

Prayers on Parchment: The Kaqchikel Translations of the *Libro de la Oración y Meditación* in Berlin and New York

Oraciones en pergamino: las traducciones al kaqchikel del *Libro de la oración y meditación* en Berlín y Nueva York

Frauke Sachse

Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, USA

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-9351-2884>

sachsef01@doaks.org

Michael Dürr

Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-0725-0262>

mduerr@zedat.fu-berlin.de

Abstract: This article presents a comparative study of two 16th-century Kaqchikel manuscripts held at the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut in Berlin and the Hispanic Society of America in New York. These manuscripts, which are partial translations of Luis de Granada's *Libro de la oración y meditación*, reveal significant insights into the spread of European religious texts in Mesoamerica. Through detailed physical descriptions and analysis, the study traces the provenance of these manuscripts, suggesting a shared history and providing a first analysis of the Kaqchikel translation. The findings contribute to our understanding of missionary language policies in early colonial Guatemala.

Keywords: European religious texts; translation; Highland Maya; Kaqchikel; Guatemala; 16th century.

Resumen: Este artículo presenta un estudio comparativo de dos manuscritos kaqchikeles del siglo XVI conservados en el Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut de Berlín y en la Hispanic Society of America de Nueva York. Estos manuscritos, que son traducciones parciales del *Libro de la oración y meditación* de Luis de Granada, revelan datos significativos sobre la difusión de los textos religiosos europeos en Mesoamérica. A través de descripciones físicas y análisis detallados, el estudio rastrea la procedencia de estos manuscritos, sugiriendo una historia compartida y proporcionando un primer análisis de la traducción kaqchikel. Los hallazgos contribuyen a nuestra comprensión de las políticas lingüísticas de los misioneros en la Guatemala colonial temprana.

Palabras clave: textos religiosos europeos; traducción; mayas de las tierras altas; kaqchikel; Guatemala; siglo XVI.

Received: 16 August 2024; Accepted: 09 September 2024



INDIANA 42.1 (2025): 57-82

ISSN 0341-8642, DOI 10.18441/ind.v42i1.57-82

© Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Introduction

The Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (IAI; Ibero-American Institute, Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation) in Berlin houses a collection of 16th- to early 20th-century manuscripts in Mesoamerican languages. The earliest item in the collection is a 16th-century tome of a Christian text in the Highland Mayan language Kaqchikel. The exquisite and well-preserved manuscript, which is written in Gothic script on parchment, was acquired by Walter Lehmann (1878-1939) in 1912.

As part of a larger project to make the IAI collection of Highland Maya language resources available for research, the manuscript (call number Y 839 [8°]) has been digitized and is now publicly accessible under “Digital Collections of the Ibero-American Institute.”¹ To prepare a philologically accurate edition, the authors have thoroughly studied the manuscript and produced a full transcription and morphological analysis of its text. In the course of this work, Garry Sparks made us aware of a similar manuscript, titled “Colección de oraciones y meditaciones en lengua Quiché,” in the Hispanic Society of America (HSA) in New York (call number NS3-37).² The HSA kindly provided us with a scan of a black-and-white microfilm and some recent photos of the item.

Comparing both manuscripts, we found them to be copies of the same text, which we identified as a partial Kaqchikel translation of Luis de Granada’s *Libro de la oración y meditación*. Granada’s masterpiece had wide distribution in 16th-century Spain, and discovering two copies of his text in Kaqchikel sheds new light on the dissemination of European knowledge and missionary language policies in Mesoamerica. Most known translations of non-catechetical and modern devotional literature are in Nahuatl, which makes this early translation into a Highland Mayan language a particularly intriguing find.

This article provides a brief description of the two manuscripts and offers a first analysis of the Kaqchikel translation and its Spanish template. The focus will rest on the copy in the IAI, which we have studied in person. We propose initial thoughts on how to situate the Kaqchikel version of Granada within the context of the Christian mission in Guatemala and outline pending questions for future study.

Physical Description

The manuscripts in Berlin and New York are very similar in form, materiality, and content; the text is almost identical.³ Both are precious books, written on parchment

1 <https://digital.iai.spk-berlin.de/viewer/image/1897937814>. The entry in the IAI catalog was updated after the authors identified the manuscript as a partial translation of Luis de Granada’s edition from 1555 (<https://www.iaicat.de/XMLPRS=N/PPN?PPN=466585691>).

2 As part of his extensive research on the *Theologia Indorum*, Sparks visited the HSA in 2014 to study a parchment volume that the library catalog attributed to Domingo de Vico. He found the attributed authorship erroneous and identified the language of the text as Kaqchikel (Sparks 2019, 126-127).

3 We have studied the IAI copy in detail. The analysis of the HSA ms. initially relied on image reproductions (scans, microfilm, and photos) and descriptions by Karl Wilhelm Hiersemann (1914, no. 37),

in a similar *ductus* but by different hands. They are of similar size, roughly 15 cm tall, 10 cm wide, and 4-5 cm high. The small format is rather unusual for parchment manuscripts in the 16th century, as after the invention of printing, it was mainly large-format liturgical manuscripts such as missals that were written on parchment.⁴

The IAI ms. comprises 65 folded sheets that are bound together in 32 sections, or quires, of two sheets each, with the first section included as a single folded sheet. The first folio (1r-v) was originally left blank, but Walter Lehmann added a note on the provenance. The parchment is of a lesser quality than we would find in most European manuscripts of the time. The preservation of the manuscript is good, though some pages are damaged or detached from the book block. The HSA ms. is less well-preserved than the copy in Berlin. Water damage has left portions of the text illegible. The manuscript is incomplete, consisting of only 45 folded parchment sheets that are bound together in 23 sections. The first section consists of a single folded sheet without pagination, of which only the second leaf contains text (folios *A and *B).⁵ The leaves are numbered in the following 22 quires of two sheets each, however, which allows us to reconstruct that at least five quires, namely folios 1-4, 5-8, 25-28, 56-59, and 104ff., are missing. One leaf has also been excised from quire 11. As the width of the binding appears to fit the current number of quires rather well, it seems likely that the manuscript was already incomplete at the time when it was bound.⁶

The bindings of both manuscripts are likewise from parchment⁷ and almost identical. Both bindings are broken on the spine, permitting close examination of the text block and stitching. The IAI ms. is sewn together in three stations on double-raised cord, while the HSA ms. is sewn only on one cord and in two stations. Both types of binding were common in the 16th-18th centuries and cannot be precisely dated without material

Franz Obermeier (2021), and Joshua Anthony, who was kind enough to examine and measure it for us on July 21, 2023. Frauke Sachse then examined the HSA manuscript in person in July 2024 to confirm the findings.

- 4 Richly decorated, small-format, handwritten books for personal devotion had largely fallen out of fashion by the 16th century. The *Farnese Hours*, created for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in 1546, was probably one of the last of its kind to be made.
- 5 As the first folded sheet does not have page numbers, we have inserted neutral letters to number the first and the second leaves of the IAI manuscript. We can assume that two full quires of a total of eight leaves are missing between the first sheet and fol. 9, where the original foliation begins. The number of missing leaves would correspond with the text in the Berlin copy.
- 6 According to Leclerc (1867, 220) the missing leaves include fols. 2-8, fols. 25-28, fols. 56-59, fols. 104ff., which basically corresponds to the current state of the manuscript. Leclerc later maintains that the HSA manuscript still consisted of 103 leaves in 1867 and that fourteen leaves have been lost since (Leclerc 1887, 63), which does not seem likely given the width of the binding.
- 7 The term 'parchment' refers here generally to animal skin. Leclerc (1867, 1887) describes the HSA ms. as "parchemin très fort," while in Hiersemann (1914), we find the description "en vitela." Without further material analysis, we are unable to determine whether the bindings are vellum (calf) or actual parchment (sheep or goat).

analysis. The text blocks of both manuscripts are trimmed, and several page numbers have been cut off in the New York copy, which indicates that the binding was renewed. The back cover of the HSA ms. is damaged, revealing an earlier layer of parchment that may be the original binding. The light brown ink used to write the shelf mark on the cover spine of each tome, in contrast, is more typical of the 18th century.

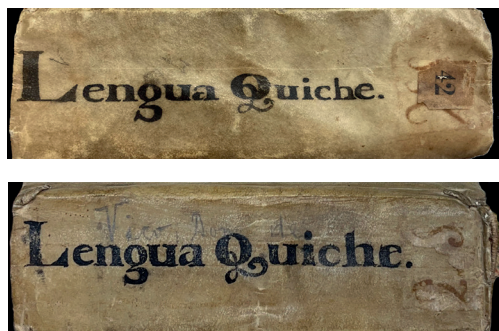


Figure 1. Comparison of the spine text of the manuscripts in Berlin (above, photo: Michael Dürr, 2022) and New York (below, photo: Joshua Anthony, 2023).

