

Introduction to Contemporary Nahua Literature

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When I first began to research “contemporary Nahua literature” extensively, I soon came to the realization that doing so resembles endeavoring to write an unreasonably broad study on a topic like “contemporary English literature.” Contrary to what many might think, there is a plethora of texts and such diversity among this literary production that arguably to speak of “Nahua literature” misleadingly suggests homogeneity and at the same time conveys the idea that there must be very few writers and texts. A movement of present-day Nahua writers comes as a surprise to most, as popular narratives teach that their “pre-Modern” language has disappeared or else is on the verge of extinction—definitely not a thriving language with a wealth of modern knowledge production.

Rather than attempt to portray an illusory uniformity among Nahua literary production, this introduction underscores the rich diversity among Nahua texts with brief selections from the genres of poetry, narrative, novel, and theater. At the same time, there are similarities among Nahua literary production that makes researching “contemporary Nahua literature” a viable mode of analysis. Authors’ desire to revitalize the Nahuatl language constitutes a major point of convergence and the overarching theme in this survey. Even Nahua authors who do not speak the Nahuatl language highlight the importance of it within their works and seek to recover their linguistic heritage. They attribute the loss of their language to linguistic discrimination, evident throughout all sectors of society, that inculcates that Nahuatl is a pre-Modern “dialect” fit for museums but not for modernity. Through their works, Nahua authors reject this discourse and show that the language is very much alive and a key player in contemporary literature.

Note: Like the diversity within the literature itself, there are also distinct alphabets proposed for modern Nahuatl. Each author has her or his own preferred writing system. The following selections have been transcribed into the orthography used by Nahuas in the *Totlahtol* project at the University of Warsaw. Rather than suggest that other alphabets are less viable, this transcription into another orthography aims solely to increase accessibility by not making the reader shift between different writing systems for each text.

POETRY

Within the genre of poetry, referred to as *xochitlahtolli* (flowered words) in the Huasteca, there are numerous authors, among them: Tirso Bautista (Huasteca Veracruzana); Alberto Becerril Cipriano (Northern Puebla); Sixto Cabrera González (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Mardonio Carballo (Huasteca Veracruzana); Fabiola Carrillo Tiego (Tlaxcala); José Concepción Flores Arce (Milpa Alta); Delfino Hernández (Huasteca Veracruzana); Jorge Luis Hernández (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Natalio Hernández (Huasteca Veracruzana); Juan Hernández Ramírez (Huasteca Veracruzana); Eugenia Ixmattlahua Tlaxcala (Sierra de Zongolica); Ezequiel Jiménez Romero (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Salustia Lara de la Cruz (Morelos); Pedro Martínez Escamilla (Hidalgo); Yolanda Matías García (Guerrero); Refugio Miranda San Román (Huasteca Hidalguense); Zabina Mora (Puebla/Tlaxcala); Calixta Muñoz Corona (Tlaxcala); Isabel Nopaltécatl Martínez (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Javier Nezahualcoyotl (Tlaxcala); Delia Ramírez Castellanos (Morelos); Alfredo Ramírez Celestino (Guerrero); Eustacia Saavedra Barranco (Morelos); Judith Santopietro (Córdoba, Veracruz); Humberto Tehuacatl Cuaquehua (Veracruz); Olivia Tequiliquihua Colohua (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Martín Tonalmeyotl (Guerrero); Rogelio Torres Montero (Morelos); Ángeles Tzanahua (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Arturo Vargas Espinosa (Morelos); Ethel Xochitiotzin Pérez (Tlaxcala); and Gustavo Zapoteco Sideño (Guerrero).

For this section, I have selected the poem “*Atlahnantzin*” by Natalio Hernández. Hernández was born in Naranjo Dulce in the municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz, and raised in a nearby community, Lomas del Dorado, which he affectionately refers to as *Tepeco* (Place of the Hills/Mountains). This geography exercises a profound influence on his poetry, as the name of his home community itself indicates. Within his texts, he seeks particularly to revive Nahuatl words that masterfully describe that landscape with a unique affective attachment. Often there is no adequate translation, as is the case with “*Atlahnantzin*.” *Atlahnantzin* (mother in the place where water abounds), also known as *atenantzin* (water mother), is a beautiful green plant that grows where water abounds at river’s edge. The poem underscores the poetic force of the Nahuatl language itself, as shown in the beauty of words such as *atlahnantzin*. In Hernández’s view expressed in the final lines of the poem, these words constitute mediums for communicating the wisdom of ancestors to the present.

