

The Institution of Slave-Bathing

Informaciones acerca de los "esclavos lavados" en relatos como los de Sahagún, Durán y Torquemada subrayan las actividades de ciertos traficantes de Tenochtitlan quienes "lavaban" o "purificaban" esclavos para sacrificarlos al dios que representaban. Estos no eran cautivos extranjeros sino naturales de los pueblos en donde se celebraban las ceremonias. Aunque dichos mercaderes figuraban más conspicuamente, de hecho les imitaban varias otras agrupaciones sociales en el pueblo náhuatl. A causa de su origen, sus atavíos y su presentación al público, probablemente el sacrificio de los "esclavos lavados" importaba más al pueblo que el de los más numerosos cautivos.

War captives, it is well known, were the victims whom the Aztecs offered up to the gods in greatest numbers. Whether they were actually all captured in battle is not precisely stated; that they might have included some individuals sent as tribute by conquered cities is perhaps hinted when Sahagún (1950-1957, II: 46) opens his account of the Tlacaxipeualiztli festival by saying that all the captives - yn ixquich malli - died, men, women, and all the children - yn oquichtli, in cioatl, in ixqujch piltzintli. But others besides captives died in that same celebration, Durán (1951, II: 148 f.) tells us: noblemen brought forth a number of slaves, each from a different calpulli, impersonating Tonatiuh (referred to here as "el sol"), Uitzilopochtli, Quetzalcoatl, Macuilxochitl, Chililico, Tlacauapan, Ixtliltzin, and Mayauel, gods of the noblemen of the main calpullis ("dioses de los principales de los barrios más señalados"),



and sacrificed them in the usual way. Such especially bought slaves, "bathed" or "purified" to impersonate gods to whom they would be sacrificed, though much fewer than the war captives, nevertheless were of considerable importance in these events. What we know about them comes mostly from accounts of the activities of pre-Hispanic merchants, though it must be admitted that they tell us more about the bathers than the bathed. For them the standard procedures and rituals were more elaborate and spectacular than for the typical sacrificed warrior, and attended by greater honors paid the victim.

The following summarizes what we are told of the bathed ones' last days by Sahagún (1950-1957, II: 130 ff.; IX: Chaps. 10-14 inc.) and Durán (1951, II: 104-257 passim). Some time - probably 40 days or more - before the sacrificial rite (Sahagún 1950-1957, II: 155; Durán 1951, II: 120), the merchant went to the slave market in A:capotzalco or the one in Itzocan (Durán 1951, II: 121, 128 f.) to buy the slave or slaves he intended to contribute. These were the most perfect men or women possible, well proportioned and unblemished physically, and, preferably, alert, intelligent, correct in speech, and skilled in dance and song. For a really good specimen the merchant would pay 40 large cotton cloths (quachtli); for a merely acceptable one, 30 such cloths. The slaves were subsequently washed or sprinkled with water to become bathed ones (tlaahtiltin), or, as Durán puts it, purified ones. Accounts vary as to what this bathing or purification consisted of. Durán (1951, II: 120 f.), speaking of one purchased by Cholulan merchants to impersonate (1) Quetzalcoatl, says that he was purified by being twice washed in the gods' water ("el agua de los dioses") and that the priests did this because he had been bought and was thus cleansed of the blemish of his captivity. The Códice Ramírez (Orozco y Berra 1944: 157) speaks of his being twice bathed in the gods' lake ("el lago . . . de los dioses"). Sahagún, in one place (1950-1957, II: 130 f.), says that the old men of the calpulli, having brought the water from Uitzilopochco, where in a cave there was a spring called Uitzilatl, the hummingbird waters, sprinkled the slaves with it at the base of the Temple of Uitzilopochtli before they were given their ritually prescribed paper adornments. Elsewhere, however (1950-1957, II: 155), he says that the slave-bathers bathed their victims continually with warm water until they were to die (caltia, atotonjltica in ixqujchcavitl mjqujtih); the Spanish text (Sahagún 1956, I: 226) says that this was one of the means of fattening them. Quite likely all these explanations are to be taken seriously. Quite likely purification was an important reason for the washing. Durán (1951, II: 223 f.) tells us that a slave who, observing the traditional procedures, had successfully escaped from his buyer in the market place, would go to the slave-purifiers ("purificadores de esclavos") and demand to be purified; his head and feet would be washed and he would be given new clothing; the ruler ("señor") would then declare him free. And Sahagún writes (1950-1957, IV: 91) that on the day sign One Dog, the unjustly enslaved were free and, immediately, "were bathed" - or bathed themselves - "there at Chapultepec, each one; thus they set aside their faults" (iguac niman vmpa onmaaltia, in chapultepec, injc qujncoa, intlacul).