The spine texts of the two manuscripts are nearly identical as well. Both display the title “Lengua Quiche” in strong black ink and bold letters (Figure 1). The letters share features of a Classicist Antiqua font that was not in use before the last decade of the 18th century, suggesting that the spine text was applied at a later date, and evidently by someone who did not read Kaqchikel and thus mislabelled the contents as K’iche’.

The orientation of the spine text differs between the manuscripts. The spine text on the IAI ms. runs top-to-bottom, while the copy in New York displays it bottom-to-top. The aforementioned shelf marks in brown ink are identical but placed on the head (IAI ms.) or tail (HSA ms.) of the spine, respectively. In both cases, the letters or figures are unreadable. On the IAI ms., they are partially covered by a 19th century label with the printed inventory number “42.” The parchment appears lighter in a wider, square-shaped area around the label, suggesting that a larger, earlier label was originally placed there. We find a glue stain of similar size on top of the inked shelf mark on the spine of the HSA ms., which might indicate that both manuscripts carried the same collection labels at some point. On the spine of the New York copy, a later hand, likely that of onetime owner Alphonse Pinart, added the name “Vico, Dom. de” in pencil.⁸

In addition to the bindings, which indicate that the two parchment tomes were rebound, labeled, and relabeled together, there is further evidence that the books have a shared history. In both manuscripts, the main text is rendered in Gothic script and preceded by a prolog that is written in a different hand and on a single folded sheet of parchment, which forms the first layer of each manuscript (Table 1). The scribe of the prolog on fol. 2r-2v of the IAI ms. wrote in the modern *cursiva humanistica* letter of the

8 The same hand also added the number “222” in pencil on the front cover of the HSA ms.

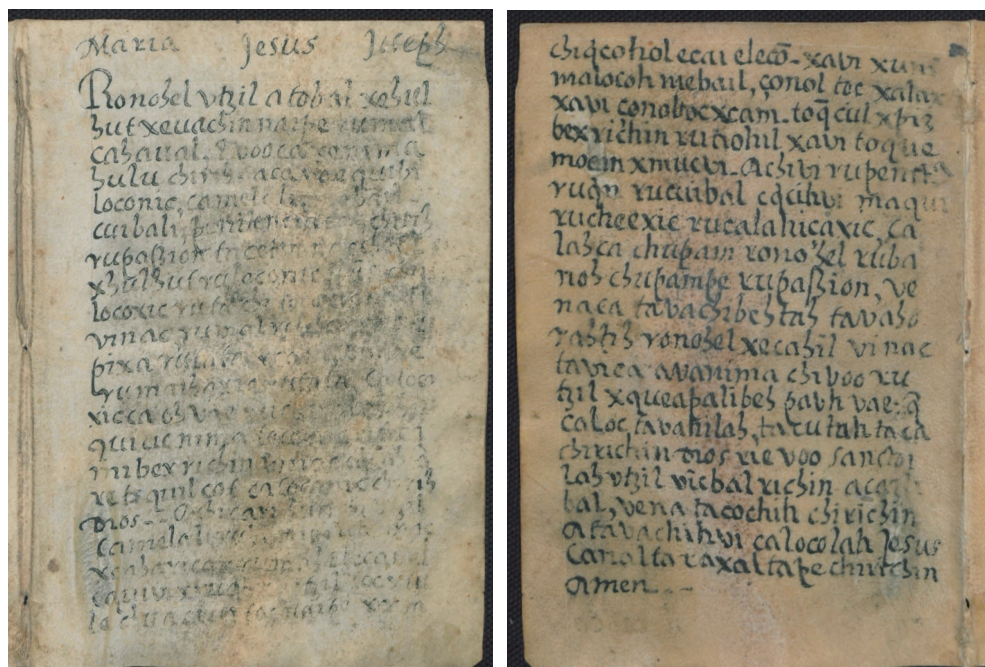


Figure 2. Prolog on fol. 2r and fol. 2v of the IAI ms. in *cursiva humanistica* (Images courtesy of the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut).

time (Hand A) (Figure 2).⁹ From fol. 3r onwards, however, the text is written in a clear and precise Gothic hand (Hand B) that is mostly legible, even though it is faded and smeared on some pages (Figure 3). Headings and some initial letters are rendered in red ink; otherwise, the text is in black ink. There are a few corrections, where text was erased and overwritten. We also find additional emendations throughout the manuscript in black ink and in a third hand (Hand C).

Strikingly, folio *B of the HSA ms. is written in the same hand (Hand B) as the main text of the IAI ms., even featuring the same red initial letters to mark new paragraphs. The rest of the HSA text, however, is written in the hand of a less ambitious calligrapher (Hand D) (Figure 4). Instead of red initial letters, the scribe used pilcrow signs (¶)

9 The medieval Gothic script fell out of use for missionary texts during the second half of the 16th century. Its use here might indicate that the manuscript was produced in the mid-16th century, when a change from Gothic to modern humanistic script occurred that is attested in other documents and prints in Mesoamerican languages. After 1580, there seems to be little evidence that Gothic letters were used in printing in New Spain, though a systematic study of this trend is pending.

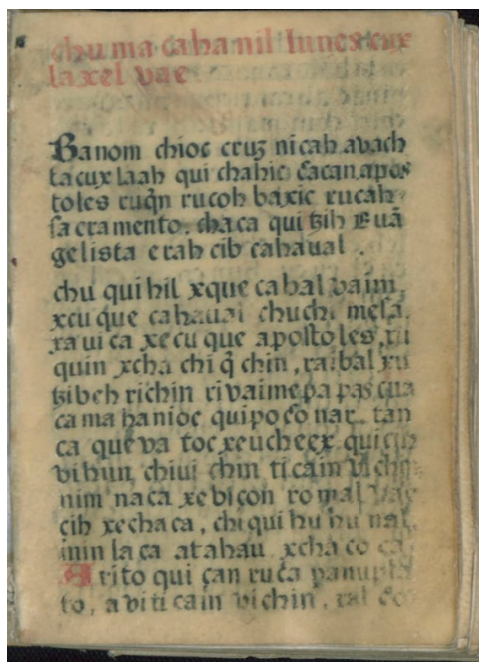


Figure 3. Gothic script by Hand B (IAI ms., fol. 3r) (Image courtesy of the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut).

next to the text block, and headings and highlighted words are rendered in red ink only occasionally.

The distribution of scribal hands implies a close relationship between both copies, though further physical analysis of the New York copy is required to establish whether the same scribe (Hand B) worked on both books or whether HSA fol. 1 was originally part of the IAI copy. The latter scenario makes sense if one assumes that the prolog written in humanistic script was added later as a correction. We will revisit this idea further below.

To summarize, physical evidence suggests that the two parchment volumes stem from the same production context. It seems likely that the manuscripts were originally housed together, rebound in the 18th century, and moved into another collection in the 19th century, where they were both re-inventoried and mislabeled as K'iche' texts.

IAI ms.		HSA ms.	
fol. 2r-v	Hand A (<i>cursiva humanistica</i>)	fol. *Br-v	Hand B (Gothic)
fols. 3r-ff.	Hand B (Gothic)	fols. 9r-ff.	Hand D (Gothic)
emendations	Hand C		

Table 1. Distribution of scribal hands in the IAI and HSA mss.

Provenance

Only the more recent provenance of the two volumes is known. The manuscript in Berlin stems from Walter Lehmann's library that was integrated into the collection of the IAI in the 1950s (see inventory number L 7977). On the *recto* side of the fly leaf, we find Lehmann's bookplate "Bibliothek Dr. Walter Lehmann. No. 322" (Library Dr.

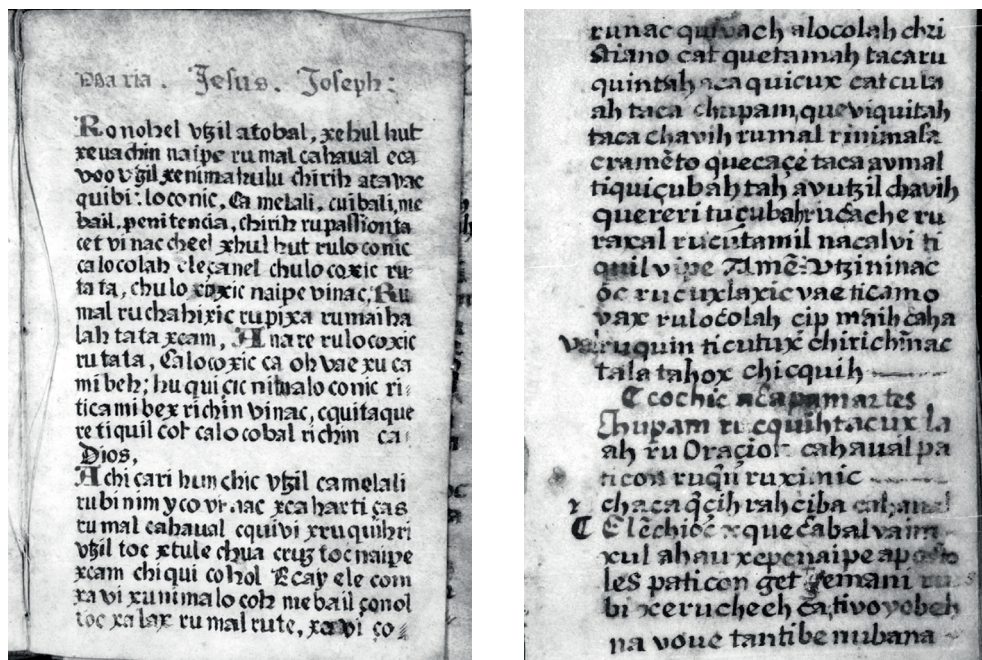


Figure 4. Fol. *Br (left) and fol. 17r (right) of the HSA ms. showing Hands B and D, respectively (Images courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America).

