

Colonial Latin American Historical Review

Volume 2

Issue 3 *Volume 2, Number 3 (Summer 1993)*

Article 2

6-1-1993

Tradition and Progress in the Late Eighteenth-Century Jesuit Rediscovery of America: Francisco Javier Clavijero's Philosophy and History

O. Carlos Stoetzer

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/clahr>

Recommended Citation

Stoetzer, O. Carlos. "Tradition and Progress in the Late Eighteenth-Century Jesuit Rediscovery of America: Francisco Javier Clavijero's Philosophy and History." *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 2, 3 (1993): 289. <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/clahr/vol2/iss3/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colonial Latin American Historical Review by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

Tradition and Progress in the Late Eighteenth-Century Jesuit Rediscovery of America: Francisco Javier Clavijero's Philosophy and History

O. CARLOS STOETZER

With the eighteenth century, Spain and its empire sailed into a new cultural and intellectual environment which would distance it increasingly from the medieval world to which it had clung with such tenacity in the previous two centuries. The new European philosophies¹ would in time be used to regain Spain's position in the world which the new dynasty, the Bourbons, believed had been lowered because of ill-fated and badly conceived Hapsburg policies. Still, the old medieval tradition did not suddenly disappear with Philip V or the War of the Spanish Succession. It was instead a gradual process, not unusual in the realm of ideas. Thus the medieval spirit largely endured, and was only openly challenged with the accession to the Spanish throne of Charles III in 1759.

The Age of Reason symbolized the gradual change of the natural law from the metaphysical to the rationalistic interpretation, even though it still owed a great deal to the Spanish late Scholastics. The new natural law (Althusius, Grotius, Hobbes, Sidney, Locke, Pufendorff, Thomasius) was the result of cultural and political factors—the need to distinguish reality from imagination, and thus to use human reason, real enlightenment, and not faith. The autonomy of human reason now became the source of all morality and of all law, and the *Lex Aeterna* ceased to be the guiding principle. No longer were organic principles the foundation of natural law as they had been in the Middle Ages and antiquity; the new natural law theories were now based on the growing individualism of the age, and with it there was injected into

¹ Carl L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932), passim, but see especially 31, 63, 42.

the interpretation of the law of nature a rather remarkable idealism which led to the theoretical construction of an imaginary state of nature.²

Spain and the Hispanic world, however, did not completely accept the Age of Reason, even though they had participated in every European cultural movement. Instead they developed the usual Iberian and American variety in line with their Christian traditions. This was the case with the Iberian Renaissance, a Christian Renaissance, a fusion of Scholasticism and humanism, where humankind did not become divine, and this pattern repeated itself with the particular brand of the Hispanic Enlightenment, a "Christian Enlightenment," to quote Vicente Rodríguez Casado,³ where neither church and religion nor the political regime were attacked. It was this type of Enlightenment, mainly concerned with terminating Spain's real or imaginary decadence and with applying useful knowledge in order to achieve reforms for the modernization of the country, within traditional lines, that swept over the peninsula and the Iberian empires overseas, although the real echo of the Age of Reason came in the second half of it.

This Spanish Enlightenment was linked in the early part of the century (1700-1759) to the Benedictine Benito Jerónimo Feijóo (1676-1764), and in the second part to Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (1744-1811) at a time when the famous Bourbon reforms took place. It was also in the second part of the eighteenth century that under the rule of Charles III (1750-1788) Spain ceased to be a patrimonial state and became a modern state.

To modernize the empire and to streamline its administration, the crown introduced the famous Bourbon reforms. Firstly, two more viceroalties were established: New Granada (1740), and Río de la Plata (1776). Secondly, over thirty *intendencias* were set up: eight in the Río de la Plata region (1782), eight in Peru (1784), twelve in New Spain (1786), and a smaller number in New Granada and Chile. The *intendencia* was an imitation of the French administration, and thus a symbol of European order; the *intendentes* (provincial administrators with general supervision over all branches of government) had

² Luis Recaséns Siches et al., *Latin American Legal Philosophy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), 266-67.

³ Vicente Rodríguez Casado, "El intento español de 'Ilustración cristiana'," *Estudios Americanos* (Sevilla) 9, No. 42 (March 1955):141-69.

competence in the field of finance, but they soon carried out other administrative duties, such as military, police, and justice. Though undoubtedly successful in matters of finance, the whole system was harmful since, from the viceroys down to the members of the *cabildos* (town councils), all felt discriminated against.⁴

In the third place, the crown initiated a new economic policy in line with the needs of the times which aimed at a greater utilization of the Indies through the development of its wealth and the growth of its population. Thus the ultimate goal was an increase in trade, production, consumption, and navigation. This led to the establishment of private trading companies and to the inauguration of free trade with the *Pragmática de Libre Comercio* of 1778, with the avowed aim of destroying the monopoly of Cádiz and Seville. However, the opening of ports in the peninsula and the Indies to foreign interests gave rise to the suspicion that the crown was no longer willing or able to take care of the interests of the Spanish empire.⁵

All these reforms were materialistic and utilitarian, and were aimed at breaking with tradition, which was not confined to politics and economics. Perhaps the most important development was the overt tendency toward secularization, with the typical eighteenth-century attempt to put the church under the control of the crown. In earlier centuries the Spanish administration had been permeated by a deep religious spirit which characterized the Golden Age of Spain and manifested a unique harmony of interests linking the church to the crown, or as Constantino Bayle, S.J., said: "Spain never advanced in its incomparable push toward the subjugation of peoples without the Church's doing likewise."⁶ Now all this apparently had changed or seemed to have changed. It was also within this rationalistic policy that the Jesuit order was forced to leave the Portuguese and Spanish empires in 1759 and 1767 respectively.

The expulsion of the Jesuits in both empires had followed an

⁴ C. H. Haring, *El imperio hispánico en América* (Buenos Aires: Peuser, 1958), 171-76; also J.M. Ots y Capdequí, *El estado español en las Indias*, 3rd ed. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1957), 76-77.

⁵ Cecil Jane, *Liberty and Despotism in Spanish America* (New York: Cooper Square, 1966), 85.

⁶ Constantino Bayle, S.J., *La expansión misional de España* (Barcelona-Madrid-Buenos Aires-Rio: Editorial Labor, 1936), 7.

earlier persecution in France (1762). The Spanish crown justified it with the claim that the Jesuits had opposed royal intentions and policies and that they represented a state within the state. Obviously, the Jesuits' political philosophy opposed enlightened despotism, and their wealth and power seemed to be enough reason for the crown to order their expulsion. A few years later, Pope Clement XIV, bending to Bourbon pressures, proclaimed the famous brief *Dominus ac Redemptor noster* of July 21, 1773, a most remarkable document since it condemned neither the Jesuit doctrines nor their morals and their discipline—the complaints of the courts against the order were the only motives alleged for its suppression.⁷

The expulsion of the Jesuits in the Spanish empire was one of the most significant events of the eighteenth century in the Indies, and was also the most dramatic. Instigated by Pombal in Portugal and by Aranda and Tanucci in Spain, it had very serious repercussions, actually cutting the history of Hispanic America in two. In their missionary work and in their colleges the Jesuits had maintained very high standards. In education, Hispanic American colleges could well rival those of the Old World, and the Jesuits' work in Paraguay had to be recognized even by their foes. Hispanic American culture, the Scholastic tradition, which the Jesuits upheld in the eighteenth century without at the same time neglecting the sciences, owed a great debt to these men suddenly exiled from their homelands. But in spite of their brilliant achievements, the Jesuits in Spanish America often encountered opposition from civil and ecclesiastical authorities. Many also envied their power; some coveted their wealth, and there was a great deal of jealousy from other less influential orders.

The results of the expulsion were many and devastating: it signaled the ruin of the Paraguayan missions and opened a new chapter in the academic history of Hispanic America. When the more than two thousand Jesuits were forced to leave the Spanish American province, one hundred and twenty colleges were seriously affected and a considerable number of natives were left without spiritual guidance. The overall consequences were detrimental in all parts of the old Spanish empire in America, and no doubt in the cultural realm a certain decline set in which was only overcome in the mid-nineteenth century.

⁷ Barbara N. Courson, *The Jesuits*, 2 vols. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1879), 1:243, 245.

A large group of Jesuits went to Bologna where they became a force in the movement for Spanish American independence, since they loved their native countries and hoped one day to return, although this should not be interpreted in an exaggerated way to mean that they deliberately worked for such a revolutionary enterprise. But certainly, to their opposition to the *philosophes* (an influential group of French thinkers and writers of whom Voltaire was one of the most influential), and to the materialistic currents of the century was added their emotional enmity toward the Spanish and Portuguese crowns. Among these men, as Ramón Insúa Rodríguez said, were many of the best spirits and most powerful intellects of the time in Spanish America, and when they departed they left a vacuum which contemporary society was unable to fill. Moreover, they had created in the New World an intellectual zone, formed by educated men, among whom the Spanish American element predominated in the final years.⁸

It is interesting to note that during the Spanish American Revolution, Father José María Morelos y Pavón in New Spain and the Peruvian delegates to the Spanish *Cortes* of 1810-1814 (Vicente Morales Duárez, Ramón Feliú, Blas Ostolaza, and Dionisio Inca Yupanqui) called for the return of the Jesuits to their respective areas of America.⁹

Finally, it might be worthwhile to mention two important contemporary sources in regard to the situation of the Spanish empire in America at the time: first, Alejandro Malaspina's political and scientific expedition (1789-1794) and his conclusions, the *Ten Axioms*, in which he stressed the importance of religion for the conservation of

⁸ Ramón Insúa Rodríguez, *Historia de la filosofía en Hispanoamérica* (Guayaquil, Ecuador: Universidad, 1945), 150.