Taken to their owner's home, the slaves were by night confined in a wooden hut or cage (quauhcalli in Sahagún's Nahuatl texts; "jaula" in Durán's Spanish) and let out by day. When the merchant was ready to give the first of a series of four elaborate banquets accompanied by lavish gift-giving to important noblemen and merchants, he arrayed his slaves in costumes, ornaments, and body paint appropriate to the gods whom they impersonated, exhibited them to his guests, and had them frequent public places as they sang and danced, smoked tobacco tubes, smelt the flowers which they wore and carried, and received the attention and honors due the gods whom they impersonated.

In theory such slaves were, apparently, expected to act as or thought of as being willing, even anxiously joyful participants in a spectacular, dramatic liturgy; and on the whole, the descriptions lead us to believe that they often actually so behaved. On the other hand, we remember, they were locked up at night and carefully attended and watched by day (Durán 1951, II: 120), and in addition Durán (1951, II: 117) tells us that if one of them were to escape, the responsible guard would have to take his place. The impression of happiness or joyfulness appears to have been important; if it was lacking, Durán says in discussing the Cholulan merchants' display of their impersonator of Quetzalcoatl, they considered it an omen of evil to come – "tenianlo por muy mal aguero y pronostico de algun mal futuro" (1951, II: 121); Sahagún gives an instance as he describes the pains which the physicians and midwives took to "banish her sad thoughts, her sorrows", when they brought forth the impersonator of Teteo Innan (1950-1957, II: 110 f.):

"intla chocaz ... tlatezaviz ...
mjeac iaumjuqjz, in quauhtli ocelutl:
anoço mjequjntin mocioaquetzazque".

"... if she should weep ... it
would be an omen of evil. ...
many men who were dexterous
as warriors would die in war,
or ... many women would die
in childbed."

Hence, it would seem, as the time to die approached, measures might be taken to prevent such a calamity. For example, the impersonator of Xilonen was always kept intoxicated or stupefied ("siempre enbriagada fuera de su natural juicio") with bino (no doubt pulque), with or aside from some sort of magic spell – "no se que hechigos" (Durán 1951, II: 172). The magic spell or hechigo by which she was continually stupefied was probably the ytzpacalatl told of in Durán's account of the merchants' presentation of the impersonator of Quetzalcoatl (1951, II: 121), which he describes as [obsidian] "knife-wash-water" ("lauças de cuchillo") used for making a bowl of cacao, on drinking which he gave himself to his death with great joy and contentment ("con mucha alegría y contento se ofrecia a la muerte"). It may well also have contained a much stronger intoxicant than either cacao or the stale blood washed off of sacrificial knives; Sahagún also mentions its being administered to the merchants' and the featherworkers' bathed slaves during the feast of Panquetzalitzli (itzpatlactli, itzpactli; Sahagún 1950-1957, IX: 63, 87). Further, he adds (1950-1957, IX: 87 f.) that when the featherworkers gave it to their victims:

"ic quiniolpolaia ... inic amo momauhtizque: in icoac quimel-tetequize. ... ça monomatlecauaia, motlalotitleco in icpac ... coneleuia, conmonectia ..."

"by means of it they deprived them of their senses ... so that no longer would they be afraid at the time that they cut open their breasts. ... quite of their own wills they climbed - ran - up to the top [of the temple] ... longing for - seeking - [death]."

As for the merchants,

"quimoxalaquia (2), ompa quioalitia in itzpatlactli, iehoatl in quitoaia teuctli. ... uel ic ihuintique" (Sahagún 1950-1957, IX: 63).

"they had [their victims] perform the xalaquia [sand-entering] ceremony. There they made them drink the obsidian-knife-wash-water. This they called the god's pulque. ... they were, in fact, quite intoxicated by it."

