manera de cierre, el profesor Alberto Baena, de la Universidad de Salamanca propuso, desde el estudio de caso concreto de la investigación que adelanta una serie de prospectivas, que más que cerrar el diálogo del workshop lo dejó abierto a la conformación de nuevos discursos sobre fuentes del pasado a través de los relativamente recientes avances en la interpretación de las imágenes artísticas.

El workshop, en su conjunto, al presentar y discutir diferentes contextos, se conformó como un espacio de discusión del lugar de la mujer en el mundo hispano a ambos lados del Atlántico, a partir de la información contenida en las fuentes visuales. Desde la reconstrucción de lo doméstico hasta la influencia de los estereotipos que ha producido el arte dramático, y pasando por el omnipresente –pero frecuentemente velado– ideal de la santidad en lo femenino, este breve encuentro permitió que investigadores de diversas trayectorias y con diversos enfoques, compartieran sus aportes originales gracias a un sólido trabajo de curaduría que los enmarcó en la perspectiva actual de género y de la interpretación de las evidencias visuales en un espacio cargado de significado simbólico, muy relacionado con el tema de estudio.

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REPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE *SEARCH FOR INDIGENOUS AMERICA 7*

(Charles University, 4–5 March 2024, Prague)

On 4–5 March 2024, the Centre for Ibero-American Studies had hosted the *Search for Indigenous America*, an already traditional conference dedicated to the indigenous peoples of the Americas. In its seventh year, the conference was, as usual, brought together by the founder of this annual event, Radoslav Hlúšek from the Department of Comparative Religion and Centre of Mesoamerican Studies (Comenius University, Bratislava) in collaboration with the Centre for Ibero-American Studies (Faculty of Arts, Charles University).

The conference opened with a keynote address of Marcel Kornfeld of the University of Wyoming, who spoke about possible religious connotations of the production of artifacts known as Folsom points, named after an eponymous location in New Mexico, where they were first found.

In the first section of the programme, researchers focused on the present-day situation of the native populations of the Americas. Rochelle Foltram (Universidade Federal de São Carlos) presented her contribution ‘On the Paths of the Pandemic: Xikrin Tales and Forest Remedies Rochelle’, which focused on the Brazilian Xikrin community. Mauricio Roberto Díaz-García (Comenius University) spoke about ‘Reclaiming the Past, Forging the Future: Indigenous Rights, Democracy, and Archaeological Patrimony in Guatemala’, and Miroslav Černý (Ostrava University) focused on the work of the poet Ofelia Zepeda in his paper ‘Advancing Environmental Justice Through Poetry: Ofelia Zepeda’s Earth Movements’.

The second section of the conference was dedicated to various historical topics. Monika Brenišinová (Centre for Ibero-American Studies, Charles University) had a contribution named ‘Hidden Voices: (Native) Women in the Inquisition Documents of Colonial New Spain’, Elizabeth Mateos Segovia (Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla) presented a paper on ‘Geografía mítica entre los nahuas de la Sierra Negra de

Puebla, México’, and the last speaker, Petr Vyšný (University of Trnava) shared his thoughts ‘On Some Theoretical and Methodological Issues of Research Into Pre-Hispanic Law’.

The last section of the day started with Raquel Ofelia Barceló Quintal (Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo) presenting her paper on ‘La importancia de la chaya en el huerto familiar entre los mayas de Xocón, Valladolid, Yucatán’, while her colleagues from the same university, Víctor Eduardo Hernández Juárez and Jorge Dolores Bautista, spoke about ‘Bioculturalidad y tradición oral. Impacto de la patrimonialización de las lenguas originarias en México’. Jorge Bautista was then joined by two colleagues, Estefanía Soto Carrasquel and Reynaldo Amador Pérez, and they jointly spoke on the subject of ‘Dilemas contemporáneos en torno a la construcción del patrimonio indígena. Entre las representaciones identitarias y la hegemonía cultural’. The first day closed with a discussion on the subject of ‘Environment and Education among the Tupi Guarani of São Paulo, Brazil’ by a panel consisting of Paride Bolletín (Masaryk University), Cristiano Awa Kiririndju (Renascer Indigenous Territory, Brazil), Lenira Dina de Oliveira (Piaçaguera Indigenous Territory, Brazil), Amanda Cristina Dagna (Universidade do Estado do Mato Grosso), and Edmundo Antonio Peggion (Universidade do Estado do São Paulo, Brazil).

The second day of the conference started with a paper on the ‘Star Constellations in Maya Art and Imagery’ presented by Jakub Špoták (Comenius University, Bratislava). Špoták discussed the study and identification of constellations depicted in Maya art, especially ceramics, with specially attention paid to some less well-known artifacts and depictions of constellations. He focused on the possible relationship between the symbolic level and astronomical knowledge, thus contributing to a better understanding the impact of concepts related to heaven on Maya artistic expression.