⁹ Carlos María de Bustamante, *El Congreso de Chilpancingo* (Mexico: Empresas editoriales, S.A., 1958), 190. The reestablishment of the Jesuit order in Mexico was inspired by Bustamante; also *Cuadro histórico de la Revolución Mexicana comenzada en 15 de septiembre de 1810 por el ciudadano Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, cura del pueblo de los Dolores, en el Obispado de Michoacán*, 5 vols., reprint of the 2nd rev. and augm. edition (Mexico: Talleres linotipográficos "Soria," 1926), 2:45-47. In regard to the Peruvian delegates to the Spanish *cortes*, see Proposal No. 11, "Propuesta de los diputados peruanos a las Cortes de Cádiz sobre igualdad de peninsulares y criollos" in José Pareja Paz-Soldán, *Las constituciones del Perú* (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1954), 402-403, which asked for the reestablishment of the Society of Jesus in Peru.

Spanish power. He also noted the opposing interests in the Spanish monarchy (*peninsulares*, *criollos*, and Indians); the badly managed trading systems between Spain and Spanish America; the serious defects of the Spanish administration in America, and Spain's conflicts with foreign interests, especially in the Pacific area¹⁰—which was one of the reasons why the retention of the Malvinas and the establishment of the viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata were so important.

The second important contemporary source is Alexander von Humboldt's famous journey to Spanish America (1799-1804), including a visit to the White House and to Thomas Jefferson: his works remain the most valuable testimony for those years.¹¹ His interpretation of Spanish American reality was in total opposition to the opinions of Montesquieu, Raynal, and Voltaire. He defended the abolition of slavery and foresaw the future independence of the region; he also stated that the Spanish American viceroyalties, except for the economic angle, could not be called colonial territories.

It is also important to mention Humboldt in this context, since his journey to the Spanish American continent may, in the final analysis, have been due to the Jesuits' exile in Italy. Goethe was a good friend of Humboldt, and although there is no mention of the Jesuits in Goethe's *Italian Journey* (1786-1788),¹² the various exiled Jesuits' residences could not possibly have escaped the keen observation of such a great personality as the German writer and poet. It could very well be that because of the many Jesuits living in central Italy and because

¹⁰ Manuel Lucena Giraldo and Juan Pimentel Igea, *Los "Axiomas políticos sobre la América" de Alejandro Malaspina* (Madrid: Colección Theatrum Naturae, Doce Calles and Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario, 1992), 12-13 and 145-202.

¹¹ *Relation historique du voyage aux régions équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent*, 3 vols., reprint of the original Paris edition of 1814-1825 (Stuttgart: F.A. Brockhaus, 1970); *Ensayo político sobre la Isla de Cuba*. Span. transl. by D.J.B. de V. y M., reprint of the 1827 original work (Miami: Mnemosyne Publishing Inc., 1969); *Ensayo político sobre el reino de la Nueva España*, facsimile edition of the 1822 Paris edition, 4 vols. (Mexico: Instituto Cultural Helénico-Miguel Angel Porrúa, 1985). See also O. Carlos Stoetzer, "Alejandro de Humboldt y la emancipación hispanoamericana con sus bases medievals e hispánicas," in Michael Zeuske und Bernd Schroeter, eds., *Alexander von Humboldt und das neue Geschichtsbild von Lateinamerika* (Leipzig: Universitätsverlag, 1992), 216-33.

¹² [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe], *Goethes Werke*, 3rd augm. ed., 6 vols. (Wiesbaden: Insel-Verlag, 1949-1952), 6:69-180. This edition does not reproduce the complete *Italian Journey*.

of their accounts of Spanish America, Goethe may have suggested to Humboldt on his return to Germany to undertake this journey, which he did a decade after Goethe made his Italian journey. Worthy of mention also is the fact that a German edition of Clavijero's *Historia antigua de México* appeared in Leipzig in 1789-1790.¹³ Very possibly, it was Clavijero who inspired Humboldt in his writings.

Of all the Jesuits who were forced to go abroad, none excelled as much as the Mexican group who tried to continue their intellectual activities in the Old World. The Venezuelan Picón-Salas called these men "the most selected and wise group of the Spanish American intellectual [community] at the end of the eighteenth century."¹⁴ They included the historians Andrés Cavo (1739-1803),¹⁵ Pedro José Márquez, Manuel Fábri, and Juan Luis Maneiro; the philosophers Rafael Campoy (1723-1777) and Agustín de Castro (1728-1790); the philosopher, lawyer, and theologian Diego José Abad (1727-1779);¹⁶

¹³ *Geschichte von Mexiko, aus spanischen und mexicanischen Geschichtsschreibern, Handschriften und Gemälden der Indianer zusammengetragen und durch Karten und Kupferstiche erläutert, nebst einigen critischen Abhandlungen über die Beschaffenheit des Landes, der Thiere und Einwohner von Mexiko*. Aus dem Italienischen des Abts Franz Xavier Clavigero, von Ritter Carl Cullen ins Englische, und aus diesem ins Deutsche übersetzt. 2 vols. in 8 (Leipzig: Im Schwickert'schen Verlag, 1789-1790), mentioned in Leonardo Pasquel, *Clavijero* (Mexico: Editorial Citlalpetel, 1970), 101-102.

¹⁴ Antonio Gómez Robledo, *Idea y experiencia de América* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1958), 35.

¹⁵ *Anales de la ciudad de México desde la conquista española hasta el año de 1766*. (Published by Carlos María de Bustamante in 1836 under the title *Los tres siglos de México*.) Also Guillermo Díaz-Plaja y Francisco Monterde, *Historia de la literatura española e historia de la literatura mexicana* (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1955), 462.

¹⁶ *Tractatus unicus de summulis. Disputationes in universam logicam Aristotelis* (1754, 1756); *Philosophia naturalis. Disputationes in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis* (1754, 1756); ...*Disputationes in libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis. De rerum ortu et interitu. De anima* (1754, 1756); *Musa Americana seu De Deo carmina ad usum scholarum congregationis S. Philippi Neri, municipii S. Michaelis in Nova Hispania* (1769, 1773, 1775). See Walter Bernard Redmond, "Bibliography of the Philosophy in the Iberian Colonies of America," *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 51(1972):1.

the historian and philosopher Francisco Javier Alegre (1729-1788);¹⁷ and finally also the philosopher-historian Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731-1787), who ranked as the most eminent of them all. These scholars formed the nucleus of a group of Jesuits who, without departing from the path of theological orthodoxy, tried to follow a humanistic path toward modernity, though their Neo-Scholasticism was often not well received by their more orthodox companions. They also injected into their historical studies a love of their Mexican homeland which they continued to follow in exile while at the same time remaining influential in New Spain in spite of their physical separation. Both the philosophical and the historical works of these scholars, especially Clavijero's *Historia antigua de Mexico*, Alegre's *Historia de la Compañía en la Nueva España*, and Cavo's *Anales de la ciudad de México desde la conquista española hasta el año de 1767*, as well as Abad's many works, reflect this spirit and also give ample evidence of the strength of Scholasticism in New Spain during the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁸

In order to understand this situation better one should bear in mind the intellectual environment in New Spain at the time of the Jesuits' exile in 1767. In the first place, the Jesuits had been instrumental in renewing teaching in their different colleges, i.e., they had initiated a new humanism, which fundamentally included the following: first, a renewed interest in Greek and Latin, as seen also in the Latin works written later in exile by Abad, Alegre, Rafael Landívar, and Pérez de Castro; second, the exaltation of the Mexican *patria*. They began to feel themselves to be Mexicans, no longer Spaniards or Europeans; third, the emphasis on native cultures, to the extent, perhaps exaggerated, that they began to admire all aspects of Indian

¹⁷ *Institutionum theologiarum, libri XVIII* (Venetiis Typis Antonii Zattae, 1789); *Historia de la Compañía en la Nueva España*. Unfinished, was published by Carlos María de Bustamante between 1841 and 1843; *Memorias para la historia de la provincia que tuvo la Compañía de Jesús en Nueva España*. Was only published in Mexico, 1940-1941. Cf. Redmond, "Bibliography," 8, and Díaz-Plaja and Monterde, *Historia de la literatura*, 461.

¹⁸ O. Carlos Stoetzer, *The Scholastic Roots of the Spanish American Revolution* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 123-25; also Redmond, "Bibliography," 1, 8, 31 and 48; Díaz-Plaja and Monterde, *Historia de la literatura*, 459-64, 471, 481; and José Tudela, ed., *El legado de España a América*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Pégaso, 1954), 1:222-23.

civilization; fourth, condemnation of slavery in all its forms; fifth, the study of a new philosophy which, while preserving the basic tenets of Christian thought, abandoned the decaying Scholasticism and recognized Descartes, Bacon, and Galileo; sixth, in the Jesuits' view, the philosopher was now given the rank of a citizen of the world—the true philosopher was a cosmopolitan, and did not recognize incapacity in any man, whether White or Black. And seventh, they held that the origin of authority is linked to the people,¹⁹ i.e., popular sovereignty. This is of course the old medieval political theory, the *pactum translationis*: God gives power to the people who in turn transfer this power to a ruler, and in case of death or the lack of any legitimate successor, authority reverts to the people. This is stated by Alegre²⁰ and was the intellectual basis for the Spanish American Revolution in 1810.²¹

Six hundred sixty-nine Mexican Jesuits were exiled to Italy. In most cases they went to Bologna, as did those from Castile, while those from Paraguay preferred Faenza, the Chileans Imola, and those from New Granada and Quito, the areas of Ancona and Urbino.²²

Francisco Javier Clavijero was born in Veracruz on September 9, 1731, of old Castilian-Leonese and Basque lineage. His father, Don Blas, came from Valladolid, received his education in Paris, and was blessed on his return to Spain with the support of the Duke of Medina Celi. Coming to New Spain, he worked in Veracruz in the royal comptroller's office (1720-1727), and thereafter became *alcalde mayor* (magistrate) of Jicayán in the Mixteca region near Oaxaca (1730). It

¹⁹ Julio Jiménez Rueda, *Historia de la cultura en México. El virreinato* (Mexico: Editorial Cultura, T.G.S.A., 1950), 179-82.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 182.

