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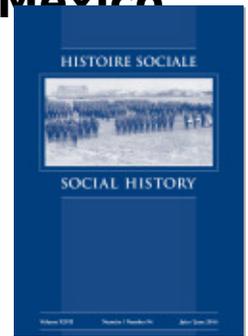
Chimalpahin's Conquest: A Nahuatl Historian's Rewriting of Francisco López de Gómara's *La conquista de México* (review)

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Public Sphere [Boston: MIT Press, 1992]; and Simon Morgan, “‘A Sort of Land debatable’: Female Influence, Civic Virtue and Middle Class Identity, c. 1830–c. 1860,” *Women’s History Review*, vol. 13, no. 2 [2004], pp.183–209). “Public” could be restricted to anything involving the state — taverns thus would have been public for the reason they were licensed premises — or it could apply to all that was shared or common to society as a whole. This also fitted taverns very well, but this “public” inevitably included women, non-white people, and members of the “lower sort.” It could refer to the sites of social, cultural, and discursive production — in which case the opposite term was not private, but solitary — and again this “public” did not exclude women, although it may have excluded lower-class people or racial minorities. All these definitions account for the tavern life described by the author. Jane Rendall’s conclusion that “[a] single version of the public sphere is insufficient to allow us to understand the complicated variety of ways in which women might identify with communities which stretched far beyond the borders — whatever they were — of home and family” (“Women and the Public Sphere,” p. 482) fits perfectly here. The British historiography of the “middling sort,” pertinent here because Upper Canadians belonged to this socio-economic strata and because the time frame is almost the same, similarly depicts women engaged in a wide range of gendered activities in public and private spaces, without being deemed out of their “spheres.” (See Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business 1700–1850* [Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2006]; Hannah Barker, *The Business of Women, Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England, 1760–1830* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006]; Margaret Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680–1780* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996]; and Simon Morgan, *A Victorian Woman’s Place. Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century* [London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007].)

This (long) caveat apart, the book is very informative and contributes significantly to our understanding of Upper-Canadian forms of sociability, community life, non-agricultural economic activities, and communications.

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SCHROEDER, Susan, Anne J. CRUZ, Cristián ROA-DE-LA-CARRERA, and David E. TAVÁREZ (eds and trans.) — *Chimalpahin’s Conquest: A Nahuatl Historian’s Rewriting of Francisco López de Gómara’s La conquista de México*, by Domingo Francisco de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010. Pp. 510.

Chimalpahin’s Conquest is an English translation of a uniquely hybrid colonial text from central Mexico. In the early 1600s the Nahuatl annalist Domingo Francisco de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin transcribed *La conquista de México* (1552), a widely popular history of the so-called “conquest” of Mexico-

Tenochtitlan written by the sixteenth-century Spanish humanist Francisco López de Gómara. Instead of merely reproducing the history word for word, Chimalpahin deleted some words and phrases, made a few corrections, and added several commentaries on indigenous life and customs. His final text — translated by Susan Schroeder, Anne J. Cruz, Cristián Roa-de-la-Carrera, and David E. Tavárez (a team of specialists in Nahuatl and Spanish historiography) — provides a fascinating look into the world of indigenous scholarship.

Three preliminary essays introduce the manuscript and authorship of *Chimalpahin's Conquest*. In the first, Schroeder describes the eighteenth-century copy of Chimalpahin's holograph (known as the Browning Manuscript) and the approach taken to translate it. Tavárez, in the second, examines Chimalpahin's modifications to *La conquista de México*, arguing that he was "the equal of a legendary Spanish chronicler in intellectual and discursive terms" (p. 29). In the third, Roa-de-la-Carrera analyses the life and work of López de Gómara, suggesting that, instead of excluding Indians from the "conquest," he "unintentionally created a common ground wherein a Nahuatl historian such as Chimalpahin could claim a stake in this history" (p. 43).

