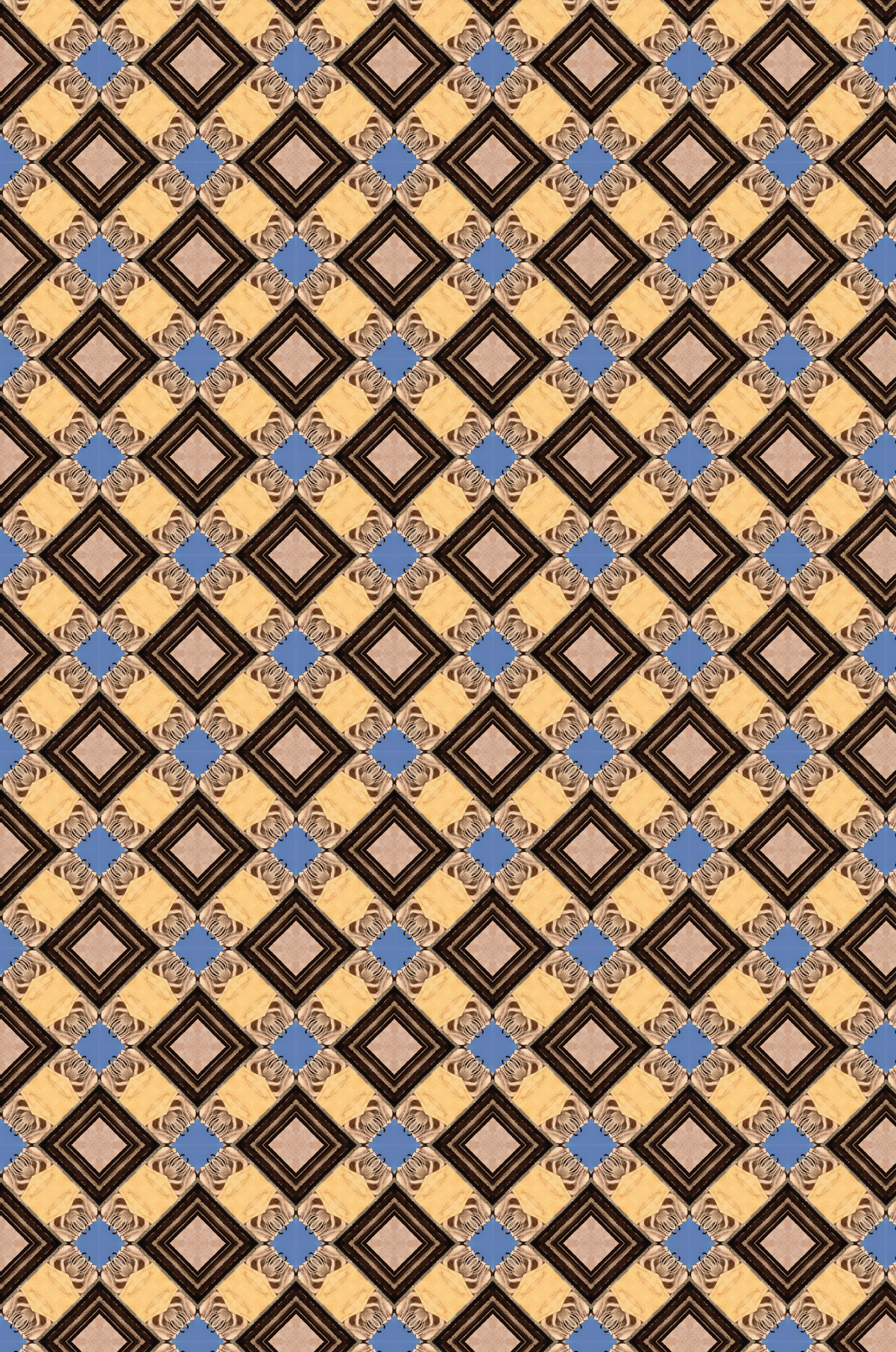

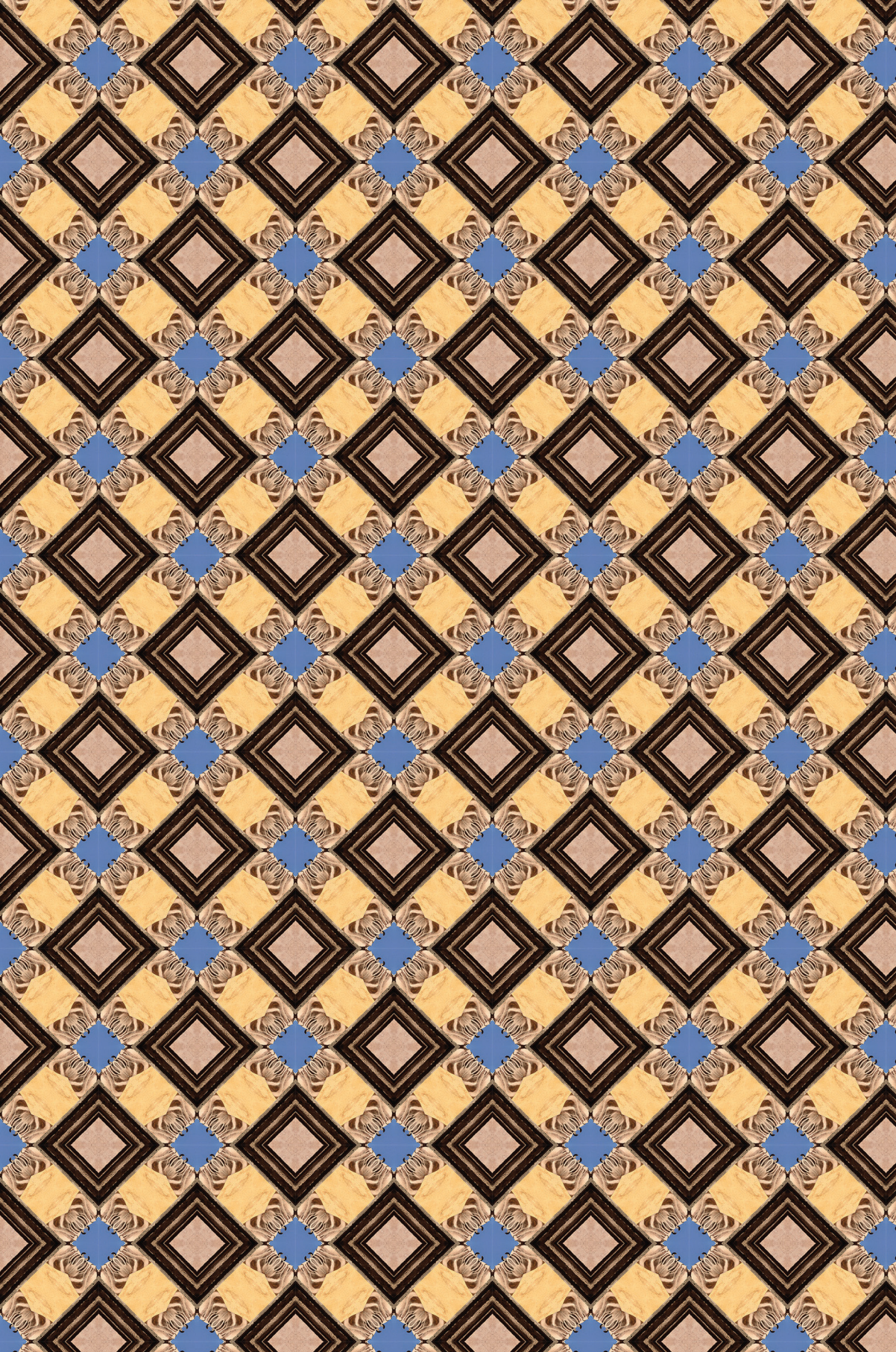

Approaches to the Theory of Freedom in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

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To Xaviera, for her love of art and nature.

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CHAPTER III • Sor Juana and the Influence of the Coimbra Jesuits

Not a Wall, but a Labyrinth

By Juan Manuel Escamilla González Aragón

Octavio Paz, José Gorostiza, and Alfredo Placencia –to name only three contemporary Mexican metaphysical poets writing "in the fashion of Góngora"–find their model not in Góngora's poetry, but in a poetical experiment first tried on American soil by a nun. Her religious name was Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. By combining Poetry and Philosophy she helped shape a new, American, definition of philosophical poetry.

This woman's experiment gave birth to a unique tradition of precise poetry. Utter precision is, ever since, the distinctive birthmark of the highest American poetry: perfect songs that, nonetheless, constitute an entirely coherent and rigorous argument that, ultimately, proposes philosophical declarations depicting concepts rather than characters.

The caution with which Americans and Hispanoamericans have approached Western Classical Tradition(s) has allowed them to recreate their heritage with new creativity, not always exempt from a certain irony. The American continent has inherited the Western Canon, correct; but us, their heirs, (mis)read it in our distinctive way. This sort of ironic appropriation may be argued about the English-speaking American literary tradition; although that is mostly right about Latin American culture, as European culture intertwines with those civilizations precedent that still awes and horrifies us. Some of the best examples of the Baroque period are to be found in what once was New Spain. Still, they do not just correspond to the Old Authorities System of Stars and their solemn conquests–and, if they do, they employ a distance, be it reverent or ironic.