Jakub Špoták was followed by his colleague from the same university, Milan Kováč, who spoke about 'Lacandon Maya Incense Burners: Living Gods on the Earth'. Kováč drew on his findings from a research stay in the Mexican Chiapas, where he investigated the rituals and mythology of Lacandon Maya with focus on the social and religious significance of incense burners for this indigenous community.

The following two contributions were related to alternative spirituality. Zuzana Marie Kostíčová (Charles University) spoke about the impact of the Maya calendar on current spirituality. She focused on the *Dreamspeel* by José Argüell, one of the most important protagonists of millennialism linked to the 21st of December 2012, who interpreted the Maya calendar and Maya culture within the framework of New Age spirituality. The second paper was presented by Jan Kapusta (University of West Bohemia), who spoke about alternative spirituality in Czech Republic that draws on Native American themes. In this context, he referred to encounters between Western alternative spirituality and Latin American indigenous traditions, which he illustrated by pointing to events that took place in the Czech Republic with active participation of the indigenous people from Columbia belonging to the Kogi tribe. The morning session on the second day concluded with a presentation named 'Mexican Dances: Traditions and Cultural Identity of Mexico in the 21st Century' by Alena Prokopius (Centre for Ibero-American Studies). She pointed out that although these dances (*baile*

folklórico) have been presented to the world as part of Mexican folklore, what is presented is just their 'official' form that has little in common with folklore or the daily lives of Mexicans.

The afternoon session of the second day of the conference was opened by Jan Dolejš (independent scholar) and his contribution 'Identification of Selected Artifacts from the Colloredo-Mansfeld Collection, Opočno Castle, Using Comparative Analysis', which focused on a small but important collection of North American native artifacts at the Opočno Castle. This presentation was followed by Marek Halbich (Charles University) and his contribution named 'Korima: A Form of Tarahumara Reciprocity and Social Resistance'. Halbich spoke not only about the importance of the practice of *korima*, but also more generally about the significance of reciprocity in this indigenous group based on his field research in Ejido Munerachi in Tarahumara Baja.

The conference concluded by Karla Maressa Crisostomo Peregrina (Masaryk University) and her online contribution 'Kimelfe: The Case of the Mapuche Traditional Teacher Isabel Quilacán', which investigated the identity of a woman from the Mapuche tribe, a teacher who found a way 'back to her roots'. This was based on an interview with Isabel, where the author identified three main topics: identity, community, and education.

*Written in Czech by Tereze Dleštková and
Ema Labudová, Prague
(Translated into English by Anna Pilátová)*

RESEÑAS

Pavel Štěpánek, ed. Ondřej Jakubec, *Trajectories of Spanish Art and Culture in Bohemia. Studies and Essays about Spanish and Ibero-American Art*, Olomouc: Palacký University Olomouc, 2021, 263 pp. ISBN 978-80-244-5866-3

The book *Trajectories of Spanish Art and Culture in Bohemia. Studies and Essays about Spanish and Ibero-American Art* was published by the Palacký University in Olomouc as a homage to the lifelong work of Professor Pavel Štěpánek, an art historian with remarkable knowledge and passion for the art and culture of Spanish and Portuguese-speaking world. He is a professor emeritus at the Palacký University in Olomouc and an external professor at the Charles University in Prague. Professor Štěpánek also collaborates with many international institutions such as the Real Academia de Belles Artes de San Fernando Madrid or the Reial Acadèmia de Belles Arts de Sant Jordi Barcelona and is the recipient of numerous international awards, such as the Order of Isabella the Catholic, granted by Spanish King Juan Carlos I in 2006, the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, to mention just a few.

This publication presents a selection of Štěpánek's most important studies. It is a collection of articles written over the course of four decades, between 1980 and the 2010s. Readers will find eleven essays on various subjects, starting with a brief commentary on the development of Czech and Slovak relations with Spain and concluding with an article on the Czechoslovak exhibition of Cândido Portinari's paintings.

The essays deal with different periods and subjects spanning from the Middle Ages until the 20th century, but the leitmotif is the connection between Spain and Bohemia, be it in art, sociocultural contexts, or philosophical approaches. There is only one exception, namely the last article, which deals with cultural contacts between Czechoslovakia and Brazilian artists of communist background.¹ In that article, Štěpánek describes the

journey of the works of various Brazilian artists to the exhibition hall in Prague in the early 1950s. The exhibition itself was fully initiated by the Czechoslovak side, politically motivated, and yet of great artistic value,² with a special focus on the work of Cândido Portinari.

Cândido Portinari, a Brazilian painter born to Italian immigrants, spent some time studying and working in Europe. Upon returning to Brazil, he painted both the beauty of Brazilian nature and social subjects. In his work, he tried to capture the true 'Brazilian soul', mostly through the depiction of the poorest Brazilians and their life. In the Czech Republic, his name is nowadays not well known but internationally, he is renowned for the great canvas 'Guerra e Paz' commissioned for New York headquarters of the United Nations. Special focus is placed on the importance of Portinari's work known to the Czechoslovak public since the end of the Second World War, which is still kept in the collections of the National Gallery in Prague. The author continues by explaining the importance of Portinari's solo exhibition in 1960 that was later shown also in Bratislava, Brno, and Prague. The text concludes with the sad history of Portinari's needless death.