Walter Lehmann, Number 322); on the *verso* side, the name “Jose Maria Bocanegra” is penned in faint ink by a unique hand, likely in reference to a previous owner.¹⁰

Walter Lehmann added information about the purchase of the manuscript on the first page, which was originally blank:

Erworben von E. Lambert / Brüssel, Place des Gueux 13 / Fondo Rud. Chillingworth – Nürnberg. / Dr. Walter Lehmann. / München / 23. August 1912 (Acquired by E. Lambert / Brussels, Place des Gueux 13 / Fondo Rud. Chillingworth – Nuremberg. / Dr. Walter Lehmann. / Munich / 23rd of August 1912).

Lehmann purchased several other manuscripts from E. Lambert, most of which came from Guatemala. Lambert was not a professional book seller but a civil servant who is listed in the 1911 address directory for Brussels as “chef du bureau au Ministère des Finances”

¹⁰ Based on the paleography, the name tag was likely added in the 18th century. The signatory could be a descendant of the family of Jorge de Bocanegra, a 16th-century *alcalde* of Santiago de los Caballeros (now La Antigua), Guatemala. It seems unlikely that the name refers to the Mexican minister and interim president José María Bocanegra (1787-1862).

(Head of Office at the Ministry of Finance).¹¹ Rudolf Chillingworth, on the other hand, was a business magnate, art collector and patron of the arts from Nuremberg, Germany, who financed Lehmann's purchase. It is unknown how the manuscript arrived in Brussels.

In his notes, Lehmann attributes the provenance of some manuscripts purchased from Lambert to "Lic. Don Justo Gavarrete, Guatemala" and "Collect. Don Justo Gavarrete, Guatemala" (IAI: Y 741-744 [4°]). This reference leads us to 19th-century Guatemalan archivist and scholar Juan Gavarrete, whose name is associated with the emergence of several other documents in Highland Mayan languages.¹² The manuscripts are all placed in white paper wrappers that are labeled by hand on the front with details about content and provenance. It is unclear whether the hand is that of Gavarrete, but the labels are written in the first-person singular and reveal that the manuscripts were obtained from Francisco de Paula García Peláez (1785-1867), archbishop of Guatemala from 1845-1867: "Lo obtube por donacion del Ilmo Sr. Garcia Pelaez" (IAI: Y 741 [4°]) or "original autógrafo que me donó el Ilmo Sr. Garcia Pelaez" (IAI: Y 744 [4°]). The note on the *verso* of the first leaf of the latter manuscript (IAI: Y 744 [4°]) includes Gavarrete's name and the provenance information, "de la curia de Gua[temala]." It is therefore plausible that the parchment tome in Kaqchikel was part of a set of manuscripts from the archive of the archdiocese that made it to Lambert via Gavarrete.¹³ We know that Gavarrete was assigned to organize the Franciscan archive

11 Additional colonial manuscripts that were sold by Lambert include the *Libros de Cabildo* from Santiago de Guatemala that were acquired in 1914 by the HSA from the antique bookseller Hiersemann in Leipzig (Lovell 2018).

12 Juan Gavarrete Escobar (1829-1882) –occasionally referred to as "Justo" (see Termer 1928, 26)– held the office of *Escribano de Cámara y Gobierno* and was in charge of "the National Archives, which included the archives of the colonial administration" (Berendt 1877, 422). Archbishop Francisco de Paula García Peláez commissioned him in 1845 to arrange and organize the archives of the Convent of San Francisco de Guatemala, where he famously identified the *Memorial de Sololá*, which he subsequently published in a Spanish edition based on the French translation by Brasseur de Bourbourg (Recinos 1950, 13-14). In 1847, Juan Gavarrete produced the first copy of the Spanish text of the *Popol Vuh*, before he showed the document to Karl Scherzer in 1854. Brasseur de Bourbourg mentions Gavarrete as a source for historic manuscripts (Brasseur 1871, 14); indeed, Gavarrete procured several manuscripts in Mayan languages that later appeared in Brasseur's collection, including the *Memorial de Sololá* (Luján Muñoz 1999), the *Título Real de don Francisco Izquin* (Matsumoto 2017, 21), and most likely also the volume by Ximénez that contains the text of the *Popol Vuh*, now in the Newberry Library in Chicago (Christenson and Sachse 2021, 9).

13 Evidence from other manuscripts that Lehmann purchased from Lambert in 1912 support this scenario. A 18th-century chronicle from the Andes, *Descripción de Lima y Guayaquil* (IAI: Y 1373 [8°]), has a shelf sticker with a number "117" that is very similar to the one on the parchment tome. The chronicle formerly belonged to the archbishop of Guatemala, Ramón Casaus y Torres (1765-1845). The spine text of Nicolas de Valenzuela's *Conquista del Lacandon y del Chol* (IAI: Y 796 [4°]) also seems to have been written by the same hand that applied the title "Lengua Quiche" to the IAI and HSA mss., which suggests that Lambert sold manuscripts from the same library.

that had been housed in the Archbishop's Palace since the religious orders were expelled from Guatemala in 1829, where he discovered the *Memorial de Sololá*:

[...] dicho documento lo encontré en el archivo del Convento de San Francisco de esta ciudad en el año de 1845, cuando por comisión del ilustrísimo señor García Peláez, se registraban y arreglaban los archivos de los religiosos, hacinados todos confusamente en uno de los salones del Palacio Arzobispal desde la revolución de 1829 (Gavarrete 1980, 16).

Adrián Recinos also attests that both Gavarrete and García Peláez were extremely generous in sharing old documents with Charles Étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg (1814-1874):

El Doctor Mariano Padillo y don Juan Gavarrete, habían prestado su ayuda al Dr. Scherzer, llevaron su generosidad con el Abate Brasseur hasta el extremo de cederle varios documentos de la colección del primero y de los archivos públicos a cargo del segundo. Otros fueron proporcionados por el Arzobispo de Guatemala, Doctor D. Francisco García Peláez, que se dedicaba también a esta clase de estudios (Recinos 1947, 47-48).

It is unclear whether Brasseur ever owned the IAI ms., but the provenance history of the HSA ms. does lead us directly to him. In 1914, Archer Huntington purchased the manuscript for the collection of the Hispanic Society of America from the German book dealer Karl Wilhelm Hiersemann (1854-1928). Hiersemann specialized in rare books and manuscripts, including items from Latin America, and was mostly active before World War I. His catalog lists the tome for 12 000 German Reichsmark (about US\$ 3000 at the time), though Huntington may have received a rebate for buying books in bulk (Obermeier 2021, 8). About a third of the HSA collection was purchased from Hiersemann, among them some catalogs in their entirety (Obermeier 2021, 2).

The description of the Kaqchikel manuscript in Hiersemann's catalog states that it originated from the collection of Pinart.¹⁴ Alphonse L. Pinart's collection, which included much of Brasseur's collection, had been sold at Maisonneuve in Paris in 1883 (Pinart 1883, 96, Ms. 583). A note in a copy of the Pinart sales catalogue suggests that the manuscript was purchased by the London-based antiquarian bookseller Bernard Quaritch (1819-1899) (Obermeier 2021, 63). We have no independent confirmation for this purchase, however, nor any indication of when the manuscript would have been acquired by Hiersemann, who eventually sold it to Huntington.

Instead, the HSA manuscript is first mentioned in Leclerc's *Bibliotheca Americana* (1867, 220, No. 942), where it was listed for sale on Tuesday, January 21, 1868. In 1887, the manuscript reappears in the second supplement to Leclerc's bibliography with the comment, "provenant de M. Brasseur de Bourbourg" and "il vient maintenant de la collection Pinart" (Leclerc 1887, 63, Nr. 3365). The manuscript is not included in

14 There is an ex-libris bookplate from Pinart's library on the inside of the front cover of the parchment manuscript, which identifies the item as "Serie E.3, No. 129." The HSA pasted the catalog entry from Hiersemann's catalog N.S. 3 (1914) next to it.

Brasseur's *Bibliothèque Mexico-Guatémaliennne* (1871), however, and it remains unclear whether he acquired it during his time in Guatemala in 1848-1863 or later in Europe.