Latin American architecture mostly dealt with European cathedrals, palaces or administrative buildings, for centuries. However, those cathedrals were invaded by thousands of tiny flowers representing the persistence of the kind of adoration that preceded the new cult; hidden in the corner of a perfectly Spanish Novohispanic building of Mexico City: a dragon sleeping in the stone sticks out its mocking tongue. Guadalupe is the perfect synthesis of such operation: a codex for both European and Pre-Hispanic cultures: a map to America's soul. In a synthesis such as this, Sor Juana reconciles a Pre-Hispanic poetic sensibility with the rigor of philosophical method and the genius of Plato, thus giving birth to new philosophical genres and conquests.

Sor Juana is on a par with other Americans, among whom stands one of the most influential and sophisticated poets of the 20th Century: T. S. Eliot, who may be reasonably considered a representative of this tradition. Let us not forget that, despite the fact that he became the referee of English poetry and an English editor and publisher, Eliot was born on this side of the water and his poetic strategies match those of Sor Juana in many relevant ways. However, the adventure of American Philosophical Poetry is not peculiar to Mexico, nor is it limited to Latin American literature written in Spanish. Despite the many good examples of philosophical poets all around the continent, strictly speaking this is not an entirely new happening. The first time that philosophy wore the garments of literature did not take place in the American continent. It happened, that we know of, back in what we call Greek soil. Nevertheless, as soon as philosophy came to America in those ships, it has shown some of the brightest colors that it has ever worn.

The words of Parmenides and Heraclitus that we still preserve–to name now two of the founders of philosophy–also also wear poetical robes. Parmenides wrote the very first strictly philosophical poem we know of, and Heraclitus wrote aphorisms.

When Plato intended to discard the genre of Homer, for he considered it too deceiving to be wise, of course, he practiced a very similar strategy to that of Aristophanes or Euripides: drama. In time, this operation freed Philosophy forever from the pre-theoretical jail where it trapped: mythology.

The Scholastics, later on, developed a passion for expressing their arguments using naked syllogisms in detailed treaties, a style still praised by analytic philosophy. However, following Montaigne–like Descartes–, for many centuries now, academics have thought of the essay as the fittest form to communicate their theories. There are exceptions to this, like Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Camus, or Sartre, as they explored other genres, such as aphorisms, gospels, drama, the novel and the short story. The vast bulk of philosophy, now, mostly consists of essays and takes is developed in universities. However, it is the case that neither Sor Juana nor Paz or Gorostiza were academics or restricted their readings to specialized treaties, but became familiar and remained at awe with their religious, philosophical, scientific and literary traditions. For the most part, they were self-taught. Their erudition is unquestionable. Their apparent lack of a system helped them produce remarkably independent oeuvres that are now under the scrutiny of universities.

Poetry fathoms the way in which all things relate: the link of anything to everything. Philosophy, on the other hand, shows the causal way in which those relations take place. Sor Juana's *Primero sueño* combines both strategies by perfectly fusing poetry and philosophy.

The poem *Primero sueño*, which Aspe discusses in this book, comprise a song on the ascent of human intellect to wisdom. There, Sor Juana joins the Parmenidean rev-

elation of being's unity. She discusses human incapacity to achieve a coherent unity from the start while addressing the difficulty of accomplishing any relevant, rational knowledge. In the end, she concludes like Parmenides, the only possible way of doing so is by employing reason–trained reason, following a rigorous method which implies brooding on a phenomenon long enough in order to make sense out of it. The whole journey is a cinematic dream and a defense of the scientific method, one that is closer to the positive theology proposed by formerly unknown contemporaries of Sor Juana, a tradition that Girard brought to new heights during the 20th century.

In order to discard the inherited prejudice of her time, Sor Juana wrote a hermetic poem that allowed her to break free from the censorship imposed on women. Instead of discarding her philosophical and theological background, Sor Juana used it to pave an emancipatory way out of dogmatism. *Primero sueño* (*First Dream*) contains rigorous advocacy for freedom of conscience which pairs women with men. In her piece, Sor Juana wrote at the same time a defense of the right to learn, an up to date treaty on the philosophy of knowledge, and another treaty on dreams and sleeping state that foresees some of the insights of modern science in such matters.

Sor Juana used the backgrounds of theology, philosophy, and poetry to promote a very modern defense of private conscience: a defense very much like that of Newman, who once proposed a toast to the Pope, but only after toasting to conscience. For Newman, as for Saint Paul, the voice speaking to conscience is that of God. When Sor Juana, with great wit, wrote that the most exceptional elegance of Christ was to respect our right to freedom before the Inquisition, she was, also, courageous. Nevertheless, despite the relevance of her poem to philosophy, historically, *Primero sueño* has been more competently approached by those poets who have written poems in response to hers, rather than by philosophers studying its contents. Oblivious to the value of the poem and of poetry, philosophy has spoken little about this poem. Probably, most modern philosophers have been too ignorant of their heritage to follow Sor Juana, as they have become specialists in mostly specific philosophical texts. Rather than lovers of wisdom, who seek it anywhere that it may be, as Plato did when discussing the foundational topics of philosophy with Homer, they usually limit their discussions to the specialized papers of any of their contemporaries who may be capable of quoting them.

It is impossible to understand Plato without studying Homer, just as, in order to be able to read Sor Juana's *Primero sueño* with a certain fruitfulness, the reader must be familiar with, at least, the roughly 400 books found in her chambers once she died. Moreover, we must take into consideration all of those books that she actually read but did not possess, as well as those she knew through indirect references.

In order for a contemporary reader to make sense of the magnitude of such a library, one might think of the production rate of the 10th century. A hundred years after

the boost of Latin by Charlemagne, when he tried to rebuild the Roman Empire, the best-furnished library in Europe treasured no more than 80 titles. However, the ability to read *Primero sueño* does not implicate a mere matter of bulk reading and access to her references, but rather a more troubling issue: the ability to understand some of the most challenging metaphors and allegories, embedded in long, intricate lines. Difficulties pile on difficulties when dealing with such poetry. There is no mystery as to why so few have measured themselves against a poem as formidable as this.

Most studies on Sor Juana focus on her style and references; some others dwell on the contents of her literature. While she has been portrayed as an intellectual by Octavio Paz, some others have thought of her as a *feminist avant la lettre*. However, to this day, virtually no intellectual has dealt with what Sor Juana meant to say in a way that may not feel anachronistic. We tend to judge our past based upon our present prejudices. For instance, we think of her tendency to naturalism as an opposition to the worldview of her time, which is only partially right. There is no doubt that Sor Juana was not a mystic by any means, or even ascetic in any other way than that of the disciplined voluntary rigor of those who were self-made. Still, if we think of the nun as a crypto-atheist lesbian living in a convent to gain access to books and power, we are not entirely fair with what seems to be the case. Even if Sor Juana was not a conventional nun, that does not mean she was not a nun at all.

Dorothy Schons, in English, and Pedro Henríquez Ureña, in Spanish, have promoted a contextualized reading of Sor Juana's life and works. Not other is the route that Virginia Aspe takes. If we want to emphasize the modernity of Sor Juana's thought–and there is no doubt she was ahead of her time in many ways-, we can not do it without first attending her context and the way she formulates the issues with which she deals. Aspe faces one of the pending tasks of Sor Juana studies: it is impossible to entirely understand her oeuvre or its value without some familiarity with discussions on the limits of philosophy regarding science and theology, on the nature of free will and grace, or the meaning of redemption to Christians.

One of the merits of Aspe's book is showing the theological background of the nun. Aspe takes a decisive step in tracing the philosophical and theological heritage and implications of Sor Juana's poetry, a task not up to anyone.

Rather than canonizing Sor Juana, in opposition to those who think of her as a regular 20th-century atheist, Aspe reshapes her philosophical and theological claims dealing with the autonomy of reason. Those readers of Sor Juana who have not yet understood her praise of freedom and access to knowledge as a consequence of her theological view, fail to understand her writings, just as they mistake her for someone she is not and, therefore, do not make justice to who she was.

If we wrongly assume that the world came out of the non-existing hands of a No-God in 1789, there is no way we will be able to grasp Sor Juana's poem. The world

was already old when the poet sang it at the dawn of our civilization–and Sor Juana, a cosmopolite Criolla, knew it. Nevertheless, let us not be harsh on those who came earlier: besides the inherent difficulty of overcoming our anachronistic prejudice, it is very unlike that many readers will ever descry the erudition of the nun. One of the main difficulties in reading *Primero sueño* is the significant amount of knowledge it synthesizes–a lifetime of reading, no less.

The nun's poem is too sophisticated for most contemporary readers, as it was once to her contemporaries. She used whatever tools she found handy to communicate her defense of freedom–a personal and cultural vindication–, at the same time that she hid her intentions and arguments from philistine, inquisitorial eyes.

To counter the perplexity of Sor Juana's readers, Aspe makes sense of what's hidden in the poem. Her approach is new, as she seems to be one of the first women–or men, for that matter–to ever take Sor Juana seriously and cleverly enough to make sense out of that which is probably the most hermetic poem ever written in Spanish. Aspe does so, moreover, in coherence with the nun's context, language, and references. This book aims to further Paz's perspective on Sor Juana, and one of its merits is introducing to the English-speaking world the most recent studies on the subject in Spanish.

This book on Sor Juana's perspective on freedom is published in a place and a time that we suffer, dramatically, a wound inflicted by censorship. The flamboyant lies of those in charge pair with the exclusion of intelligence and those who are intelligent in the times we are living. Promoting the freedom of conscience or the autonomy of thought is counter-cultural nowadays more than ever.