In the Foreword, Vicente Carreres, an essayist and philologist, writes that it is only now that the book could come into existence, because 'it is a product of an entire life research and passion for Spanish and Latin American culture'.³

In relation to this quote, I believe that the greatest strength of this book is the thorough and in-depth research of many aspects of interconnections between the cultures of Bohemia, Spain, and the Hispanic world, which are nowadays perceived as separate. Štěpánek clearly proves that mutual intertwining and influence have been always present. For example, in the essay 'Spanish Decorative Arts 1550–1650', he investigates the

ries of Spanish Art and Culture in Bohemia, pp. 239–250, First published in *Bulletin Národní galerie v Praze* XXVI, 2016, pp. 70–79.

² Ibidem, p. 240.

³ *Trajectories of Spanish Art and Culture in Bohemia*, Foreword by Vicente Carreres, p. 6.

¹ Pavel ŠTĚPÁNEK, "Cândido Portinari (1903–1962) in Czechoslovakia", in: *Trajecto-*

story of Emperor Rudolph II Habsburg and his stay at the court of Philip II in Madrid, which had a strong impact on Rudolph's life and his future interest to the arts and alchemy.⁴

The book of essays by Pavel Štěpánek is an eminently important resource for in-depth research. It is mainly intended for art historians who are interested in the Hispanic world and its links to Bohemia. Although for readers who lack a sound knowledge of Spanish art in general this book could be sometimes confusing and overwhelming, I can heartily recommend it to all people who would like to expand their knowledge beyond the standard of Czech academia. It is also a useful tool for students who focus on Spanish art and its connections with Bohemia from the Middle Ages until the present day.

by Alena Prokopius, Brno⁵
(Written in English by the author)

<https://doi.org/10.14712/24647063.2025.19>

Vendula V. Hingarová, *Česká a slovenská periodika v Argentině* [Czech and Slovak Periodicals in Argentina], Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 2021, 246 pp. ISBN: 978-80-7571-078-9

Benedict Anderson's memorable work *Imagined Communities* had shown us that we can view national consciousness also through the lens of indirect relationships between the nation and its people, such as the links created by the printing press and circulation of periodicals in vernacular languages.⁶ While Anderson's ideas were inspired by an analysis of the emergence of Creole nationalism in America, they are also relevant to a better understanding of the publishing activities of migrant communities that settled in the Americas and their wider implications.

Vendula Hingarová's book is dedicated to the Czech and Slovak press in Argentina. Czech and Slovak immigrants formed but a small fraction of

the fast-expanding immigrant population in Argentina; in early twentieth century, about 30% of that country's population had been born abroad. In this multiethnic and multilingual country whose government was actively trying to attract (white) immigrants to populate the allegedly empty pampas, growing diasporas took pride in publishing periodicals in their national languages.

As noted above, the Czech and Slovak diaspora was small. In 1907, the first Czech journal, *Slavia*, was printed in 250 copies while the Italian daily *La Patria* had a circulation of 40,000.⁷ Although the Czech and Slovak publishing efforts were initially something of a 'Cinderella' among the larger foreign diasporas with their own press (p. 26), they spanned a century and jointly form a unique testimony about the cultural and political history of Czechs and Slovaks living on the other side of the Atlantic.

Vendula Hingarová's book is the result of a pioneering research conducted in archives in Argentina, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, USA, and Germany. In its second part, the volume offers a systematic overview of 45 periodicals produced in Argentina by Czech and Slovak immigrants and their offspring from 1907 until 2003. The periodicals are introduced in an alphabetical order (Part II, pp. 113–222) and each entry contains bibliographical details, names of the main editor(s), and a reproduction of the cover page. What is especially praiseworthy is that Hingarová managed to find several previously unknown titles, thus expanding our knowledge of publication activities of Czechs and Slovaks in Argentina. Accompanying indexes of periodicals, people, places, and institutions make the book easy to use for further research (Part II, pp. 233–241).

But this publication is much more than a systematic reference guide to periodicals produced by the Czechs and Slovaks in distant lands. This is mainly thanks to the opening essay which introduces readers to wider historical, political, and social circumstances of the century in the course of which the titles in Czech and Slovak came into existence in Argentina (Part I, pp. 13–110). This

⁴ Ibidem, pp. 165–204.

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⁶ Benedict ANDERSON, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: 1983.