Brasseur, in turn, identified the manuscript as a collection of prayers and meditations written shortly after the conquest in “un *dialecte élégant*, qui tient á la fois du *Quiché* et du *Kakchiquel*, analogue à celui qui est parlé encore aujourd’hui par les indigènes de Zipacapa, département de Huehuetenango” (an elegant dialect of Quiché and Kakchiquel, similar to that still spoken today by the natives of Zipacapa, in the department of Huehuetenango). He erroneously attributed its authorship to Domingo de Vico (Leclerc 1867, 220).¹⁵ Viñaza's bibliography (1892, 241, no. 697), which is based on Leclerc, lists the manuscript as *Oraciones y meditaciones en Lengua Quiché ó Cakchiquel*. This title is taken from the paper fly leaf inserted before the first folio, where Alphonse Pinart had added it in pencil: “Vico Coleccion de oraciones y meditaciones en lengua Quiche. Siglo XVI.” The title's resemblance to that of Granada's *Libro de la oración y meditación* suggests that it represents the original title of the manuscript.

To summarize, the connection between Brasseur and Gavarrete appears to be the node to which the provenance histories of both manuscripts can be traced. Whether both copies arrived in Europe as a pair, along with the rest of Brasseur's acquisitions, and were then sold off separately remains unclear. While the history of the IAI ms. before it arrived in Lambert's hands remains opaque, it is reasonable to reconstruct the presence of both parchment tomes in the archbishop's archive in Guatemala City by the 19th century, especially when one considers their material preciousness and religious contents.

Luis de Granada's *Libro de la oración y meditación*

The *Libro de la oración y meditación* (Book of prayer and meditation) by the Spanish Dominican Luis de Granada has recently been referred to as the “best seller of the Spanish Golden Age” (Cheely and Wasserman-Soler 2022). First published in Salamanca in 1554, the book became the most widely printed and translated text of the “Devotio Moderna,” a humanist movement that produced literature in vernacular languages for laypeople's private devotion.¹⁶ Originally written in Spanish, Granada's text circulated widely among Catholics and Protestants alike and was translated into various European languages, “with approximately one thousand editions to his name by 1650” (Cheely and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 41). With every edition and translation, the text was modified and reinvented.

15 Brasseur also misattributed other early missionary sources in K'iche' and Kaqchikel to the acclaimed Dominican Vico, including a vocabulary (BnF MS Américaine 46) and a grammar (BnF MS Américaine 63) (see Sachse 2018), as well as sermonarios (BnF MS Américaine 69 and HSA NS3-34) (see Sparks 2019).

16 The “Devotio Moderna” movement goes back to the monastic society of the “Brothers of the Common Life” in Windesheim, Flanders, the Netherlands, and its founder, Geert Groote. The movement, which inspired the writings of Thomas á Kempis (*Imitatio Christi*), Andreas Vesalius, Rudolph Agricola, Martin Luther and Erasmus, leaned towards “learning as well as private contemplation” and “simple piety,” and it “found an enthusiastic reception in Spain” (Laird 2019, 16).

The original text that came out in 1554 was “divided into three parts [...] in turn divided into chapters of very unequal length” (Moore 1977, 68). The first part included an explanation of “the five parts of prayer”¹⁷ and seven admonitions, a morning and a nocturnal meditation for each day of the week, as well as a chapter on six aspects of the Passion of Christ (ibid.). The second part contained a treatise, or discussion, on devotion and instructions for how to “increase [one’s] fervor for prayer” (Moore 1977, 68); and, in the third part, we find three sermons on the benefit of prayer. The morning meditations for each day of the week begin with translated excerpts from the Gospels and are “followed by a meditation from” Granada (Cheely and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 47). By combining excerpts from several Gospels, Granada avoided existing restrictions for translating scripture into the vernacular (see below). The *Libro de la oración* quickly became a popular resource for private devotion.

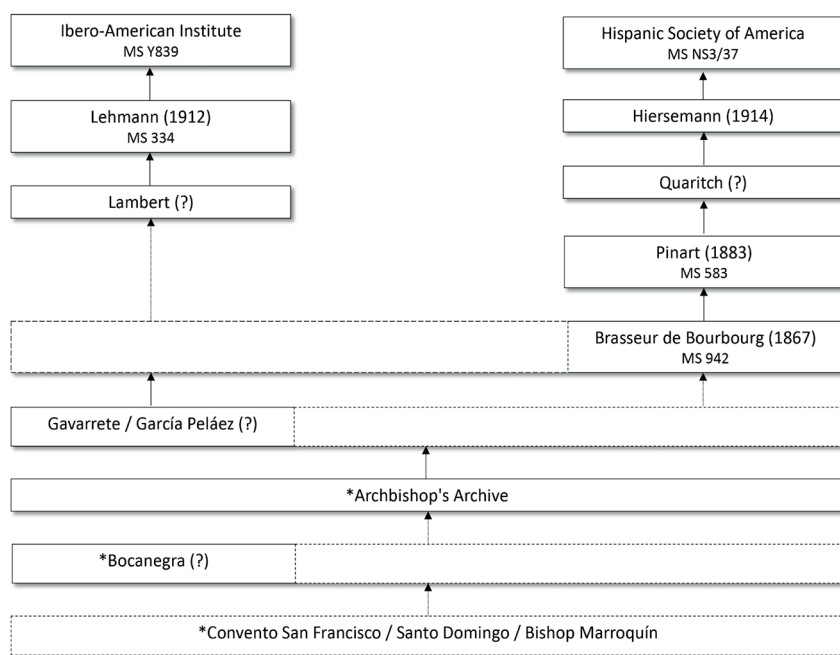


Figure 5. Provenance history of manuscripts IAI Y839 and HSA NS3-37.

17 According to Granada the five parts of prayer are: preparation, reading material, meditation on the material read, prayer of thanksgiving, petition (which is the essence of prayer) (see Moore 1977, 69-70).

In 1559, the Holy Office of the Inquisition, led by Inquisitor General Fernando de Valdés y Salas, banned Granada's text (Cheely and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 47). It was not only the Castilian translations of excerpts from the Gospels that posed a concern to inquisitors. Dominicans Melchor Cano and Domingo Cuevas found specifically the part on silent prayer problematic (Wasserman-Soler 2020, 25). The text educated the general public in Castilian on how to achieve 'spiritual perfection' through direct communication with God –choosing their own mode and words for prayer– which should only be accessible to the ordained (Wasserman-Soler 2020, 25-26). Even after the book was placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, Cano and Cuevas continued to accuse Granada of promoting the heretical ideas of the *alumbrados*¹⁸ (Cheely and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 47; Wasserman-Soler 2020, 26). The reasons for indexing the book lie very much in the politics of the time and in the Catholic Church's striving to maintain its power as a mediator of scripture in Spain, with the Reformation fully underway in Germany and other parts of Europe (Wasserman-Soler 2020, 28).

Granada responded to the ban by removing the entire second chapter, "De dos maneras de Oracion y de las meditaciones para los días de la semana," from the first part and rewriting the second and third parts, including thoughts on the good works and "the practice of Christian virtues" needed to complement prayer in part two. He also combined the three sermons on prayer into one, while adding two more on fasting and almsgiving. In 1566, this new edition was published by printer Andrea de Portonariis (Cheeley and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 47). The dispute about Granada contributing to the spread of *...alumbradismo* continued among the Dominicans for a few years. In 1583, however, the Inquisition removed the *Libro de la oración* from the Index of Prohibited Books, though the editions prior to 1566 remained banned (Cheeley and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 48). By 1600, at least 35 Spanish editions of Granada's work had appeared (see Cheely and Wasserman-Soler 2022, 48).

Regarding its reception in the Americas, we know that the *Libro de la oración* sailed westward onboard ships to Mexico and Peru (Leonard 1992, 161, 388; Tavárez 2017, 39). By the mid-16th century, the Franciscan Colegio de Santa Cruz de Tlatelolco in modern-day Mexico City had become a central place where Latin texts and other books from Europe were translated into Nahuatl (see Laird 2019). Among them were several works from the "Devotio Moderna," including the *Imitatio Christi* by Kempis, as well as works by Diego de Estella and Luis de Granada (Tavárez 2013, 230). Juan de Bautista Viseo (1555-1607) also produced a Nahuatl version of five of the seven nocturnal meditations from the *Libro de la oración* (Tavárez 2013, 231; 2017, 38). Bautista's Nahuatl

18 The *alumbrados* were a mystical Christian movement in Spain who strove for reformation of the Church towards a religion oriented towards the interior. They were particularly supported by the Franciscans (Hamilton 1992).

text was printed in 1604 under the title *Libro de la miseria y breuedad de la vida del hombre: y des sus quatro postrimerias, en lengua Mexicana*, without any reference to Granada (Tavárez 2013, 231). It is uncertain whether Bautista intended with his new title to avoid mentioning an indexed book or simply to assert authorship.