Cihuatzintli tlen chanti atempan
xochitl tlen cueponi

Precious lady who dwells at the river’s edge
flower that blooms

campa atzin quitenamiqui totlalnanzin,
papalotzin tlen nochipa yolpactoc
ica xihuichalchihuitzin.

where the water kisses our mother earth,
Eternally joyous butterfly
with green jaded foliage.

Nochi yehhua motlachializ Atlahnanzin
cihuatzintli tlayocoltzin;
ica tepitzin xochicuicatl
ticchuihua cualtzin hueyi cuicatl,
ica ce tlahtoltzin tiyolitia xochitlahtolli;
melahuac tehhuatzin cihuatzintli
tichualica xochitl ihuan cuicatl
tlen tocoltzitzihuan.

All that is your countenance Atlahnanzin
simple lady
with small flowered songs
you create beautiful concerts,
with one word you give life to flowered
language;
truly precious lady
you bring flower and song
from our ancestors.

From: Hernández, Natalio. *Yancuic Anahuac cuicatl / Canto nuevo de Anáhuac*. Mexico City: ELIAC, 2007. 96-96. Translated into English by Adam W. Coon.

NARRATIVE

Narrative, referred to in the Huasteca as *tlatenpohualiztli* (literally, something recounted with the lips), communicates engaging plots and wisdom from the community. It is important to note that authors who write these narratives do so within an unfavorable context. Pre-packaged soap opera and televised narratives in Spanish now flood many Nahua communities and are quickly displacing the art of storytelling. Authors such as Mardonio Carballo attempt to challenge this shift not only through writing but also broadcasting these stories on national television. The following authors write narrative: Eliseo Aguilar (Puebla); Isaías Bello Pérez (Tlaxcala); Santos Carvajal García (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Fabiola Carrillo Tiego (Tlaxcala); Miguel Félix (San Miguel Tzinacapan, Northern Puebla); José Concepción Flores Arce (Milpa Alta); Arturo Gómez (Huasteca Veracruzana); Jorge Luis Hernández (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Maribel Hernández Bautista (Huasteca Veracruzana); Natalio Hernández (Huasteca Veracruzana); Luciana Julia Jiménez González (Milpa Alta); Joel Martínez Hernández (Huasteca Veracruzana); Carlos López Ávila (Milpa Alta); Marcos Matías Alonso (Guerrero); Ildelfonso Maya (Huasteca Veracruzana/Hidalguense); Ana Cristina Mixteco Zepahua (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); Isidoro Meza Patiño (Milpa Alta); Refugio Nava Nava (Tlaxcala);

Librado Silva Galeana (Milpa Alta); Ramón Tepole González (Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz); and Ethel Xochitiotzin Pérez (Tlaxcala).

I have selected the first part of a narrative from Fabiola Carrillo Tieco entitled “In tlazique,” “The Lazy One.” Carrillo Tieco is from San Pablo del Monte, Tlaxcala and she is currently completing her PhD in History at the Universidad Autónoma de México. She is part of a growing movement of Nahuatl women writers who, in the face of literary, academic, and communal contexts traditionally dominated by men, forge forward to write and publish their works. Francis Karttunen has criticized this near exclusion of Nahuatl women in literary and academic circles: “It is disconcerting that the twentieth century, which opened with a publication by Isabel Ramírez Castañeda and into which Doña Luz brought forth her work, is concluding with Nahuatl literature practiced, as in the colonial period, largely by men” (441).¹

Awareness of Carrillo Tieco’s opposition to this marginalization makes a close reading of “In tlazique” even more intriguing. In this narrative, Aurelia, the “lazy one,” refuses to care adequately for her elderly mother, Doña Margarita. Aurelia is inordinately lazy and spends most of the day asleep. When she marries the sacristan’s son, the town people hope that this will cure her stupor, described as a mysterious disease. Nonetheless, to no avail, she becomes even lazier and wholly neglects her family. Her husband runs away, Doña Margarita passes away from neglect, and Aurelia, as lazy as ever, ends up on the street selling chamomile branches door to door to survive.