⁷ Samuel L. BAILY, "The Role of Two Newspapers in the Assimilation of Italians in Buenos Aires and São Paulo, 1893–1913", *The International Migration Review* 12/3, Autumn 1978, pp. 321–340.

essay opens a window to a better understanding of Argentinian Czechs and Slovaks in a broader geopolitical context, such as the establishment of an independent Czechoslovak state in 1918, the outbreak of Second World War, creation of an independent Slovak state, or the Communist coup d'état in 1948 and its aftermath. The author also takes into consideration the political context in the country of origin, Czechoslovakia, and the host country, Argentina, where the publishing activities took place. We can thus follow the evolving relationship between the official representation of the Czechoslovak state and its migrant communities as well as the impact of the increasingly suspicious stance of the Argentinian government towards foreign-language press and community organising. Hingarová also mentions some of the leftist members of the Czech and Slovak community: their periodicals were banned in Argentina in the 1930s and some of these activists faced jail or even expulsion from the country (p. 44).

The main subject of the book is, however, 50,000 strong diaspora of people of Czech and Slovak heritage who settled in Argentina. Through their publishing efforts that spanned nearly a century (1907–2003), we can understand some of the challenges they faced in the new country, which may have depended on their ethnicity (Czech, Slovak, Jewish, Ruthenian) but also their identification with the Czechoslovak state. Hingarová shows that the process of immigrant assimilation in Argentina was uneven and that the agendas of urban and rural communities, such as the Czech and Slovak enclave in the remote Chaco region, had significantly differed (p. 48).

The book can also be read as a testimony of vibrant migration flows from the Czech lands, Slovakia, and Ruthenia to Argentina (and sometimes back). This subject had been studied by this author (as well as other scholars) before,⁸ but in the present volume Hingarová pays special attention to the

transnational mobility after the Second World War. In this context, she describes the Argentinian exile of a group of influential Slovak separatists who decided to emigrate just as the Cold War was starting. It is a fascinating reading (Part I, sections 5.1–5.3).

After the Second World War, about one thousand Czechs and Slovaks have responded to the active re-immigration policy of the Czechoslovak state and left Argentina to re-settle the Sudeten region after the expulsion of the German-speaking population (p. 73). In the opposite direction, several hundred new Slovak immigrants came to Buenos Aires from Italy. Compared to the existing diaspora in Argentina, they formed a radically different immigrant group: most were former high officials and sympathisers of the war-time Slovak State, such as Ferdinand Ďurčanský and Rudolf Dilong. Immediately after the end of the war, they found refuge in Italy and in 1947, they headed to Argentina, the Peronist regime would shield them from prosecution for their war-time activities.

Hingarová demonstrates how these postwar arrivals, mostly Catholic and nationalist radicals, caused a disruption in the existing Slovak associations in Argentina. They wasted no time and started attacking the Slovak periodicals that had a clear pro-Czechoslovak stance (pp. 87–88). At the same time, the political engagement and transnational networking abilities of these new arrivals brought about a boom in Slovak publishing activities in Argentina: no less than a dozen Slovak-language journals were launched in Argentina in 1945–1958 (p. 93).

All in all, the results of new research presented in the form of a systematically ordered registry of periodicals published by Czechs and Slovaks in Argentina and the accompanying essay form a significant and laudable contribution to the existing knowledge with a clear analytical potential. Thanks to this book, we are now aware of a large body of source materials that would deserve further and deeper analysis and interpretation. And while Chapter 6 (pp. 103–110) presents a brief sketch of possible future research agendas, the present volume leaves this analytical potential largely unexploited.

This, I believe, will be a task for the next stage of research in this area. The range of potential topics is broad. For instance, it would be interesting to conduct a discourse analysis of periodicals as a way of understanding the shifting forms of belonging among Czech and Slovak immigrants to Argentina and the process of gradual assimilation,

⁸ Vendula HINGAROVÁ, “La emigración checoslovaca a Argentina en el Archivo de la Cancillería Checa – estudio de fuentes”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia, Supplementum* 37, 2014, pp. 241–263; idem, “The Czech and Slovak Emigration to Argentina in the Archive of the Náprstek Museum in Prague”, *Ibero-Americana Pragensia, Supplementum* XLV/1, 2017, pp. 101–118.

which might eventually lead to a comparative study of Czech and Slovak diasporas in Argentina and in the USA (which were previously analysed by Alena Jaklová).⁹ Worth a deeper exploration are also the evolving attitudes of urban and rural papers vis-à-vis the host society and to the prospect of naturalisation in Argentina in the course of the twentieth century or the intergenerational shifts between the first, second, and later generations of Czech and Slovak immigrants in Argentina as mirrored through the papers published in Argentina. Finally, it might be worth investigating to what extent the agendas set by *Čechoslovenský zpravodaj*, *Noticioso checoslovaco*, *Juhoamerický Slovák*, *Slovenské zvesti pre Slovákov v Južnej Amerike*, and *Naša zem* mirrored the agenda of the Czechoslovak state, of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, or Slovak separatism.