²¹ See, among others, Jaime Eyzaguirre, *Ideario y ruta de la emancipación chilena* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1957); Guillermo Furlong, S.J., "Francisco Suárez fue el filósofo de la revolución argentina de 1810," in Atilio dell'Oro Maini et al., *Presencia y sugestión del filósofo Francisco Suárez: Su influencia en la Revolución de Mayo* (Buenos Aires: G. Kraft, 1959); Manuel Giménez Fernández, *Las doctrinas populistas en la independencia de Hispanoamérica* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1947); Rafael Gómez Hoyos, *La revolución granadina de 1810: Ideario de una generación y de una época, 1781-1821*, 2 vols. (Bogotá: Temis, 1962); and O. Carlos Stoetzer, *Scholastic Roots of the Spanish American Revolution*.

²² P. Ricardo García-Villoslada, S.J., *Manual de historia de la Compañía de Jesús*, 2d rev. and augm. ed. (Madrid: Compañía Bibliográfica Española, 1954), 553, 548.

was in those years that Don Blas married Isabel Echegaray, who bore him eleven children—Francisco Javier was the third in the family. After Don Blas finished his assignment in Jicayán he moved to Puebla in 1740 and filled a government position in the Inquisition of Puebla (1741) and a position as administrative judge of the royal *alcabala* (sales tax) (1743), which was to last until 1758—but he died in 1751.²³

Young Francisco Javier was at first tutored by his father, about whom in later years he wrote admiringly in his *Memorias edificantes*.²⁴ Therein he depicted his father as a devoted son of the church, a friend of the poor, an ideal husband and father totally devoted to the welfare of his family, and a deeply religious man who, by his example, influenced his son's decision to become a Jesuit.²⁵

It was in Puebla that young Francisco Javier continued his early education, first, at the Jesuit College of San Jerónimo where he learned Latin, grammar, history, poetry, and rhetoric, thereafter studying philosophy at the College of San Ignacio. In 1746, he graduated as *Bachiller de Artes* at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. Besides all these studies, he was much attracted to the reading of the Spanish classics—Miguel de Cervantes, Francisco de Quevedo as well as Feijóo—and such Mexicans as Juan Martínez de la Parra and Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz. Moreover, already at this stage of his life he was fascinated by the mysteries of the natural sciences.²⁶

At the age of seventeen, and after deep reflection, young Francisco Javier decided to enter the Society of Jesus at Tepozotlán. It was the year 1748, and although he had some difficulties at first in

²³ Charles E. Ronan, S.J., *Francisco Javier Clavigero, S.J. (1731-1787), Figure of the Mexican Enlightenment: His Life and Works* (Chicago: Loyola University Press/Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1977), 1-15, and Juan Luis Maneiro, "Javier Clavigero", in Pasquel, *Clavigero*, 21-23.

²⁴ *Memorias edificantes del Br. D. Manuel Joseph Clavigero, sacerdote del obispado de la Puebla, recogidas por su hermano...* (Mexico: por Christoval, y don Phelipe de Zúñiga y Ontiveros, 1761), cited in Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavigero*, 373.

²⁵ Juan Luis Maneiro, *De vitis aliquot Mexicanorum aliorumque qui sive virtute sive litteris Mexici inprimis floruerunt*, 3 vols. (Bologna: ex typografia Laelii a Vulpe, 1791-1792), 3:35; Clavigero, *Memorias edificantes*, 2-9, cited in Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavigero*, 11, n.32.

²⁶ Maneiro, "Javier Clavigero," 25-30, and Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavigero*, 7-9.

adjusting to the discipline of the order, he eventually overcame them and was officially accepted two years later. Probably the friendship of his fellow novice Francisco Javier Alegre, who later became as famous as he himself did, must have greatly helped him.

Clavijero's intelligence and seriousness, already known at an early period of his career, now revealed themselves even more, especially in the fields of theology, philosophy, and the humanities, as well as in the wide range of languages. On his own initiative, he learned Greek and Hebrew, he mastered such modern languages as French and Portuguese, and succeeded in obtaining a relative knowledge of German and English. Finally, in order to perfect his philosophical training, he took further courses at the College of San Ildefonso, also in Puebla, where he acquired a solid knowledge of the modern philosophies of Descartes and Gassendi, Newton and Leibniz.

Next, he returned to the viceregal capital where he broadened and deepened his theological studies at the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo, the Colegio Máximo, for four years. The fact that these studies in the city of Mexico were much guided by a group of German Jesuits who had come from the Old World, as well as by his Jesuit companion José Campoy, led him to explore further the modern philosophies in vogue. It was also Campoy who led him toward the discovery of a great Mexican, Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645-1700), that extraordinary symbol of the scientific revolution in the New World, who opened his eyes not only to the natural sciences, but also to the great Indian past of his country. From that moment Sigüenza y Góngora became one of his leading models.²⁷

Already at that time Clavijero realized that not everything modern was automatically to be rejected, and that Christianity and Enlightenment were not necessarily mutually exclusive, but could very well coexist. In other words, he was inclined to accept what later became known as the Spanish Enlightenment, which incorporated modern science but did not deviate from Christian orthodoxy. Feijóo had led the movement in Spain and represented the very symbol of

²⁷ Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 31-40.

Spanish and Spanish American Enlightenment,²⁸ so much in opposition to Voltaire and the French *philosophes*. Feijóo had never become an *afrancesado* (one who is excessively fond of French styles and customs), though he admired writers such as Montesquieu, Gassendi, Descartes, Bossuet, Fénelon, and Fleury, while at the same time distrusting Cartesianism and opposing the ideas of Voltaire and Rousseau.

Furthermore, what Clavijero achieved then, just like Feijóo and Jovellanos, was the very Spanish idea of always attempting a synthesis and a harmony between tradition and progress, between faith and reason. Of course, this had also been in the best of Jesuit traditions, since from the very beginning of their existence they had begun to be interested in the natural sciences. The outstanding example of this successful endeavor was José de Acosta, theologian, philosopher, historian, and also natural scientist, who best symbolized the late Scholastic fusion of universal knowledge with faith.

There were also innumerable astronomers and mathematicians within the Jesuit order, to such an extent that the French astronomer Lalande stated that at the time of the suppression there were in Europe some thirty astronomical observatories, founded or directed by Jesuits such as Father Walcher, director of mathematical science and of navigation in Vienna, who was "kept busy building dykes to prevent inundations."²⁹

At the same time, for several months, Clavijero was also appointed student prefect at the adjoining Colegio de San Ildefonso and he was lucky to have as his provincial Juan Antonio Balthasar, who greatly helped him to solve a conflict of conscience in which the new post had placed him. He was thus soon relieved from the appointment which might have put him in the awkward position of bending his principles because of some deeply rooted customs that had become commonplace in New Spain.³⁰ His final ordination came in 1754, and

²⁸ G. Delpy, *L'Espagne et l'esprit européen: L'oeuvre de Feijóo (1725-1760)* (Paris: Hachette, 1936), and Universidad de Oviedo, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, *El P. Feijóo y su siglo: Ponencias y comunicaciones presentadas al simposio celebrado en la Universidad de Oviedo del 28 de septiembre al 5 de octubre de 1964*, 3 vols. (Oviedo: Grossi, 1966).

²⁹ Courson, *The Jesuits*, 1:267-68.

³⁰ Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 40-42.

immediately thereafter he was sent back to Puebla to finish his theological studies at the Colegio de San Jerónimo and to complete his Jesuit training at the Colegio del Espíritu Santo.

Clavijero's first assignments were short: at the Casa Profesa and the Colegio de San Jerónimo, both in the viceregal capital, and at the Colegio de Santo Tomás in Guadalajara. However, he really preferred missionary work and asked to be sent to Baja California to work among the Indians there. His request was denied and instead he was assigned to teach Indians at the Colegio de San Gregorio in the city of Mexico, an old institution founded in 1586.³¹ It was here that Clavijero delved deeply into Mexico's ancient past which he began to champion at this early stage. Here also he met future Mexican intellectuals, such as Juan Benito Díaz de Gamarra y Dávalos, José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez, Lino Gómez, José Uribe, and Juan Luis Maneiro. From this period of his life dates his first book, the *Memorias edificantes*.

He remained at the Colegio de San Gregorio until 1762. For a short time he was transferred to Puebla where he also taught Indians at the Colegio de San Francisco Javier, and then to the Colegio de San Francisco Javier in Valladolid (today Morelia), where he taught philosophy, beginning in 1763. The philosophy course resulted in the *Cursus philosophicus diu in Americanis gymnasis desideratus*.³² The Valladolid assignment also produced *El sacerdote instruído en los ministerios de predicar y confesar*³³ and an impressive correspondence with his friends Gómez and Alegre. It was, however, again a short assignment, since suddenly he had to replace a dismissed teacher at the Colegio de Santo Tomás in Guadalajara.

In a rather pessimistic and dejected mood Clavijero arrived in Guadalajara where he found solace in writing and teaching, 1766-1767. Here he produced a *Vexamen* ("a poetic composition of a burlesque

³¹ Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 31-33.

³² The *Cursus* had two parts, but only the second, the *Physica Particularis*, though unpublished, is available.