Besides Bautista's translation, however, no other renderings of the *Libro de la oración* into Mesoamerican languages have been identified to date.¹⁹ The Kaqchikel copies in Berlin and New York can therefore be recognized as the earliest and most comprehensive translations of Granada's opus into an Indigenous language. They also prove that the European text had a much wider distribution across New Spain than was previously thought.

Text and Template

The manuscripts in Berlin and New York are translations of the morning meditations found in the third chapter of the first part of Granada's *Libro de la oración*. The chapter "De cinco partes de la oración" includes seven morning meditations for each day of the week, starting with Monday, followed by seven nocturnal meditations in the same order. The basic theme of the mediations is the Holy Week and the Passion of Christ. Each morning meditation in the *Libro de la oración* starts with excerpts from Gospels ("El texto de los evangelistas dize assi [...]"), followed by a meditation on the excerpts ("Meditacion sobre los passos del texto [...]") and between one to five thematically related meditations by Granada (e.g., "Del sanctissimo sacramento y de las causas por que fue instituido" [Monday] or "De como el Salvador lleuo la cruz acuestas" [Thursday]).

The Kaqchikel translation closely follows the structure of Granada's original text. In the IAI ms., the headings for each day of the week are marked in red ink. The heading for Monday reads *chumacanihil lunes. cuxlaaxel vae* ('Meditation for Monday morning'). The pattern *chumacanihil* [*chumak'anijil*, in modern Kaqchikel orthography] + [day name] is found in all headings, except that for Tuesday, which reads *co chic aca* [*k'ò chik aq'a*] *pa martes* ('in the early morning on Tuesday'). The terms *chumacanihil* 'in the morning (before nine o'clock)' and *co chic aca* 'early morning, at daybreak' refer to different times at the beginning of the day.²⁰ The heading is followed by a sentence summarizing the theme of the meditation based on the events on the corresponding day of Holy Week. The section with the Gospel excerpts is titled *Aca vae quicih evangelistas*

19 The idea that a sermon on the nature of the soul and body in Pedro de Feria's *Doctrina Christiana en lengua Castellana y çapoteca* (Mexico: Pedro Ocharte 1567) might be based on Granada's *Libro de la oración* (Tavárez 2017, 39-41), requires more study. The argument was based on similar statements in both texts about the human body being filthy and filled with bad smell (see Feria 1567, 3v-4r, and Granada 1554, 129v). This association is a common trope also found in other texts, including Vico's *Theologia Indorum* from 1553/1554 (see e.g., chapters 41 and 50). So, the intertextuality between the *Libro de la oración* and the Zapotec sermon seems not exclusive.

20 Coto (1983, 332): "MAÑANA, o de madrugada: Qo chic a3a, qa moyol. [...] Mañana, ID EST, lo q[ue] ai desde q[ue] amanescę hasta las ocho o [nueve] del día: maqahan."

(‘these are the words of the Evangelists’) and *chaca rutzih san Juan evangelista* (‘and [this] is the word of Saint John the Evangelist’).

The HSA ms. may also have included translations of Granada’s nocturnal meditations, of which only the beginning of the Monday meditation is preserved. The last section of the HSA ms. is introduced as *A chica vae vcuchic cuxlabal riil quicatzin chaca chupan huhun semana* (‘The following collection serves weekly meditation’), followed by the subheading *Pa raeabal lunes ticuxlaax rie* (‘Meditation for Monday night’) (HSA ms. NS3-37, fol. 101r).

To identify which edition of the *Libro de la oración* may have served as the template for the translation, we compared the Kaqchikel text of the IAI ms. with several index and post-index editions, including the first edition from Salamanca (1554) and editions printed in Cologne (1556; a reprint of the first revised edition from Salamanca 1555, according to Cuervo (1895, 262-263)), Antwerp (1559), and Salamanca (1566). We found the Kaqchikel translation to be based on one of the indexed editions released between 1555-1559, most likely one of the editions printed in Salamanca in 1555, as it seems less probable that any of the editions printed in the Spanish Netherlands (Antwerp 1556, 1558 and 1559), France (Lyon 1556) or Germany (Cologne 1556) would have made the journey across the Atlantic.²¹

Between 1554 and 1555 a total of eight editions were published in Salamanca, and we were not able to access copies of all of them. Nonetheless, the 1555 Salamanca editions include slight revisions that are also reflected in the Kaqchikel translation. Whereas the first edition from 1554 repeats the day of the week in the text that follows the heading, in the revised editions, the day name has been replaced by “Este día [...]” This is precisely the wording that we find in the Kaqchikel text on five of seven weekdays, variously translated as *chupam ri quih* (Tuesday), *chupam vae quih* (Thursday and Friday), *chupam quih vae* (Saturday), and *pa quih vae* (Sunday). Most indicative, however, is the change in the subheading on Tuesday, which reads *co chic aca* instead of *chumacanihil* (see above). The same modification is found in the earliest Spanish editions before 1556, where the subheading for Tuesday reads “El martes en la mañana,” while all other chapters are titled “Por la mañana.” In later editions, all headings read “Por la mañana.”

We have not been able to find independent evidence for the existence of early indexed copies of the *Libro de la oración* in Guatemala. The printed book would have had to make the journey from Spain across the Atlantic to Guatemala, so the *terminus post quem* for the translator to start work would have been the year 1556, although a later date is more likely. Given Domingo de Vico’s martyrdom in 1555, however, the Dominican can be firmly excluded as the Kaqchikel translator.

21 For a systematic overview of existing editions and their revisions, see Justo Cuervo (1895, 253-278; 1906, 511-513).

Translation

The translations of the Gospels are very close to the Spanish original composed by Granada, which is not surprising, as we can assume that the translator would have taken utmost care in rendering scripture accurately in Kaqchikel. The translations of the meditations on the words of the Evangelists, in contrast, are more mixed and include precise translations as well as passages that were translated more freely. Granada's thematic meditations are often paraphrased, with some portions added and others entirely omitted. Still, the translation itself gives us few clues about the translator's identity.

In his assessment of the HSA ms., Sparks excluded Domingo de Vico as the author based on the difference of terminological and orthographic conventions found in the *Theologia Indorum* (Sparks 2019, 126-127). Instead, he found that the high number of Spanish terms suggested a more Franciscan origin (Obermeier 2021, 67). Franciscans and Dominicans had different approaches to creating Christian discourse, with Franciscans showing a greater tendency to integrate loanwords and descriptive paraphrases, while Dominicans frequently adopted Native religious discourse (Sachse 2016; 2019). But in the Kaqchikel translation of the *Libro de la oración*, we find both a large number of loanwords (e.g. *ah-penitencia* 'penitent', *dios-il* 'divinity', *sancto-ilah* 'holy') and concepts from Kaqchikel religious discourse (e.g. *çacol pitol* [Framer-Former] 'creator', *canal raxal* [yellowness-greenness] 'glory'), which makes it difficult to identify any mendicant 'tradition of translation' underlying the text based on terminology alone.

The orthography of both manuscripts follows Spanish spelling conventions of the time and seems to differ only in some details.²² However, it is needs to be noted that none of the scribes used the orthographic conventions that the Franciscan Francisco de la Parra had established for Kaqchikel and other K'iche'an languages in 1545.²³ The special character *quadrillo* <4> does not occur at all, and the phonemes /k'/, /q/ and /q'/ are represented rather ambiguously and unsystematically with either the *tresillo* <e> or a special trigraph <cqu>.²⁴ Instead of Parra's <tz>, the scribes use <ç> or just <c>. Spanish abbreviations, in turn, occur with some frequency (e.g. <tâ> for *tan* or <q'> for *qui* or *que*). This combination of orthographic features occurs in very few other Highland manuscripts of Dominican authorship, among them the core text of the Kislak MS 1015 in the Library of Congress, Washington, DC (Sparks and Sachse 2017, 108).

Comparing the main scribes of both manuscripts (Hands B and D), we can detect some spelling preferences. For instance, the scribe of the IAI ms. (Hand B) prefers the

22 A systematic comparison of the orthographic conventions is pending until a full transcription of the New York manuscript has been produced.

23 La Parra established the following conventions for representing uvular and glottalized stops: /k'/ = <4>; /q/ = <k>; /q'/ = <e>; /tʰ/ = <4,>; /ch'/ = <4h> (see Campbell 1970, 120-121).

24 The distribution of these special characters in the Berlin ms. is not systematic, and in some cases, a later hand may have emended <c> to <e>. The variant <cqu> is used as an allograph before <e> or <i>.

spellings *chuvach* ‘in front of’, *racan* ‘his feet’, or *rumal* ‘by/through him’, where the scribe of the HSA ms. (Hand D) uses *chuuach*, *raean*, and *romal*. The orthographic differences and scribal errors do not provide clear evidence as to whether one text might be a direct copy of the other, although the IAI ms. appears to be grammatically more accurate. In any case, translator and scribes were likely not the same person. The spelling <s.amaritano> in the IAI ms., for instance, reveals a misunderstanding of the term ‘Samaritan’ as a saint’s name and suggests that the scribe was not very well-versed in the Bible, and may have been Indigenous or mestizo. The translator, on the other hand, was likely a missionary who was not only able to paraphrase and modify the meditations he was translating but to include additional text.

