

Where No One Will See: Spanish Legend,
Indigenous Knowledge, and the
Cantares de Dzitbalché

Ezekiel Stear
Auburn University

Off the coast of Cozumel in Yucatan on March 8, 1519, a famous chronicle reports on Hernán Cortés's expedition to the mainland to find castaways, who had been missing for eight years. Cortés's orders from Diego Velázquez, the governor of Cuba, were to find Gerónimo de Aguilar and any others shipwrecked during Juan de Valdivia's expedition in 1511. Cortés found Aguilar, who returned to the Spanish forces with relief. Aguilar told Cortés of one Gonzalo Guerrero, a member of Valdivia's crew, who had married a Maya woman and was contentedly living a new life. In fact, through a letter he sent back to Cortés via Gerónimo de Aguilar, the castaway asked the Europeans to leave him behind.

A long, loose thread joins Spanish chroniclers' varied recollections of Gonzalo Guerrero. All agree that Guerrero refused to return: he remained in the jungle with his wife and—by some accounts—their two sons. Thus runs the basic outline of his life. However, over time, Spanish chroniclers gradually constructed a more elaborate story of Gonzalo, at times adding contradictory details. Together, their inconsistencies cast doubt on even his existence. Rolena Adorno has observed that the gradual development of patchy evidence reveals the construction of the nativized Spaniard as a

literary figure.¹ She argues that he simultaneously personifies the chroniclers' disappointment from early defeat at Mayan hands and their uneasiness towards horizons of cultural and biological hybridity. In spite of mounting evidence to the contrary, this legend continues into its sixth century. Colonial era chronicles, together with recent postmodern representations of Gonzalo Guerrero in print and in other media (discussed below), show the resilience of the figure as a counter-narrative to Spanish colonialism. Nonetheless, European chroniclers were not the only ones who wrote in the region during the Colonial Era. Yucatecans made strategic appropriations of the Latin alphabet and wrote down what mattered to them. In spite of the persistence of the legendary Gonzalo Guerrero, native texts from the period remain silent regarding the nativized Spanish castaway.

In what follows, I revisit the legend of Gonzalo Guerrero. I argue that it holds an ambivalent relationship with Maya textual production, obscuring the importance of the latter, while displaying thematic intersections with experiences of Yucatecans during the Spanish colonial period. Decentering the Gonzalo Guerrero narrative leads readers closer to Maya knowledge and experiences on the peninsula at the time. To that end, I examine key selections regarding rituals from the *Cantares of Dzitbalché* (c. 1440 – c. 1740).² The text contains poetic arrangements for musical accompaniment that open a window into life in Mayan Yucatan from before the arrival of the Spanish, and into the eighteenth century. The *cantares* represent native anxieties concerning the preservation of their culture on the shifting frontiers between Mayan and European-controlled areas of the peninsula. The year 2019 marked the 500-year anniversary of Cortés's landing in Mesoamerica, an event that provides opportunities for

¹ Here I refer to only key pieces of evidence in Rolena Adorno's analysis of texts on Gonzalo Guerrero in chapter nine of *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative* (220-245).

² Housed in the Museo de Antropología e Historia in Mexico City, the manuscript of the *Cantares of Dzitbalché* uses a Latinized all-capital-letters version of the Yucatecan language. Alfredo Barrera-Vásquez claims the year 1440 is a copy error, and the year 1740 is more reliable (23 n. 6). David Bolles holds that linguistic characteristics should date it to the twentieth century (2), which is when Barrera-Vásquez found the tattered *cantares* in Mérida (Meléndez Guadarrama 201 n. 2). I agree with Munro Edmunson ("Songs" 173) and with Martha Nájera Coronado (*Cantares* 10) that it is reasonable to claim the cultural content of the *cantares* spans the fifteenth to the nineteenth century.

reading against the Spanish colonial project and redirecting attention to native textual production. For much of the colonial period, Spain had only partial control of Yucatan. Along the permeable chain of colonial outposts, Yucatecans appropriated Western alphabetic writing, and produced texts in their language that recorded their concerns. The Spanish chroniclers of the Gonzalo Guerrero legend gazed into an unknown interior of the Yucatan, from which their shadowy figure refused to emerge. The Yucatecan jungle thus simultaneously signals the frontier of Spanish knowledge and the Mayan enunciatory locus.³ The *Cantares of Dzitbalché* give insight into processes of change that eluded Spanish chroniclers. There, Mayan writing reveals articulations between text, time, and territory.

Geographic representation lies at the core of the early Spanish colonial project. The Americas as a region belie the European act of naming them as such. This act of naming has been termed “the invention of America” (Dussel 7-8).⁴ The Spanish redrew the *mapa mundi*, placing their Atlantic world of colonial activity at the center. This ideological and geopolitical construction has had far-reaching consequences in Western understandings and representations of the colonial past. Gonzalo Guerrero gives one example of how the intrusion of the Eurocentric imaginary into time and space affects contemporary portrayals of the past in literature and historiography. As Aníbal Quijano has observed:

The Eurocentric perspective of knowledge operates as a mirror that distorts what it reflects, as we can see in the Latin American historical experience. That is to say, what we Latin Americans find in that mirror is not completely chimerical, since we possess so many and such important historically European traits in many material and intersubjective aspects. But at the same time we are profoundly different. Consequently, when we look in our Eurocentric mirror, the image that we see is not just composite, but also necessarily partial and distorted (556).

³ Texts on the edges of European influence reveal particular colonial relationships of power and knowledge: see chapters seven and twelve of *The Location of Culture* (Bhabha 175-198; 338-367).

⁴ See also Edmundo O’Gorman’s “Historia y crítica de la idea del descubrimiento de América” in *La invención de América* (3-21). Also, Catherine Walsh’s “Interculturalidad, conocimiento y descolonialidad” gives an interdisciplinary approach to the problem of Europe-as-center.

My close reading of the *Cantares de Dzitbalché* juxtaposed with the legend of Gonzalo Guerrero suggests the possibility of a less distorted image with a number of implications. The invention of Gonzalo Guerrero arose from Spanish failure to secure control of the Yucatan, failure that, I propose, points to native success through cultural survival and resistance. The vague presence of their Spanish others comes through the *Cantares of Dzitbalché* via the Yucatecan appropriation of alphabetic script and their emphasis on the clandestine continuation of ritual practices. By establishing ceremonial spaces beyond the Spanish purview, Yucatecan scribes wrote and told what Mario Blaser has called “stories in spite of Europe” (548).⁵ A marriage between Gonzalo and his Maya bride comes from hearsay at best, yet we may ask how female rites of passage, betrothal, and union fared in Yucatan after the Spanish. The Spanish chroniclers’ uneasiness regarding the possible existence of mestizo sons of Guerrero also leads us to inquire into the fate of orphans of conquest. Likewise, the unsubstantiated claims of Hernán Cortés and fellow conquistador Francisco Montejo that Gonzalo Guerrero wrote them letters can prompt us to consider how Mayas did use Western writing to preserve their worldviews, rituals, and practice-based knowledge. The manuscript of the *Cantares de Dzitbalché* as portable, collective memory reveals how territorial displacement affected traditional rituals. As counter to the worlding tendencies of the Spanish Gonzalo Guerrero legend, the *Cantares of Dzitbalché* convey indigenous discourses regarding time, ritual, and the trauma of conquest.