It is safe to conclude that the communities of Czechs and Slovaks who engaged in a variety of publishing activities in Argentina in the course of the twentieth century prove Anderson's thesis correct. Publications in the national languages helped them forge a sense of unity and shared identity far away from their land of origin. The periodicals published in Czech and Slovak in Argentina between 1907 and 2003 are a clear testimony of the continued sense of the 'imagined' national belonging of their editors and readers spanning several generations and stretching beyond the immediate geographical boundaries of interaction.

by Kateřina Březinová¹⁰, Prague
(Written in English by the author)

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⁹ Alena JAKLOVÁ, *Čechoamerická periodika 19. a 20. století* [Czech-American periodicals of the 19th and 20th centuries], Praha 2010; idem, *Národnostní a sociálně-ekonomická sebereflexe českých přistěhovalců v čechoamerických periodikách 19. a 20. století* [National and socio-economic self-reflection of Czech immigrants in Czech-American periodicals of the 19th and 20th centuries], Praha 2006.

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Lukáš Perutka, *La sociedad checa y México, 1821–1939* [Czech society and Mexico, 1821–1939], Prague: Karolinum, 2023, 398 pp. ISBN 978-80-246-5801-8¹¹

The distance between London and Prague is just a little over 1,000 kilometres but that did not deter Neville Chamberlain, the ill-famed British prime minister, from uttering one of the most unfortunate and ominous statements of the twentieth century: "How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing."

On the other hand, while there are almost 10,000 kilometres between Mexico City and Prague, this geographical and cultural gap did not prevent prominent members of President Lazaro Cárdenas's brain trust, such as Ramón Beteta or Isidro Fabela, from taking keen interest in the distant Central European republic as a conceivable political, economic, and cultural partner amidst a sea of international hostility, crass imperialism, and rising totalitarianism. So much so, that in 1936 the main avenue of Polanco, a posh district of Mexico City, was named in honour of President Masaryk, then recently deceased first president of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Nevertheless, the Czech historian Lukáš Perutka debunks the romanticised notion that Cárdenas's administration bravely defended Czechoslovakia from Nazi aggression, and sets the record straight. Aside from this, however, Czech-Mexican relations stretch back almost half a millennium, as Perutka painstakingly and impressively shows in the present volume. The relations go as far back as the Conquest of Mexico, when Johann Berger, a soldier from the Silesian town of Hotzenplotz (present day Osoblaha) who was known to his comrades as 'Juan Alemán', actively participated in Hernán Cortés's exploits.

This is most decidedly a highly ambitious work that fulfils its promise. It is an important contribution to our knowledge of the ties between the two countries. While building on and contributing to a growing corpus of works on this subject, it also brings many novel insights (as will be shown).

¹¹ Accesible de: <https://karolinum.cz/knihy/perutka-la-sociedad-checa-y-mexico-1821-1939-29761>.

The book focuses on a period stretching between 1821, when Mexico achieved independence, and 1939, when Czechoslovakia was dismembered and partly annexed to the Third Reich. Its main focus just spans a little over a century. It should be noted, though, that because Czechoslovakia was formed as a separate entity only after 1918, the author rather speaks about 'Czech society' when defining and referring to the object of his study.

The book is divided in six chapters, an epilogue, and a final section that summarises the conclusions. The first chapter deals with Mexican independence and reactions to it in Bohemia and Moravia up to 1860. During this period, contacts were limited, and Czech impressions of the newly independent republic were based largely on Czech and German translations and summaries of news coming from English, French, Spanish, and American sources that appeared in various dailies in Prague and Brno. It should be noted that Metternich's stern censorship made sure that subversive liberal, Enlightened, or republican ideas did not reach the Austrian Empire. Still, events such as the secession of Texas from Mexico, the Pastry War, or the Mexican-American War captured the interest of educated Czech and German middle class in both Bohemia and Moravia. In this section, the author also traces the lives and exploits of Czechs who emigrated to Mexico or travelled there.

The newly independent Mexican Republic established diplomatic ties with the Austrian Empire in late 1843 by signing a Treaty of Friendship, Trade, and Navigation. This was a somewhat lengthy process, because Metternich did not want to establish official relations before Spain did. Yet even after the treaty was signed, Vienna and Mexico City did not exchange diplomatic envoys, which fortunately did not stand in the way of economic exchange. The most important goods imported by Austria (in the order of importance) were cochineal, vanilla, sticks, various colonial fruits, furs, and medicinal products. The most important exports to Mexico were beads, bar and wrought steel, ornaments, furniture, pianos and other musical instruments, carriages, ropes for ships, tools and implements made of various metals, rifles, cannons, and both white and marbled soap. Bohemian glass was also highly appreciated.

The second chapter deals with the ill-fated Mexican adventure of Maximilian of Habsburg. In this context, it is noted that alongside the French

troops arriving with the emperor, there also came an army of volunteers, and that included numerous Bohemians and Moravians. The adventures of Maximilian of Habsburg in Mexico and the Czech volunteers who accompanied him in his tragic venture were a milestone in the history of Czech-Mexican relations. Along with the about 7,200 volunteers from the Czech Lands, about a third of whom came from Moravia, there also came military bands that introduced the polka to Mexico.

During the brief Habsburg rule in Mexico, exchange with the Austrian Empire – including the Czech Lands – had significantly increased. Not surprisingly, restoration of the Mexican republic after Maximilian's execution by a firing squad in 1867 had put an end to this commercial exchange. Still, while many of the abovementioned volunteers returned to Europe, others decided to remain in Mexico.