³³ The full title is *El sacerdote instruído en los ministerios de predicar y confesar en dos cartas de San Francisco de Sales, obispo de Ginebra, tr. del original francés y ampliadas con notas. Dadas al público en utilidad de los nuevos sacerdotes el Lic. D. Lino Nepomuceno Gómez Galbán* (Mexico: Imprenta del superior gobierno de Joseph Antonio de Hogal, 1771). Mentioned by Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 374, and by Pasquel, *Clavijero*, 107.

nature...usually presented in the schools") with the title *Un banquete de la filosofía*³⁴ and a fascinating *Diálogo entre Filaletes y Paleófilo*.³⁵ The *Banquete*, by means of allegory, represented a critical analysis of the writings of Aristotle, Gassendi, and Descartes, and what he considered to be "the rightful place of tradition in philosophy;"³⁶ the *Diálogo* dealt with a similiar problem, in this case with physics: Filaletes spoke for the modern inductive method, Paleófilo for the ancients, who relied on authority. The dialogue thus stated that in the study of the natural sciences the only path was to discover the truth and not to adhere to opinions established *a priori* in antiquity.³⁷

In both these works we observe Clavijero's modernity, that he was a man both of the past and of the present, reconciling tradition with progress. In his *Banquete*, he revealed himself in the best traditions of Hispanic thought, harmonizing faith with reason, when he stated that he and his fellow Spanish Americans praised the non-Aristotelians, the foreigners, for their constant application to the study of nature, their observations, their discoveries, their methods, and their style, but at the same time were obliged to condemn their pernicious liberty in passing judgment on matters philosophical which depended on religious dogmas.

While this was one side of the picture, there was also another: the Aristotelians, the Spanish and Spanish American philosophers, were excoriated for their servile subjection to Aristotle, their negligence in investigating nature, passion for purely metaphysical and abstract matters, wasting time on useless questions, their preoccupation in opposing the foreign non-Aristotelians, their disorganized methods, and even their barbaric philosophical language. But the same persons, including himself, were obliged to esteem in them what was more important: their inviolable and firm adherence to the faith of their

³⁴ Unpublished manuscript known through a letter Clavijero wrote to his friend Juan Moreno, Rector of the Colegio de San Nicolás in Valladolid and later for a short time Rector of the University of Guadalajara (1807). See Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 51-52, and 51, n.166.

³⁵ The full title is *Diálogo entre Filaletes y Paleófilo contra el argumento de autoridad en la física*. It became known through Maneiro, *De vitis aliquot mexicanorum*, 3:56. See Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 373.

³⁶ Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 52.

³⁷ Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 59.

forebears and their humble deference to the Roman pontiffs.³⁸ How true a statement, when we recall that still in the midst of the Spanish American Revolution, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, philosophy teachers at the many Hispanic American universities were engaged in endless discussion about the correctness or otherwise of Duns Scotus, Francisco Suárez, St. Augustine, and whether angels had wings and what size, etc.³⁹ The above statement represents a modified Aristotelianism "familiar with and strongly influenced by eighteenth-century sciences with a heavy emphasis on empirically-based critical analysis."⁴⁰

By the time Clavijero was teaching Aristotelianism, or the Aristotelian Thomistic version, Aristotle was still the dominant factor, although the more lucid minds realized that some kind of compromise with the modern realities had to be faced, just as St. Thomas Aquinas had done in the thirteenth century and Francisco Suárez in the sixteenth. It was thus remarkable that a group of Jesuits in New Spain, with Clavijero at their head, undertook this task, modernizing Scholasticism and adjusting it to the new realities, both in regard to physics and politics, the latter evolving around the increasing pressures of patriotism. The cry for educational reform and renewal had been answered by the Jesuits who, among not only the religious orders but also the increasingly educated lay elites, were among the top intellectual leaders, and this was particularly true in the field of philosophy.

However, the problem was that Aristotelianism in its Christian, Thomistic version, had been the basis for the Christian faith and was thus difficult, if not impossible, to replace. The imposing and enduring strength of tradition and conservative thinking made it almost impossible to effect changes without being openly subversive. Again, let us look briefly at the independence of Mexico in 1821 which came as a

³⁸ Francisco Javier Clavijero, *Un Banquete. Vexamen 2 que hizo el P. Marianno* [sic] *Clavijero y dixo en el Colegio de la Compañía de Jesús de la ciudad de Guadalajara el día* [n.d.] (Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional, MS 12467), 58-59, quoted in Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 70.

³⁹ Juan David García Bacca, *Antología del pensamiento filosófico venezolano (siglos XVII-XVIII). Introducciones sistemáticas y prólogos históricos. Selección de textos y traducción del latín al castellano* (Caracas: Ediciones del Ministerio de Educación, 1954).

⁴⁰ Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 23.

conservative reaction to the liberal circus in Madrid, since New Spain wanted to remain Spanish in its basic attitudes and spirit and perceived the mother country as having lost these qualities through the Frenchified Bourbons and the Europeanized liberals. The *Plan de Iguala*, proclaimed in February 1821, making Mexico independent of Spain, clearly proclaimed that religion mattered and that only one religion would be tolerated.⁴¹

Still, the world was changing and thus the challenge had to be met, since gradually the solid basis on which philosophy had been grounded with the establishment of the two universities, Mexico's San Pedro y San Pablo and Lima's San Marcos, both in 1551, on traditional Aristotelianism, was eroding. The Jesuit order then dealt with this grave problem in its general congregations of 1706, 1731, and 1751. In 1706, the general congregation specifically referred to Cartesianism and resolved that philosophy should continue to be taught with the defense of Aristotle in mind, and should refute those Cartesian arguments which were particularly heretical, although Descartes himself would not totally be condemned. The general congregation of 1731 repeated that Aristotelianism was still the official philosophy of the order, in the version promulgated by Francisco Suárez, and in 1751, the same body reiterated that the Aristotelian system was to be defended and upheld, although in the experimental physics a certain harmony could be established between the traditional views and the more modern versions. While pure philosophy and theology would be kept within strict orthodoxy, in the experimental sciences a more flexible attitude would prevail. Thus in the field of mathematics contradictions or controversies should be treated only "as was necessary for comprehending physics." The meaning of these congregations and their decrees mirrored, as Ronan stated, "the transition through which the order was passing in the eighteenth century as a result of its confrontation with modern philosophy."⁴²

The Mexican Jesuits proceeded to abide by the new rules of the Order of 1751. The first Jesuit in Mexico to teach modern philosophy

⁴¹ Richard M. Morse, "The Heritage of Latin America," in *The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada and Australia* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1964), 160; and Jane, *Liberty and Despotism*, 81.

⁴² Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavigero*, 61.

in this manner was Diego José Abad, though his was not a complete course, being limited to general physics, which he taught at the Colegio Máximo in the years 1754-1756.

Clavijero was chronologically the next in line. What he had already developed in the *Vexamen* now appeared in greater length and depth in the *Cursus philosophicus*. The *Cursus* was traditionally divided into two parts: one, *Physica Generalis*, which is lost, and the other, *Physica Particularis*. With its two parts, Clavijero's *Cursus* ranked as the first complete philosophy course in Mexican history, since it went beyond Abad's *Physica Generalis*.

In *Physica Generalis* Clavijero maintained the old Aristotelian philosophy, the philosophy of nature, such as hylomorphism (matter and form) and the law of causality, as St. Thomas Aquinas described it in his *Commentaria in Octo Libris Physicorum Aristotelis*—but then, in *Physica Particularis*, he switched to the modern interpretations, as proclaimed by Descartes, Gassendi, Newton, Copernicus, and Tycho Brahe, in regard to astronomy, physiology, biology, and psychology. Thus the *Cursus* followed the Aristotelian division into general and particular physics and dealt with Aristotle and the best of Greek thought in the former, in the latter exploring modern philosophy.⁴³ *Physica Particularis* was in turn divided into two parts. The first referred to non-living bodies, such as heavenly bodies—heaven, stars, sun, moon, eclipses, comets, etc.; elements and meteors—fire, exhalations, meteors and winds; terrestrial bodies—the earth, earthquakes, hot springs, fossils, etc. The second part dealt with living bodies—plants, animals, and humans.⁴⁴

From Clavijero's two-part *Cursus* it has been inferred that he was more a modern thinker than a traditionalist, but in fact he maintained the past wherever it seemed justified and switched to the modern when reality dictated such a change. This comes clearly to light not only in the *Physica Particularis*, but is obvious also in the *Physica Generalis*, and in his correspondence with his friends Alegre and Gómez and with Vicente Torrija y Brisar.⁴⁵ The latter congratulated him for defending the Copernican system, teaching about Tycho Brahe, and Maneiro reported the enthusiastic reception of his teaching of the

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 23-24, and Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 53.

⁴⁴ Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 71.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 63.

Physica Particularis on the part of his students.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, it should not be supposed that he incorporated into his system everything that was modern. On the contrary, concerning the theories of the universe, while agreeing that Ptolemy could no longer serve as an authority, he rejected the theories of both Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, and carefully stated that more knowledge was needed before a final verdict could be issued. On the other hand, in regard to a closer subject, inanimate bodies, he accepted the views of Galileo and those of a former Jesuit, Christopher Scheiner (1575-1650), who was the first to observe sunspots; he also agreed with both of them and with Kepler that the moon has atmosphere, and with Descartes and Dechales "on the moon's light coming from the rays of the sun reflected from the earth." He rejected the views of Anaxagoras and Democritus regarding comets and sided with Seneca against the followers of Aristotle, that they were "true planets," recommending to the students that they read Pico della Mirandola, Gassendi, and Dechales.

An interesting illustration of harmonizing both the Scholastic tradition and modernity was Clavijero's theory of the ultimate constitutive elements of matter. Investigating the problem, he denied the four elements of the Peripatetics and the five of the chemists, and stressed that neither could be considered ultimate "because they, in turn, can be resolved into atoms which alone are irresolvable." However, realizing that this view could be challenged, since atoms could be further resolved into matter and form, Clavijero came forward with a distinction between the physical and the philosophical order, "arguing that matter and form are not physical bodies but philosophical principles that constitute all reality but on a different level."