SPANISH LEGENDS AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES

The most elaborate account of the shipwrecked sailor turned Maya warrior, outlined above, comes from chapter XXVII of Bernal Díaz de Castillo’s *La verdadera historia de la conquista de la Nueva España* (1576). Díaz accompanied Hernán Cortés when he arrived to Yucatan in 1519; however, he did not write of the castaway until the 1570s. The half-

⁵ Blaser theorizes ways in which natives throughout the world have used writing to preserve their cultural discourses. See also José Rabasa’s concept of *elsewheres*—situated epistemes in native writing and painted images—, which he explains in *Tell Me the Story of How I Conquered You: Elsewheres and Ethnocide in the Colonial Mesoamerican World* (18-55, 193-205).

century of distance led Bernal Díaz to rely on other Spanish chronicles, notably Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia de las Indias y la conquista de México* (1553) (Adorno 233), which he alternately refuted and used to support his claims. López de Gómara himself had drawn on earlier chronicles. The first printed account of the 1511 shipwreck of the Valdivia expedition (published 1516) narrated navigational failure: their trip from Panamá to Sevilla reached a premature end with a group of sailors washed up on a beach in Yucatan (Anghiera 238, 417-418). In 1534, as if unaware of the true name of the legendary figure, Cortés mentioned the stranded compatriot simply as "Morales" in a legal document (*Documentos inéditos* 27: 301-569, 28:388-429). Likewise, in 1536, Cortés's soldier Andrés de Cereceda wrote his name as "Gonzalo Aroça" (Tozzer 8 n38). Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo added details by calling him a sailor (*marinero*), and identifying him as a *converso* who left the Spanish fold (Oviedo 3: 255). All of these Spanish accounts sought to explain a pressing reality: by the time Cereceda and Oviedo wrote, otherwise capable conquistadors, who sacked Tenochtitlan in 1521 with Cortés, had failed to take the Yucatan on multiple occasions. Oviedo's account in 1542 thus became significant, since he placed Gonzalo in key battles against conquistadors: at Montejo's defeat in 1528 and Alonso de Dávila's 1531 attack on the Mayas (2:233-234; 3:244, 246). As the chroniclers reckoned, something must have gone wrong in Spanish ranks in order for the Mayas to have kept them out of Yucatan. Ultimately, the conventional account of Gonzalo Guerrero represents an uneven narrative patchwork, the sum of dozens of undocumented details, which reflect largely ineffectual Spanish military efforts.

In sixteenth-century Spain, written documentation for governmental operations became preferred, yet bureaucratic record-keeping remained in its infancy. Earlier, orality formed the basis of government records in Iberian kingdoms. The turbulent events of the previous century—the consolidation of Castilla and Aragón, and anti-Islamic military campaigns—would encourage meticulous written documentation. As such, the fifteenth century marked the phasing out of the oral report in royal ministries in favor of standardized written reports (Bouza 6) and ubiquitous notaries (Casey 168). Letters on all matters governmental and social proliferated: as the rhetorician of the period Pedro Ceballos remarked, "the pen becomes a sixth sense for those who are absent or a breath that inspires the soul in the same way a portrait delights the gaze" (Bouza 8), [*la pluma viene a ser un sexto sentido para los ausentes y una*

respiración que alienta el ánimo, de la manera que un retrato recrea la vista”] (qtd. in Bouza 76 n. 9). Optimism spread regarding the credibility of the written word. Thus, the Spaniards who reached the Yucatan in 1519 associated writing with the modern and rational, and considered orality outmoded (5-6). In keeping with growing graphophilia, it is noteworthy that the chroniclers insisted that Hernán Cortés and Francisco Montejo received letters that proved the whereabouts and aims of Gonzalo Guerrero. These scribal acts, though imagined, do signal alphabetic writing as a key medium of contact and negotiation between Mayas and Spanish.

Through complex migrations,⁶ Mayas avoided Spanish rule; with the pen, they preserved indigenous knowledge. As the following analysis of five *cantares*—7, 15, 8, 5 and 12—will reveal, each serves as a repository of time-honored ways of knowing.⁷ Indigenous knowledges (IK) are rooted in rituals, customs, and daily activities that lead to balance, rather than abstractions about truths (Maffie, “End” 57). IK thus encompass shamanic and ritual practices, including all activities related to subsistence and group welfare, with a pragmatic day-to-day eye to maintaining equilibrium.⁸ When it comes to proper human action, one seeks a way forward, and practical guides for concerns of the here and now (Deloria 13-14; Hester and Cheney 323-324). During the colonial period, the Spanish faced unrelenting opposition from Yucatecans who “used the frontier to hide both people and ideas and to maintain an underground of spirited resistance” (Jones 16). The *cantares* under consideration thus used writing to reinforce tradition and the oral transmission of knowledge

⁶ Nancy Farriss has observed three kinds of colonial migration in Yucatan. They took *flight* south into the jungle. Through *dispersion* they reorganized their pre-contact settlements into new ones in the forest. Also, they would *drift* back and forth between their communities and Spanish-controlled areas. See chapter seven in *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (199-223).

⁷ Barrera-Vásquez’s order of the *cantares* and his Spanish translation follow the Dzitbalché manuscript. Munro Edmunson, however, grouped his transcriptions and English translation thematically. While Edmunson’s translations appear in this publication, I use Barrera-Vásquez’s Arabic numerals for each *cantar*.

⁸ James Maffie’s approach to IK includes “shamanism, sorcery, ceremony, ritual, and mysticism as well as farming, weaving, storytelling, navigating, building, hunting, painting, singing, cooking, dancing, playing music, animal husbandry, astronomy, botany, medicine, mathematics, toolmaking, and child rearing” (60).

(Montiel 43). The pragmatic orientation of Yucatecan knowledge meant that even in the midst of back-and-forth migrations, generations of Mayas negotiated their own engagements with the invaders, their economics, and their ritual observances. With a contact zone in constant flux, the colonial Spanish north pushed to take the southern reaches of Mayan Yucatan. Fighting and writing, the Mayas pushed back.

Shifting ground between orality and writing characterizes the legendary Gonzalo Guerrero and the *Cantares of Dzitbalché*. Turning to these compositions, it is crucial to bear in mind colonial pressures informing them, as Timothy Knowlton notes, in indigenous texts from the colonial period, the “colonial ‘why’ can and does determine ‘what’ the text relates” (243). The *cantares* communicate culture, tradition, and metaphysical views (Garza xxvi-xxvii; Nájera Coronado, *Cantares* 12), yet colonial territorial encroachment influenced the topics they address. The Spanish construction of the Mayanized Guerrero exposes their knowledge gaps. Meanwhile, the village of Dzitbalché preserved songs as an archive against the erosion of communal knowledge.

A WIFE WHO NEVER WAS

While there was no wife of Gonzalo Guerrero, in the jungles of Yucatan, songs of preparation for betrothal and nuptial union continued, intertwined with the abiding importance of shamanic practices. Female initiation rites remained, as *cantares* 4, 7, 14, and 15 depict in vivid detail.⁹ Away from Spanish settlements, ancestral practices continued with clandestine marriages even under the growing interference of colonial administrators and clergy (Jones 274). Entering adulthood continued to involve spectacle and the guidance of a traditional ritual specialist (Nájera Coronado, “Nueva” 112). The *Cantares de Dzitbalché* provide insight beyond the limits of Spanish knowledge regarding female coming of age in Yucatan. In part seeking refuge from the rape culture of Spanish soldiers and fortune-seekers, and in part to preserve continuity, young women had recourse to traditional ceremonies under the forest canopy.