Relating to the Novohispanic order, as the readers of this book may relate, calls our attention not because it results in a radically different order to that our times. Instead, it strikes us an explanation to the foundation of our times and institutions. Sor Juana's perspective on freedom seems as pressing today as it seemed back then. Her claims towards emancipation would formerly be placed by our contemporary discourses, empathetic to the persecuted Other; and singularly, to the perspective of the female Other.

Primero sueño presents us with a journey towards emancipation. Aspe's book helps us decipher the map to the treasure. Sor Juana's life stands for the human attempt to overcome any walls, may they be transparent or clay-made. Her perspective on freedom is capable of becoming a key cultural reference in the History of Philosophy. Aspe's erudition unfolds for us the hidden meanings of the poem. Her book constitutes a rejection of any walls and an archipelago of clear signs out of Sor Juana's labyrinth and into the labyrinth of freedom.

Foreword

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is, perhaps, the best known Mexican intellectual in or outside Mexico. Her influence surpasses that of the Nobel prize winner Octavio Paz, and although Alfonso Reyes appears to be the most solid thinker in the history of ideas in Mexico, Sor Juana, together with Frida Kahlo, has surpassed in fame these two Mexican intellectuals. If Frida Kahlo is the icon of Mexicanness, Sor Juana is the writer that has best expressed—in form and substance—the vicissitudes of the Mexican soul. In *El laberinto de la soledad* (*The Labyrinth of Solitude*), an essay that won Octavio Paz a place at the apex of world authors, he claims that Mexicans find themselves incessantly traveling through labyrinths they themselves have created. It is as though the life of the Mexican were like a game of mirrors, where all the passages double back upon themselves, and one is reflected in what one thought was an exit door. There is an uncertainty about their origin that Mexicans experience morbidly and obsessively, together with deceitfulness and Baroque complexities in seeking to be understood without committing themselves fully, and a struggle between public power and personal convictions. All of these battles are expressed in Sor Juana's work, both in prose and in poetry, and her biography reveals the same constant cultural errors in which Mexicans find themselves trapped.

For these reasons, reading Sor Juana must be a priority both for Mexicans as well as for their neighbors to the North: to the former, so that they remain conscious of the labyrinth into which they have been inserted, and to the latter, so that they can better understand their closest collaborators. This is why this book will be published in English: to present to the English-speaking world a seemingly unknown aspect of the nun's work that has best portrayed the vicissitudes of the Mexican soul. This book only presents a small exploration of the monumental continent of research that Sor Juana merits, one which is underdeveloped and that has been neglected by an infinity of specialists and others thinkers interested in the nun. This line of approach is hardly glamorous, for it presents the theological waters from which Sor Juana drank through her Jesuit contemporaries. The reasons why this approach seems viable have barely been sketched, but the journey itself unmistakably reveals the dialectics of the Mexican soul.

This book intends to give a single face to Sor Juana, despite the multiplicity of the chapters it includes. I will focus on three of her works: the poem *Primero Sueño* (*First*

Dream), which the reader will find in each of the book's sections, the *Carta Atenagórica* (*Athenagoric Letter*) and the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* (*Response to Filotea de la Cruz*). These are her two treaties on the topic of freedom. The reader may choose to read each chapter separately, according to its topic; each of the texts are autonomous, and contain something about the context and content of each of the three works analysed. In addition, this book provides tools for understanding a topic as complicated as the connection between theology, science, poetry, and politics: while Sor Juana was a voracious reader and explored each of these thematic areas, she did so obliquely: she expressed herself and presented her arguments through the poetry she wrote upon request. Near the end of her life she wrote *Primero Sueño,* just after the conflict with religious authorities, a fact some have said lead indirectly to her death. During the same time period, she also wrote the two famous letters, which will be analyzed here. *Primero Sueño* was the only poem Sor Juana wrote for her own pleasure, and it contains, in encoded form, her philosophical legacy.

This book on Mexican philosophy traces the theory of freedom in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. As in the great Greek myths and tragedies, Sor Juana found herself more and more distanced from freedom as she ardently sought it.

The book first investigates the educational context that constituted her philosophical thought, with attention paid to the then-dominant Baroque style and to her life in her convent. Regarding her philosophical formation, the book's second point of focus is the relationship between Sor Juana and the so-called "Baroque School", which blossomed in the 16th and 17th centuries at the Portuguese universities of Coimbra and Evora. The thesis presented is that Sor Juana is indebted to the thought of Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina, Jesuit philosophers who in 16th-century Spain proposed an alternative model of nationhood that contrasted with the political philosophies that arose in Europe after the Reformation of Martin Luther. In these thinkers, the topic of freedom stands out. Sor Juana developed her own theory, participating in a theological disputation through the *Carta Atenagórica*, with a biographical response in the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* and with a philosophical poem that was the great culmination to her thought: *Primero Sueño,* where she gives voice to the vicissitudes of free intelligence. At this point, the reader might as well expect a literary analysis of Sor Juana's poetry, but instead encounters a prolegomenon for understanding the contents of that poetry: as a Catholic Criollo and nun of the Hieronymite religious order, as a woman who lived at the viceroy's court and who later spent the better part of her life in the cloister of the convent, Sor Juana has to be approached through Theology, and only later can one then analyse her literary production. This book traces the theological principles that inform her poetry, on the basis of the context that constitutes it.

The three chapters of the book trace the evolution of certain formative philosophical ideas in Sor Juana. The last section reveals the identity that she achieves with her proposal of freedom, in the poem that was the culmination of her life, *Primero Sueño*, where she was able to fully fuse philosophy and poetry. This book begins by proposing that there has been, in Mexico, a permanent guiding thread that allows philosophizing on the basis of a poetic rationality, a thread that will reveal Sor Juana is not just a poet but is also a philosopher. This initial chapter is entitled "Sor Juana, from childhood to philosophy". In turn, the last chapter of the book demonstrates that hypothesis: there has been a permanent guiding thread in Mexico for doing philosophy in an original way. That particular contribution Sor Juana's, and it consists of the formulations arguments from the point of view of aesthetics.

I would like to thank Dr. Jorge Morán of the School of Philosophy at the Universidad Panamericana of Mexico, my *alma mater,* for having motivated me to begin my journey through Novohispanic philosophy by way of studying Sor Juana, and I thank Rocio Mier y Terán for having inspired me to continue my philosophical journey by studying Mexican thought. Most importantly, I am grateful to my students at Universidad Panamericana of Mexico, specially to Karla Aguilar and Montserrat Fernández. Also I am grateful for the kind collaboration of María del Carmen and Carolina Garcés, who made a in-depth revision of the text and to Mario Murgia, who helped shape the translation made by Erik Norvelle and the english versions of the quoted poems . Finally, this research project was completed thanks to a stay at the University of Columbia in New York. In the Philosophy Department of their Teachers College they opened the doors for me to present the Novohispanic thought of authors such as Bartolomé de las Casas, Bernardino de Sahagún, Alonso de la Veracruz, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Through the LAPES journal for students, I was able to present the penultimate chapter of my book entitled "Educación Femenina en Nueva España" ("Feminine Education in New Spain"); this chapter began as a presentation for students interested in topics in the philosophy of education in Latin America. I would like to thank Ana Cecilia Galindo, a doctoral student at the Teachers College in Columbia University, for her enthusiasm and skill at gaining the participation of professors from Mexican universities. I especially would like to thank Regina Cortina, David Hansen, and Megan Laverty for their hospitality and for the opportunity they gave me to finish this book at Columbia. The financing for my research stay at the University of Columbia was thanks to the School of Philosophy at the Universidad Panamericana and CONACYT, of which I am a member. I am grateful to all of you.

Chapter I

Juana De Asbaje: A few Previously Ignored Antecedents to her Philosophical Work

Emotional Intelligence: A Guiding Thread in Mexican Thought, from Flor y Canto and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to José Vasconcelos

Philosophy seeks out the underlying principles of reality, and a true philosopher struggles to go beyond mere knowledge of currents of thought that happen to be in vogue, going beyond an academic's understanding of the thought of some distant thinker, however important their influence might be. Philosophical knowledge is so radical that it demands deep immersion, a journey beyond the common understanding of a problem. This is how I propose to do philosophy—by tracing the underlying foundations that have sustained Mexican philosophical thought over the centuries. Is there something in common among its doctrines, a transversal guiding thread through the complex weaving of *Mexican* philosophical reflection?

I will begin my study by defining the periods into which this Mexican way of philosophizing can be divided. Throughout the history of Mexican philosophy there has been a consistent approach to the principles of reality and reflection on human truths. Pre-Columbian Mexicans developed a unique form of philosophy, expressed through categories that connect to some of the most relevant thinkers of other eras in our history. If the discovery of America involved an encounter with what was utterly new, what does its absolute novelty mean for astrology, ethnology, geography, history and theology? Will it not imply philosophy is dealing with something entirely new? Recent studies have demonstrated the philosophical importance the conquest of America had for Europe, as well as the importance of Spain's dominion over the native peoples and their evangelization. The teachings of the 16th century School of Salamanca on the rights of conquered peoples have been recognized as important precursors to later thought on human rights. It made the topic of the "other" relevant by defending the full humanity of the indigenous peoples and their corresponding rights. The contributions of Novohispanic friars are widely recognized in the areas of the philosophy of law and society, in particular the work of Bartolomé de las Casas, who developed a libertarian

philosophy of great value. But nothing has been said about the manner in which Latin American philosophical thought developed its own identity. The issue of the contributions of Latin American philosophy has been discussed by authors like David Brading in England and by Lewis Hanke and Edmundo O'Gorman in the Americas, in addition to Mexican thinkers like Enrique Dussel and Mauricio Beuchot. However, nothing has been written regarding the unique manner in which Mexican philosophy found its own space in time. In this introductory chapter I will show readers how Latin American philosophy has come to be characterized by certain persistent traits. I am not claiming that the various ways of practicing philosophy in Mexico all share these traits; rather, I will merely point to a guiding thread that has been a constant throughout the history of our country.