He also discussed the weight and elasticity of the air and showed that he was well acquainted with the latest developments—the eighteenth-century expeditions to the North Pole and the equator—and stated that the shape of the earth was ellipsoidal. On the other hand, in his treatise on living bodies, he defended the Aristotelian doctrine "that the plant soul is a substantial material form," and referred the students to his *Physica Generalis* for further refutation of the Atomists, who

⁴⁶ Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 51-55.

opposed the theory.⁴⁷

What comes out of all this evidence is the fact that Clavijero followed the contemporary world since as an intelligent human being and a scholar he could not deny certain truths which had been discovered in his century or before and which were linked especially to astronomy and physics; but at the same time wherever faith could be questioned he would stick to the traditional point of view, and from this angle the ideas of Descartes had no impact. He as well as his companions, especially Alegre and Abad, would never qualify as being Cartesian. The principles Clavijero stated were derived from Aristotle, such as those on movement, hylomorphism, causality, for general physics; Descartes, Gassendi, and other moderns provided the data and conclusions in particular or special physics. In the final analysis, he was "an eclectic combining Aristotelianism with contemporary science."⁴⁸

Mexicans could already be proud of Clavijero as a prominent eighteenth-century thinker who had introduced modern philosophy into the country; however, a greater glory awaited him in exile. News of the expulsion of the Jesuit order from New Spain reached Clavijero when he was teaching in Guadalajara. After a real odyssey, full of hardships, which took him and his companions first to Havana, then to Cádiz, and from there to Corsica, he finally arrived in Ferrara and then in Bologna. Thus began the long exile which he shared with many of his friends and colleagues of earlier times.

It was here in exile that Clavijero became the renowned historian, or more precisely, the creator of Mexican history, as Juan Luis Maneiro, his great friend and biographer, has said.⁴⁹ The imposed leisure led Clavijero and his colleagues to look for some

⁴⁷ Francisco Javier Clavijero, *Physica Particularis* (Guadalajara: Biblioteca pública del Estado de Jalisco, Sección de manuscritos, ejemplar 209, n.d.), fols. 1-3, 10-14v, 22-25, 31-33v, 35v-36, 69-70, quoted by Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 72-73.

⁴⁸ Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 76.

⁴⁹ Mariano Cuevas, S.J., "Prólogo," in Francisco Javier Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, 8th ed. (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1987), xi-xii, and Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 69, where he says: "...Sin duda, el hombre que del caos informe y confuso sacara los elementos, dispersos aquí y allá en oscuras tinieblas; el que explorara honduras casi impenetrables para descubrir las partes de esos elementos; el que con infinito sudor acumalara las partes mismas, las ordenara y las pusiera en clara luz, ese hombre, repito, debe decirse que creó la historia mas bien que la haya escrito..."

positive solutions: they turned to writing, and he chose history. For this same reason he also decided to move to Bologna where a good library and a more literary environment would encourage him in the pursuit of his scholarly endeavors; Ferrara could in this respect not compete with the more sophisticated Bologna. In his new residence there, Clavijero found some peace which he shared with about fourteen Mexican Jesuits, among them Rafael Landívar, Salvador Dávila, Agustín Pablo de Castro, Manuel Iturriaga, and José Mariano Vallarta, as well as Alegre and Abad.⁵⁰

The nostalgia from which they suffered, like all exiles, was one reason for them to plunge into writing about their homelands; another was the limitations under which their lives as exiles developed and which forced them to embark on some intellectual endeavor. Another important factor was the ignorance about America which he and his companions encountered in their surroundings, and the odd ideas circulating in the Old World together with the misleading writings, typical of the so-called Black Legend, which were spread by some European writers quite popular at the time. The latter included especially Corneille de Pauw (1739-1799),⁵¹ Count Buffon (1707-1788),⁵² William Robertson (1721-1793),⁵³ the Abbé Guillaume-Thomas François Raynal (1713-1796),⁵⁴ Thomas Gage (1603-1656),⁵⁵ Theodore de Bry (1528-1598),⁵⁶ and the Abbé Antoine Prévost d'Exiles (1697-1763).⁵⁷ These distorted interpretations of America were first to be corrected, as far as New

⁵⁰ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, xi.

⁵¹ Corneille de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains ou mémoires intéressants pour servir à l'histoire de l'espèce humaine*, 2 vols. (Berlin: G.J. Decker, 1768-1769).

⁵² Count Buffon, *Histoire naturelle, générale, et particulière avec la description du cabinet du roy*, 44 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1749-1804).

⁵³ William Robertson, *The History of America*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for W. Strahan, T. Cadell and J. Balfour, 1777).

⁵⁴ Guillaume-Thomas François Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam: n.p., 1770).

⁵⁵ Thomas Gage, *The English American...or, A New Survey of the West-Indies* (London: printed by R. Cotes, 1648).

⁵⁶ Theodore de Bry, *Les grands voyages*, 6 parts in 1 (Frankfurt: n.p., 1593-1619).

⁵⁷ Antoine Prévost d'Exiles, *Histoire générale des voyages...*, 20 vols. (Paris: chez Didot, 1746-1789).

Spain was concerned, by Clavijero's monumental works, *Historia antigua de Mexico* and *Historia de la antigua o Baja California*, and later demolished by Alexander von Humboldt at the turn of the century.

Thus, Clavijero did not need to be pushed into some intellectual pursuit; in fact, as soon as he had arrived in Italy he was dreaming of setting up some kind of an academy of sciences for all Mexicans now in forced residence in the Pontifical States.⁵⁸ He also began to assemble materials, one thing led to another, and soon he was deeply involved in working on his histories of Mexico and of Lower California. It was obvious that the European historians' bizarre and unfair interpretations added an important element of an emotional nature for writing these two histories. Not only did he see the need for engaging in this task but also the urgency of doing so.

In the preface to his work on Mexican history Clavijero cited as credentials his thirty-six years of residence in various parts of his homeland, apart from the knowledge of native languages. He had written a work entitled *Reglas de la lengua mexicana* which can be found in the Mezzofanti Collection of the Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio of Bologna with other Clavijero manuscripts.⁵⁹ He also stated categorically that he would write nothing but the truth, neither embellishing certain aspects nor covering up others.⁶⁰

As a prelude to his work Clavijero gave a list of all the famous Mexican and Spanish American historians he consulted, with the aim also of honoring them and to introduce them to the Europeans.⁶¹ Thus, for the sixteenth century, such obvious authors as Fernando Cortés with his "four very lengthy letters," Bernal Díaz del Castillo⁶², Francisco López de Gómara,⁶³ Toribio de Benavente (better known as

⁵⁸ Maneiro, "Javier Clavijero," 63.

⁵⁹ See Arthur J.O. Anderson, *Rules of the Aztec Language: Classical Nahuatl Grammar. With modifications of Francisco Xavier Clavigero's Reglas de la lengua mexicana (Mezzofanti XXII-10, Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna, Italy)* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1973.)

⁶⁰ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, xxi-xxii.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

⁶² Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España* (Madrid: Impr. del Reyno, 1632).

⁶³ Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia de México, con el descubrimiento de la Nueva España* (Antwerp: por I. Bellerio, 1554).

Motolinía),⁶⁴ Bernardino de Sahagún,⁶⁵ Alonso Zurita,⁶⁶ José de Acosta,⁶⁷ Juan Ventura Zapata y Mendoza,⁶⁸ Pedro Ponce,⁶⁹ Juan Bautista Pomar,⁷⁰ Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin,⁷¹ Fernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc,⁷² Bartolomé de las Casas,⁷³ Agustín Dávila Padilla,⁷⁴ Francisco Cervantes de Salazar,⁷⁵ Antonio

⁶⁴ Motolinía, Fray Toribio, *Historia de los indios de la Nueva España* (unpublished until the nineteenth century, according to Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 231, n.138.)

⁶⁵ Bernardino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, 4 vols. (Mexico: I. Paz, 1890-1896). Clavijero mentions also Sahagún's twelve-volume dictionary of the Mexican language, unknown today.

⁶⁶ Alonso Zurita, *Compendiosa relación de los señores que había en México y de su diversidad: de las leyes, usos y costumbres de los mexicanos; de los tributos que pagaban*. More commonly known as the *Breve relación* (Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 234, n.144).

⁶⁷ José de Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (Sevilla: Juan de León, 1590).

⁶⁸ Juan Ventura Zapata y Mendoza, *Crónica de Tlaxcala*, cited by Clavijero—but no printed edition exists.

⁶⁹ Pedro Ponce, *Noticia de los dioses y de los ritos del gentilísimo mexicano*, mentioned by Clavijero. Published in 1900 as "Breve relación de los dioses y de los ritos de la gentilidad," *Anales del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía* 6 (1900):2-11.

⁷⁰ Juan Bautista Pomar, mentioned by Clavijero as the author of historical notes on the kingdom of Tlaxcala.

⁷¹ Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin, cited by Clavijero as the author of four works: *Crónica mexicana*, which contains all the necessary information on the Mexican nation from 1068 to 1557; also *Historia de la conquista de México por los españoles*; *Noticias originales de los reinos de Acolhuacán, de México y de otras provincias*; and *Comentarios históricos*, from the year 1064 to 1521. (Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 239-40, n.158.)

⁷² Fernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc, *Crónica mexicana* (Mexico: I.Paz, 1878).

⁷³ Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* (Sevilla: en casa de Sebastián Trugillo, 1552), and his *Historia de las Indias* (Madrid: Ginesta, 1875-1876), "published for the first time from the original manuscript begun 1520, finished 1561." (University of Texas, *Catalogue of the Latin American Collections*, 31 vols. [Boston: G.K. Hall, 1969], 6:452.)

⁷⁴ Agustín Dávila Padilla, mentioned by Clavijero as the author of *Crónica de los dominicos de México*, *Historia de la Nueva España y de la Florida* (Valladolid: n.p., 1634), and *Historia antigua de los mexicanos*, "now lost," according to Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavijero*, 209).

⁷⁵ Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Memorias históricas de México*, written ca. 1557 and first published in 1914 as *Crónica de Nueva España* (Madrid: Hauser y Menet).

de Saavedra Guzmán,⁷⁶ Pedro Gutiérrez de Santa Clara,⁷⁷ and many others.⁷⁸ In regard to Las Casas, Clavijero stated explicitly that he had included all his famous writings, even though he found them too unreliable and subjective.⁷⁹

For the seventeenth century Clavijero incorporated another impressive list which included Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas,⁸⁰ Gregorio García,⁸¹ Juan de Torquemada,⁸² Arias de Villalobos,⁸³ Cristóbal Chávez Castillejo,⁸⁴ Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora,⁸⁵

⁷⁶ Antonio de Saavedra Guzmán, *El peregrino indiano* (Madrid: Casa de Pedro Madrigal, 1599).