⁹ The complementary *cantares* 14 and 15 emphasize solar imagery (Barrera-Vásquez 15), in distinction to the nocturnal, lunar rite in the dyad of *cantares* 4 and 7 (Eudave Eusebio 110).

Writing conceals ritual knowledge from the Spanish and reveals it to select young women in Dzitbalché. *Cantar 7* exemplifies the poetic genre of *kay nicté*, which Alfredo Barrera Vásquez has translated as “canto de la flor” (flower song). The motif centers on female sexuality. The Motul dictionary defines *nicté* as “*rosa o flor... travesuras de mujeres*” (“rose or flower... mischief of women”) and “*Kay nicté*” as “*cantares deshonestas y de amores y cantarlos*” (“indecent songs about love, and singing them”; my trans.; Arzápalo Marín f328r). A contemporary Yucatecan rite of passage inverts the same name, the *nicté kay*, wherein women and a female shaman perform a ceremony to cause a departed lover to return (Nájera Coronado, *Cantares* 53; Basauri 150). The rising moon frames the clandestine performance of the fertility rite:

U TZ' U KUCHUL	Its center comes
CHUMUC CAAN	To the middle of the sky,
CHEN ZACTTIN CAB	Just lighting the earth
U ZAZILIL	With its glow,
Y OOK T U LACAL BAAL Y AN	Over everything there is
CIMAC OLIL	happiness
TI T U LACAL MALOB UINIC	for all good men.
TZ' OOC COHOL T U ICHIL	One has arrived inside
U NAAK KAAX	The womb of the forest,
TUUX MAIXI MAC MEN MAX	Where there is not even
	anyone stirring
HEL U Y ILCONEIL	Who can counterspy
LEIL	On anything
BAAX	Whatever
(C) TAAL	We may come
C BEET (4v) ¹⁰	To do.
	(Edmunson, “Songs”
	182)

The creator goddess Ixchel, personified in the moon at its zenith (Cruz Cortés 18), makes apparent that female collaboration with the celestial orb weaves a symbolic textile and restores cosmic order (Nájera Coronado, “Nueva” 106). In this ritual, the moon is at its highest and brightest point, which suggests participants would wait to hold the rite when a full moon

¹⁰ The transcription follows the Yucatecan capitalization from the manuscript.

would provide the most intense lunar energy. The first-person plural in tandem with the limited male access to the ceremonial space may mean that female participants in the rite later dictated its events to a Mayan scribe (Eudave Eusebio 112). To these observations I would add that the chaotic threat of Spanish invasion increased the relevance of these harmonious representations. The light of the moon shines on the Yucatecan ritual, showing balance between nature and the land's inhabitants. The emphasis on secrecy is likewise telling: the shaman and other women are present, yet the rest of the community and the invading Spanish are nowhere to be found.

Holding the ceremony in a secluded place where the shaman can practice her expertise also suggests that the larger community has interest in its success: group survival depended on the rite, which promoted fertility.¹¹ At stake is the cosmic and social order, whose potential lies in a web of propitious unions. The phrase “for all good men” [TIT U LACAL MALOB UINIC] signals that part of the preparations for this rite of passage is the community's approval of suitable partners for the initiates. Emphasizing unions that will strengthen Dzitbalché, the uninvited Spanish have not met with group approval.

The *kay nicté* motif draws attention to material aspects of Yucatecan culture as vibrant in spite of pressures from outsiders. Gathering a host of flowers, along with other products of forest and field, the ceremony parallels the historical survival of trade relationships among the Mayas, drawing on their large areas of productive land.

T TAZAH POM	One has brought copal
H ZIIT	And cane vine;
BEY XAN X COC BOX	Likewise black tortoise shell:
BEY XAN TUMBEN HIIB TOOK	Likewise new quartz and flint
Y ETE TUMBEN KUCH	And new cotton,
TUMBEN LUCH	New spinning sockets,
BOLOM YAAX TOOK	Great green flints;
TUMBEN PEETZ'ILIL	New weights,

¹¹ Males also sought assistance from lunar fertility rites, as the *Ritual de los Bacabes* prescribes a nocturnal ceremony to restore lost virility (Cruz Cortés 279-81).

TUMBEN XOOT BEY XAN U CAN X ULUM	Fresh conch; Likewise a quantity of turkeys,
TUMBEN XANAB T U LACAL TUMBEN LAIL XAM U KAXIL C HOOL U TIAL C POOC NIICTE HA	And new sandals: Everything is new, even the ties for our heads, So that we can gather nectar,
BEY XAN C HOOP ZA(H)UB (4v)	And thus we can skim the flowers. (Edmunson, “Songs” 182-83)

The descriptions of musical instruments, ritual implements, and the locale integrate native economics and ritual knowledge, while isolating them from Spanish influence. In the context from which the poem emerged, the harvesting of copal sap for incense continued, as did the fabrication and trade of flint knives. The continuation of the manufacture and use of domestic utensils—knife, turtle shell, and weaving instruments—show the Spanish had not destabilized many quotidian patterns of labor and leisure. Yet these lines also recall exploitative practices of *encomiendas* and subsequent Spanish landowners, who required natives to raise cotton, the region’s chief export to Central Mexico in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Patch 31). However, without looking abroad, Yucatecan communities were able to cultivate, harvest, spin, and dye cotton, maintaining a traditional industry, which also supplied their needs. In this case Spanish economics inadvertently aided Yucatecan ritual.

Expertise in textiles goes hand-in-hand with ritual expertise. The list of ritual objects shows their importance in passing on local knowledge. Although at the end of the list, the ceremonial matron has a central role in the rite of passage: she understands the specific uses of the incense, turtle shell, flowers, flint knife, turkey, colorful cotton thread, and other material the participants have gathered. The weaving implements and the cotton indicate a fabric of social responsibilities, included in the ongoing teaching and reliance on a skill necessary for identity and survival (Nájera Coronado, *Cantares* 50). The ritual area itself, an enclosed, watery space (“the womb of the forest”) with a low entry, may refer to a *cenote*, whose walls and aquifers recall birth and the female reproductive ability (51).

Diego de Landa recorded the observance of a similar rite of passage for adolescents, which involved the descent into a *cenote* (45-46). The descent into the earth touches death and renews the capacity to give life. The care of material and ritual culture shows that upon returning to the surface, young women could expect to continue their traditions, even while safeguarding the rite from outsider eyes. The ritual in *cantar 7* concludes at a climactic moment, which shows that the women of Dzitbalché—by preserving their performance of ceremony in textual form—carry the knowledge necessary for life:

T Y AN ON T U TZ'U KAA(X)	We are here then in the
	heart of the forest
T U CHI NOH HAL TUN	At the edge of the stone
	pool
U TIAL C PAAT U HOKOL	To await the appearance
X CIICHPAN BUUTZ' EK Y OOKOL	Of the beautiful
KAAX	smoking star over
	the forest.
PITAH NOOK EEX	Shed your clothes!
LUUZ U KAXIL A HOL EX	Remove your hair stays!
BA TEN EEX	'Til you are
HEE COHIC EEX	As you arrived
UAY	Here
Y OKOL CABIL E	On this earth,
U ZUHUY EX	Oh virgins,
X CHUPALEL EX HEL U (4v)	Maidens of the changing
	Moon. (Edmunson,
	"Songs" 183)

The corporality of the rite has a vital psychological dimension: disrobing becomes a cognitive act, which describes the world, causes of origin and existence, in addition to giving instructions on obligations to oneself, the group, and the universe (Nájera Coronado, *Cantares* 51; Eliade 65-66). By taking even the Yucatecan reader to the limits of scribal knowledge, this *cantar* appropriates the Latin alphabets without divulging key sacred knowledge. The Spanish threat, never completely absent from the text, led a scribe of Dzitbalché to place a crucial distance between the ceremony and colonial meddling. Thus, the song reveals the imperative isolation of a ceremony that worked to strengthen Yucatecan demographics.