While it might be tempting to read this story as a lesson for women to comply with domestic responsibilities, I argue that this narrative instead serves as a warning not to lose the affective attachment with one’s mother. The one thing for which the town people are never able to forgive Aurelia is the abandonment of her mother. The act of writing this narrative itself in Nahuatl is symbolic of that connection with ancestors and respect for their knowledges—something that in many instances younger generations poorly care for or even reject:

¹ Citation from Frances Karttunen, “Indigenous Writing as a Vehicle of Postconquest Continuity and Change in Mesoamerica.” *Native Traditions in the Postconquest World*. Eds. Elizabeth Hill Boone and Tom Cummins. 421-47.

Quemen chicome nozo caxtolli tonaltin tenanzintli Margaritatzin omotemaya, ichpocauh Aureliatzin oquimacaya ce atlixcatl huan tlahco xapon, ihcuac Margaritatzin yolitzin omotemaya, ocpacaya itzonteco, ixayac, iahcolhuan ixquizca octlamiyaya ican icxihuan, ichpocauh ocmacaya ce icpalli tlen ica omotlaliltzinoaya. Cencah mohmoxtla cihuatzintli Aureliatzin amo oquichihuaya amitla, inantzin yeca ocachi tenantzin, oquipiaya macuitl cempoalli xihuitl yeca acmo oceliti moliniaya icxihuan huan imaitl. Tenantzintli Margaritatzin amo omotemaya yeca opanolliyaya miec meztli, yeca amo ocelitliyaya in tenantzin amo omopatilyaya, ichpocatzintli amo ocpalehuiyaya tleca oquipiyaya miec tlatzihui, Aureliatzin ohuitqui amo omotemaya huan omopatilyaya tleca oquipiyaya miec tlatziui, amo oquinequiyaya quiittaz inantzin, ohuitqu amo oquitlamacaya amo oquinequiyaya quichihuaz in tlacuatl. Icon omomiquilih in tenantzin Margaritatzin, ichpocauh oquilcahua huan amo otlacualiyaya. Ican apiztli icon omomiquilih in tenantzin Margaritatzin ichpocauh oquilcahua. Iuhcon omomiquilih.

About every week or two, Mrs. Margarita bathed. Her daughter Aurelia would give her the tub and half a bar of soap. Margarita slowly bathed, washed her head, her face, her shoulders, and ended with her feet. Her daughter would then give her a seat. Every day was the same, Miss Aureliatzin would do nothing, even though her mother was elderly. She was one hundred years old. This is why she could no longer move her feet and hands. Because she could not change herself, Mrs. Margarita would sometimes go more than a month without a bath. The daughter would not help her because she was too lazy. Even worse, Aureliatzin was so lazy that she did not even bathe herself or change her clothes. She did not want to see after her mother and would not prepare meals. Under these circumstances, Mrs. Margarita passed away. Her daughter forgot her and did not feed her. Her daughter forgot her and she died of hunger. That's how she passed away.

From: *Pensamiento y voz de mujeres indígenas*. Eds. Carmen Moreno Marina Anguiano and María de Lourdes Ros. Mexico City: INALI, 2010. 168-75. Translated into English by Adam W. Coon.

NOVEL

Considered entirely Western in origin, the novel is perhaps the genre one might least expect to see in Nahuatl. Arturo Arias explains that novels in First Peoples' languages contain important decolonial implications in "procesos de transformación epistémicos con potenciales repercusiones de índole global" (epistemic processes of transformation with potential effects on a global scale) (5).² These authors shift and transform this genre in innovative and unexpected ways. Crispín Amador Ramírez has published two novels, *Infierno del paraíso* (Paradise's Hell) and *El tiempo no aborta* (Time Does Not Abandon), and is currently working on two more novels. He is from the Huasteca Hidalguense and currently resides in Toluca, Estado de México. Natalio Hernández will also soon publish two novels: *Yohualichan* (The House of the Night) and *Ohtocani* (The Sower of Paths). Both novels are filled with cultural practices and philosophies from his home region, the Huasteca Veracruzana.