⁷⁷ For information about this author (cited by Clavijero, although he was unfamiliar with his works), see Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavigero*, 233, n.140.

⁷⁸ They included Alonso de Mota and Alfonso de Ojeda's commentaries on the conquest of Mexico; the *Anonymous Conquistador*, which is to be found in the *Relaciones de un gentilhomme de Fernando Cortés*; Andrés de Olmos's grammar and dictionary of the Mexican, Totonec, and Huasteca languages; Juan de Tovar's manuscripts on the kingdoms of Mexico, Acolhuacán, and Tlacopán; Fernando Pimentel Ixtlixochitl and Antonio de Tovar Cano Moctezuma Ixtlixochitl, who both wrote on the genealogy of the kings of Acolhuacán; Antonio Pimentel Ixtlixochitl, the son of Fernando, and his *Memorias históricas del reino de Acolhuacán*; Tadeo de Niza's historical commentaries on Mexico from 1243 to 1562; Gabriel de Ayala, who traced all Mexican events from 1243 to 1562; the *Anales del reino de Colhuacán*, written by the masters of Colhuacán; Cristóbal del Castillo, who wrote about the journeys by the Aztecs or Mexicans to Anáhuac; Diego Muñoz Camargo's *Historia de la ciudad y de la república de Tlaxcala*; Fernando de Alva Ixtlixochitl and his *Historia de la Nueva España, Historia de los señores chichimecas, Compendio histórico del reino de Texcoco*, and *Memorias históricas de los toltecos y otras naciones de Anáhuac*.

⁷⁹ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, xxviii-xxix.

⁸⁰ Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las islas: tierra firme del mar océano [8 Décadas]*. (Madrid: Emprenta real, 1601-1615).

⁸¹ Gregorio García, *Origen de los indios del Nuevo Mundo e Indias occidentales* (Valencia: n.p., 1607).

⁸² Juan de Torquemada, *...Monarquía indiana*, 3 vols. (Sevilla: por Mathtías Clavijo, 1615).

⁸³ Arias de Villalobos, cited by Clavijero as the author of a history of Mexico in verse.

⁸⁴ Cristóbal Chávez Castillejo, whose work on the origin of the Indians in Anáhuac is mentioned by Clavijero—but there is no extant version of it.

Agustín de Vetancurt,⁸⁶ Enrique Martínez,⁸⁷ and Antonio de Solís y Rivadeneyra,⁸⁸ even though he considered the latter's work closer to beauty than to truth.⁸⁹

Among the eighteenth-century sources which Clavijero consulted were Pedro Fernández del Pulgar⁹⁰ and Lorenzo Boturini Benaducci's manuscript on ancient Mexico. As in the case of Solís, Clavijero considered Boturini Benaducci's work rather more fantastic than close to reality.⁹¹ Moreover, many annals of the Toltecs and Mexican commentaries (1066-1316, 1367-1509) as well as a Mexican history which ended in 1406 when the Mexicans arrived in the town of Tolán, were also incorporated. Clavijero then dealt with some of the earlier mentioned foreign historians, such as Gage, de Pauw, Raynal, Robertson, de Bry, and Jean Francois Marmontel,⁹² faulting in particular de Bry for his biased interpretation.⁹³

Last but not least, Clavijero included a list of collections of Mexican drawings and paintings which he thought the historian should consult: the Mendoza Collection (sixty-three drawings made for Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza), the Vatican Collection, mentioned by Father Acosta but which Clavijero did not visit, the Vienna Collection, the Sigüenza Collection, and the Boturini Collection.⁹⁴

Clavijero's *Historia antigua de Mexico* consists of ten books and nine dissertations. The first seven books deal with Mexico before

⁸⁵ Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, three of whose works are cited by Clavijero as sources: his *Ciclografía mexicana*, *Imperio Chichimeco*, and *Genealogía de los reyes mexicanos*. These are in manuscript form only. See Irving A. Leonard, *Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1929), 206-207.

⁸⁶ Agustín de Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano* (Mexico: por Doña María de Benavides..., 1698).

⁸⁷ Enrique Martínez, *Reportorio de los tiempos y historia natural desta Nueva España* (Mexico: Empronta del autor, 1606).

⁸⁸ Antonio de Solís y Rivadeneyra, *Historia de la conquista de la Nueva España* (Madrid: Bernardo de Villa-Diego, 1684).

⁸⁹ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, xxx-xxxi.

⁹⁰ Pedro Fernández del Pulgar, few of whose writings have been published, is cited by Clavijero as the author of *La verdadera historia de la conquista de la Nueva España*.

⁹¹ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, xxxii.

⁹² *Ibid.*, xxxiii-xxxv.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, xxxv.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, xxxv-xxxvii.

the Spanish arrival, and in Book 1 he gives a physical description of the country: its division and location, its mediterranean and maritime provinces, land and climate, mountains, rivers, and lakes; its minerals, fauna and flora, and inhabitants. Book 2 describes the different peoples: Toltecs, Chichimecs, Acolhuás, Olmecs, and all the other nations who inhabited Anáhuac before the Mexican arrival, the departure of the Aztecs from Aztlán, the division of Tenochcas and Tlaltilolcas, and finally, the inhuman custom of sacrificing young maidens to honor Huitzilopochtli, the god protector of the nation.

The next three books cover the pre-Columbian history of Mexico. In Book 3 Clavijero sketches the past from the founding of the Mexican monarchy and its first ruler Acamapichtli in 1352 to the tyrants Tezozómoc and Mextlatán. Then in Book 4 he takes the reader from the reestablishment of the royal Chichimec family on the throne of Acalhuacán to the death of Ahuizotl, the eighth king of Mexico in the year 1502. Also in this book Clavijero deals with the famous dedication of the Templo Mayor in the heart of Tenochtitlan. Book 5 covers the last years of the old Aztec Mexico under the ninth king Moctezuma Xocoyotzín until the year 1519 on the eve of the Spanish conquest.

Books 6 and 7 are particularly interesting to the anthropologist and the political scientist. They concern important aspects of Aztec life. Thus, Book 6 deals with the religion of the Mexicans, their gods, temples, priests, sacrifices and obligations, their fasts and austerities, chronology, calendar, feasts, and their rites at the birth of their children, at marriages and funerals. Book 7 then analyzes the government as well as the military and the economy of the kingdom; the kings and lords, administration, embassies, dignitaries and magistrates, judgments, laws and penalties of their militia; hunting, fishing, and trade; games, clothing, food, and utensils, language, poetry, music and dance, medicine, its history, and painting, sculpture, smeltery, and mosaic works, architecture, and other forms of art.

The last three books cover the Spanish conquest. In Book 8, Clavijero discusses the arrival of the Spaniards, the confederation they formed with the Totonecs and their alliance with Tlaxcala until their solemn entry into Mexico and the founding of Villa Rica de la Cruz. Book 9 covers the period from Moctezuma's conference with Cortés until the former's death, the battle of Otumba in July 1520, won by the Spaniards after six days of retreat from Tenochtitlan, the election of

King Cuitlahuatzin and his death, and the election of the last Aztec emperor, Cuauhtemotzin. Finally, Book 10 includes the last stages of an independent Aztec empire, from the Spanish march to Texcoco, the plot against Cortés, the imprisonment of Cuauhtemotzin and the ruin of the Mexican empire.

Clavijero added to these ten books nine dissertations for a better understanding of his subject. Not only did he consider these "useful," but "necessary to illuminate the history of ancient Mexico."⁹⁵ These explanatory notes cover, in the first dissertation, the population of America and Mexico and its origin, who the different peoples were, and how they and the animals came to the American continent. In this context, Clavijero discusses the opinions of many authors, including Vetancurt, Hans Sloane, Feijóo, Acosta, Sigüenza y Góngora, Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz, López de Gómara, Boturini Benaducci, Buffon, St. Augustine, Pliny, and Seneca, among others, and affirms that his respect for the Holy Scriptures forces him to believe that peoples and animals came to the continent by various means. Finally, he states that he submits these his sentiments to the judgment of Christian scholars, but not to that of unbelieving and capricious philosophers "who neither respect Divine authority nor do they follow human tradition or reason."⁹⁶

The second dissertation covers the most important periods of old Mexican history, including a chronology of all Aztec emperors. In this context Clavijero writes that it is quite difficult to find accurate figures, and he compares data submitted by both Acosta and Sigüenza y Góngora,⁹⁷ and especially refutes de Pauw "who even here shows his extravagance only mentioning eight Mexican kings"⁹⁸ when it is obvious that there were eleven—Acamapitzin, Huitzilihuitl, Chimalpopoca, Itzcoatl, Moctezuma I, Axayacatl, Tizoc, Ahuizotl, Moctezuma II, Cuitlahuatzin, and Cuauhtemotzin.⁹⁹ His method of correcting the historical record is to begin with the last emperors and go backwards, and not the reverse as had hitherto been done.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 422 ["Al Lector"].

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 442.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 448.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 449.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 449-52.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 449.