As a group, *cantares* 7, 4, 14, and 15 take place in Dzitbalché, near the Spanish settlement of Mérida. The quatrain includes a female initiation rite in *cantar* 7; in *cantar* 4 a couple ceremoniously receives a flower, an act tantamount to marriage (Nájera Coronado, *Cantares* 55; Cruz Cortés 19).¹² Whereas *cantar* 7 makes it clear that only select members of the community may be present at the female rite of initiation, *cantar* 15 takes place during the day and gives a glimpse at a future domestic horizon that young women could still anticipate:

TZ'A EX A HAUZ'UUTZ NOK	Put on your beautiful
EEX [...]	clothes. [...]
T KAILBELT CAA I LAAC	It is necessary that you
CLICHPAM EECH	look beautiful
HE BIIX (MA IX) MAAC E	As no one else
UAY TU T CAHIL	Here in the town,
H TZ'IITBALCHEE	The town of Dzitbalché.
CAH IN YACUMA ECH	I love you,
X CICHPAN COLELBIIL	Beautiful lady.
LAI BEILTIC	That is why
IN KAAT CA I(LABE) ECH	I want you to look
HAACH ZEM PE ECH	Glorious
CII(CHPAM) ECH	And beautiful,
T U MEN C U Y AN CA CHIICPAAC	So that you appear like
ECH TI X BUUTZ' EK	the smoking star.
T U MEN CA U TZ'IBOOLT ECH	So that you will be loved
TAC	Even as
LAIL	Existence,
U	The moon,
Y ETEL U X LOL NICTE KAAX (9v)	And wildflowers are.
	(Edmunson,
	“Songs” 177-78).

Arrayed in all her finery, the figure in *cantar* 15 complements the ceremonial disrobing of *cantar* 7. This song marks the passage of day to night, and with it a coming of age. The poetic voice describes human

¹² As part of Mayan marriage ceremonies and the reciprocal exchange of gifts between families, Bartolomé de Las Casas describes the “recibimiento de la flor” in his *Apologética sumaria historia* (516-517).

beauty in cosmic terms. Linguistic clues from the *Dresden Codex* (Knowlton 69), in addition to the *Popol Vuh* (Tedlock, *Popol*, 1985 ed. 335; Tedlock, *Popol*, 1996 ed. 375; Christensen 218 n. 569), emphasize Venus as the herald of the Sun.¹³ Just as Venus rises, a young woman's moment has arrived for her entrance into adult society, which the song depicts as an immense generative dance. The metaphors of Venus and the moon point to the unveiling of feminine beauty, which culminates in her comparison to wildflowers (LOL NICTÉ). In Dzitbalché, native scribes used the flexible motif of the *kay nicté* ("flower song") to portray female sexuality and reproduction (Cruz Cortés 20). Native writing here remembers moments of beauty and socially constructed processes of becoming, which continued in Yucatan beyond the limits of Spanish knowledge and the narratives they constructed.

While *kay nicté* in general connotes generative aspects of sexuality, it inhabits a liminal space in indigenous knowledges. The sensuality of *cantares* 7 and 15 echoes passages concerning the *kay nicté* in the *Chilam Balam of Chumayel*,¹⁴ which describe the libidinal excess of the Spanish. In this case, *nicté* flowers accompany descriptions of the damaging behavior of the *Dzules*—the Spanish soldiers—who imposed a culture of concubinage:

There was then no sickness; they had then no aching bones; they had then no high fever; they had then no smallpox; they had then no burning chest; they had then no abdominal pains; they had then no consumption; they had then no headache. At that time the course of humanity was orderly. The foreigners made it otherwise when they arrived here. They brought shameful things when they came. They lost their innocence in carnal sin; they lost their innocence in the carnal sin of Nacxit Xuchit, in the carnal sin of his companions. (Roys 19-20)

¹³ See Knowlton for chromatic and semantic analysis of Venus "*chac ek*" "Great [or Red] Star," which appears in the *Dresden Codex* (69). Dennis Tedlock has translated "Icoquih," the title of Venus the *Popol Vuh*, as "Day-bringer" and "Sun-carrier;" Alan Christensen has translated the same term as "Accompanies/Bears/Passes before the Sun." Susan Milbrath explains associations between the rising of Venus, the number five, conch shells, and femininity in chapter five of her *Star Gods of the Maya* (157-217).

¹⁴ During the slow Spanish invasion, local communities wrote, copied, and expanded the *Chilam Balam*; astute native catechists and choir leaders secretly read them aloud (Knowlton 242).

The abrupt arrival of outsiders shattered long-held patterns of health and wellbeing: presenting the negative outcomes of uncontrolled sexual desire and conquest, the *Chilam Balam* shows the flexibility of *nicté* imagery. The passage proposes the epidemics the people suffered were due to the invaders' uncontrolled appetites. The "foreigners" here may include more than the Spanish, as the diphastic kenning of the Yucatecan "Nacxit" (plumeria flower) with the Nahuatl-derived "Xuchit" (flower) intimates. I submit that this linguistic combination may reflect the influence of Nahuatl mercenary soldiers who accompanied Francisco de Montejo in 1528 and Andrés Dávila in 1531 on their campaigns in Yucatan. Away from the organizing effects of traditional rituals, *nicté* here signals rupture and pain infliction.¹⁵ The flower that meant cultural survival within established ceremonies meant desolation and trauma in the hands of the conquistadors.

ORPHANS OF CONQUEST

The children of Gonzalo Guerrero (that is, the legendary embodiment of historical mestizo children of early Spanish soldiers) belie the reality of orphanhood the Spanish invasion brought. Díaz's chronicle portrays Gonzalo Guerrero and his wife as the parents of the first mestizo children (108). As we have seen, only letters, whose existence is based on hearsay, would attest to the existence of the emblematic offspring. Certainly, by the time Cortés and his company reached Tenochtitlan, the concubinage of native women among Spanish soldiers had become commonplace (Menchaca 54-55). Orphans no doubt experienced dislocation and a lack of knowledge as to their communities of origin during the colonial invasion of Yucatan. Resembling the Nahuatl genre of *icnoncuicatl*—songs of sorrow—which proliferated after the conquest of central Mexico (Baudot 103; León-Portilla, 47, 66), in *cantar* 8, "The Lamentation Song

¹⁵ Antonio de Mediz Bolio's translation of this passage of the *Chilam Balam* uses a more literary tone, which emphasizes the connection between sexual violence and *nicté* flowers: "*No fue así lo que hicieron los Dzules cuando llegaron aquí. Ellos enseñaron el miedo; y vinieron a marchitar las flores. Para que su flor viviese, dañaron y sorbieron la flor de los otros*" (58). ["It was not that way, what the Dzules did, when they arrived here. They taught fear; and they came to wither the flowers. So that their flower might live, others' flowers they did damage, from others' flowers they did drink." My trans.]

of the Poor” [U YAYAH KAY H OZTZIL], the poetic voice recounts the experience of a child who has gradually lost every intimate connection in life:

HACH CHIICHAN EN	I was very little
CAA CIM IN NA	When my mother died
CAA CIM IN VUM	And my father died:
AY AY IN YUM EN	Oh alas, I am my father!
CAA T PPAT EN T U KAB	I was just left in the
	hands
T Y ICNAL IN LAAK	And company of my
	fellows.
MIIX MAAC Y AN T EN UAY Y	I have nobody here on
OKOL CAB	earth:
AY AY IN YUMIL EN	Oh alas, [ay, ay] I am my
	parents!
C U MAN CA PPEL KIN	Two days pass
C U CIMIL T EN IN LAAK (5r)	And my fellows may
	die. (Edmunson,
	“Songs” 184)

It is worth noting that of all of the *Cantares de Dzitbalché*, this one alone contains the vocable “ay ay.” Knowlton has observed the similarity here between “ay ay” and the rhythm-keeping interjection *ohuaya ohuaya*, in the *Cantares mexicanos*, which Bernardino de Sahagún and his Nahuatl assistants compiled from elders in the Valley of Mexico (ca. 1550-1581). However, Knowlton concludes that in the absence of other Yucatecan uses of the expression in colonial-era songs, it is not possible to determine that an influence from Nahuatl exists in the song (249). Martha Nájera Coronado has pointed out that the song uses the first person, which is atypical of compositions in Maya, but the norm in the Mexican highlands (*Cantares* 19 n2). As with the *Chilam Balam* quoted above, I would suggest another possibility. Given the contingents of paid Nahuatl mercenaries who accompanied the Spanish expeditions to Guatemala, (Oudijk and Matthew 28-64), and to Yucatan (Restall 123), we may also hypothesize that these same soldiers—from the recently-conquered Valley of Mexico and surrounding areas—brought the *icnoncuicatl* tradition with them during the aforementioned incursions of Francisco Montejo and Andrés Dávila. Thus, this song may acknowledge children whose parents

died in the Mayan fight against the Spanish and their Nahua allies. With elements of mobility and sudden dissolution of a family unit, the themes in the song represent the substance of traumatic lived experience.

The unknown antiquity of the orphan's song certainly does not gainsay the reality of the hostile presence of Spanish fortune-seekers and Nahua mercenaries. These outside, colonial pressures of displacement may echo in the abject phrases in *cantar* 8. The song continues:

UA Y AN CA U KAAT	If it is that one begs,
T U TTULUCH HUM	Groping and alone,
KAAT	Begs
MEN KAAT	And begs
T U HOL NAH	At the doors
NAHIL	Of houses
T U LACAL MAAC	Of everyone
ILIC	He sees,
HE LEIL I	Surely
U TZ'IIC YACUNAIL	He will be given love.
INAN Y OTOCH	He has no home;
INAM	He has no clothes;
INAN KAAK (5r)	He has no fire . . .
	(Edmunson,
	“Songs” 185)

Without a family, the orphan has lost ties to a lineage, and to any possibility of an inheritance (Nájera Coronado, “Nueva” 101). That inheritance includes the ability to converse with and learn from his elders: the orphan thus has reduced access to his people's knowledge of the past. The uncertainty of the moment extends to times to come: the child wanders as a refugee of the territorial and communal displacement characteristic of colonialism.

KEEPING TIME

In the face of orphanhood and demographic losses, the *Cantares de Dzitbalché* portray the continuation of traditional time-keeping as paramount to the stability of community life. By using linear writing to reinforce ancestral observances of the passage of time, scribes found an

application of the Latin alphabet the Spanish never planned. As Nancy Farriss has observed, “for the Maya and the rest of Mesoamerica, time is cosmic order, its cyclical patterning the counterforce to the randomness of evil” (“Remembering” 574). To ward off the chaos of the Spanish invasion, the practice of placing a white stone (*tun*) to mark the passage of 360 days (twelve lunar months) continued in Yucatan. Every twenty stones stacked on top of each other required the building of a stela to mark the passage of 7,200 days, one *katun*. At the end of a *katun*, a period of 105 days of ritual impurity followed (Edmunson, *Ancient* 199). The long-lasting adherence to *katun*-keeping provided Mayan settlements in Yucatan a common “ritualized communication” (Jones 15). Yucatecans had always conceived of time-keeping as a collective effort to help “the gods to carry the burden of the days, the years, and the katuns and thereby to keep time and the cosmos in orderly motion” (Farriss, “Remembering” 589). Scribes in Dzitbalché who preserved the *katun* songs thus used writing as an added measure to counteract destabilizing, aleatory interruptions in the cosmic and social order that the Spanish brought. In the counting of *katuns*, Yucatecans maintained control of a central feature of their culture, which guided rituals and rites of passage, and made the cosmos inhabitable.

As Yucatecans migrated to avoid the Spanish, their *katun*-keeping also reminded them of connections with their ancient cities, which by then the jungle had reclaimed. *Cantar* 5 shows that the residents of Dzitbalché were aware of the urban planning of their predecessors. They knew that keeping time would help them maintain contact with those who came before. While the song has didactic elements serving to extend knowledge within the community (Edmunson, “Songs” 200), it is striking that the singers of Dzitbalché recognize what they do not know about their ancestors. The *cantar* opens:

H UA PAACHOOB	It is urgently
KAA(BET)	Necessary
U PPIZIL	To measure
U XOCIIL	The count,
UA HAY PPEL HAAB	Either of how many
	years
UA KATUM KIN MAAN(AAC)	Or <i>katun</i> days have
	passed
LE U KINIL UAY	Since that time

TE CAHOBAALEIL	Of the settlement there
H NUCUUCH	Of the great
CHAAC UINCOOB	And powerful men,
LAI TIOB LIIZ U PA(AK) LEIL	Those who raised the walls
U UCHBEN CAHOB	Of the ancient cities
HE LAH C ILIC	That we see here and there
UAY	Here
PETEN	In the forest
H CHAKAN	Of the plainsmen.
T U LACAL LAIL	All of them
CAHOOB	Are cities
TTITTANOOB	Scattered over the land
UAY	Here,
HE LAH	Here and there,
T AAN C ILIC	As we have seen,
TTUUCH MEN	And made to squat,
TTUUCH	Squatting
Y OKOL CANAL	On the heights
UITZOOB (3v)	Of the mountains. (Edmunson, "Songs" 200-201).

City and cosmos connect through human effort. Building cities and raising stelae at the end of each *katun* were concrete social activities: deities do not intervene and it was the job of people on the ground to keep time (Farriss, "Remembering" 576-77). Not knowing how many *katuns* have elapsed since their ancestors built there heightens the urgency "to measure / The count" and reclaim their sense of space and time. The phrases "All of them / Are cities / Scattered over the land" may point to the communities on the move during the composition and recitation of the song, some of whom now stay in an abandoned Yucatecan city. Recording what remains unknown in group memory in fact undertakes the protection of the urban sites, through a collective enunciatory locus and Yucatecan readership.

Cantar 5 portrays the city as a living repository of knowledge, which transcends generations and traces organizing lines through the cosmos. In addition to carving portraits of current rulers on stelae, Mayan cities

recorded history and followed an astronomical layout.¹⁶ The observance of solstices and equinoxes was built into the layout of streets and the positioning of temples and palaces. The descending shadow of the Kulkulkan serpent on the great pyramid of Chichen Itza on the day of the spring equinox is a well-known example. Public ceremonial constructions manifest the importance of living and building in harmony with annual cosmic cycles. Urban features like these lead the singer to reflect:

T U MEN ZAZAMMAL	For day by day
CI ILIC	We just see
T C CHUMUUC CAAN	When we have halved the sky,
U CHICULIL	The manifestation
BAX ALAN T ON	Of what was handed down to us
T U MEN H UUCHBEN UINCOOB	By the ancient people
UAY T CAHAL E	Here in these villages,
UAY T LUM E (3v)	Here in this land. (Edmunson, “Songs” 201).