The *Flor y Canto* Wisdom

I will begin my discussion with the ancient Mexicans. They protected their wisdom in *The Black and Red Ink*, a book about Náhua culture preserved by the *Tlamatinime*.[1] This cultural period begins in the 14th century CE. It was a culture that extended its reach beyond the territory of the Aztec Empire, and survived until the discovery of America in 1492. It was further developed in the 16th and 17th centuries by those who preserved the *word*[2] in codices and paintings. It was the fruitful work of Franciscan friars like Bernardino de Sahagún[3] that preserved Nahua culture and history through their writings, paintings and the *Huehuetlatolli* (*Sayings of the Elders*).[4]

Mexican philosophy continued during a second period, the so-called Novohispanic Era, which stretches from the discovery of America and the 16th century through to the final years of the 18th century. This era can be divided into two stages: 1) the political thought of the 16th century and 2) the period of *Criollo* philosophy, which self-identified as Mexican, and which remained a living philosophical tradition over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries. Sor Juana was one of the most famous and sofisticated thinkers in this period, sharing the stage with Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, another great *Criollo* intellectual of the 17th century. Finally, there is the philosophical thought developed in Mexico, beginning with the Independence in the early years of the 19th century and continuing through to the Mexican Revolution. It is believed to include contemporary Mexican thinkers.

From each one of these great periods or blocks of Mexican history I have chosen the most representative thinker, in order to see if their thought possesses some guiding thread in common that warrants clarifying the character of Mexican philosophy as such. This chapter takes us on a journey through the history of Mexican philosophy

by investigating whether there is some topic or way of philosophizing common to the Náhuatl wisdom of the *Tlamatinime*, the *Criollo* poetic philosophy of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and the organic philosophical system of Vasconcelos. I make the case that all three share poetic-philosophical elements that should be taken into account. This topic has stirred up interest among contemporary scholars. For example, in the book *Las aporías fundamentales del periodo novohispano*[5] (*The Fundamental Aporias of the Novohispanic Period*) I presented the hypothesis; my next step will be providing textual coincidences in the works of the aforementioned major philosophers I have.

The texts of pre-Conquest Mexico have been preserved thanks to the work of Bernardino de Sahagún, Durán, Ixtlixóchitl, Mendieta, and Torquemada,[6] among others. These friars attempted to preserve the codices and collected wisdom of the Nahuas, but the latter's culture lacked a writing system like that of the Europeans. Rather, they employed the ideographic writing of an iconic or figurative type, a peculiar writing system that represented its objects by alternating between paintings, points, and glyphs. They also possessed an oral tradition, which involved extensive memorization by the *tlamatinime* or philosophers in order to preserve their wisdom from robbery or misplacement. This triple combination meant painting alone was insufficient for thoroughly understanding a text; there was also a necessity to decipher its points and glyphs and employ the oral tradition. Nahuatl wisdom would have remained a closed book if its deciphering had not involved the collaboration of those Nahua elders who, invited by Sahagún to the College of Tlatelolco, shared their ancient wisdom or *Huehuetlatolli.* It was through this methodology that Sahagún was able to put the Nahuatl language into writing,[7] and in turn it is by means of these translated works that we have access to the metaphysical and theological ideas of the Nahuas. Those elderly wise men explained to the friars that they knew "the Lord of what is close and what is near, that [being] to which we owe the existence of the heavens and the earth."[8]

You said
that we do not know
the Lord of what is close and what is near,
that one to whom the heavens and the earth
belong.
You said that our gods were not true.

This is a new word,
that which you speak, we are perturbed by it,
we are bothered by it.
Because our progenitors,
those who have been,
those that have lived on the earth,
did not speak thusly.

[Vosotros dijisteis
que nosotros no conocemos
al Señor del cerca y del junto,
a aquél de quien son los cielos y la tierra.
Dijisteis/ que no eran verdaderos nuestros
dioses.

Nueva palabra es ésta,
la que habláis/, por ella estamos perturbados,
por ella estamos molestos.
Porque nuestros progenitores,
los que han sido,
los que han vivido sobre la tierra,
no solían hablar así.

They gave us
their rules of life,
they believed they were true,
they worshiped them,
they honored their gods.[9]

Ellos nos dieron
sus normas de vida,
ellos tenían por verdaderos,
daban culto,
honraban a sus dioses.][10]

They are profoundly conscious of the afterlife, and have reflected on the value of their tradition—what their elders taught them. They defend their own culture, as they did in their dialog with the Spaniards, by saying they are distraught because the Europeans believed that Nahuatl culture could not have authentic beliefs. They speak in the same way of their ethics and moral philosophy, with its uses and customs, in addition to reflecting on the fleetingness of life, as when Netzahualcoyotl asks in a philosophical poem:

Is it true that one can live above the earth?
Not forever on the earth:
just a little time here:
even if it is jade it breaks,
even if it is gold it breaks,
even if it is quetzal plumage it comes apart,
we are not on the earth forever,
just a little while.

[¿Es verdad que se vive sobre la tierra?
No para siempre en la tierra:
solo un poco aquí,
aunque sea jade se quiebra,
aunque sea oro se rompe,
aunque sea plumaje de Quetzal se desgarra,
no para siempre en la tierra:
sólo un poco aquí.]

More important perhaps are the ethical poems, where the work of the *Tlacuilo* is shown to be analogous with the formation of human virtue:

The good painter
The Toltec (artist) of the black and red ink,
Creating things with black water
The good painter: it is understood
that God is in his heart.
He divinizes things with his heart,
he dialogs with his own heart.
He knows the colors, applies them,
applies shades.
He paints the feet, the houses,
sketches the shadows, achieves a perfect finish.
As if he were a Toltec,
he paints the colors of all the flowers.

[El buen pintor
Tolteca (artista) de la tinta negra y roja,
creador de cosas con el agua negra
El buen pintor: entendido,
Dios en su corazón,
que diviniza con su corazón a las cosas,
dialoga con su propio corazón.
Conoce los colores, los aplica, sombrea.
Dibuja los pies, las casas,
traza las sombras, logra un perfecto acabado.
Como si fuera un Tolteca,
pinta los colores de todas las flores.]

This poem about the good painter is linked to the following:

He who gives being to clay,
possesses a sharp eye, molds,
kneads the clay.

The good potter
puts style in everything,
teaches the clay to tell lies,
he dialogues with his own heart.

[El que da un ser al barro,
de mirada aguda, moldea,
amasa el barro.

El buen alfarero
pone esmero en las cosas,
enseña al barro a mentir,
dialoga con su propio corazón.]

This philosophy, called *Flor y Canto* (Flower and Song), sought to make the human being into "a face and a heart;" that is, to unify and integrally shape the inner person together with his bodiliness. The maxim "a healthy mind in a sound body" was written over the entrance to the *Academy* of the Greek philosopher Plato. The Nahuas too believed in this inclusiveness, albeit in a deeper way, since they sought full identity between the heart and the human sentiments that had to be united to the expressions of the face. This philosophical rationality is poetic and develops via appropriate emotions and affectivity.

Note that references here to Nahuatl culture do not concern the Aztec theory of war formulated by Tlacaelel, councilor of the Aztec king Itzcoatl around 1427, and was later a councilor of Montecuhzoma and Axayácatl.

Tlacaelel modified the version of history held by his people and placed their former tutelary numen Huitzilopochtli at the highest level of the religious pantheon, with the idea of building a great temple in his honor. He dealt out lands and titles, reorganized the army and the *pochtecas* (merchants) and consolidated the so-called Triple Alliance with the lord of Texcoco and the kingdom of what we now call Tacuba—*pelele*, an oppressed people subject to the will of another, which was substituted for the old Azcapotzalco. In addition, he initiated a series of conquests that would bring the Aztecs to Chiapas and Guatemala.[11]

As the Ramírez Codex and the indigenous historian Chimalpain relate, the monarchs did everything Tlacaelel suggested. It was through his intervention that the Aztec Empire was consolidated, albeit at the price of wars and blood in the veneration of the God of war: Huitzilopochtli. Tlacaelel increased the number of human sacrifices and organized the Flower Wars with the nearby kingdoms, which also shared the Nahuatl language and culture, *i.e.*, the cities of Tlaxcala and Huexotzingo.

In Mexico, Tlacaelel gave a mission of war to Tenochtitlan, a mystical mission that would teach everyone that it was the city chosen by the sun, Huitzilopochtli. In the meantime, the residents of the neighboring cities led a peaceful life with their wise men and poets following the doctrine of the ancient codices they had rescued from the

destruction imposed by Tlacaelel. These cities had preserved the sayings and traditions inherited from the Toltecs. The kingdoms of Tlaxcala and Huexotzingo—enemies of Tlacaelel located outside of the Valley of Mexico—blossomed splendidly. In around 1490, their monarch Tacayehuatzin organized a dialog with poets and wise men, where the *tlamatinime* were brought together in order to discuss the origin and nature of poetry. Huexotzingo, on the other hand, was known as the home of music and illustrated books—it ws dubbed the Place of Butterflies. In the Mexican songs translated from Nahuatl by Angel María Garibay, Huexotzingo is compared with flowers:

As though they were flowers,
there the mantels of quetzal were unfurled
in the house of paintings.
This is how they are venerated on the earth and on the mountain,
this is how the one God is venerated.
Like flowery and igneous darts
your precious houses are lifted up.
My golden house of paintings,
is also your house, oh one God.