From this passage it can be argued that the sand-entering ceremony (xal-quia) either accompanied the drinking of obsidian-knife-wash-water or was a term which meant the same thing, as Garibay appears to infer in translating quim on xalaquia ompa quioalitia itzpatlactli as "los metfan en arena (es decir), les daban a beber las lavazas de la piedra del sacrificio" (Sahagún 1961: 146 f.). On this basis I think it highly probable that the four instances of entering the sand enumerated by Sahagún in Book II (1950-1957, II: 97, 127, 133, 150) imply that such a potion was at those times also given the victims for the purpose already stated.

Thus they behaved over a span of time which Sahagún does not exactly specify in accounts which he applies clearly to bathed victims; perhaps 20 or 40 days are likely figures. Durán (1951, II: 219), considering a number of instances, mentions time spans of a week to a year when he speaks of their being "purificados ... y lavados uno por un año entero, otros cuarenta días, otros nueve otros siete". On the eve of their sacrifice they were made to keep vigil all night. Their owners clipped hair from the crowns of their heads to keep as relics. In the Panquetzaliztli ceremony, on the last day of their life they met and sometimes died in a preliminary hazard consisting of a fight with, it would seem, other bathed ones assisted by experienced warriors (Sahagún 1950-1957, II: 134 f.; IX: 64), and soon after that they were sacrificed. Not always were captives offered up on the same occasion, but when they were, the captives died first; they formed what Durán called an "estrado" and Sahagún's informants pepechtli for the bathed ones. Perhaps these terms may be translated respectively as "dais" and "bed". Torquemada (1975, III: 178) and Motolinía (1971: 62) both remark that whereas the sacrificed war captive was thrown down the temple steps, the dead bathed one's body was carried down. He, like the sacrificed warrior, was the most important feature in the banquet which followed.

Such in outline were the life and death of bathed victims as we know them from the merchants' accounts. There are gaps in the bodies of information that Sahagún's informants and Durán give us, but their accounts are our best ones. Much is to be found in Torquemada's "Monarquía indiana", though for the most part it echoes other chronicles, especially Sahagún's.

As to the victims, they were slaves. Further, they were not foreigners, they were not enslaved because of war ("no eran gente estraña ni habida en guerra"), but natives of the area in which they were sacrificed ("naturales de los mismos pueblos"), as Durán says (1951, II: 220) and repeats (1951, II: 246), and hence quite likely to have been known personally to their owners and to others of their locality. In the Aztec view as we find it expressed by Sahagún's informants, slaves found themselves in their rather unenviable position probably through their own negligence or actions, almost of their own volition (Sahagún 1950-1957, IV: 2, 25, 34, 35, 93 ff.; VII: 24). Or they had committed or been associated with sins, crimes, faults, as Durán (1951, II: 221 ff.) and Motolinía (1971: 266 ff.) say - murder, kidnapping, robbery on a large scale, especially if organized, being a close relative of a traitor, falling into debt by various means - all of which tended to be regarded as the results of irredeemable personal weaknesses. Gambling in the rubber ball game (tlachtli) and the pachisi-like game played with beans on a marked mat (patolli) by those not rich enough to afford losses is the most prominent (though by no means only) weakness dwelt upon; the addict of modest means usually found himself reduced to betting, and losing, his family's and his own freedom, and thus he eventually could become a slave bathed or purified for sacrifice (Durán 1951, II: 221, 227, 246; Motolinía 1971: 367). Sahagún's informants also mentioned gambling prominently (1950-1957, IV: 94), though they took the cause fundamentally to be due to one's unfavorable day sign and a failure to mitigate its evil through submission to the admonitions of one's elders and the performance of acts of penance and piety. So the one born on One Jaguar, even if a brave warrior, "abandoned himself to slavery; he became someone's digging-stick, his tump-line" - motlacocaoaia, tevic, temecapal muchioaia (Sahagún 1950-1957, IV: 5); the one who ill-treated slaves on the day sign One Death would "perhaps somewhere . . . be bathed for sacrifice, would die as a bathed one" - aco cana altiloz, tlaaltilmiquiz (IV: 34); the man and the woman born on One House, through their own perverseness and heedlessness, sank lower and lower to die eventually as bathed ones (IV: 93 ff.). Such a fate could occur despite the fact that the individual was somewhat safeguarded; one was enslaved always before four or more old men as witnesses; slaves had unusual privileges, were well treated, and could not be sold unless incorrigible. If one were sold as unredeemable two or three times or more, however, he could be bought in the slave market to become one's bathed slave. Thus conditions made the slaves bought for sacrifice purely local products, just as the children bought to sacrifice on the feast days of Tlaloc were.