Even the Spanish invasion that has caused them to wander does not dampen the community’s resolve to continue the collective enterprise of reading the night sky. The use of first-person plural underscores the identification of the singer and the refugee community with the ancestors in the phrase “when we halved the sky” [T C CHUMUUC CAAN], which affirms the prominent role of human interpretation and meaning-making. The poetic voice places itself in a line of knowledge preservation from the cities of their forbearers to the colonized present.

The community of Dzitbalché prizes the ancestral cities as civic and cosmological testimonies for posterity. They pass on architectural knowledge through the aid of song, and a complementary written record:

TI C TZ’IIC	Which we shall give
-------------	---------------------

¹⁶ Chapter five of Anthony Aveni’s *Skywatchers* gives an introduction to cosmology and urban planning (217-322). Aveni’s “Cosmology and Cultural Landscape: The Late Postclassic Maya of Northern Yucatan” provides specific examples from near Dzitbalché (115-132). See also Ivan Šprajc’s useful overview of equinoxes and solstices in urban planning (303-314).

U HAHIL C OOL	As the truth of our hearts,
U TIAL CAA PAACTAC	So that it may be possible
XOCIC U BA	To read
Y AN T Y IICH	What is on its face
LAI CAAN	There in heaven.
Y O(CO)L AKAB BY C CHUM	At nightfall we shall thus divide it
T U CHUMCU(C)	In the middle,
BEY UA TUN CHIMIL	And perhaps the total
T AN CANZA (3v)	Will instruct [us]. (Edmunson, "Songs" 201)

The *Cantares de Dzitbalché* have survived and come down as written, linearized records of collective reflections on the meaning of the ancient cities of the Yucatan. At the point at which the song passed into its textual iteration, the community did not consider their astronomical knowledge complete. The expectation that "perhaps the total / will instruct..." [BEY UA TUN CHIMIL / T AN CANZA] reveals the continuing expansion of Mayan knowledge in ancient cities where the Spanish did not settle. A future tense anticipates the continued procedures of dividing celestial movements while aligning ritual and even mundane tasks with cosmic balance.

The celebration of the placing of the *katun* stones evinces the continuation of other ancient ceremonies by which the ancestors marked the passage of time in the conflictive contact zone of the Yucatan. Cultural survival did not mean austerity and dour expressions. In fact, *cantar* 12 presents a carnival-like gathering as part of larger time-keeping practices. Through an observance of "the death and rebirth of fire at the beginning of the year" (Edmunson, "Songs" 197), ritual specialists and musicians begin to assemble before dawn:

TZ'U KUCHUL H PAX	The musicians have arrived,
KAYOOB	And singers,
H PAALTZ'AMOOB	And actors
H OKOTOOB	And dancers,

H UALAK	Contortionists,
ZUTZIHOOB	Acrobats,
BEY H PPUUZ	Together with
	hunchbacks
Y ETEL NACYAOOB	And spectators.
T U LACAL U UINICIL	The whole population
TAL T U PACH AH AHAU CAN	Will be following the
	Lord Snake,
T U CIMAC OLIL	And will be delighted
C U BEETABIL	At what is to be
	performed
T U CH(U)MUC KIUCIL	In the middle of the
	square
C CAHTALIL (7r)	Of this village of ours.
	(Edmunson,
	“Songs” 198).

The undulating movements of the ritual performers will follow the Lord Snake, who embodies the movements of the cosmos, sliding back and forth between equinoxes while advancing. By the time the sun appears on the horizon, shamanic leaders of the ritual hierarchy prepare for dances in the center of town. These choreographies, in addition to marking time, convey collective knowledge to participants and spectators. The Yucatecan audience grows via the use of writing. The community met and taught—by movement, music, and the *katun* observance—how the ancestral knowledge would allow them to survive for the long term (Eudave Eusebio 110, 113).¹⁷ By the eighteenth century, ecclesiastical concern regarding Yucatecan dances led to efforts to suppress them (Pinkus Rendón 45). Despite prohibitions, even through the Caste War—as late as 1847-1901—dances continued in isolated places (Eudave Eusebio 109). The tool of writing and deep knowledge of the jungle help Yucatecans protect their dances and calendar. *Cantar* 12 thus recalls the incomplete nature of Spanish conquest. Far from ending the collective observance of the new fire ceremony, the indigenous appropriation of

¹⁷ Earlier in the manuscript, *cantar* 10 describes the Spanish imposition of the seven-day week as the intrusion of “The Lord Centipede / The one with seven necklaces, which were on his head” [X AH CHAAPAAT / HUM UUC U TIICHIL U POL] (Edmunson, “Songs” 188).

linear writing served to reify Mayan concepts of time, cosmos, and communal ritual responsibility. The *cantar* continues:

TZ'U HOOPPOL Y OOCOL KIN	The rising of the sun has begun
T U HAAL NA CAAN	At the edge house of the sky,
T U TIIBIT	And has shown
(TA)AL U HOOPPOL	That the beginning comes.
LAIL X... POM...	There is the incense [burner?]
YUM CAAN	So that the Father of Heaven
KAMIIC U BUUTZ'	Will receive the smoke
KAK	And fire
U TIAL U CHIL	For the mouth
T CU Y IICH	And holy face
YUM	Of Father
KIN	Sun.
C ON EEX	Let's go!
C ON T CHUM YAAX CHE	Let's go to the Fort of the Ceiba!
COO X TZ'AIC C KEEX	Go make our offering
U TIAL TUMBEN HAAB	For the new year!
TZ'OOC	It is over!
TZ'OOCIL U MAAN YAAYAA	The miserable days have
KINIL (7r)	passed! (Edmunson, "Songs" 198-199)

The offering to the ceiba guarantees sustenance for the sun and sky during the new *katun*. Similarities exist between this offering and the Mexica new fire celebration at the end of a fifty-two-year calendric cycle in Tenochtitlan (Nájera Coronado, *Cantares* 112, 118),¹⁸ although the practice of the fire drill on the chest of a sacrificial captive does not appear

¹⁸ Bernardino de Sahagún describes the New Fire ceremony and the tying-of-the-years, *toxiuh molpilia*, in Bk XII, Chap X of his *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España* (438-439).

here. Yet, as in many parts of Mesoamerica, this ceremony marks the end of the “miserable days,” ritually dangerous days, which the Yucatecans called the *uayeyab* “días duendes” / “dwarf days” (my trans., *Chilam Balam* 65). Ritual danger has passed and the *katun* is complete. Even with nearby Spanish settlements, a Yucatecan reading of the cosmos and time supported tradition and allowed for adaptation and fusion. As young women could depend on their rites of passage surviving despite the pressures of the invading Spanish, so the community at large could depend on ceremonies that renewed katuns.