Chapter three investigates the fortunes of Czech travellers and adventurers who explored Mexico, while the following fourth chapter deals with the reestablishment of official contacts between Austria-Hungary and Mexico, tracing their development from the Belle Epoque until the outbreak of the Great War. It is also noted that in the 1880s, there were various attempts to reestablish contacts between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Mexican Republic but they that were systematically blocked by Emperor Franz Joseph himself. Ultimately, it was a Czech, František Kaszka, who played a key role in negotiations that led to the restoration of official ties in April 1901. Afterwards, there was established a regular service of an Austrian shipping line connecting Trieste with Veracruz and other Mexican ports, although this eventually gave way to a more efficient route from Hamburg. The book also describes the extent to which the nascent Mexican brewing industry was indebted to the Czech beer brewing expertise and resources, with malt and hops coming straight from Bohemia, a region which, not surprisingly, gave its name to one Mexico's best-known and most appreciated beers. But first the Mexican Revolution and then the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 had ended these ties.

The new state of Czechoslovakia was proclaimed at the end of October 1918 with Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk at the helm. This signalled a new stage in bilateral relations, which is the subject of the fifth chapter. In 1922, Czechoslovakia and

Mexico have formally established diplomatic ties. They opened general consulates, rather than legations, in Prague and in the Mexico City, whereby the former was headed by Vladimír Smetana. Czechoslovak export increased 50% in the first year of Smetana's tenure. For the following five years, however, Smetana received little attention from Prague. This ultimately led to his resignation, clearly motivated by frustration: he had repeatedly requested funding and directions from the Tuscan Palace, the seat of Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry – to no avail.

In late 1927, Smetana was replaced by Jan Brož, who apparently found the consulate on the verge of collapse. At this time, Prague decided to elevate the consulate to the status of legation, perhaps because Mexico had done so for its consulate in Prague a little earlier. But this proved to be of a merely ceremonial significance, because the Great Depression began to bite. All in all, Brož seems to have achieved little. In 1931, he was hastily recalled and replaced by Jan Potůček, a diplomat with little experience, who arrived in Mexico City in April 1932. This appointment only further worsened the condition of what seemed to be an already weakened bond: he stayed barely one year and resigned his mission from abroad in an undignified and not very diplomatic manner. Afterwards, the first secretary Vladimír Krupka headed the legation as an interim *chargé d'affaires* but his tenure was even shorter, because he committed suicide in May 1932. Then the Czechoslovak legation in Mexico City remained without a formally appointed head and it was only with the arrival of Vlastimil Kybal in mid-1935 that relations between the two countries could finally take off in earnest.

The author pays special attention to the development of bilateral Czech-Mexican relations during the interwar period. Perutka also contributes significantly to our knowledge of Mexican diplomacy in Prague by a thorough analysis of the efforts of Mexican diplomats Enrique Santibañez and Leopoldo Blásquez (1922–1934), thus shedding light on a hitherto little studied phase of Czechoslovak-Mexican relations. All in all, this period was marked by an increase of bilateral trade, Czechoslovak migration to Mexico, and Mexican interest in purchasing weapons made by the Škoda Complex of Pilsen.

During the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940), the bilateral relations were at their perhaps strongest point but, so far, there exist only

a handful of one-sided and fragmented studies from the Mexican perspective. This state of research is undoubtedly due to the insurmountable obstacle that the Czech language poses to most Mexicans and, for that matter, to English-speaking scholars. This crucial episode of Czechoslovak–Mexican relations is the subject of chapter six, which is dedicated to the special connection that emerged between Cárdenas and Vlastimil Kybal, and contributes much to our understanding of that specific period. Perutka's in-depth analysis of Agustín Leñero's demarche in Prague is especially relevant and I believe it will be often quoted.

The triangulation carried out by Mexican agents who re-exported Czech weapons made by the Škoda Complex to the Spanish Republic during the Civil War is a fascinating episode in the history of mutual relations between Czechoslovakia and Mexico. Unfortunately, it is proving extremely difficult to properly document and describe: both because it was a clandestine operation and, secondly, because Czechoslovak resources were used rarely if at all. Nevertheless, Perutka offers a fresh and novel perspective on the matter.

Perutka's book ends with a sad epilogue describing the relations between Mexico and the rump state of Czechoslovakia after the infamous Munich Agreement of 30 September 1938, that is, during the period between 1 October 1938 and 15 March 1939, when the remaining territory of Bohemia and Moravia was occupied by the German forces and Slovakia split away as a separate Nazi vassal state under the leadership of Jozef Tiso. Perutka shows that, contrary to a widespread belief, Cárdenas's government did not condemn the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. This question can now be considered settled. During this time, a number of Czechoslovak citizens sought a political asylum in Mexico, because their state seemed doomed even before the outbreak of the war. One of these was Jan Bažant, a future prominent Mexican scholar, who arrived in 1937, befriended Trotsky, and went on to become a renowned Mexican historian.