I have selected a portion from the novel *Infierno del paraíso* (2008), in which a group of student ethnographers visits the Nahua community of the novel's main character Mundo. As suggested by the title of the novel, Mundo lives in a paradise of close communal relationships. This world turns into a hell when he must leave to work elsewhere to earn enough money for his family to survive. He travels through different regions to work for wealthy landowners in orange and sugar cane fields. Shortly after his return from grueling work, he attends a community meeting to welcome the student ethnographers. Crispín Amador Ramírez bases this scene on a real visit that researchers made to his own community. In an exchange with the community elders, these researchers express that their view that the Nahuatl language is "pretty" and that the community should keep speaking it. Mundo responds that it does not make sense to speak the language when it makes their children targets of discrimination. After a researcher raises his voice with the elders, the community asks them to leave due to their disrespect. This scene depicts a common problem in which Nahuatl is depicted only as "pretty." Such limited recognition glides over an underlying problem of linguistic discrimination that impedes Nahuas from obtaining employment:

² Citation from Arturo Arias, "Nahuatlizando la novelística: De infiernos, paraísos y rupturas de estereotipos en la prácticas discursivas decoloniales." *Alternativas* 1, 2013.

“Noicniuan, timechnotzqueh nican pampa monequi tiquintlacacilizceh tlen techpaxaloah, ni telpocameh tlen ahcicoh tohuanya quiihtoah quinequih quichihuazceh ce tequitl zan achtohui tlahtoznequih ihuan nochi tohhuantih.”

--Ahquiya quititlanqui—quitzahztic Doroteo quentzin ititoc ne caltzintlan.

--Amo ximolini—tlananquilih ce huehueh, monequi tiquincaquizceh ica tlepanittaliztli. Ma amo quiihtoah nican tocaltitlan tihuihuitiqueh, amo titlatelpanittah. Ma camatican.

--Telpocameh, timechcaquiznequih—quiihtoah tlanahuatihquetl.

Moquetzqui ce ichpocatl tlen achi huehcapantic ica itzoncal huehueyac huan istaltic.

Quipiyayaya ce yoyoitl cualli huan yectic neciyaya. Huahca peuhqui:

“Macehualmeh, tiitztoqueh nican pampa ticchihuazceh ce tocalmachtiltequitl. Monequi titlahtozceh inmoahuan queniuhqui intequitih huan inmonechicoah. Tiquittaqueh inquiayah miac tlamameh. Yoltoqueh inmotlahtol, inmoyoyon, tlacualli huan ni cemi cualli, ceche tohhuantih ticpiyayaya tlayaque ticchihuazceh, ticnequih xitechcahuacan ma timechpaxalocan. Amo timechtonalpolozceh, zan titlahtozceh quemman inmoahuantih intequitih. Cequih yazceh millah campa inmoahuantih inquichihuazceh tlen monequi.”

Moquetzqui tlen quiyayaya iyoyon istac, quichichinqui iya huan...

“Timopantihtoqueh ica ce tlamantli yectic. Amo xicpolocan inmotlahtol. Xiquinmachtican inmoconeuan inmotlachihual. Yohhuantih monequi quichihuazceh pampa ni inmechteixpania campahueli, mexikameh neltiliztli.”

Quitequihuiyayah tlahtolmeh tlen amo quemman niccactoya. Niquilnamihqui nochi tlen niquittac nepa campa tiohuatequitoh, nopa tlamahcehualli, queniuhqui niquincauhteuhqui noconeuan, ica yohhuantih nicchihuiqui, queniuhqui niquinmachtisqui tlen quiihtouah noconeuan intla monequi nitequititi sehanoc pampa tlali amo toaxca, tonali amo techpaleuyaya quehuac nicmachiliyaya toteotzin techilcauhtoc, noyoyon tzatzayactic huan nimomacocohtoc; niquilnamihqui nochi huan ayoc niccacqui tlen tlahtohqueh, matique nochi tlahtohqueh huan cequih tlananquilihqueh; zampa niquincauhqui quemman tlahuelchihuayayah intla nopa tlali, nopa chachapaltinich, miltequitl, tlaptlalli ticchihuah tohhuantih, tlatelchihual hueyi tlanahuatihquetl zan techhuihuitia huan cualli nitlacacqui.

Nimoquetzqui huan...