The third dissertation analyzes the land and the climate of Mexico, and takes issue with Buffon and de Pauw, who "copies a great deal of Buffon's opinions," and the supposed flooding of America.¹⁰¹ The fourth dissertation refers to the animals of Mexico, and here again Clavijero finds fault with Buffon and his list of quadrupeds in America and the Old World, as it appeared in his *Histoire naturelle*.¹⁰² He then includes a vast list of all the American quadrupeds and lists the species that Buffon either confused or ignored.¹⁰³ The fifth dissertation concerns the physical and moral qualities of the Mexicans, which he records, and he ridicules statements coming from de Pauw about the weakness of the Americans in contrast to the view of Antonio de Ulloa, who considered them to be "healthy, robust and strong";¹⁰⁴ Clavijero asks, "who can be trusted more of these two, Paw, who from Berlin began to philosophize about the Americans without knowing them, or Ulloa who for several years saw them?"¹⁰⁵

Among other bizarre statements by de Pauw which he demolishes is one about the alleged lack of milk produced by American women;¹⁰⁶ another is in regard to the rational conduct of Americans. Clavijero notes that although de Pauw hated everything that is linked to the Roman church, and particularly the Society of Jesus, he still considered Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* "an excellent work,"¹⁰⁷ and then declared that the rational conduct of the Americans was guided by "barbarity, extravagance and brutality," while Acosta mentioned them as having many "admirable laws worthy of preservation, even within their Christianity."¹⁰⁸ Who is to be given more credit, asks Clavijero, stating that the readers will judge. Finally, in regard to another matter, Clavijero tells us about de Pauw's statement that the Spaniards "had entered Mexico without firing a single shot," implying that the Mexicans were cowards; Clavijero

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 454, 455-60.

¹⁰² Ibid., 485.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 500-502.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 506, quoting from Ulloa's *Relación del viaje a la América meridional*, vol. 1, book 5, chapter 5.

¹⁰⁵ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, 506.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 507-509.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 513.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 514.

counters the argument, which he considers "worthy of Paw's logic,"¹⁰⁹ by saying that such a silly statement could be compared with the view that the Prussians are cowards because the ambassadors of some European courts enter Berlin "without firing a single shot."¹¹⁰

The sixth dissertation describes the culture of the Mexicans, the lack of a currency and the use of iron, the lack of an alphabet, and their arts, languages, and laws. It also includes a catalogue of European and Mexican authors who wrote on Christian ethics. Again Clavijero confronts de Pauw, who "furious, always hostile to the New World, calls all Americans barbarians and savages, inferior in wisdom and industry to the most unpolished and rude peoples of the Old World."¹¹¹ With his usual irony, he refutes this wild and exaggerated statement and explains the religion, government, laws, and trade of the Mexicans. In the same manner he discusses the fact that they did not have a currency, and counters the criticism about the lack of iron, and about the arts, the languages and the laws. If de Pauw had done his research, Clavijero asserts, he would have found that iron *was* known in Hispaniola—it was mentioned by Herrera y Tordesillas in his *Descripción de las Indias occidentales*,¹¹² he says—as well as on the Mexican coast (Zacatula),¹¹³ and that copper was known all over the continent.

In regard to de Pauw's criticism about the few drawings and paintings, Clavijero refers to the famous Mexican Juan José de Eguiara y Eguren and "his erudite preface to his *Bibliotheca mexicana*,"¹¹⁴ and as for de Pauw's statement about the lack of good architecture, he mentions that had Cortés not destroyed Axayácatl's palace (which could have housed some six thousand Spanish soldiers) he could have installed himself right there in great comfort.¹¹⁵

Clavijero also deals extensively with the criticism of the languages of Mexico, which, he says, were not as limited in vocabulary

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 520.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 525.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 529, quoting Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Descripción de las Indias occidentales* (Madrid: Empronta real, 1601), vol. 4, book 6, chapters 7 and 10.

¹¹³ Clavijero, *Historia antigua de México*, 529.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 535-36 and 535, n.9.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 538.

as de Pauw wants us to believe, "with no possibility of explaining any metaphysical concept."¹¹⁶ Our author, who knew Nahuatl quite well and had written about it, refutes de Pauw on this point, and then does the same in regard to laws and government. He tells us that neither anarchy nor despotism was the rule in Mexico's ancient history. The latter only existed in the last decades of the Mexican empire, whereas before that, the kings respected the laws, including the right of appeal; there were also laws against lying and drunkenness.¹¹⁷

The last three dissertations examine the borders and the population of Anáhuac (seventh dissertation), the religion of the Mexicans (eighth dissertation), and the spread of syphilis, called the French sickness (ninth dissertation). In the first of these Clavijero corrects the erroneous assertions by writers, Spaniards and other Europeans, especially de Pauw, concerning the borders of Mexico and the population therein. In his refutation of both de Pauw and Robertson, he bases his argument on the records of Fernando Cortés, whom he calls the "Conquistador Anónimo," Alfonso de Ojeda, Alonso de Mata, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Toribio Motolinía, Sahagún, and Gerónimo de Mendieta, as well as Herrera y Tordesillas, López de Gómara, Acosta, Torquemada, and Enrique Martínez,¹¹⁸ and asserts that Mexican readers must laugh when they see what de Pauw has to say. De Pauw should know, Clavijero writes, that "Mexico is the most populous city the King of Spain possesses,"¹¹⁹ and if de Pauw has any doubts, why not travel to "Texcoco, Otumba, Tlaxcala, Cholula, Huexotzinco, Cempoala, Tula, etc." where he will find plenty of old cities that still exist today.¹²⁰

The religion of the Mexicans is dealt with in the eighth dissertation, and here we find a rare agreement between Clavijero and de Pauw, since the latter sees little difference between many inhuman Mexican religious rites and those of the ancient world;¹²¹ Clavijero also refers to Moctezuma's conference with Cortés in which the Mexican emperor told the Spanish conquistador that he did not doubt

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 544.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 548, 550, 552.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 558-62.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 564.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 568.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 571.

the goodness of the Christian God; but if He was good for Spain, the Mexican gods were equally good for Mexico,¹²² and he asserts rightly that in comparison with the ancient world Mexican sacrifices did not seem to be different. They were inhuman, especially cannibalism, but the latter could also be found in the ancient world, and in this regard he bases himself on St. Augustine, Seneca, Caesar, and Pliny.¹²³ In the last dissertation, the ninth, Clavijero refutes the legend that syphilis was an American sickness, and in this respect uses a variety of sources, including Las Casas, John Lion the African, André Thevet, Francis Bacon, Gonzalo Hernández de Oviedo, among others.¹²⁴

Clavijero's *Historia antigua de Mexico* was first published in Italian in four volumes in the years 1780-81,¹²⁵ followed by an English edition in two volumes in 1787 and a German edition, mentioned earlier, also in two volumes, in the years 1789-90. A Spanish version, translated by the famous Spanish liberal José Joaquín de Mora, which appeared in London in 1826, was published by the equally famous publishing house of R. Ackermann.¹²⁶ Clavijero's Mexican history was praised all over Italy, and soon it was known also in France and other parts of Europe.¹²⁷ Suddenly his name was on everybody's lips, since his Mexican work had fully justified the great expectations that had accumulated over the many years of preparation.

At the same time that Clavijero wrote his Mexican history he also dealt with an equally fascinating subject: the history of (lower) California; this, however, saw the light of day only after his death—in the year 1789. His *Historia de la antigua o Baja California* is as important a work as the Mexican history, although of a different nature, since its history was more recent. Actually Clavijero became the pioneer historian for that region. It consists of four books with a

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid., 572-78.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 579-92.

¹²⁵ Pasquel, *Clavijero*, 97. The title was as follows: *Storia antica del Messico, cavata da' migliori storici Spagnuoli, e da' manoscritti, e dalle pitture antiche degl' Indiani: divisa in dieci libri, e corredata di carte geografiche, e di varie figure; e dissertazioni sulla terra, sugli animali, e sugli abitatori del Messico*, 4 vols. (Cesena: per Gregorio Biasini, 1780-1781).

¹²⁶ *Historia antigua de México... traducido del Italiano por José Joaquín de Mora*. 2 vols. (London: R. Ackermann, 1826).

¹²⁷ Pasquel, *Clavijero*, 75-76.

preface, and includes a map of California made in 1788 by the Spanish Jesuit Ramón Tarrós.¹²⁸ It also contains two additions: first, the Lord's Prayer in three different dialects of the Cochimí language, and second, a detailed description of the "Experiments and Observations which Father Francisco Inama, German Jesuit and Missionary of that Province, made on the Californian snakes."¹²⁹

Book 1 describes the geography, landscape, climate, fauna and flora, and the native inhabitants. Book 2 begins with the Spanish attempts at conquering the region, first under Fernando Cortés, and then under the various viceroys of New Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It then examines the famous expeditions of Admiral Isidoro de Atondo y Antillón and others, the arrival of the Jesuits and the story of the foundation of the first missions, with some of the most famous missionaries: Juan María de Salvatierra (Loreto mission), Francisco María Pícolo, the missions of San Juan Bautista de Londó and San Jaime de Viggé, Juan de Ugarte and the San Javier mission, Basaldúa, Julián Mayorga, and Eusebio Kino and his death. Book 3 describes the foundation of eight additional missions in Baja California, with the ups and downs of the various missions and the death of some of the most prominent Jesuit missionaries: Salvatierra, Pícolo, Ugarte, and Mayorga, the revolt of the Pericués, and the loss and recovery of some of the missions.

The fourth and last book covers the eighteenth century and the royal orders in regard to California issued by Philip V and Ferdinand VI demonstrating continued royal interest in the region; it also describes the journeys of Fathers Consag and Sedelmayer, the continuous struggle to overcome difficulties and obstacles in the advance of the missions in Baja California, and thus further trouble with the Indians, and the deaths of several missionaries. The book also deals with the foundation of the last four missions and the suppression of several others, and discusses the state of Christianity in California by the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits, how the missions were administered as well as the presidios, and the number of missions in the peninsula. Clavijero mentions the Jesuit proposal to renounce their

¹²⁸ Ronan, *Francisco Javier Clavigero*, 299.