This book is based on thorough research in both Czech and Mexican archives, especially those of the respective foreign ministries, the national archives of the two countries, but also several regional, Austrian, and German collections and records. Perutka's book is the result of a thorough and comprehensive effort. It is a significant contribution to our knowledge of bilateral

relations between the two countries. It is destined to become a valued resource used by scholars who specialise in international relations and contemporary history, but also the wider public. Perutka's command of Spanish and his style are outstanding and admirable. This book is a carefully crafted piece of historiography: it flows effortlessly and is a pleasure to read. I can heartily recommend it to scholars and the general public alike.

by Mario Ojeda Revah¹² (*Ciudad de México*)
(Written in English by the author)

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Jonathan Singerton, *The American Revolution and the Habsburg Monarchy*, Charlottesville/London: University of Virginia Press, 2021, 390 pp. ISBN 978-0-8139-4832-8

La obra reseñada presenta un análisis detallado sobre el impacto de la Revolución norteamericana en el Imperio Habsburgo, y el involucramiento tanto de las élites políticas como de los comerciantes e intelectuales en los asuntos de los Estados Unidos en los primeros años de su existencia. Basado en un prolongado estudio de fuentes, Jonathan Singerton reexamina la habitual narrativa de la historia norteamericana. La bibliografía es impresionante, contiene numerosos archivos de Austria, Bélgica, Croacia, Dinamarca, Eslovaquia, Francia, Gran Bretaña, Hungría, Italia, República Checa, y Suecia, sin mencionar las fuentes publicadas en otras lenguas.

En su libro se muestra de modo persuasivo que, por un lado, la Revolución fue producto de las particularidades de la colonización británica en el suelo del Nuevo Mundo, así como de inspiración debida a los ilustrados franceses, y que también fue fruto de las aspiraciones políticas y comerciales producidas en varias partes de Europa. Por otro lado, el libro esclarece cómo varios actores en el Imperio Habsburgo, un estado en el centro-oriente del continente europeo, aparentemente absorbido en sus propios asuntos, pero con intereses globales extensivos demostrados desde el periodo anterior, se veían amenazados por la

entrada de un nuevo competidor en el orden internacional, y por las peligrosas ideas políticas promovidas por este. Sin embargo, también se sentían atraídos por las nuevas oportunidades comerciales y la posibilidad de fortalecer su posición a nivel europeo y global a través de la cooperación con los norteamericanos.

El autor va de la historia política y diplomática hacia la historia de las ideas, la historia económica, la historia naval y la historia de la vida cotidiana, de esa forma, consigue entrelazar estos enfoques para crear una imagen compleja y dinámica de las relaciones de dos poderes a través del Atlántico, el “viejo” y el “joven”. El libro se centra en el periodo entre 1776 y 1795, y llama la atención sobre los procesos de largo plazo, al igual que las consecuencias de los precipitados eventos de estas dos décadas. Asimismo, muestra con claridad que el impacto de la Revolución norteamericana dejó huellas profundas y de largo alcance sobre el Imperio Habsburgo y sus partes constituyentes, huellas que continuaron manifestándose a través de todo el siglo XIX.

La detallada investigación de archivo del autor brindó numerosos hallazgos. Se puede mencionar, entre otros, la persuasiva argumentación acerca del hecho de que la monarquía de los Habsburgo ciertamente no era, por lo menos en la fase inicial, inequívocamente un “poder reaccionario”. Al contrario, afirma Singerton, hubo numerosos individuos, incluidos los que ocupaban posiciones superiores en el gobierno y en la corte (y de hecho también miembros de la familia imperial), que por varias razones percibían positivamente la causa americana. Se entremezclan en la narrativa figuras prominentes y notorias, como Jan Ingenhousz, con otras hasta el momento oscuras y desconocidas para los historiadores como el joven y ambicioso médico Joseph Cauffman (pp. 64-66). Otro tema fascinante es la narrativa de cómo la “guerra por [la] independencia americana tuvo lugar en el Mediterráneo y en el Mar Norte” por medio de escaramuzas entre los contrabandistas de armas y la flota británica, y el persistente esfuerzo de los Habsburgo por mantener la neutralidad con respecto a sus propias actividades comerciales navales; también los empeños diplomáticos de los norteamericanos en Viena, que a pesar del fracaso inmediato sirvieron para establecer las bases para el futuro; o la bizarra descripción del encuentro del primer enviado habsburgo en los Estados Unidos, Baron Frederick Eugene de Beelen-Berthloff, con

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los líderes de la tribu nativa de oneidas, para explorar la posibilidad de ampliar relaciones comerciales de la monarquía en Norteamérica (p. 166).