FIVE HUNDRED YEARS LATER

Returning to the main argument, we have seen that the Gonzalo Guerrero accounts give retrospective explanations of repeated Spanish failures to conquer the Yucatan. The five-hundred-year anniversary of Cortés’s expedition to Yucatan offers fresh engagements with Mayan texts, which his legend has obscured. Writings on Guerrero emerged as a cathartic dialogue between Spanish chroniclers to make sense of their experiences. Over time, Spanish chroniclers added detail to their accounts of the castaway, claiming he lived in Yucatan for a twenty-year period (Adorno 229), roughly one *katun*. For the Mayas, what was new? The European invasion unfolded as a three-hundred-year cataclysm. Nonetheless, Yucatecans had survived previous disasters, including the collapse of ancient city-states some four centuries before 1519. The *Cantares de Dzitbalché* demonstrate discursive resistance to the worlding narratives of the Spanish.

Recognizing Gonzalo Guerrero as a Spanish interpretation of their own military failures signals the limits of their knowledge. In turn, this Spanish ignorance sheds light on native knowledge preserved in the *Cantares de Dzitbalché*. Reading these *cantares* against the legend of Gonzalo Guerrero reveals the vitality of Yucatec Mayan culture in the sixteenth century and beyond. The contact zones of Yucatan led to mutual Mayan and Spanish processes of interpretation and textual production. As we have seen, the later the chronicle, the more complex the story about the vanished sailor became. Rather than a defector from Spain’s history, Gonzalo Guerrero emerged as a literary figure, which reveals Spanish frustration from their defeat at the hands of the Mayas.

Gonzalo Guerrero has continued appearing in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as the legend becomes a forum for tracing postcolonial imaginaries. In 1975, Mario Aguirre Rosas edited and published what he claimed were hand-written chronicles by Guerrero himself; Gabriela Solís Robleda and Pedro Bracamonte y Sosa in 1994 also released his memoirs, which they claimed the castaway had written on a deer hide (Adorno 370 n54).¹⁹ Consistent with the legend, no material proof of these holographs exists (Mueller 146-147; Adorno 242-245). Recent writing on Guerrero tends to undermine the Spanish colonial project. However, as we have seen, earlier sources from native pens also record decolonial views. As I have shown, numbers 7, 15, 8, 5 and 12 of the *Cantares de Dzitbalché* circumvented Spanish ecclesiastical and administrative projects. This analysis suggests that Yucatecans began writing during the century of initial contact, addressing their specific circumstances with their inherited knowledge.

Beyond the written word, other current media reinforce the Guerrero legend. In Spain, the RTVE network's series *Ministerio del Tiempo* aired an episode in 2017 entitled "Tiempo de conquista," which features a disaffected Gonzalo, cynical towards all things Spanish. In 2019, the History Channel, in cooperation with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, released *Hernán, el nombre de la conquista*, a documentary series on the 1519-1521 invasion of the central highlands of Mesoamerica. The first episode of the series, "Marina" takes Bernal Díaz del Castillo at face value and assumes the existence of Gonzalo, in spite of the lack of direct evidence, as explained earlier. Perhaps a collective desire to atone for the past motivates recurring visual representations of Gonzalo. The Spanish rebel and his family appear cast in bronze in two 1974 renderings by Raúl Ayala Arellano; the pieces stand in Akumal, Quitana Roo, and Mérida, Yucatan, respectively. In the governor's palace in Mérida, a mural by Fernando Castro Pacheco recalls paintings of the Holy Family, with a mestizo babe lying between Gonzalo and his wife (Siegel 144). This sampling represents the ongoing reappearances of the fictitious indianized

¹⁹ Rolena Adorno explains, "The books edited by Aguirre Rosas and by Solís Robleda and Bracamonte y Sosa are presented as autobiographical accounts by Gonzalo Guerrero himself, written, according to the editors, on European paper and deerskin, respectively (Aguirre Rosas, *Gonzalo*, 66; San Buenaventura, *Historias*, 9; Solís y Bracamonte, "Introducción," xiv.)" (Adorno 370 n54)

warrior. As we have seen, the examples of Yucatecan writing in the colonial period examined here from the *Cantares de Dzitbalché* do not show Mayan interest in incorporating Spanish castaways into their numbers. Rather, they show concern for preserving indigenous knowledge for an internal audience.

Earlier I recalled Aníbal Quijano's observation on the distorted reflection of Latin America in the mirror of Eurocentric modernity. My analysis aims to reposition indigenous self-representation. Imaginary written correspondence from Gonzalo Guerrero to the Spanish conquistadors never came from Yucatan. In their place emerged texts that shed light on what mattered to the Yucatecan scribes who witnessed tradition and wrote beyond the limits of Western knowledge. The *Cantares de Dzitbalché* drew on the ancestral ritual motif of the *kay nicté* in order to show the importance of sex and ritual reciprocity between female initiates and the community. An orphan's suffering in the same *cantares* may recall the young and vulnerable during the European invasion. The *cantares* reveal the embedded nature of Indigenous Knowledges in ritual, daily activities, and in the operations of the cosmos itself. Yucatecans inhabited a cosmos with powerful forces that perennial figures populated, interwoven into a fabric of cyclical time and ritual. Showing neither defeat nor surrender in the colonial era of their composition, the textual production of Dzitbalché presents a continuing group image, a reflection on self in spite of Spanish legend.

Works Cited

- Adorno, Rolena. *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*. Yale UP, 2007.
- Aguirre Rosas, Mario. *Gonzalo de Guerrero: Padre del mestizaje iberoamericano*. JUS, 1975.
- Anghiera, Pietro Martir de. *De Orbe Novo*. Knickerbocker Press, 1912.
- Arzápalo Marín, Ramón. *Calepino de Motul: Diccionario Maya-Español, Tomo III*. UNAM, 1995.
- , editor and translator. *El ritual de los Bacabes*. UNAM, Centro de Estudios Mayas, Fuentes para el Estudio de la Cultura Maya, 5, 1987.
- Aveni, Anthony. "Cosmology and Cultural Landscape: The Late Postclassic Maya of Northern Yucatan." *Astronomers Scribes, and Priests: Intellectual Interchange between the Northern Maya Lowlands and Highland Mexico in the Late Postclassic Period*, edited by Vail, Gabrielle, and Christine L. Hernández, Dumbarton Oaks, 2010, pp. 115-132.
- . *Skywatchers: A Revised and Updated Version of Skywatchers of Ancient Mexico*. U of Texas P, 2001.
- Barrera-Vásquez, Alfredo. *El libro de los Cantares de Dzitbalché*. INAH, 1965.
- Basauri, Carlos. *Tojolabales, tzeltales y mayas: Breves apuntes sobre antropología, etnografía y lingüística*. Tallers Gráficos de la Nación, 1931.
- Baudot, Georges. *Utopia and History in Mexico: The First Chroniclers of Mexican Civilization (1520-1569)*. Translated by Bernard and Thelma Ortiz de Montellano. UP of Colorado, 1995.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.
- Blaser, Mario. "Ontological Conflicts and the Stories of Peoples in Spite of Europe: Toward a Conversation on Political Ontology." *Current Anthropology*, vol. 54, no. 5, Oct. 2013, pp. 547-568.
- Bolles, David. "Comparison between the *Herrera Manuscript* and *El libro de los Cantares de Dzitbalché*." 17 Jan 20, <http://www.alejandrasbooks.org/www/Maya/Herrera-Dzitbalche.pdf>.
- Bouza, Fernando. *Communication, Knowledge, and Memory in Early Modern Spain*. Translated by Sonia López and Michael Agnew. U of Philadelphia P, 2004.
- Casas, Bartolomé de las. *Apologética sumaria historia*. Alianza, 1992.
- Casey, James. *Early Modern Spain: A Social History*. Routledge, 2003.