[Como si fueran flores,
allí se despliegan los mantos de quetzal
en la casa de las pinturas.
Así se venera en la tierra y el monte,
así se venera al único dios.
Como dardos floridos e ígneos
se levantan tus casas preciosas.
Mi casa/ dorada de las pinturas,
también es tu casa, único dios.]

But most of all, it was the elders of Texcoco who articulated the wisdom that united a face and a heart in a Nahuatl *paideia*. Two great kings embodied this emotional intelligence: Nezahualcoyotl, who ruled from 1418 to 1472, and Nezahualpilli, son of Nezahualcoyotl, who ruled from 1472 to 1516. Despite being in a political alliance with the Aztecs, the Texcocans never approved of their use of violence. Instead, the Texcocans studied their paintings and rejected the God of war. They later built a great temple to an unknown God instead. In addition, they were lovers of nature:

May the earth remain!
May the mountains stay on their feet!
Thus said
Ayocuan Cuetzpaltzin
In Tlaxcala in Huexotzingo
May the earth remain
May the mountains stay on their feet
May the maize flower be shared
May the cocoa flower be shared
May the earth remain!

¡[Que permanezca la tierra!
¡Que estén de pie los montes!
Así decía
Ayocuan Cuetzpaltzin
En Tlaxcala en Huexotzingo
Que permanezca la tierra
Que estén de pie los montes
Que se reparta la flor de maíz
Que se reparta la flor de cacao
¡Que permanezca la tierra!]

Moreover, they had their own image of what it meant to be a sage:

The wise man: a light, a torch,
a thick torch that does not smoke.
A perforated mirror,
a mirror with holes on both sides
to it belong the black and red ink,
to him belong the codices, to him belong the codices.
He himself is writing and wisdom.
He is the path, a true guide for others.
He leads people and things,
he is the guide for human activity.
The true sage is careful
(like a doctor) and keeps the tradition.
To him belongs the transmitted wisdom, he is the one who teaches, he follows the truth,
he never ceases to admonish.
He makes the faces of others wise,
he makes the other take a face
[a personality]
he makes them develop it.
he opens their ears, illuminates them.
He is the greatest of guides,
he gives them their road,
it depends on him.
He puts a mirror before the others,
he makes them sane, careful;
he makes them take on a face
[a personality].
He fixes his eye on things,
regulates their path,
he prepares and he creates order.
He applies his light over the world.
He knows what is above us
[and], the region of the dead.
[He is a serious man].
He can comfort anybody, correct anybody, teach anybody.
Thanks to him the people humanize their desires and receive a strict teaching.
He comforts the heart, comforts the people, helps them, mends, cures all.[12]

[El sabio: una luz, una tea,
una gruesa tea que no ahúma.
Un espejo horadado,
un espejo agujereado por ambos lados
suya es la tinta negra y roja,
de él son los códices, de él son los códices.
Él mismo es escritura y sabiduría.
Es camino, guía veraz para otros.
Conduce a las personas y a las cosas,
es guía de los negocios humanos.
El sabio verdadero es cuidadoso (como un médico) y guarda la tradición.
Suya es la sabiduría transmitida, él es quien la enseña, sigue la verdad
no deja de amonestar.
Hace sabios los rostros ajenos,
hace a los otros tomar una cara
(una personalidad)
los hace desarrollarla.
les abre los oídos, los ilumina.
Es maestro de guías,
les da su camino,
de él depende.
Pone un espejo delante de los otros,
los hace cuerdos, cuidadosos;
hace que en ellos aparezca una cara
(una personalidad).
Se fija en las cosas,
regula su camino,
dispone y ordena.
Aplica su luz sobre el mundo.
Conoce lo (que está) sobre nosotros
(y), la región de los muertos.
(Es hombre serio).
Cualquiera es confortado por él, es corregido, es enseñado.
Gracias a él la gente humaniza su querer
y recibe una estricta enseñanza. Conforta el corazón, conforta a la gente, ayuda,
remedia, a todos cura.]

Through this poem we get to know the Texcocans' vision of a wise man. It integrates intelligence with the senses and connects affectivity with thought and bodily expression. In the Nahuatl culture, emotions are the arrow tip of humanism, of the process of humanization. It is not just a matter of gaining character, for this character must also be consistent with intelligence. This *makes people sane*, while keeping them in touch with their bodiliness *until a face appears in them.* The wise man's task is educational: *he holds up a mirror to others.* He neither imposes nor follows pre-established ideas: rather, the wise man is essentially a facilitator, a *tlamatini*, someone who helps others to set down roots. Far from proposing a theory or rational speculation, the *tlamatinimi* held that the way to speak truth on earth is by *Flor y Canto –in xochitl in cuicatl–*a poetic formulation of wisdom. Did they mean wisdom is only found in poems? For the *tlamatinime*, poetry was not a technique but simply the best way to disseminate truth, which has to be expressed in an inclusive, integral way in order to avoid dividing reality into pieces, which will not lead to the path of the wise man. They believed that natural reality is distorted if it is conceived of as being isolated, and human reality is perverted when it serves isolated interests. According to their criteria, a person will never attain wisdom through reason alone, through passion alone, or through a separation from their bodies.

It is Alfredo López Austin[13] who has provided us with all the details of the discourses and ceremonies used in the offering and acceptance of children at the *Telpochcalli* and the *Calmecac*,[14] together with educational discourses for nobles and *macehuales*. This Náhuatl wisdom is known to us thanks to the so-called *Florentine Codex* of Bernardino de Sahagún, also called the *General History of the Things of New Spain*. On the basis of the information provided by the *tamatinimi nahuatlatas*, Sahagún describes each stage in the development of a native boy, from his birth to fifteen years of age, when he begins military training. Thanks to this chronicle we know there are numerous aspects to pre-Columbian education, from instructions on eating and the rules of hygiene and the arts, to the piety and penitence the children had to go through at each stage of their training. What is most interesting about this text is that it also includes instructions on how to speak, key phrases to be used on every occasion, descriptions of gestures that must be made, clothes that must be worn, and ways to paint one's face in order to attain courage in a war, as well as the exclamations of joy needed to celebrate good outcomes. In this educational rhetoric, there was an emphasis on the use of persuasion and moral philosophy. For the elders, movement, clothing and music were just as important as ideas, thoughts and activities. Rites, symbols and metaphors were forms of language, expressions integrated with a deeper reality, a reality neither hidden nor separated—it is a kind of reality that dwells, rather, at the root of things, as what is most radical in the realities in question.

The Nahua vision of ethical and social reality is revealed clearlyty in the famous confrontation between Franciscans and indigenous wise men recorded by Sahagún: the *Huehuetlatolli*.[15] We have the collision of two forms of rationality: the Western-Spanish way, which mixed a medieval mentality with a technical and conceptual capacity characteristic of the Renaissance, whereas Mexicans have a poetic rationality, their mentalities permeated by mythical knowledge and a metaphoric discourse. The collision between these two forms of rationality gave rise to mutual incomprehension between the two parties. These were two contrasting ways of understanding reality, two ways of confronting it.

The Importance of Novohispanic Philosophy

The years following the Conquest were a time when much of this wisdom was lost, with valuable codices being burned and with philosophy in New Spain taken over by Medieval European teachings. In the latter part of the 17th century, however, after the religious orders had long taught scholastic-medieval philosophy in the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico and in their own schools, a new identity for Mexican philosophy appeared in the guise of a woman. She was a Hieronymite nun, *Criollo* by birth, precocious from infancy. She had lived in the viceregal court, and had been examined by a group of chair professors at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. After the examination, she emerged triumphant. Her name was Juana Inés de la Cruz. Every Mexican knows a few of her lines:

Stupid men who accuse
the woman without justification,
without seeing that you are the occasion
of what you blame on her.[16]

Hombres necios que acusáis
a la mujer sin razón,
sin ver que sois la ocasión
de lo mismo que culpáis.

Sor Juana writes her lines in the Baroque style of the time, which uses contrasts and counterpoints (love, hate, wanting, rejecting) in writing, just as chiaroscuro is utilized in painting.

These lines, my dearest reader
dedicated to your delight,
have but one virtue in them,
that I know how imperfect they are.[17]

[Estos versos, lector mío
que a tu deleite consagro,
y que solo tienen de mío
saber yo que son malos.]

Or, as when she speaks philosophically and amorously:

Let us pretend I am happy,
melancholic thought, for a while;
perhaps you can persuade me, though
I know the contrary is true.

For since on mere apprehension
they say all suffering depends,
if you imagine good fortune,
you will not be so downcast.[18]

[Finjamos que soy feliz,
triste pensamiento, un rato;
quizá podréis persuadirme,
aunque yo sé lo contrario.