“Xitechcaquican noicnihuan, telpocameh inmoahuantih intechilhuiah ma amo ticpolocan tlen ticpiyah ma tiquinmachtican toconehuan, zan quemantica tohuantih amo ticanti tiqilnamiquizceh inon, xiquittacan ne tlalli, ne tlen quipiya zacatl tominpiyanih inaxca, tohuantih zan ticpiyah tepemeh campa no timopiltlatihtotoquiliah, amantzin niquitta no ma nimotlami macocohtoc pampa niasitihuala ohuatequiztli, nicpantico nomil huactoc, tlaya quicahuazceh noconehuan, zan niqilnamictoc quemman niyaz zampa huan iuhquinon quipiyazceh tlen quicuazceh noconehuan, ohuih tlen inqiihtoah, ximocahuacan nican tohuanya, xiccuacan huan ximoiltican no tlen tohuantih, huan inqiihtazceh amocanah ce pano quen ce tlahtoa...”

“My brothers, we have called you here because we need to listen to our visitors. These young men that have arrive here with us say that want to do a job. But first they want to speak with all of us.”

“Be quiet,” answered one of the wise elders, “We need to hear them out with respect. We do not want them to say that here in our town we are dumb and do not show respect. Let them speak.

A tall young woman with long blonde hair stood up. She was wearing nice clothing and looked elegant. Then she began:

“Indigenous peoples, we are here because we want to do a school assignment. We need to speak with you about how you work and meet together. We see that you have many things. Your language, your clothing, your food are lively and very pretty. Each one of us has an assignment to do. We want you to let us visit with you. We will not interrupt your day. We will only talk with you while you work. Some will go to the fields when you do what you need to do.”

The one wearing a white shirt and smoking a cigar stood up and said:

“We have encountered pretty things. Don’t lose your language. Teach your children to make your handicrafts. They need to do this also because this identifies you everywhere as true Mexicans.”

They used words that I had never heard before. I remembered all I saw there where I had worked in the sugar cane fields, that suffering, how I left my children, what I did with them, how would I teach my children if I need to go work somewhere else. That land is not ours,

the weather no longer helped us and I felt that God had forgotten us. My clothing is in shreds and my hands hurt. I remembered everything and I no longer listen to what they said. I think everyone spoke and some answered. Again I listened when they started causing uproar about if that land... those pots... farming... we do the revolution... the damnable government only plays us for fools... and I listened closely.

I stood up and said:

“Listen to us, my brothers, you young men tell us not to lose what we have, to teach our children, but sometimes we do not have time to remember that. Look at that land, that belongs to the rich. We only have the hills where we plant. Now I see my hands, they are worn out because I come from working in the sugar cane plantation. I came to find my fields dried up. What are my children going to eat? I have only thought about when I will go again so that my children have something to eat. What you say is difficult. Stay here with us, eat and drink the same as us, and you will see that things do not happen like one says...”

From: Amador Ramírez, Crispín. *El infierno del paraíso*. Toluca: Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura, 2008. 28-31. Translated into English by Adam W. Coon.

THEATER

While one can find Nahua theater companies throughout different regions, very little of their work has been published. One of the most well known playwrights is Ildefonso Maya, who wrote and performed numerous works in Huejutla de los Reyes, Hidalgo. Nonetheless, from an extensive corpus of more than a hundred works, only a few of his plays are published. Nahua actor Victor Pérez, head of a Nahua theater company, led the transformation of the play *Santo Luzbel* into a feature length film. In the Sierra de Zongolica, Nahua students from the Intercultural University travel among numerous Nahua communities to perform plays that criticize the abuse and marginalization of women. These plays and others from similar groups, however, have not been published and this remains a field that very much needs to be promoted and researched.

For this section I have selected a scene near the beginning of Ildefonso Maya's play *Ixtlamatinij*. The work depicts a family harassed by their son Epitacio. Epitacio, ironically in the role of a bilingual teacher, pressures his grandfather (Juantzín), his parents (Nichah and Coceh), siblings (Nicolás and Cirilo), and extended family (Acoztih and Tilah) to stop speaking Nahuatl and to adopt the customs of "those of reason," referring to the supposed superiority of those of the city. He boasts of his remedial Spanish skills and shuns the Nahuatl language. This attitude leads to a violent confrontation with one of his brothers, Cirilo, in which he accidentally cuts his mother in a drunken fit. After a night in jail, Epitacio returns repentant to the family circle and signifies his change by speaking his last lines in Nahuatl.

Acto I Escena II

NICOLÁS

¿Tlahqui inquichihuah señores? ¿Inquitlaliahya la ofrenta?