¹²⁹ Francisco Javier Clavijero, *Historia de la antigua o Baja California: estudios preliminares por Miguel León-Portilla*, 4th rev. ed. (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1990), 241-47.

hundred and more missions in Lower California and its rejection by the royal authorities, as well as the famous offer by Doña Josefa de Argüelles on her death in 1767 to bequeath all her great fortune to the Jesuits for the advancement of Christianity in California—which the Jesuits solemnly rejected. The book ends with the condition of the many missions after the expulsion of the Jesuit order, under their Franciscan and Dominican successors.¹³⁰

Clavijero's purpose in writing about California and the Jesuit missionary work was, first of all, his great interest in the region. Did he not volunteer several times for missionary activity in California? At heart he was a missionary, and felt that work in that region should be his main goal in life. On the other hand, once in exile, and as in the case of the Mexican history, he wanted to correct distortions which he saw in the same authors who had dealt with the history of Mexico—de Pauw and Robertson in particular.¹³¹ There was a Californian history, *Noticias de la California y de su conquista temporal y espiritual hasta el tiempo presente*, written by the Jesuit Father Miguel Venegas in 1739 and published in Madrid in three volumes in the year 1757, which seemed to Clavijero to be quite deficient.¹³² Hence, as in the case of his Mexican history, his main goal was to set the record straight, and this he accomplished brilliantly. His clarity in presenting the subject, his scholarship and erudition demonstrated his remarkable accomplishment and won him immediate universal recognition and praise; using all the prevailing and most different sources available at his time, he came up with two works which represented the last word in scholarly research on the subject.

Although Clavijero's histories are very different, both became classical works for an understanding of Mexican and Californian history. In his Mexican history he dealt with the great native history of Mexico's past—the Toltecs, Chichimecs, Acolhuás, Olmecs, Otomíes, Tarascos, Mazahúas, Matlalzineas, Nahuatlacas, Tlaxcaltecas, and finally the Aztecs, from Acamapichtli, the first king of Mexico in 1352, to the last king, Cuauhtemotzín and the Spanish victory; in the

¹³⁰ Ibid., 239-40.

¹³¹ Ibid., 2.

¹³² Ibid., 1, and Miguel León-Portilla, "Apéndice bibliográfico" in Clavijero, *Historia de la antigua o Baja California*, xli. León-Portilla's appendix contains valuable literature on Clavijero and on Californian history.

Californian history, though also analyzing the indigenous population, especially the Pericués, Guaicuras, and Cochimíes—who never reached the high cultural level of the Mexican peoples discussed in the Mexican history—he covered the establishment and development of the Jesuit missions in that area from the end of the sixteenth century to 1767. Both works have a common denominator: love of truth and devotion to true scholarship, religious zeal, and defense of Christian civilization, but also profound respect for the natives, and thus love of country and intense patriotism. In both histories, Clavijero achieved an objective interpretation of Mexican and Californian history—a truly successful undertaking.

In the words of Leonardo Pasquel, Clavijero "was the first Mexican with the mentality, vision, work, and transcendence of a Mexican," and that is why, "from his exile he became the inspiration for the concept of *Patria* that incubated our Independence."¹³³ In that sense, both works by Clavijero represent an extraordinarily successful achievement of Mexican patriotism, and in that sense also both the Mexican history and the Californian history are documents of a new era, signalling an awakening of Mexico's soul. While it is true that there were already earlier some examples of a nascent Mexican patriotism—and also of a Peruvian patriotism if we look further south to the other remarkable cultural region in South America—Clavijero's works are the first truly powerful illustration of the new nationalist winds which later would blow with the movements for independence in the early nineteenth century. No doubt Juan de Torquemada was the founder, so to speak, of an early Mexican patriotism, just as Garcilaso de la Vega was his Peruvian counterpart, to be followed in New Spain by the towering figures of both Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora and Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz; but in the case of Mexico it was Clavijero and his Jesuit colleagues in exile, who, for special reasons—their forced exile with its spiritual cruelty, their homesickness, and nostalgia for their beloved country—building on the earlier, weaker, and more timid expressions of patriotism by Torquemada and especially Sigüenza y Góngora, succeeded in establishing a solid Mexican patriotism. Clavijero's two historical works played a major role in this cultural development, which amounts to a true rediscovery of America. In this sense he destroyed the Black Legend interpretations of certain European

¹³³ Pasquel, *Clavijero*, iii.

historians and produced a more realistic version of his homeland, and moreover, his histories exuded a vivid expression of the Mexican spirit as it unfolded in the eighteenth century.

In writing his two histories Clavijero did so not only with love and passion, but also inspired by the soul of America, and this, in the final analysis, represented a protest in the name of his people against the enlightened despotism of the Spanish crown. He did not write about Mexico in the way his predecessors had, but with a fascinating interest and devotion.¹³⁴ Thus, in reality, he resurrected and recovered the true history of his country, and that is why we can justly call his works on Mexico and California, like those of Rafael Landívar in Guatemala¹³⁵ and Juan Ignacio Molina in Chile,¹³⁶ rediscoveries of America. Moreover, while the Peruvians had not been able to establish a viable patriotic cosmology, Clavijero had achieved such a development in his country, since the Mexicans had signally succeeded with their patriotic figure of the *Virgen de Guadalupe* and with the fantastic story of St. Thomas having spread Christianity before the arrival of Cortés and the Spaniards, a legend which, begun by Sigüenza y Góngora, was disseminated in the eighteenth century and further developed and hailed by that fabulous and incredible personality Friar Servando Teresa de Mier.

Clavijero's rediscovery of America also included the recovery of the American, i.e., he laid the basis for the later identity of the present-day Mexican. This was part of his fundamental conviction which affirmed the unity of the human race; although this concept was not original, since the Spanish sixteenth-century missionaries, lawyers, and philosophers had already proclaimed it, Clavijero's restatement led directly to the principle of equality between Spaniards and Spanish Americans, from which again other principles were derived, such as the rational conception of man and the universe; the appreciation of nature, with the recovery and recognition of the Indians, the human group most affected by and linked to this idea; the concept of biological and cultural *mestizaje*, and, finally, political independence. True enough,

¹³⁴ Jiménez Rueda, *Historia de la cultura en México*, 203.

¹³⁵ Rafael Landívar, *Rusticatio mexicana* (Bologna: n.p., 1782).

¹³⁶ Giovanni Ignazio Molina, *Compendio del la historia jeográfica, natural y civil del reino de Chile*. Escrito en italiano por el Abate don Juan Ignacio Molina (Madrid: A. de Sancha, 1788-95).

Clavijero did not propose independence, but in his Mexican history he was certainly suggesting it, or wishing it without spelling it out.¹³⁷

Clavijero died in Bologna in 1787 and was buried there in the church of Santa Lucia, and although the Jesuit order returned to Mexico in 1814, when the expulsion order of 1767 was nullified and the Society restored by Pope Pius VII, it took a long time for Mexico to do justice to its great son, "our universal Mexican," "the highest exponent of the Mexican Enlightenment."¹³⁸ Only in 1945, and due to Mariano Cuevas, S.J., was the original text of Clavijero's Mexican history, which he wrote in Spanish, published in Mexico. Under President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, Clavijero's remains were brought back to Mexico and solemnly buried in the Rotonda de los Hombres Ilustres in Mexico City, in 1970, some 183 years after his death.

In his philosophical work, the *Cursus philosophicus*, Clavijero demonstrated conclusively that it was possible to be at the same time progressive and traditional. His traditional background and foundation were very much reflected, first of all, in the division of his work into *Physica Generalis* and *Physica Particularis*. More to the point, the *Physica Generalis* reflected the traditional opinion based on Aristotelian lines, whereas in the *Physica Particularis* he followed more the modern trends as long as these did not contradict the Christian faith and were in line with the decisions of the Jesuit order of 1706, 1731, and 1751. Since Clavijero's religious, ethical, and philosophical outlook was deeply anchored in the pure and orthodox Scholastic traditions founded in and carried over by St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Suárez, it seems correct to say that this important part of his overall thought cannot be dismissed because in his *Physica Particularis* he displayed his modernity by openly siding with the modern natural scientists against Aristotle.

In sum, can we classify Clavijero as a Neo-Scholastic philosopher or as a follower of the Age of Reason? This is a very debatable issue, and it depends very much on the emphasis one puts on

¹³⁷ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, "Estudio introductorio y selección," in *Francisco Xavier Clavijero. Antología* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, Dirección General de Divulgación, 1976), 19, 39-46.

¹³⁸ Efraín Castro Morales, *Documentos relativos al historiador Francisco Xavier Clavijero y su familia: Estudio y selección* (Puebla, Mexico: H. Ayuntamiento de Puebla de Z., Talleres de Marco Antonio Fuentes Rodiles, 1970), 18.

pure philosophy and ethics, or on the natural sciences. Most people, in dealing with this question, have categorized Clavijero as a member of the Enlightenment, but this is misleading because he has nothing in common with the European Enlightenment. Thus, if the choice is in favor of the Enlightenment, it must be spelled out loud and clear that what is meant by Enlightenment is the Spanish and Spanish American Enlightenment, "the Christian Enlightenment," that of Feijóo and Jovellanos. To call him a Neo-Scholastic would in our view be more just and objective, since in the traditional hierarchy of values, religion, ethics, and philosophy would or should rank higher than the natural sciences. Besides, he demonstrated convincingly that tradition and progress are not always contradictory but truly complementary.

If in the realm of philosophy we find the answer to Clavijero's position concerning tradition and progress, it is in the field of history that we see his rediscovery of America. In both his *Historia antigua de México* and his *Historia de la antigua o Baja California* Clavijero dealt with two important issues: in the former, the great Indian past of his country, and in the latter, the extraordinary Jesuit missionary effort from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries in that part of New Spain. Both amounted to a true rediscovery of America: an impressive scholarship and erudition was joined to interest in and devotion to his subject. With love and passion he extolled the glories of the Mexican past and the remarkable achievements of the Jesuits in California. In his histories he not only demolished European prejudices and corrected deficiencies but also wrote differently from his predecessors and always remained objective. He thus was able to give Mexicans an extraordinary boost in their self-confidence. In the final analysis his works demonstrate a shining *Mexicanidad*, turning him into the most important scholar on both the ancient Mexican past and the California missions.

Clavijero's rediscovery of America thus amounted to a catalyst for Mexican nationalism, which had already been growing during the eighteenth century, and through his two histories he contributed to a better understanding of Mexican realities as they appeared in the second half of the eighteenth century.