Qué pues sólo en la aprehensión
dicen que estriban los daños,
si os imagináis dichoso
no seréis tan desdichado.][19]

Here, in these lines, the protagonist is the thought that arises when her confessor[20] reprimands her for spending time philosophizing instead of obeying and praying—activities more appropriate for a nun. She tells her thought to pretend to be happy when she receives the prohibition:[21]

Let my understanding at times
allow me to rest a while,
and let my wits not always be
opposed to my own benefit.[22]

[Sírvame el entendimiento
alguna vez de descanso,
y no siempre esté el ingenio
con el provecho encontrado.][23]

In this poem, Sor Juana insists that creating poetry for pleasure does no harm to anyone, an opinion the bishop of Puebla did not share.[24] Sor Juana defended the existence of variety in opinions and rejected ideological imposition in the realm of human knowledge:

All people have opinions and
judgments so multitudinous
that when one states that this is black
the other proves it is white.

Some find attractive precisely
what others deem an annoyance;
an alleviation for one
is bothersome for another.

One who is sad criticizes
the happy man as frivolous
and one who is happy derides
the sad man and his suffering.

The two philosophers of Greece
offered perfect proofs of this truth
for what caused laughter in one man
occasioned tears in the other.[25]

[Todo el mundo es opiniones
de pareceres tan varios,
que lo que el uno que es negro
el otro prueba que es blanco.

A unos sirve de atractivo
lo que otro concibe enfado;
y lo que éste por alivio,
aquél tiene por trabajo.

El que está triste, censura
al alegre de liviano;
y el que esta alegre se burla
de ver al triste penando.

Los dos filósofos griegos
bien ésta verdad probaron:
pues lo que en el uno risa,
causaba en el otro llanto.][26]

The philosophical poem *Primero Sueño* was the apex of her production—it is a poem of 975 lines, which even herself said was the only work she had created freely and not at the behest of another. In *Primero Sueño,* Sor Juana recounts her journey of knowledge, a journey of the intellect or reason, and she speaks of how at first she rises proudly, with the goal of knowing all things at once.

Pyramidal, doleful, mournful shadow
born of the earth, the haughty confirmation
of vain obelisks thrust towards the Heavens,
attempting to ascend and touch the stars.[27]

[Piramidal, funesta, de la tierra
nacida sombra, al Cielo encaminaba
de vanos obeliscos punta altiva,
escalar pretendiendo las Estrellas.][28]

In her poem, Sor Juana considers that the claim of reason to grasp everything at once represents an impossible, arrogant goal. The figure of the pyramid represents the impetuous ascent of reason, while also representing the wisdom of the Egyptians as well as other interpretations and cultures. This is typical after the Renaissance, and is characteristic of 17th-century Hermetism. Sor Juana wrote her philosophical poem in a Hermetic mode, that is, via symbols, myths and allegories. This may have been a means of avoiding the Inquisition and speaking directly to a cultural elite, thus evading ecclesiastical authorities. In this intellectual journey, she proposes a noetic experience similar to that of mystics like St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Ávila. In her case, however, she was not pursuing a vision of the divine, but rather a philosophical vision of the world of reason. This kind of reason seeks to attain full wisdom but, halfway through the poem, it realizes its goal is impossible to achieve at one stroke, even though it had followed the key steps: being vigilant in using the body, thereby suspending the senses and the imagination.

At this near impenetrable pinnacle,
joyful but marveling,
marveling yet well content,
still, even though content, astonished, the
the supreme and sovereign Queen of all the earth
—free of the obstacle of spectacles,
the vision of her beautiful and
intellectual eyes,
unclouded by any fear of distance
or resistance of opaque obstructions,
cast her gaze across all creation,
this vast aggregate,

[En cuya casi elevación inmensa,
gozosa más suspensa,
suspensa pero ufana,
atónita aunque ufana, la suprema
de lo sublunar Reina soberana,

la vista perspicaz, libre de anteojos,
de sus intelectuales bellos ojos,
(sin que distancia tema
ni de obstáculo opaco se recele,
de que interpuesto algún objeto cele),
libre tendió por todo lo crïado:
cuyo inmenso agregado,

this enigmatic whole,
although to sight seeming to signal
possibility, denied
such clarity to comprehension
which, bewildered by such rich profusion
its powers vanquished by such majesty)
with cowardice, withdrew.[29]

cúmulo incomprehensible,
aunque a la vista quiso manifiesto
dar señas de posible,
a la comprehensión no, que—entorpecida
con la sobra de objetos, y excedida
de la grandeza de ellos su potencia–,
retrocedió cobarde.][30]

Thus, a repentant reason regresses in its attempt to see the light:

compelled to abnegate its daring
proposition, its immoderate
attempt to vaunt its strength
against the supreme creator of
irradiating beams.[31]

[Tanto no, del osado presupuesto,
revocó la intención, arrepentida,
la vista que intentó descomedida
en vano hacer alarde
contra objeto que excede en excelencia.][32]

Does this dream of reason reflect something of the nun's biography? Sor Juana was prohibited from going to the University because she was a woman, and was similarly banned from pursuing the things of men, such as the attempt to attain wisdom.

...castigating, blow after blow, both
that ancient, arrogant, once daring but
now lamented challenge,
(the demented experiment of
Icarus, who, for his audacity, drowned
in the sea of his own tears),
and, just as insistently, understanding
conquered no less by the immensity
of such a massive machine
a sphere of multifarious, conglobed
entities composed,
than by the properties
of each of them; and thus it acquiesced,
so awestruck that,
surrounded by such bounty, afloat upon
the neutrality of a sea of wonder;
and by observing everything, it saw nothing.[33]

despreciando, castigan rayo a rayo
el confïado, antes atrevido
y ya llorado ensayo,
(necia experiencia que costosa tanto
fue, que ícaro ya, su propio llanto
lo anegó enternecido)–, como el entendimiento,
aquí vencido
no menos de la inmensa muchedumbre
(de tanta maquinosa pesadumbre
de diversas especies, conglobado
esférico compuesto),
que de las cualidades
de cada cual, cedió; tan asombrado,
que– entre la copia puesto,
pobre con ella en las neutralidades
de un mar de asombros, la elección confusa–,
equivocó las ondas zozobraba;
y por mirarlo todo, nada vía].[34]

Instead of following reason in its arrogant search for sudden illumination, Sor Juana proposes in the second part of the poem a method or path whereby it can obtain knowledge gradually. She compares this effort with a boat on high seas, whose captain

struggles against storms until he discovers the proper sailing techniques that will enable the boat to enter a safe harbor. The poem ends with the rising of the sun—having begun at night (ceasing vision, breathing and imagination so that the unencumbered intelligence can rise up), but now the world is illuminated and she wakes up—thereby concluding her noetic experience.

Over the course of the poem, the various philosophical schools of the West are introduced: Plato's myth of the cave, Aristotle's theory of science, the Thomist problem of induction and deduction, Cartesian skepticism, and the methodological solution; all of them are gnoseological approaches, together with others propose a path for reason to pursue wisdom. However, with the method proposed by Sor Juana, what is interesting is that the search is formulated as a poem written in the first person— not as a treaty. Just like the philosophical poems of the ancient Mexicans she cites, her piece employs metaphors, myths, symbols, and allegories.

Primero Sueño is not the only philosophical text in Sor Juana's complete works. Little remains of the nun's prose works, but this does not make it less important. In *Carta Antenagórica* as well as in *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz,* she reveals she knows the philosophy of the Jesuit philosopher Suárez and the theology of the great theologian of her times, the Portuguese bishop Vieira. Possessing a knowledge that enabled her to cite the greatest intellectuals of her time in prose, Sor Juana decided to do her philosophizing in poetry on her own initiative. This was the reason the great Mexican humanist Alfonso Méndez Plancarte—who earned the right to become the editor of her complete works, in the edition published by Fondo de Cultura Económica—classified her poetry not just into romances, sonnets, *ovillejos,* and *silvas*, but also defined them as philosophical or erotic romances, philosophical satires, and historical-mythological sonnets, among other classifications.

In all of these categories, beginning with *Romance*, where there is a prologue from Sor Juana to the reader, we perceive that the nun's preferred format of doing philosophy was in verse. In the lines below she complains that she is not allowed to think freely, which is documented in her *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, where she disobeys the order of silence imposed on her. She replies with the following lines:

Nothing enjoys greater freedom
than the human understanding;
if God does not violate mind,
then why would I even try?[35]

[No hay cosa más libre
que el entendimiento humano;
pues lo que Dios no violenta,
por qué yo he de violentarlo?][36]

In her *Romances filosóficos y amorosos,*[37] Sor Juana criticizes the rationalist urge, which is a characteristic of decadent philosophizing:

A proof is found for everything
a reason on which to base it
and nothing has a good reason
since there is reason for so much.

All people are equal judges,
being both equal and varied
there is no one who can decide
which argument is true and right.
(…)
Discursive reason is a sword
quite effective at both ends
with the point of the blade it kills
the pommel on the hilt protects

If you, aware of the danger
wish to wield the point of the sword
how can the steel blade be to blame
for the evil acts of your hand?

Knowing how to create subtle,
specious reasons is not knowledge,
true knowledge consists only in
choosing salutary virtue.[38]

[Para todo se halla prueba
y razón en qué fundarlo;
y no hay razón para nada,
de haber razón para tanto.

Todos son iguales jueces;
y siendo iguales y varios,
no hay quien pueda decidir
cuál es lo más acertado.
(…)
El discurso es un acero
que sirve para ambos cabos:
de dar muerte, por la punta,
por el pomo, de resguardo.