Importantes como son estos resultados parciales y, bien documentados, sin duda servirán para desarrollar análisis históricos especializados. Lo más estimulante es el conjunto, la concepción del libro, que lo hace una fuente inspiradora para los lectores más allá del campo de la historia de los Estados Unidos o la historia centroeuropea. En su ya clásica deliberación acerca del concepto y métodos de la historia global, Sebastian Conrad advirtió: “El interés en examinar fenómenos transfronterizos quizás no es nuevo en sí mismo, pero ahora se plantea un nuevo reto. Aspira a cambiar el terreno en el que piensan los historiadores.”¹³ Jonathan Singerton, como se observa en este libro, aceptó el desafío. Mostró claramente en su monografía qué debe significar este “nuevo modo de pensar” sobre las interconexiones a escala mundial, y los efectos de los procesos globales a desarrollos muy concretos, aparentemente aislados en contextos locales.

Markéta Křížová¹⁴ (Praga)
(Escrito en español por la autora)

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Exhibition *FIRST AMERICANS – Honouring Indigenous Resilience and Creativity: On the Wave of Indigenous Futurisms*¹⁵
(Leiden: Wereldmuseum Museum, until 2 July 2023)

When I visited the Dutch National Museum of Ethnography in Leiden (renamed Wereldmuseum in 2023) in 2020, I expected to encounter a familiar ethnographic script: collections of objects from the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania presented

through generalized narratives of cultural difference, accompanied by descriptive labels that provided contextual information while largely avoiding structural critique of colonial power relations.

My previous visits to exhibitions in ethnographic museums had rarely gone beyond this pattern, and I had consistently found attempts at decolonization limited to partial gestures rather than genuine epistemic transformation. In this context, the *First Americans* exhibition represented a notable intervention, seeking a more substantive engagement with Indigenous perspectives.

According to the official text, the exhibition foregrounded Indigenous resilience, creativity, and self-representation. Rather than organizing artworks strictly along geographical or chronological lines, the curatorial structure was thematic, focusing on history, survivance, and futurity. Objects from the museum’s collections were placed in dialogue with contemporary Indigenous art, photography, fashion, and design, thereby disrupting the conventional temporal divide that had previously confined Indigenous cultures to a premodern past – a limitation that ethnographic museums often reproduce by overlooking ongoing contemporary artistic production. By juxtaposing historical and contemporary works, the exhibition challenged the ethnographic tendency to depict Indigenous peoples as static or anachronistic, highlighting their ongoing presence, agency, and cultural production.

At the same time, the exhibition’s decolonial ambitions revealed certain tensions. Most notably, the historical objects were displayed with little to no information regarding their provenance or the conditions under which they had entered the museum’s collection. Given the exhibition’s explicit engagement with colonial violence and Indigenous dispossession, this omission could not be dismissed as merely technical. It pointed to a persistent institutional reluctance to confront questions of ownership, extraction, and epistemic authority that remained central to any genuinely decolonial museological practice.

A particularly strong aspect of the exhibition lay in its engagement with Indigenous and Chicana futurisms. Drawing on artists primarily from Indigenous communities across what is now the United States, as well as creators of Mexican descent living in the country, the exhibition presented futurism not as escapist speculation but as a critical and political practice. Through media ranging from

¹³ S. CONRAD, *What is Global History?* Princeton 2016, p. 4. (An interest in examining cross-border phenomena may not in itself be new, but now it stakes a new claim. It means to change the terrain on which historians think.)

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¹⁵ Véase <https://leiden.wereldmuseum.nl/en/whats-on/exhibitions/first-americans>.

graphic art and digital games to textile and fashion design, these works mobilized science fiction to reimagine Indigenous pasts, presents, and futures beyond linear, Eurocentric conceptions of time. Indigenous futurisms here functioned as a space for reworking historical trauma, including colonization and genocide, without reducing Indigenous experience to narratives of victimhood.

Importantly, the exhibition resisted framing Indigenous history solely through the lens of loss. Alongside references to colonial violence, it recalled moments of Indigenous political mobilization, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, situating contemporary artistic practices within longer genealogies of resistance and activism. In this way, Indigenous peoples were presented not as passive subjects of historical processes but as political agents whose struggles took multiple forms.

Across the works on display, resistance emerged as a heterogeneous set of practices. These ranged from armed opposition, exemplified by Pueblo resistance to Spanish military and missionary expansion, to cultural strategies aimed at undermining settler colonial hegemony through the preservation, transformation, and continued

production of Indigenous knowledge systems and aesthetic forms. By foregrounding such strategies, the exhibition demonstrated that Indigenous cultures had not merely survived but had actively asserted their presence and reshaped dominant cultural narratives, engaging with popular culture on their own terms rather than being immobilized as relics of a vanishing past.

Although the exhibition did not fully escape the structural constraints of ethnographic museums, it demonstrated how such institutions could present Indigenous peoples in ways that recognize their agency, self-representation, and active engagement in shaping and sustaining their cultural practices. By centering Indigenous voices and artistic practices, the display marked a significant departure from conventional museum approaches, even as its silences around provenance highlighted the persistent limits of decolonial interventions within established institutional frameworks.

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(Written in English by the author)*

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