On the other hand, if a man was seen to possess unusual qualities, to be

"intla ... cenca mjmati ... yn cuj-
camatinj, in iolmatquj, yn ixe, yn
iollo: qujquxtiaia in pipilti, ipan
tlacaquetzaia: no iuhquj, intla ci-
oatl, intla tlamachihquj, anoço
vellaqualchioa, vel achioa ...
vellatolmelaoac ... qujnmotlaca-
cioaoatiaia in pipilti"
(Sahagún 1950-1957, I: 44).

"very subtle, ... skilled in songs,
... ingenious, ... intelligent and
able - the noblemen set him aside
and put another in his place. Like-
wise, if a woman could embroider,
or ... prepared food well, or made
good cacao ... were a clear speak-
er ... noblemen took such as
wives."

Such considerations as these may offer a partial explanation of their treatment as respected persons. Even in a society well reputed to have treated its slaves well, the bathed slave was unusually well treated; "... until he died", Sahagún writes, his owner "favored him greatly. ... he enriched him. ... All the food which he gave him was good" - in aiama mjquj, cenca qujmavizmatia ... qujtlanenetia ... muchiqualli tlaqualli in qujmacaia (1950-1957, II: 155). And - for another example - in the feast day of Uey Tecuilhuitl the buyers of the woman impersonating Ciuacoatl, presumably noblemen (señores), offered her all kinds of contentment - "todos los generos de contento y regocijo que podian" (Durán 1951, II: 172). The impression is repeated over and over again in both our main sources. As the feeling was evidently reciprocated. Two days before the feast of Panquetzaliztli the slave victims quite willingly danced the "serpent dance" along with their owners and others, and, on the eve of their death, paid a last visit to their owners' houses and left souvenirs in the form of hand-prints in red, black, or blue on posts and door lintels (Sahagún 1950-1957, II: 132). They visited their relatives and gave them gifts, too, as both Panquetzaliztli and Izcalli drew to a close (Sahagún 1950-1957, II: 132; Sahagún 1956, I: 223). At all points, even though their owners, attendants, and guards watched them carefully and locked them up at night, even though they may have been stupefied by whatever obsidian-knife-wash-water really was, and however they may have been impelled by a kind of mass hysteria, both individual and group victims are represented as acting like the not unwilling participants we have characterized as moving toward the climax of a portentous pageant, cooperating with their owners or patrons and the sacrificing priests, and satisfying the expectations of the spectators. And these spectators were their own kind, including their relatives, friends, and neighbors.

The groups or individuals supplying slave victims - the beneficiaries of the system, so to speak - are generally identified as merchants; more specifically certain slave-dealing elements in or related to those who specialized in wholesale, long-distance, coastland commerce. Such is the information in Sahagún's Book IX of the "Historia general", and, with less emphasis, in Books I and II. In all three, the main feast day chosen for description is that of Panquetzaliztli. Undoubtedly these merchants contributed most of the slave victims, very likely especially on the celebration named. Sahagún's account in Book IX makes it plain that they thereby gained extraordinary prestige not only

in their own merchant groups but in Aztec society as a whole. Sahagún's informants assume (1950-1957, X: 59) that the slave-dealer is a slave-bather; he

"puchteca iacatl, tlapanauia, tlacaoa, "is a leading merchant. He excels
in innecuiltonol. Mocuiltonoa ... his wealth is as possessor of
totecuio itlaiximach, totecuio slaves. He is rich. ... He is ack-
iicniuh". nnowledged by our lord - he is a
friend of our lord."