Si vos, sabiendo el peligro
queréis por la punta usarlo,
¿qué culpa tiene el acero
del mal uso de la mano?

No es saber, saber hacer
discursos sutiles, vanos;
que el saber consiste sólo
en elegir lo más sano.][39]

Sor Juana became so dissatisfied with the vacuous speculations of arrogant reason that she wrote a canto to ignorance:

How blithesome is the ignorance
of one who, unlearned but wise,
deems his affliction, his nescience
all he does not know, as sacred!

The most daring flights of genius
do not always soar assured, when
they seek a throne in the fire
and fine a grave in copious tears.

For knowledge is also a vice:
if it is not constantly curbed
and if this is not acknowledged,
the greater the havoc it wreaks;

and if the flight is not brought down,
fed and fattened on subtleties
it will forget the essential
for the sake of the rare and the strange.[40]

[Qué feliz es la ignorancia
del que, indoctamente sabio,
halla de lo que padece,
en lo que ignora, sagrado!

No siempre suben seguros
vuelos del ingenio osados,
que buscan trono en el fuego
y hallan sepulcro en el llanto.

También es vicio el saber,
que si no se va atajando,
cuando menos se conoce
es más nocivo el estrago;

y si el vuelo no le abaten,
en sutilezas cebado,
por cuidar de lo curioso
olvida lo necesario.][41]

Instead of being arrogant and dogmatic, Sor Juana proposes a faculty of reason able to doubt and even be left speechless. For Sor Juana, wisdom is poetic because it is open to dialog, rather than be motivated by the raw desire to emerge as the winner of a debate. Her philosophy—just like Platonic philosophy—is expressed in a discourse that, by means of myth, goes beyond the predicamental level of truth and falsehood. It thus opens itself to a style that aporetically expresses the meaning and problems of reality. This is Plato's solution, as it is Sor Juana's, expressed in myths and poetry.

In addition, the poem integrates sound with metrics and words with metaphors and symbols in a structure that evokes the work of the ancient *tlamatinime*. In both cases, Sor Juana shows she is proposing a reason that is inclusive, since *Primero Sueño* is about the journey of reason and the vicissitudes it must undergo for not behaving in a manner that integrates diversity into unity.

The Guiding Thread flows into the 20th century with the Organic System of Vasconcelos

Now we will move on to the 20th century and the modern philosophical thinking of José Vasconcelos. Later on we will join together all the pieces of this puzzle and reveal the philosophical guiding thread encountered in all three of the Mexican philosophies analyzed. As José Gaos pointed out in 1950, Vasconcelos was the first Mexican philosopher to attain universal relevance. This is not because Sor Juana had not been published in Europe—even in her lifetime her works were published in Spain a number of times—but because she was known fundamentally as a poetess. It is only in recent years that people have understood that Sor Juana is also a noteworthy philosopher.[42]

Vasconcelos, however, pursues truth by developing a philosophical system that arises from what he calls an identity proper to Latin American philosophy. As Vasconcelos says, what is interesting about this identity is that it does not arise from the philosophy imposed by Church and Crown in the colonial era. Rather, Vasconcelos develops a harmonious synthesis out of the totality of all Latin American philosophies. His own system of thought is synthetic-emotional, that is, a system that ascends through distinct levels: the metaphysical, the ethical, and at the end, like a coronation, the aesthetic. Philosophy comes to its culmination with aesthetics. In his work *Estética* (*Aesthetics*), Vasconcelos proposes a revolution of knowledge inspired by Kant's Copernican revolution, as expressed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The Vasconcelian revolution consists of a *revulsion* of energy; following the scientific advances of his time, Vasconcelos extends physicalist theses about energy to the philosophical domain. Instead of saying the starting point of knowledge is the image, where what is

concrete in natural reality elevates itself by abstraction towards conceptual realities, philosophy must begin with the concrete and the emotional. Vasconcelos formulates the starting point of philosophy in his early work *Pitágoras, una teoría del ritmo* (*Pythagoras, a Theory of Rhythm*).[43] In this work he claims that philosophy can be understood in the light of Pythagoras' proposal, and that the problem was in the doubly bad interpretation of his thought by later thinkers. The first erroneous interpretation was the mystical path, which attributed an irrational knowledge to Pythagoras and ignored his philosophical aspects; the second held that for Pythagoras the first unity was number, as Philolaus and Aristotle assert. Vasconcelos gives a third possible interpretation, that of the musical Pythagoras who made rhythm into the first principle of things. He explains the origin of wrong interpretations:

The aesthetic interpretation of Pythagoreanism implies a radical change of criterion. Nearly the entire tradition sought to identify the concept of number with that of harmony, and ultimately with the notions of truth and the absolute. This links Pythagoras with Parmenides, and Pythagoreanism becomes a mechanics of the stable, a static mechanics...[44]

Vasconcelos declares the authentic spirit of Pythagoras was different: he proposed a musical conception of the universe. Rather than seeing things as physical entities subject to measurement, weight and a description of their relations and trajectories, they are described from the point of view of rhythm. This is a "rhythmic movement that in the end is indefinite movement,"[45] a position that in fact was closer to Heraclitus: "Pythagorean dynamism becomes mobile, like the life of the non-static spirit, in a word, aesthetic and not mechanical."[46]

For Vasconcelos, "Pythagoras sought to explain nature neither by the experience of the senses nor through intellectual postulates, but rather by the secret affinity existent between it and us, by the disposition that inclines us to choose, from among the multitude of external phenomena, those that coincide and are mixed with the intimate flow of our consciousness. We are told Pythagoras applied a criterion not merely intuitive, but also aesthetic: he practiced philosophy with the notion of music and beauty."[47] Vasconcelos begins with this idea taken from Pythagoreanism, an idea which, in his opinion, was first noted by the Seer of Crotone in the *Phaedo*. Before dying, Socrates expresses his ideal "to develop a philosophy that is musical, to discover the joint expression of beauty and truth." According to Vasconcelos, Pythagoras claimed the initial education of the human being should consist in music and in certain melodies and rhythms that act as a remedy for the passions and habits of the human soul. He claims the success of Pythagorean moral education was due, as Iamblichus described in his *Life of Pythagoras*: "[to] the mixtures of diatonic, chromatic and harmonic melodies, through which he easily succeeded in transforming the passions and orienting them in a circular manner, in better directions, when they had originally

developed in a clandestine and irrational way."[48] In Vasconcelos' view, this access to reality leads to formulating a *paideia*, that is, a philosophy that educates the student integrally: this is what he termed "musical." Vasconcelos proposes a process of natural, civic and ethical humanization, where rhythm is the axis. One allows oneself to be carried along—eliminating restrictions, prohibitions, moral codes and ideologies—but not in a way that promotes an anarchic, irrational expression of the passions. Rather, these passions need to be channeled, kept in tune with a rhythm that should determine their flow in the human being, as a part of the cosmos. Vasconcelos' philosophy recognizes a plurality of operant faculties in the human being, as being one with the cosmos (a point which communicates a clear ecological message by anticipating today's ecological emphasis on being one with nature, respecting it and recognizing that the human being is part of a greater whole, nature).

In his work *La Revulsión de la Energía* (*The Revulsion of Energy*), a prelude to his *Metaphysics*, Vasconcelos studies the cycles of force, change and existence, proposing that human wisdom is a new organ or faculty:

> *Reason and the senses do not explain the totality of existence—consciousness also possesses a faculty for extending one's attention beyond the zone of the physical, penetrating other levels of the world and of being, a penetrating attention that is either thought or intuition or a metaphysical gift. It is a new organ, perhaps of perception, perhaps of relation, with an existence that is different from our own, situated on planes that the senses will not be able to perceive.*[49]

What is Vasconcelos refering to? For him there are two modes of perception:

> *[...] one that is subliminal, that connects with the senses and gives us the laws and existence of the physical world, and another super-scientific perception that reveals a different universe alongside the ordinary processes of evolution. This is the universe of consciousness, neither chronological nor linear, which does not respond to the laws of physics. This universe possesses an energy and a force, a revulsion of energy that turns back on itself and ascends in a spiral.*[50]

Using the scientific terminology of his time, Vasconcelos establishes a metaphor to reveal the path of human growth, which at the level of consciousness is not transitive; rather, it turns back upon the same perceiving subject, thus perfecting it. "And for consciousness, liberating itself from the forms would be the same as overcoming limits, the same as penetrating into many universes at the same time, into all of those

universes that coexist with our daily life […]."[51] The discovery of his metaphysics is the discovery of existence and of other possible manners of being. Having attained the basis of existence, Vasconcelos now crowns his philosophical reflection with his last work, entitled *Estética* (*Aesthetics*).[52] In its prologue he states that "Mexican thinking, due to its Iberian roots, separates itself from Latin intellectualism and seeks to root itself in the facts […] our system is the deepest of all."