Since Chimalpahin was for the most part a faithful copyist, the general narrative of *La conquista de México* is still present in *Chimalpahin's Conquest*. One can follow the life of the conquistador Hernán Cortés from the cradle to the grave, principally his exploits in the siege of Mexico-Tenochtitlan and later in Central America. López de Gómara unabashedly expresses his admiration for the conquistador, presenting him as a herald of the Christian gospel (pp. 218–220) and as a warrior who performed feats more daring than any "Greek or Roman" (p. 215) without "the slightest sign of cowardice" (p. 136). Although López de Gómara's relationship with Cortés is uncertain, he clearly drew upon his letters and testimony to write his history, defending his seigneurial goals by claiming that he "did not receive the respect that he deserved" (p. 415) and that his "exploits were worthy of a Roman reward" (p. 426). Near the end of his history he included 49 chapters on indigenous customs, based primarily on the work of the Franciscan friar Toribio de Benavente Motolinía. The content of López de Gómara's history, however, worried the crown because it openly expressed the feudal aspirations of the conquistadors. In 1553 the Council of the Indies banned his text from publication, and in 1566 King Philip II prohibited its reading in Spain and America.

Despite these royal prohibitions, Chimalpahin still read through *La conquista de México*, and the changes he made to the text in his transcription are highly suggestive. He highlights his own personal history by expanding upon his native *altepetl* ("ethnic state") of Amecameca Chalco (p. 177) and by referencing the "church of our Lord San Antón" (p. 314) in Mexico City, where he lived and worked. Several of his insertions reveal the mind of a Nahuatl Christian who had internalized various aspects of Catholicism. Chimalpahin refers to the street that "leads to Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe" (p. 324) and to "a saint" who left "crosses to their ancestors" (p. 170). Further, he speaks of the "rituals" and "ministers of the devil" (pp. 197, 210), accepting the "conquest" as the providential "will of

the Almighty God” (p. 245). In certain cases he describes the natural beauty of central Mexico, specifically the “good province” of Xochimilco (p. 181) and the “nearby garden” of Chapultepec (p. 182). From some of his references it is clear that Chimalpahin was also well-read. He claims that the Chichimeca were “courageous like the Arabs” (p. 145); he references the “god of Bacchus” in ancient Spain (p. 158); and he says that Cortés was “another Alexander the Great in his munificence” (p. 307). Other additions focus on indigenous customs. Chimalpahin details the artisanship of the Mexica (p. 184), and he provides an explanation of the “*texamatl* leaves” used to make paper (p. 126). But a significant amount of his insertions deal with indigenous nobility, the most interesting example being the extended list he includes of Indian nobles who were taken to Spain with Cortés (p. 420).

Chimalpahin's Conquest places all of Chimalpahin's deletions in brackets and his additions in bold letters. The hybrid nature of his transcription is easily followed, and the translation reads smoothly. Although Lesley Byrd Simpson had already translated López de Gómara's history into English in 1964, he edited out all of the chapters in *La conquista de México* that deal with indigenous customs. This important section forms part of *Chimalpahin's Conquest*, but it is unfortunate that the final 23 chapters of López de Gómara's history were not included, even though they are missing from the Browning Manuscript. Despite the fact that there are helpful footnotes, a glossary, and a bibliography, it is a shame that a map indicating the plethora of place names in the text was not included to guide the reader through the itinerary of “conquest.” Notwithstanding these minor criticisms, Schroeder, Cruz, Roa-de-la-Carrera, and Tavárez have produced a fine piece of scholarship that further complicates the Spanish narrative of the “conquest” of Mexico-Tenochtitlan. *Chimalpahin's Conquest* highlights the multi-ethnic voices of the colonial era in one text, forcing one to move beyond the “vision of the vanquished” and some of the other “myths of the conquest” to see indigenous people as conquerors in their own right.

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SMITH, Helmut Walser — *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. 246.

German historians once routinely built their explanations of the Third Reich and its genocidal policies on the foundations of deep historical continuities. In their narratives of the Nazi regression into barbarism, they variously emphasized the legacies of late mediaeval anti-Semitism, the inherited traditions of Prussian militarism, the enduring streams of post-Enlightenment “anti-modernism,” or the persistence of pre-industrial, anti-democratic aristocratic elites and Germany's