For he had bought slaves to sacrifice, as an act of penance (Sahagún 1950-1957, VI: 33) or as an act of piety - "por su devoción" (Sahagún 1956, I: 224, 236, 241). Durán gives us a more practical analysis of

"estos yndios mercaderes que ad-
quiriendo hacienda y alcanzando
esclauos que poder sacrificar ...
luego era [sic] reputado entre los
magnates de la tierra ... así co-
mo el baleroso soldado traya ca-
tivos que sacrificar por donde al-
cangaua renombre ... así estos
mercaderes con vn esclauo ó dos
que ofrecían al sacrificio con las
demas cerimonias de comidas y
bayles que haçia [sic] ... les da-
ban ditados de grandes y los hon-
rraban ... y poníanle vn nombre
al tal apropiado distinto de los
demas que denotaua el modo por
donde ganaua aquella honrra con-
biene a ssauer (tla altique)"
(Durán 1951, II: 125).

"these Indian merchants who, on
attaining wealth and acquiring
slaves to sacrifice ... were re-
puted among the grandees of the
land. ... as the brave warrior
brought captives ... to sacrifice
whereby he gained renown ...
thus to these merchants, with a
slave or two whom they offered
for sacrifice, with the other ce-
remonies of dinners and dances
which they gave ... they accorded
titles of grandees and honored
them ... and assigned them an
appropriate name different from
those of the others, which denoted
the means by which they gained
this honor, that is, [the title]
slave-bather."

There were, besides, others who bought slaves for sacrifice, or who were beneficiaries of the system. The accompanying chart, while emphasizing merchants, draws attention to noblemen, lapidaries, featherworkers, stewards, priests and dignitaries, physicians and midwives, pulque-makers, salt-makers, water vendors, mat-makers, and a group of goldsmiths, engravers, embroiderers, and weavers combined. (A few categories were not named or could not be identified.) It does not follow that they all acted with the elaborateness and lavishness observed by the merchants. As the slave-bathing merchants did it, it was a very expensive process, for which, not counting travels and preliminary feasting and gift-giving on a smaller scale, the would-be slave-bather saved up and spent 800 to 1,200 elaborate capes, 400 breechclouts, and unnamed quantities of skirts and shifts; sufficient quantities of shelled maize, beans, chía, squash seeds, chilis, and tomatoes; 40 to 60 jars of salt; 80 to 100 turkeys and 20 to 40 dogs; 20 sacks of cacao beans; three or four boats of

CHART
BATHED SLAVE SACRIFICES

<u>Deity impersonated; feast day</u>	<u>Criteria (see key below)</u>									<u>Identity of owner or patron</u>
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Atlatonan (Ochpaniztli)	x	x	x	x						
Camaxtli (Tititl)	x					x				
Chalchiuhtli Icue (Etzalqualiztli)	x		x		x					water vendors
Chicome Coatl (Ochpaniztli)	x	x	x							
Chiconauhecatl (Atl Caualo)	x	x		x	x		x			noblemen
Chiconauhitzcuintli, etc. (Nine Dog)	x		x		x					lapidaries
Ciuacoatl (Uey Tecuilhuitl)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			noblemen (?)
Coyotl Inaaal (Panquetzaliztli)	x	x			x	x		x		featherworkers
Ilama Tecutli (Tititl)	x	x	x	x	x					stewards
Iztac Ciuatl (Etzalqualiztli ?)	x	x								
Mixcoatontli & Yoztlamiyaua (Quecholli)	x		x	x	x					priests, dignitaries
Nappatecutli (Tepeilhuitl)	x		x		x					mat-makers
Quaxolotl Chantico (One Flower)	x				x					noblemen
Quetzalcoatl (Izcalli ?)	x	x	x		x	x				merchants
Teteo Innan (Ochpaniztli)	x	x	x	x	x					physicians, midwives
Tlalocs (Etzalqualiztli)	x		x					x		
Tlamatzincatl, etc. (Quecholli)	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	pulque-makers, stewards
Tonatiuh, etc. (Tlacaxipeualiztli)	x		x		x					noblemen
Uitzilopochtli (Panquetzaliztli)	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	merchants
Uixtociuatl (Tecuilhuitontli)	x		x	x	x		x			salt-makers
Xilonen (Uey Tecuilhuitl)	x		x	x	x	x	x			physicians, midwives
Xipe, etc. (Tlacaxipeualiztli)	x	x	x							
Xiuhtecutil (Teotl Eco)	x				x					merchants
Xiuhtecutil (Tlacaxipeualiztli)	x	x		x	x					merchants (?)
Xiuhtecutil (Izcalli every 4 years)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			merchants
Xochiquetzal (Tepeilhuitl)	x		x		x					goldsmiths, engravers, embroiderers, weavers
Yiacatecutli, etc. (Xocotl Uetzl)	x	x	x	x	x					merchants
Yiacatecutli (Tititl)	x	x	x	x	x					merchants