Prolog

Both manuscripts include a prolog that was not taken from Granada’s *Libro de la oración* but was likely written by the translator or whoever commissioned the Kaqchikel translation. The author of this prolog argues that all ‘virtues’ (*vtzil atobal*) manifest in the Passion of Christ, explains that one should aspire to *loconic* (‘love’), *camelal i* (‘humility’), *mebail* (‘poverty’), *cuibal i* (‘patience’), and *penitencia* (‘penitence’), and admonishes the reader that if “you only pretend to follow” the teachings of the Lord, “you are disregarding the five virtues in the book.” In both manuscripts, the folios with the prolog were inserted later, after the main text was written (see above). The prolog in the HSA ms. is written by the same scribe as the main text of the IAI ms., while the IAI prolog is in a different hand and humanistic script (Table 1). The two prefaces are not entirely identical. Differences in terms and grammatical forms suggest that the cursive text in the IAI ms. may be an emendation of the other, though further analysis is required to confirm this. The following translation of the prolog is based on the IAI manuscript.²⁵ Illegible parts in the lower righthand corner on fol. 2r, which is badly damaged, have been reconstructed from the the HSA manuscript.²⁶

[fol. 2r]

Ronohel vtzil atobal xehulhut xeuachin naipe {r}umal cahaua, e voo ca {xe}nimahulu chirih.

All virtues appear to shine through our Lord. There are five (virtues) that glow through Him.

a ca vae quibi loconic, camela{li, mebail} cuibali, penitencia

Their names are: Love, Humility, Poverty, Patience, and Penitence.

25 All translations from Kaqchikel in this article are by the authors.

26 Curly brackets mark unreadable text in the IAI ms. that has been reconstructed based on the HSA ms., while square brackets are used to resolve abbreviations or insert letters omitted by the scribe.

{coh} chirih rupaßion tacet {vi nac cheel} xhulhut ruloconic {}[esu]}²⁷

Through His suffering, you see how the love of our beloved Jesus shines,

{chu} locoxic ruta[ta], {chulocoxic naipe} vinac.

so that His Father would be loved and that people would be loved.

rumal {ruchahixic ru}pixa rutata x{cam}

By guarding the commandments of His Father, He died.

{A na re} rumaiha {xic rutata, ru} locoxic ca oh

It was for our admiration of His Father and for His love,

vae xuc {amibeh hu} quiçic nimalo {conic ri tica} mibex richin vinac

only for this great love He died, He was martyred for the people.

{cqui ta que} re t{i} quilco {t caloconic chir} ih Dios.

It is certain that by this our love for God is raised.

A chi ca {ri hun chic vtzil} camelali {rubi} {nimycovinac} xcahartiçax ru{mal} cabauual

And then there is another virtue, humility is its name, it is greatly blessed by our Lord.

cqui vi xru {quih ri vtzil} {t} oc xtule chua {cruz toc naipe xcam} [fol. 2v] chiq[ui]cohol e cai eleco[m]

It is certain that the virtue accompanied Him, when He was stripped on the cross, and when He died between the two thieves.

xavi xunimalocoh mebail, çonol toc xalax xavi çonol toc xcam;

He just loved poverty, He was naked, when He was born and He was naked, when He died,

toq[ue] cul xpizbex richin rutiohil, xavi toque mocan xmuc vi.

and then His flesh was wrapped in a cloth, and just like this, He was interred in the grave.

A chi vi rupanit[enci]a ruq[ui]n rucuibal cq[ui]cih vi maqui rucheexic rucalahiçaxic

Then there are penitence and patience that certainly are not mentioned or manifested,

calah ca chupam ronohel rubanoh chupam pe rupaßion,

They manifest then in all His deeds and in His Passion.

ve na ca tavachibeh tah tavaho rahtih ronohel xecahil vinac tavica avanima chi voo rutzil
xqueapalibeh pa vh

If you only pretend your desire to attach your soul to the teacher of all people on earth, then you disrespect the five virtues in this book.

27 The abbreviation of the name is not entirely clear. In HSA ms.: *calocolah eleçanel* 'our beloved savior'.

vae q[ue]cal oc tavahilah tacutuh ta {ca} chirichin Dios.
 With care you count, and you demonstrate this for God.

rie voo sanctoilah vtzil vicbal richin acazlibal.
 It is He who gives you these five holy virtues, the adornment for your life.

ve na tacochih chirichin A tavachih vi calocolah Jesus, canal tah raxal tape chirichin.
 If you offer these to Him, then you see our beloved Jesus, and beatitude may come through Him.

Text Sample from the Gospels

The following sample from the Gospel section of the Monday meditation compares Granada's original Spanish text from 1554 (Granada 1554, 17v-20r) to the Kaqchikel text and our English translation of the latter. The excerpt illustrates the accuracy with which the translator rendered the passages from the Bible into Kaqchikel. Translating passages from the Bible was a highly contentious task, and Granada carefully composed the section of his publication from excerpts of different Gospels. The following Kaqchikel rendering of the *quicib evangelistas* ('words of the evangelists') includes sections from Matthew, John and Luke. Granada renders the text on the Last Supper from Matthew (26:20-28) and then inserts the "Footwashing of the Disciples" from John (13:4-15), which he discusses as a particular example for 'humility' in the meditation that follows in the next section. The Gospel excerpts end with Jesus' explicit call for liturgical celebration of the Last Supper according to Luke (22:19).

[fol. 3r]
El Lunes por la mañana.
chumacahanil lunes cuxlaxel vae.
 This is the meditation for Monday morning:

*El Lunes por la mañana*²⁸ *hecha la señal de la cruz, con la preparacion que adelante se pondra en el Cap. iiij.*²⁹
Banom chioc cruz nicah avach
 After you have made the [sign of the] cross in the center of your face,

se ha de pensar el lauatorio de los pies, y la institucion del sanctissimo sacramento.
tacuxlaah quichahic eacan apostoles ruq[ui]n rucobhaxic rucah sacramento.
 you meditate over the washing of the feet of the Apostles and the establishment of the Holy Sacrament.

28 "El Lunes por la mañana", or, "Este día" as in the editions published in 1555 or later, is not translated here, but it appears in later chapters as *chupam ri quib* ('on this day').

29 Cross-reference omitted in Kaqchikel version.

El texto de los Euangelistas dize assi.

chaca quitzih Eva[n]gelista e rahcib cahaua.

These are the words of the Evangelists, the scribes of our Lord.

Como se llegasse ya la hora de la cena, assentose el Señor a la mesa, y los doze apostoles con el, y dixoles:

chuquihil xquecabal vaim xcuque cahaua chuchi mesa. xauí ca xecuque apostoles, ruquin xcha chiq[ui]chin,

At the time of the evening meal, our Lord sat at the table and the Apostles just sat with Him, and He said to them,

Con desseo he desseado comer con vosotros³⁰ esta pasqua, antes que padescas.

raibal x[v]utzibeh richin ri vaim e pa pascua, ca mahani oc qui[n]poëonar.

“With desire I wished for the meal at Passover before I suffer.”

Y estando ellos cenando, dixo, En verdad os digo, que vno de vosotros me ha de vender.

tan ca queva toc xeucheex quicib vi hun chiuichin ticain vi

And when they were eating, they were told their words, “One of you will sell me.”

Y entristecidos mucho con esta palabra, començaron cada vno a dezir, Por ventura so yo Señor?

chunim na ca xebiçon romal vae çih xecha ca, chiquihuhunal. min la ca at ahau

They were saddened by the word, each one of them then said, “It is not me, Thou Lord?”

Y el respondioles diziendo: El que mete conmigo la mano en el plato, esse me vendera.

xhaco ca Ari toquiçan ruëa pa nuplato, a vi ticain vichin,

So, He responded: “The one who puts his hand in my plate will be the one who sells me.”

Y el hijo de la Virgen va su camino, assi como esta escripto del:

ral eopoh [fol. 3v] tan tibe ian rubei quere vi rutzibal,

The son of the Virgin will go His way, just like it is written of Him,

mas ay de aquel hombre, por quien el sera vendido. Bueno le fuera no auer nacido.

xana cahoie ruach ri vinae ahcai richin. vtz tan are chirichin mani tah xalax.

But pity to the face of the man who is His seller. It would have been good if he had not been born.

Y respondienddo el mismo Iudas que lo auia de vender, dixo, Por ventura so yo Señor?

xcha eo ca ri Judas ahcai richin, min on vae at ahau xcha

Then responded Judas, His seller, “It is not me, Thou Lord,” he said,

30 “Con vosotros” is omitted in the Kaqchikel translation.

Respondiolo el Señor, Tu lo dixiste.

at bare cabiin xcha cabauual chire.

“You say it,” said our Lord to him.