TILAH

¡Colas, ahcicoya Colas! Maque axhualahuih telpocameh.

JUANTZIN

Que Cirilo, axhualahci.

NICOLÁS

Zanquemman ticchixtoqueh ne ohtli, huan axhualahci. Papá huan tahhua ma, puncase lo que lis traigo; porque nocarnal Pitacio, axquinequi anmechmiraroz quen intios, semejante fiero anmovestiroa, huan inquiittahya nompá toPitacio, yaha mayestro; huan cieh quiipiya ueruenza totathuan nemi icxicatza huan za de calzoncio. Yejea quiihtoa, aprisa ximocamiarocan ica ni yectli pantaloh huan ni festido huan ni cepatoz, huanquinon quemman huahqueh ahciz toCirilo, uste vas estar como in lecençiao, uan tahhua quen de probesura.

NICHAH

¡Ayih Dios! Quen tiquihtoa, xichualican niquttaz ... Ayih nanita, cajcaltzin, yectli festido huan ni cepatoz... (Observa las pantimedias) Ayih.... Tlahqui ini...

TILAH

Neci quehuac merias... ayi naneh atic ... huahca naman ni ica timometzcuetlaxhuiz.

NICHAH

Cuchina...zan nimetzpepetlacatoz.

TILAH

Neciz quen titepemichin.

COCEH

Xictlacahualti ni Tilah, ma axtlenhueli quiilhui.

ACOZTIH

Tilah. Zan xiccahua, cuirado, cuirado...

JUANTZIN

Huan ta tlatatl, ¿Axtiquixtomaz tlen mitzhualtitlaniliya Pitacio? Xiquixtoma, tictlachilizceh.

COCEH

Hueliz... monequi ma ticonittacan tlahqui techhualtitlanilia.

ACOZTIH

Kafroj, huan ni coyotl, nelliya quinequi anmechpatlaz.

COCEH

Pantaloh, camisa huan cepatoz, huahca quinequi ma timopatlacan, quenuihqui molhui a notelpocauh.

NICHAH

Semejante tepinauhtia quen quinequi ma timopatlacan.

JUANTZIN

Tecneltih noixhuih, zan quinequi anmechhuihuiittaz, anmechpatlaznequi quen rerasoh.

Act I Scene II

NICOLÁS

What are you doing gentlemen? Have you already placed the offering?

TILAH

Colas, Colas has got here! But the boys have not come.

JUANTZIN

Cirlo, he has not arrived.

NICOLÁS

Since early in the morning I have waited for him on that road, and he has not arrived. Dad and you must put on what I've brought, because my buddy Pitacio doesn't want you looking like Indians. You dress ugly. Now you see that our Pitacio, he's a teacher. He is ashamed of how our parents walk barefoot and only wear traditional Indian clothing. That's why he says to change right away into pretty pants and this dress and these shoes. Then when our Cirilo arrives, you are going to look like a lawyer, and you are going to look like a professor.

NICHAH

Oh my! As you say, bring it here, I will take a look... Oh wow, a pretty dress and these shoes... (she sees the pantyhose) Oh... What's this...

TILAH

They look like stockings... oh Mom, they are like water... so now you will put this leather on your legs.

NICHAH

That's indecent... my legs are going to shine.

TILAH

You will look like a hill fish.

COCEH

Make Tilah stop saying things.

ACOZTIH

Tilah. Just leave her alone, watch it, watch it...

JUANTZIN

And you man, are you not going to unwrap what Pitacio sent you? Unwrap it, we'll have a look.

COCEH

Maybe... We need to see what he has brought us.

ACOZTIH

What an idiot, this city slicker, he really wants to change how you look.

COCEH

Pants, shirts, and shoes... so he wants us to change, what is my boy thinking.

NICHAH

It's so shameful how he wants us to change.

JUANTZIN

My poor grandson, he only wants to make you all look like fools, to make you all like "those of reason."

From: Maya, Ildfonso. "Ixtlamatinij." *Words of the True Peoples/Palabras de los seres verdaderos: Anthology of Contemporary Mexican Indigenous-Language Writers*. Vol. 3. Eds. Carlos Montemayor and Donald Frischmann. Austin: U of Texas P, 2007. 230-82. Translated into English by Adam W. Coon.