Key to numbered columns:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. slave | 7. sacrifice of captives first |
| 2. bathed | 8. voluntary ascent of slaves' own will |
| 3. impersonator | 9. careful bringing down of slaves' bodies |
| 4. named for a god | |
| 5. owner or "patron" | |
| 6. obsidian-knife-wash-water or equivalent | |

Sources; data in Sahagún, Durán, Torquemada

water per day; sufficient wood and charcoal for cooking; and equipment consisting of 2,000 to 4,000 chocolate-beating sticks and unnamed quantities of baskets, sauce dishes, cups, and plates, besides other essentials such as mats and godly costumes for the slaves on exhibit, gifts for the owner's assistants who guarded and otherwise looked after the slaves, and unestimated quantities of tobacco, smoking tubes, and flowers. These supplies were for four successive banquets; and after the slaves' sacrifice, another one followed (Sahagún 1950-1957, IX: 47 f., 59-61, 67).

The noblemen might have been able to entertain guests on this scale. It is very doubtful that any other sector of Aztec society could have, not even the featherworkers, said to have been "almost the equals" of the merchants "in their wealth, in their bathing of sacrificial victims" - achi moneneuilitiua, inic mocuiltonoaia, inic tealtiaia (Sahagún 1950-1957, IX: 88 f.). And, in fact, no other group offered slaves for sacrifice in numbers comparable to those produced by the merchants. No attempt is made here to estimate what these numbers may have been; they undoubtedly varied from occasion to occasion, as all the sources imply. But if all possibilities are included, they may have amounted to the hundreds per year, especially if all the Nahuatl-speaking area of central, highland Mexico is included. Motolinía cannot have been right when he wrote that not often did they sacrifice slaves - "Pocas veces sacrificaban esclavos" (1971: 370).

The chart included here is based upon nine criteria. 1. The victim is a slave. 2. He is "bathed" or "purified"; if it is not so stated, the fact that he has an owner (or "patrón") so indicates. 3. As a bathed slave, he is the impersonator of a god, though it is not always specifically so stated; his being named for a god (4) also indicates or corroborates his impersonation, as we have said, and so does (5) information as to owner or "patrón", though one is not always identified. 6. Sometimes the drinking of obsidian-knife-wash-water or entering the sand (assumed to be equivalent), or the drinking of a potion ("brebaje") are mentioned. 7, 8, 9. Immediately previous sacrificing of captives to form a bed (pepochtli) or dais ("estrado") for the bathed ones, voluntary ascent to the top of the pyramid temple, and gentleness in bringing the bodies down are prominently mentioned though detailed in few cases. Column No. 5 is continued at the right-hand margin to allow identification, if known, of the owner or "patrón". Data are compiled from information given by Sahagún, Durán, and Torquemada. It may be noted that in the 28 instances given, the merchants appear seven times, the noblemen four, stewards and physicians-midwives each twice, and the rest once each. Data are undoubtedly incomplete and in some details may have been misinterpreted. But if there are as many as 28 instances for each year fairly adequately recorded from these sources, covering mostly Tenochtitlan but also including some data applicable to Cholula and the Tlaxcala-Uexotzinco region, both victims and participating social entities in the total central highland Nahuatl-speaking area represented must have been much more numerous. It may be significant that if information specifying only that the victim was an impersonator or was named for the god and implying that he was not a war captive were added, on the assumption that such a description defi-

nately identified a bathed slave, the instances I have compiled would be approximately trebled.