Acabada la cena, leuantose de la mesa: y quitose las vestiduras:

A oe xelex vaim xpaleh el chuchi mesa xuhol ca el rucu.

When the meal was over, He rose from the table and took off His clothes,

y como tomase vn lienço, ciñose con el: y echo agua en vn bacin,

hun çaqui cul xuxim chirih. ruquin xucaçah ia pa coxical

He wrapped himself with a white cloth, and He poured water from the jar,

y començo a lauar los pies de sus discipulos: y a limpiarlos con el lienço, que se auia ceñido.

xutiquiba ca. quichahic caean e rutihom Aca ri paño ruximom chirih xuçubeh richin caean

and He began to wash the feet of His disciples. With the cloth He had tied around His back, He cleaned their feet.

Llego pues a Simon Pedro. Dixole Pedro, Señor tu me quieres lauar los pies?

xul na ca chuach simon p[edro] xcha ca ri pedro chirichin at ahau ma at la ca cachaho vacan

When He arrived then before Simon Pedro, Pedro said to Him, “Thou Lord, is it not you who washes my feet?”

Respondiolo Iesus, y dixole, lo que yo hago, no sabes tu agora: saber lo has despues.

xcha eo ca ri Jh[esu]s: xcha ca mani tan tanabeh ri tahn tinuban. tanabeh an chachux. apon,

Jesus responded, He said, “You do not know what I am doing, you will come to know it later.”

Dizele Pedro, Nunca jamas tu me lauaras los pies.

xcha ca ri s[an] p[edro] xma tachah [fol. 4r] ui vacan

Saint Pedro then said, “You must not wash my feet then!”

Respondiolo Iesus, y dixole, Si no te lauare, no ternas parte en mi.

xcha eo ca ri Jh[esu]s. xcha ca. vue mani tinchah avacan, mani avoquibal ch{i}uih

Jesus then responded, He said, “If I do not wash your feet, you will not follow me.”

Dize Simon Pedro, Señor dessa manera, no solamente los pies, sino tambien las manos y la cabeça.

xcha ca ri simon p[edro] ue quiere chacux tachaha nuca tachaha uæan ruq[ui]n nuui

Then said Simon Pedro: “If it is so in your heart, wash my hands, wash my feet, and my head.”

Dizele Iesus, El que esta lauado, no tiene neccessidad que se lauen mas que los pies: porque todo lo demas esta limpio.

xcha ca ri Jh[esus]. Ari chahom chic xere ahoxel ruchahic raean xa rumal chahom chic ronohel,
Then said Jesus, “The one who is already washed will only have to wash his feet, because all is already washed.

Y vosotros ya estais limpios, aun que no todos.

ix chahom chic maqui ee ivonohel tah:

You are already clean, although not all of you.”

Sabia el quien era el, que lo auia de vender, y por esto dixo, No todos.

retaam Jh[esus] ruach ahcai richin xa cache xubiih ri mani ivonohel

Jesus knew the face of His seller, so He said, “Not all of you.”

Pues como acabo de lauarles los pies, tomo sus vestiduras y tornandose a assentar,

ix tah chahom, toe xutzin ruchahic caean, xucuuu rucu xcuque ca

When He had finished the washing of their feet, He took the cloth and sat down,

dixoles, Entendeis esto, que he hecho con vosotros?

xcha ca chiquichin, tan petina ri xnuba[n] chivichin,

and He said to them, “I have come to do this to you,

Vosotros me llamais maestro y Señor: y bien dezis: porque de verdad lo soy.

at cahlih at naipe eahaua, quixcha chiuiichin, jn bare iuahtih iuahaua

‘You are our teacher, and you are our Lord,’ you say to me.

Pues si yo os he lauado los pies, siendo vuestro Señor y Maestro, vosotros deueis tambien vnos a otros lauaros los pies.

pe xnuchah ca iuaean ca uach la ca ahoxel tichah iuaean chivibil iui

Indeed, I am your teacher, I am your lord. I came to wash your feet, it is necessary that you wash each other’s feet.

Porque exemplo os he dado en esto, para que assi como yo lo hize, assi vosotros lo hagais.

xnuia [fol. 4v] an ruçetbalil tibana ca quere xnuban.

I have given you an example so you do like I have done.”

Acabado el lauatorio, tomo el pan y bendixolo, y partiolo,

caxan chic oc ri xucam vai xrutziriçah ca ruquin xuperela

After He had washed them, He blessed the bread/tortilla and cut it.

y diolo a los discipulos dziendo, Tomad y comed este es mi cuerpo.
xuia ca chiq[ue] e rutihom rachbixic vae ticama el quixua ca A nutiohil e.
 He gave His companions a lesson: "Receive this and eat this, this is my body."

Y tomando tambien el caliz, dio gracias, y entregoselo dziendo,
xavi xucam caliz xcamouan ca ruquin xuia chiquichin chubixic vae.
 He just took the chalice, He gave thanks, and He gave it to them to drink it.

Beued todos deste caliz: por que esta es mi sangre del nuevo testamento,
quixuquia oe ivonohel xa rumal nuquiquel vae richin caca testamento,
 "Drink you all, because this is my blood, from the New Testament,

que por muchos sera derramada en remission de los peccados.
tixel ca rumal ruçachic imæ rumal naipe ruçachic rumæ quia vinae,
 that shall be poured by forgiveness of your sins and by forgiveness of the sins of many people.

Y todas las vezes que esto hizieredes, hazedlo en memoria de mi.
A ca ronohel mulchachiban rie, tibana chi numuluquixic.
 And every time that you will do this, you shall remember me."

Origin and Purpose

The remaining questions regard the context in which the Kaqchikel version of Granada's *Libro de la oración* was produced. Who translated it, where, and for whom? Why are there two copies? The physical evidence and provenance history point toward their presence in the archbishop's archive. The manuscripts could have been transferred there when the convents of the religious orders were closed in Guatemala, or they may have originally been part of the archbishop's library.

Few would have had the resources in the 16th century to produce such translations or precious books. The translator would have had expert knowledge of Kaqchikel and access to recent Spanish books, as well as parchment, which would have been an expensive resource in sixteenth-century Highland Guatemala. Further analysis of both manuscripts is needed to identify whether the parchment sheets were produced in Guatemala or were imported, as paper was at the time. In 1561, the first bishop of Guatemala, Francisco Marroquín (1499-1563), acquired eleven parchment volumes for the choir:

Deseoso Marroquín de aumentar los libros de la Iglesia, adquiere con fecha 26 de noviembre de 1561, para la sección de Canto del coro 'son once cuerpos de pergamino/ sanctoral/ psalterio/ dominical/ cincretorias/ oficio/ proceso/, todos los cuales fueron tasados por el licenciado de Vellisca, escriptor de libros y con juramento, de que valían mil y quinientos pesos. Desta tasa se le quitaron trescientos y quedaron en mil doscientos pesos, los cuales se dieron y pagaron a doña María y a doña Isabel y a Luis Zúñiga' [...] (*Libro 1° de Cabildo*, fol. 44v, cited after Estrada Monroy 1973, 111).

It is notable that these presumably folio-sized, illuminated books had to be especially appraised and that the recipients of the rather high sum are explicitly named. Both facts suggest that the books were not bought and shipped from Spain but produced or at least completed in Guatemala.

The most likely *loci* for skilled production of such parchment books would have been one of the religious convents in Santiago Guatemala, which housed libraries that the orders were continuously expanding. A *Real Cédula* from November 18, 1556, grants 50 pesos to the Franciscan order in Guatemala to purchase books (AGI, Audiencia de Guatemala, legajo 386. Libro 1, fol. 197). A recent edition of Granada's *Libro de la oración* could have been included in this purchase. We know that García Peláez specifically commissioned Gavarrete to organize the archive of the convent of San Francisco housed at the archbishop's palace (see above), where he could have come across the two parchment books. However, we have no conclusive evidence that the translation was the work of a Franciscan, given that the orthography does not follow La Parra's conventions. The convent of Santo Domingo in Santiago Guatemala would be another likely place of origin. The Dominican convent housed the Colegio de Santo Tomás, now the University of San Carlos of Guatemala, which Marroquín founded in 1559 to educate Indigenous students. Translations of Christian texts into Kaqchikel might have proven useful not only in education, but also for recital during meditation.

The Kaqchikel version of Granada's text probably served a different purpose than the Spanish original. Unlike Bautista's translation of the nocturnal meditations from the *Libro de la oración* into Nahuatl, the Kaqchikel text focuses on the morning meditations with particular care applied to the translation of the Gospel sections. Given that vernacular translations of the Bible were prohibited, Granada's 'collage' of passages on *Semana Santa* from the Gospels might have presented a useful template for the creation of essential scripture in Kaqchikel.³¹ The precious materiality of both volumes, too, suggests the text may have served a more public and performative purpose—possibly during Holy Week—rather than as an instructional manual for private devotion and silent prayer. However, we cannot entirely rule out that these volumes might have been produced for use in high-status mestizo families, many of whom would still have spoken Kaqchikel in the mid-16th century. Further research and a systematic material analysis of both manuscripts is needed to better understand the synoptic relationship between them and the use and purpose of the text.