- Christensen, Allen. *Popol Vuh: The Sacred Book of the Maya: The Great Classic of Central American Spirituality, Literal Poetic Version, Vols 1 and 2*. O-Books, 2003.
- Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de América y Oceanía*, 42 vols. Manuel G. Hernández, 1864-1884.
- Cruz Cortés, Noemí. "Ritos y plegarios lunares de fertilidad." *Estudios mesoamericanos*, vol. 1, no. 2, July-Dec. 2000, pp. 16-21.
- Deloria, Vine. *The Vine Deloria Reader*. Edited by Samuel Scinta, Kristen Foehner, and Barbara Deloria, Fulcrum Publishing, 1999.
- Díaz del Castillo, Bernal. *La historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, vol. I. Porrúa, 1992-2001.
- Dresden Codex. *World Digital Library*. 18 Jan. 2020, <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/11621/>.
- Dussel, Enrique. *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*. Translated by Michael Barber, Continuum, 1995.
- Edmunson, Munro, translator. "The Songs of Dzitbalché: A Literary Commentary." *Tlalocan*, vol. 3, no. 9, May 2013, pp. 173-208.
- . *The Ancient Future of the Itza: The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin*. U of Texas P, 1982.
- Eliade, Mircea. *Iniciaciones místicas*. Taurus Ediciones, 1975.
- Eudave Eusebio, Itzá. "Tejedoras de la vida: La presencia femenina en los cantares de Dzitbalché." *Estudios mesoamericanos: Nueva época*, vol. 9, no. 2, July-Dec., 2010, pp. 107-117.
- Farriss, Nancy. *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival*. Princeton UP, 1992.
- . "Remembering the Future, Anticipating the Past: History, Time, and Cosmology among the Maya of Yucatan." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 29, no. 3, 1987, pp. 566-93.
- Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, Gonzalo. *Historia general y natural de las Indias*. Edited by Juan Pérez de Tudela Bueso, Ediciones Atlas, 1959.
- Garza, Mercedes de la. *Literatura maya: Popol Vuh, Memorial de Sololá, Libro de Chilam Balam de Chumayel, Rabinal Achí, Libro de los cantares de Dzitbalché, Título de los señores de Totonicapán, Las historias de los Xpantzay, Códice Calkini*. Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1980.
- Hester, Lee, and Jim Cheney. "Truth and Native American

- Epistemology.” *Social Epistemology*, vol. 15, no. 4, 2001, pp. 319-334.
- Jones, Grant. *Maya Resistance to Spanish Rule: Time and History on a Colonial Frontier*. U of New Mexico P, 1989.
- Knowlton, Timothy. *Maya Creation Myths: Words and Worlds of the Chilam Balam*. UP of Colorado, 2012.
- Landa, Diego de. *Relación de las cosas de Yucatán*. Edited by María de Carmen León Cázares, CONACULTA, 1994.
- Léon-Portilla, Miguel. *Quince poetas del mundo náhuatl*. Diana, 1994.
- López de Gómara, Francisco. *Historia de las Indias y la conquista de México: Zaragoza, 1552*. Condumex, 1978.
- Maffie, James. “In the End, We Have the Gatling Gun, and They Have Not’: Future Prospects of Indigenous Knowledges.” *Futures*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2009, pp. 53-65.
- “Marina,” *Hernán, el nombre de la conquista*, season 1, episode 1, directed by Norberto López Amado, Televisión Azteca, 22 Nov. 2019.
- Meléndez Guadarrama, Lucero. “Una propuesta de análisis lingüístico-poético de cuatro de los cantares de Dzitbalché.” *Estudios de cultura maya*, vol. 32, no.1, 2008, pp. 201-222.
- Menchaca, Martha. *Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans*. U of Texas P, 2001.
- Mediz Bolio, Antonio. *El libro de Chilam Balam de Chumayel*. San José, Costa Rica, Lehmann, 1930.
- Milbrath, Susan. *Star Gods of the Maya: Astronomy in Art, Folklore, and Calendars*. U of Texas P, 2010.
- Montiel Contreras, Carlos Urani. “La simbolización del sacrificio en los antiguos cantares del Dzitbalché.” *Abya Yala Wawgeykuna: Artes, saberes y vivencias de indígenas americanos*, edited by Beatriz Carrera Maldonado and Zara Ruiz Romero, Instituto Zacatecano de Cultura Ramón López Velarde, 2017, pp. 30-45.
- Mueller, Roseanna. “From Cult to Comics: The Representation of Gonzalo Guerrero as a Cultural Hero in Mexican Popular Culture.” *A Twice-Told Tale: Reinventing the Encounter in Iberian/Iberian American Literature and Film*, edited by Santiago Juan-Navarro and Theodore Robert Young, Associated UP, 2001, pp. 137-148.
- Nájera Coronado, Martha Ilia. “Hacia una nueva lectura de *Los Cantares de Dzitbalché*.” *Mayab*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2004, pp. 99-114.

- . *Los cantares de Dzitbalché en la tradición religiosa mesoamericana*. UNAM, 2007.
- O’Gorman, Edmundo. *La invención de América: El universalismo de la cultura de occidente*. FCE, 1985.
- Oudijk, Michel, and Laura Matthew, editors. *Indian Conquistadors: Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica*. U of Oklahoma P, 2012.
- Patch, Robert. *Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan: 1648-1812*. Stanford UP, 1985.
- Pinkus Rendón, Manuel Jesús. *De la herencia a la enajenación, danzas y bailes tradicionales de Yucatán*. UNAM-IIF-UACSHUM, 2005.
- Quijano, Aníbal. “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Social Classification.” *Coloniality at Large: Latin America and the Postcolonial Debate*, edited by Mabel Moraña, Enrique D. Dussel, and Carlos A. Jáuregui. Duke UP, 2008, pp. 181-224.
- Rabasa, José. *Tell Me the Story of How I Conquered You: Elsewheres and Ethnocide in the Colonial Mesoamerican World*. U of Texas P, 2011.
- Restall, Matthew. *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*. Oxford UP, 2004.
- Robleda Solís, Gabriela, and Pedro Bracamante y Sosa. “Introducción.” San Buenaventura, pp. ix-xi.
- Roys, Ralph, translator. *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1934.
- Sahagún, Bernardino de. *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España*. Edited by Angel María Garibay, Porrúa, 1999.
- San Buenaventura, Joseph de and Gonzalo Guerrero. *Historias de la conquista del Mayab, 1511-1697*. Edited by Gabriela Robleda Solís and Pedro Bracamante y Sosa, Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, Facultad de Ciencias Antropológicas, 1994.
- Šprajc, Ivan, “Astronomical and Cosmological Aspects of Maya Architecture and Urbanism.” *Cosmology across Cultures*, edited by J. A. Rubiño-Martín, J.A. Belmonte, F. Prada, and A. Alberdi, Astronomical Society of the Pacific, 2009, pp. 303-314.
- Tedlock, Denis, *Popol Vuh: The Definitive Edition of the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life and the Glories of Gods and Kings*, Simon and Schuster, [1985], 1996.
- “Tiempo de conquista.” *Ministerio del Tiempo*, season 3, episode 5, directed by Koldo Serra, RTVE, 1 Nov. 2017. *Netflix*.

- Tozzer, Alfred M., editor. *Landa's Relación de las cosas de Yucatán, a Translation*. Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard U, vol. 18, 1941.
- Walsh, Catherine. "Interculturalidad, conocimiento y descolonialidad." *Signo y pensamiento*, vol. 24, no. 46, 2005, pp. 39-50.