Such an expansion would necessitate weighing some arguable cases of possible interest. One is the question of the impersonators of Tezcatlipoca and of Uitzilopochtli for the celebration of Toxcatl. Sahagún's account (1950-1957, II: Chap. 24) is the familiar one of the war captive who impersonated the god (Ixteocale is not specifically called a captive, though it may be assumed that he was thought to be one). Durán unhesitatingly says that the impersonator of Tezcatlipoca was a slave ("yndio esclauo"); he does not mention bathing or purification, however, nor does he mention Ixteocale (1951, II: 104, 117f.). Torquemada refers to Tezcatlipoca's impersonator first as a captive (1976, III: 375) and later as a slave (1976, III: 383f.), when he also refers to Ixteocale as a slave, whose body was brought down from the temple with much reverence. And Motolinía (1971: 52) says that Tezcatlipoca's impersonator was a war captive if one was available, but if not, a slave. Then there was a puzzling occasion when lords and stewards of the region about Mexico bordering enemy lands presented sacrificial victims, captured (maltequime) or bought, for the feast day of Xochipilli or Macuilxochitl. None are described as bathed slaves, but

"... intla aca ... tlachololti, ypan
tlacaquetzaia, motlacacoujaia,
quixiptlaiotiaia. ... in tlatlacuti,
vncan micuja, yn yquac ilhujqujxtil-
iloia"
(Sahagún 1950-1957, I: 32).

"if one of them ... escaped, [the
steward responsible for him] re-
placed him; a man was purchased;
they delegated another. ... Then
the slaves died, when the feast day
was celebrated".

The term tlacotli (pl., tlatlacoti) defines a slave, but not a bathed or purified one (tlacaltilli); on the other hand, the term quixiptlayotiaya could be taken to imply god-impersonation as well as substitution for a person. Other bodies of information in the Spanish version of Sahagún's "Historia" are often equally contradictory; they refer to the same victims indiscriminately as captives - "cautivos" - and slaves - "esclavos" (1956, I: 149, 172f., 187, 239). Such cases as these are impossible to classify definitely as either captive sacrifices or slave sacrifices.

Another doubtful classification concerns the sacrifices made at the funeral obsequies of noblemen and rulers, when slaves owned by the deceased and presented by other noblemen were offered up - 100 or 200 or more of them (Motolinía 1971: 304 ff.). But we are not told that the slaves were bathed or purified, nor that they impersonated any of the gods. And finally one might mention the sacrifice described by Durán (1951, II: 195f.) of two girls who must always be of noble lineage - presumably the line of the semi-mythical Tezcacoatl; not slaves, not bathed or purified, offered up at the celebration of the feast of Xochiquetzal. Presumably they were not impersonators, but neither were they captive girls, and the proceedings as described are here and there reminiscent of some of those performed at the sacrifice of bathed slaves. Instances of confusion and uncertainty like these could be multiplied.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The ideal pattern for slave-bathing and sacrifice as we know it is the one traced for us in Sahagún's second and ninth Books, particularly the latter. There the proceedings involve not only the procuring of suitable slaves to impersonate gods as acts of piety, but also, perhaps mainly, the providing of a way, through public display and lavish banqueting and gift-giving, of increasing the prestige and status of the individual merchant. For as a class, merchants were not entirely devoid of social ambitions. The slave was also fattened to serve up at the final banquet. Merchants were emulated by other sections of society as high as the nobility and as low as the salt-makers, but presumably with nothing like comparable resources and not for the same results. The nobility needed nothing to add to their reputation; the other social entities had not reached a social level which gave slave-bathing the meaning which the merchants gave it and which was generally recognized and accepted by society as a whole. Yet we find that sixteen or more categories of social entities besides the merchants practised this act of piety. In one way or another they were the beneficiaries of the system. The victims were natives of the localities where these rites took place, not foreigners captured in any way for the purpose. The data suggest that whereas war captives supplied the greatest numbers of sacrificial victims, slaves were also offered up in appreciable numbers, and that because of the way in which they were presented, costumed, ornamented, and singled out, and because they apparently acted as major participants in the Aztecs' pageant-like religious ceremonies, they were probably more spectacular and meaningful to the spectators, who undoubtedly, in a way, were themselves minor participants.

NOTES

- (1) Durán uses the terms "representar" and to be a "semejanza"; Sahagún usually uses the term "imagen" in his Spanish text and ixiptlatl, ixiptlati, or ixiptlatia in his Nahuatl text.
- (2) Read quimonxalaquia.

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