31 With respect to Nahuatl translations of Kempis' *Imitatio Christi*, a compelling argument has been made that translation into Indigenous languages turned devotional literature into scripture (Tavárez 2017, 234).

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, specifically Ulrike Mühlischlegel and Iken Paap, for their support of this project. We are equally grateful to John O'Neill (Hispanic Society of America) for permitting reproductions and access to the New York manuscript and its records, and to Joshua Anthony (Rutgers University) for providing us with photographs and a detailed description. Garry Sparks deserves thanks for alerting us to the existence of the manuscript in the Hispanic Society of America. Furthermore, we are indebted to Mallory Matsumoto for her valuable comments and for inviting us to the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin in March 2024, which gave us an opportunity to finalize this article.

References cited

- Berendt, Carl Hermann
1877 "Collections of historical documents in Guatemala." *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year 1876*: 421-423. <https://library.si.edu/digital-library/book/annualreportofbo1876smit> (02.01.2025)
- Brasseur de Bourbourg, Charles Étienne
1871 *Bibliothèque Mexico-guatémaliennne*. Paris: Maisonneuve & C. Libraire Éditeur. <https://archive.org/details/bibliothequemexi00brasiala> (02.01.2025)
- Campbell, Lyle
1977 *Quichean linguistic prehistory*. Publications in linguistics, 81. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cheely, Daniel M. J., and Daniel I. Wasserman-Soler
2022 "The forgotten best seller of the confessional age: The many lives of Luis de Granada's Libro de la oración y meditación." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 53, no. 1: 41-64. <https://doi.org/10.1086/SCJ5301002>
- Christenson, Allen, and Frauke Sachse
2021 "Understanding the Ancient Maya through the mythologies of the Popol Vuh." In *The myths of the Popol Vuh in cosmology, art, and ritual*, edited by Holley Moyes, Allen J. Christenson, and Frauke Sachse, 3-17. Boulder: University of Colorado Press. https://upcolorado.com/university-press-of-colorado/item/download/884_ee2ef78582295c42a2e57d9a5520d712 (02.01.2025)
- Coto, Tomás de
1893 *Thesaurus verborum. Vocabulario de la lengua cakchiquel vel guatemalteca*, edited by René Acuña. México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).
- Cuervo, Justo
1895 *Biografía de Fr. Luis de Granada*. Madrid: Librería de Gregorio del Amo. <https://archive.org/details/biografadefrlu00cuer> (02.01.2025)
1906 *Libro de la oración y meditación. Obras de Fr. Luis de Granada. Edición crítica y completa*. Tomo 2. Madrid: Imprenta de la viuda é hija de Gómez Fuentenebro. <https://archive.org/details/obrascue02luisuoft> (02.01.2025)

Estrada Monroy, Augustin

- 1973 *Datos para la historia de la Iglesia de Guatemala*, Tomo 1. Bibliotheca "Goathemala," 26. Guatemala: Sociedad de Geografía e Historia.

Gavarrete Escobar, Juan

- 1980 *Anales para la historia de Guatemala: (1497-1811)*. Guatemala: Ed. José de Pineda Ibarra.

Granada, Luis de

- 1554 *Libro de la oracion y meditacion*. Salamanca: Andrea de Portonaris.
1556 *Libro de la oracion y meditacion*. Colonia Agrippina: Herederos de Arnoldo Bircmanno.

Hamilton, Alastair

- 1992 *Heresy and mysticism in sixteenth-century Spain: The Alumbrados*. Cambridge: James Clarke.

Hiersemann, Karl W.

- 1914 *Rare books and manuscripts on Spain and Latin America of exceptional importance and value consisting of recent purchases of some of the choicest items of the libraries of Dr. Antonio Peñafiel, Director General de Estadística, Sir Th. Phillips, Bart F. R. S. and other collectors*. Privately printed catalogue, New Series, 3. Leipzig: Karl W. Hiersemann.

Laird, Andrew

- 2019 "From the Epistolae et Evangelia (c. 1540) to the Espejo divino (1607): Indian latinists and Nahuatl religious literature at the College of Tlatelolco." *Journal of Latin Cosmopolitanism and European Literatures* 2: 2-28. <https://doi.org/10.21825/jolcel.v2i0.8522>

Leclerc, Charles

- 1867 *Bibliotheca Americana. Catalogue raisonné d'une très-précieuse des livre anciens et modernes sur l'Amérique et les Philippines*. Paris: Maisonneuve & Cie. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5492414g> (02.01.2025)
1887 *Bibliotheca Americana. Histoire, géographie, voyages, archéologie et linguistique des deux Amériques*. Supplément n° 2. Paris: Maisonneuve Frères & Ch. Leclerc. <https://archive.org/details/ahn8644.0001.002.umich.edu/> (02.01.2025)

Leonard, Irving

- 1992 *Books of the brave: Being an account of books and of men in the Spanish conquest and settlement of the sixteenth century New World*. Berkeley: University of California Press. <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft1f59n78v/> (02.01.2025)

Lovell, W. George

- 2018 "Patrimony lost: Hispanic-American treasures in foreign collections." *The Americas* 75, no. 1: 155-180. <https://doi.org/10.1017/tam.2017.101>

Luján Muñoz, Jorge

- 1999 "Introducción." In *Memorial de Sololá*, transcripción y traducción de Simón Otzoy, XI-XXIII. Guatemala: Comisión Interuniversitaria Guatemalteca de Conmemoración del Quinto Centenario del Descubrimiento de América.

Matsumoto, Mallory

- 2017 *Land, politics, and memory in five Nija'ib' K'iche' títulos: "The title and proof of our ancestors."* Boulder: University Press of Colorado. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1x76gqq> (02.01.2025)

Moore, John A:

- 1977 *Fray Luis de Granada*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.

- Obermeier, Franz
 2021 "Ethnolinguistic manuscripts from Middle and South America in the collection of the Hispanic Society of America, New York. A preliminary catalog." Online document. <https://www.academia.edu/44632446> (02.01.2025)
- Pinart, Alphonse L.
 1883 *Catalogue de livres rares et précieux, manuscrits et imprimés, principalement sur l'Amérique et sur les langues du monde entier: composant la bibliothèque de ... Alph.-L. Pinart et comprenant en totalité la bibliothèque mexicoguatémaliennne de ... Brasseur de Bourbourg*. Paris: Labitte. https://archive.org/details/gri_33125010963599 (02.01.2025)
- Recinos, Adrián
 1947 *Popol Vuh. Las antiguas historias del quiché*. México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
 1950 *Memorial de Sololá*. México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Sachse, Frauke
 2016 "The Expression of Christian concepts in colonial K'iche' missionary texts." In *La transmisión de conceptos cristianos a las lenguas amerindias: estudios sobre textos y contextos en la época colonial*. Collectanea Instituti Anthropos, 48, edited by Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, 93-116. Sankt Augustin: Academia.
 2018 "Renaming Vico's Dictionary: Reconstructing the textual genealogy of the Vocabulario copioso de las lenguas cakchikel y 4iche." *Indiana* 35, no. 1: 67-95. <https://doi.org/10.18441/ind.v35i1.67-95>
 2019 "Maya divinities in Christian discourse: The multivocalities of colonial mendicant translations from highland Guatemala." In *Translating wor(l)ds: Christianity across cultural boundaries*, edited by Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, 49-71. Baden-Baden: Academia.
- Sparks, Garry G.
 2019 *Rewriting Maya religion: Domingo de Vico, K'iche' Maya intellectuals, and the Theologia Indorum*. Louisville: University Press of Colorado.
- Sparks, Garry G., and Frauke Sachse
 2017 "A sixteenth-century priest's fieldnotes among highland Maya: Proto-Theologia as Vademecum." In *Words and worlds turned around: Indigenous Christianities in Latin America*, edited by David Tavárez, 102-126. Boulder: University of Colorado Press.
- Tavárez, David
 2013 "Nahua intellectuals, Franciscan scholars, and the Devotio Moderna in colonial Mexico." *The Americas* 70, no. 2: 203-235. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tam.2013.0106>
 2017 "Performing the Zaachila word: The Dominican invention of Zapotec Christianity." In *Words and worlds turned around: Indigenous Christianities in Latin America*, edited by David Tavárez, 29-62. Boulder: University of Colorado Press.
- Termer, Franz
 1928 "Berichte über Reisen in Mittelamerika." *Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft in Hamburg* 39: 1-63. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783112692264-002>
- Viñaza, Cipriano Muñoz y Manzano, Conde de la
 1892 *Bibliografía española de lenguas indígenas de América*. Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra. <https://archive.org/details/bibliografiaespa00viuoft> (02.01.2025)
- Wasserman-Soler, Daniel I.
 2020 *Truth in many tongues: Religious conversion and the languages of the early Spanish Empire*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.