Vasconcelos proposes three main criteria that struggle for the attention of the thinker: deductive empirical science, deductive science, and the intuitive method, which sees the facts as linked for a purpose, as a well-ordered unity in their totality. He clarifies that this does not mean he does not use other mental forms; rather, in working with those other forms, it is artistic, religious, symbolic and poetic reason that is privileged. He explains this by opposing two binomials: dynamicist realism as opposed to idealist objectivism.[53]

Vasconcelos recognizes that intuitive knowledge is rational, but with an emotional principle. In his prologue to *Estética*, Vasconcelos pushed this knowledge too far towards the sacred and the religious. I believe this was what annoyed the Mexican academics of his day. During his lifetime he gained fame for his educational ideas and cultural relevance. However, he has never been read as a philosopher, nor have his philosophical works been subjected to serious analysis. He was misunderstood by the generation that came after him. Still, he merits optimism: perhaps the postmodern youth of the 21st century will be able to connect with his thought, provided they are able to get past his more impetuous affirmations. For him, "myth is valid in poetry, but not in science." He believes intellectual reason is "intellective-emotional, composed of sensation, the objective idea, impulse and reaction." Just as soon as intention appears, "knowledge is tinged with emotion. After acting, emotion discerns the intention, just as the intelligence discerns the forms of sensation. One always thinks with sense and meaning, and not in the abstract."[54]

As the reader can see, in Vasconcelos' view, emotional knowledge lies at the core of his philosophical theses. I believe he is correct about Mexican emotional intelligence, even without having performed research into the history of philosophical ideas. Vasconcelos' philosophical texts take up more than 3,000 pages, many of them quite complex, and in addition an analysis of his texts demands knowledge about the state of science in his day. Drenched in passion, his writings have given rise to prejudices among present-day Mexican academics, who are irritated by how he stumbles over his own words and his vehemence, or by the colloquial approach that his essays usually feature. To understand him, he must be appreciated from a place higher than his rhetoric. Vasconcelos has the merit of proposing a philosophical system for Latin America, based on a rationality that generates emotive syntheses out of what is heterogeneous.[55] A kind of analogy is at work in this faculty, which allows communication

between the subjects and the world via an intimate-qualitative order that he calls "aesthetic" (*estético*). This kind of reason is neither instrumental nor objectivizing. Harmony is based on knowledge as a whole, avoiding analysis and preferring the synthesis of diversity. Counterpoint is crucial to this way of seeing the world. For our philosopher, "writing for various simultaneous parts, according to certain rules, in order to produce harmony, is key."[56]

Here, our exploration of Vasconcelos' aesthetic theory can come to an end. We can see how his idea of *contrapunto* coincides with the analysis of Sor Juana I have just presented and with ancient Mexican thought. It is clear now there is a permanent Mexican approach to philosophy that includes an emotional faculty. In Sor Juana's case, speaking of the convergence of the Baroque, of *Criollismo* and of Catholic Counter-Reformation implies an analysis of problems that are inseparable. In the architecture of the great churches and convents of the era, in the sacred paintings that employ chiaroscuro and in the metaphors and learned language of poetry, counterpoint was the aesthetic resource which permitted the Baroque to blossom. Perhaps today we can find a deep answer to the question of why it was *Criollismo* that gave rise to a philosophical movement that sought the eventual emancipation of Latin America. Perhaps it was only in this era that the poetic conditions were appropriate for Mexicans to shape their own point of view.

This topic leads us to a philosophical reflection on the rationality of the Mexican soul: in his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle held that educating meant teaching the pupil to become sad because of what is due, and to be happy because of its opposite. This coincides with the educational and formational task Vasconcelos has in mind, since, just as with the Stagirite, his great educational project is fundamentally an emotional task. For the former, any moral revolution in Mexico must have a metaphysical base: "understanding the cosmos musically," that is, uniting the good and the true with beauty in order to obtain a radical kind of knowledge. Emotional intelligence consists of attaining a kind of knowledge that goes beyond differences and beyond every part of reality. Just as with musical scores, truth seen from the Vasconcelian aesthetic-philosophical dimension consists in penetrating into reality in a synthetic and intimate way, penetrating the global sound acquired by a measured and complete rhythm. Similarly, human knowledge is not found in the analysis of the parts of things—even though the approach the particular sciences employ is validly scientific—because to philosophize is to reach the deepest root, where differences are harmonized: philosophizing does not mean a sum of the truths of the various sciences, but rather a subjective penetration of reality.

The faculty or emotional organ Vasconcelos calls *antennal* is an intelligence which is able to contemplate things in their aesthetic-integral value, a focus proper to *unity in a rhythmic and metrical diversity*. Subject and reality are, from this perspective, insep-

arable. With this as our basis, it is possible to say Vasconcelos' proposal is ecological and moral in its highest sense. It is an aesthetic proposal that indicates the connection of the whole with the fragment and the connection of forms and figures with the ground that integrates them.

With this in mind, the investigative hypothesis I began the book with can be rounded off: for the ancient Mexicans of the Nahuatl culture, the most profound wisdom consists, as in the work of a craftsman, in forging a face and a heart. For Sor Juana, true wisdom consists of the formulation of contrasts and paradoxes. She therefore writes without scientific demonstrations in an aesthetic fashion—in her poems she works with symbols and metaphors, where the protagonist is a rationality that collapses when it seeks to know the entire universe in one fell swoop. In turn, the greatness of Vasconcelos was his formulation of a system of knowledge peculiar to Latin America, in order to penetrate philosophically into the deepest realities of the human being and of the cosmos. In this system, Vasconcelos proposes the principle of rhythm as the starting point through which the Mexican soul makes itself one with the other.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: from Childhood to Philosophy

Juana de Asbaje was born in San Miguel Nepantla in 1651. When she was only forty-four years old, a deadly epidemic took her life while living in Mexico City. Ever since she was young, she had the desire to study philosophy and theology at the University of Mexico; sadly, she never saw that dream fulfilled, for women were not permitted in the universities. This situation forced Sor Juana to become an autodidact, a virtue few people can acquire. She learned to read Latin at a very young age due to her desire for knowledge and her dedication to read and study. Her Latin skills meant that even as a child she was able to access numerous texts other women could not. Her childhood readings bore fruit when, at seventeen, she demonstrated her erudition in the presence of the professors at the Royal and Pontifical University, in a ceremony convened by viceroy Mancera.[57]

In 1669, she professed as a novice in the Hieronymite convent in Mexico City, where she put together a library containing many volumes—some say that she amassed a collection of four thousand before her death.[58] In her prose work *Carta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*,[59] Sor Juana tells of the passion for wisdom that characterized her entire life, even as a religious sister. In this letter, she reveals she was three years old when she learned to read. To fulfill her dream of attending the University, at age seven she pleaded with her mother to let her dress as a man. In order to live alone and devote herself to studying, she decided at the age of 19 to join a convent as a nun. It was there that she found space for "reading, reading and more reading, without any other teacher than the books themselves."

In the drama *Los Empeños de una Casa* (*The Trials of a Noble House*) the nun painted herself into the story that Ms. Leonor composed:

Such was my eagerness to learn
from my earliest inclination,
that studying far into the night
and with most eager application
I accomplished in a briefer span
the weary toil of long endeavor.[60]

[Inclíneme a los estudios
desde los primeros años
con tan ardientes desvelos
con tan ansiosos cuidados
que reduje a tiempo breve
fatigas de mucho espacio.][61]

It has been demonstrated that Sor Juana maintained, from her convent, a fecund academic relationship with another great Novohispanic philosopher of the 17th century, Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, with whom she exchanged books of philosophy and science.[62] She was familiar with the latest developments of science in her era, although this was not where her heart lay.[63] Instead, she worked to acquire a tremendous knowledge of Thomist philosophy[64] that characterized every philosopher of her time.

Octavio Paz, Nobel awardee in Literature, has shown in his work *Sor Juana o Las Trampas de la Fe* (*Sor Juana, or the Traps of Faith*) –a work catalogued by philosopher Ramón Xirau as "the most original book ever written on Sor Juana"[65]– that the nun had extensive knowledge on Hermetism and Renaissance Humanism, like Atanasio Kircher or Pico de la Mirandola. Xirau, together with other present-day philosophers, has demonstrated that Sor Juana had extensive knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy. This knowledge was not merely theoretical, for the nun put it to work in some of her poems, and especially in her *Carta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*.[66] Paz remarks that Kircher's Hermetism traces its roots to the Renaissance. He includes texts from the Stagirite because of the Peripatetic philosophy the nun professed. Irving Leonard has revealed another trustworthy channel for Aristotle's influence on Sor Juana,[67] with his theory of the Novohispanic 17th century as a neo-medieval world.

The Philosophy of Aristotle in Sor Juana[68]

Based on her own texts and the interpretations of others, it can be safely said that Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz knew the philosophy of Aristotle. The Stagirite's influence on the nun has two dimensions: one direct and the other indirect. In the first dimension, of direct influence, we can safely state that she knew Aristotle from her own readings. The second dimension reveals she also encountered the Philosopher via the Peripateticism of humanists like Las Casas, Thomists like Vitoria, and Hermeticists like Kircher.

Sor Juana's direct knowledge of the philosophy of Aristotle can be demonstrated by the presence in her works—especially in the philosophical poem *Primero Sueño*—of issues such as the categories,[69] substance and accident,[70] the speculative syllogism and the scientific demonstration,[71] being and essence,[72] the topic of induction and deduction,[73] and hylemorphism.[74] Other indicators of direct knowledge are a vast Aristotelian cosmology[75] and the influence of the *De Anima*,[76] among other works.[77]

Both Don Alfonso Méndez Plancarte[78] and Mauricio Beuchot have written on various indirect influences on the nun.[79] In Sor Juana's texts the two have noted, for instance, the presence of Thomist theses influenced by Aristotle. The topics that ap-

pear in her works include the causes, the teleology of the living being, the differences between natural and artificial form, the intrinsic union of soul and body, the logical and ontological point of view on substance, and the issue of the accidents.

From poetry to philosophy and back again

Primero Sueño, Sor Juana's most famous poem is a philosophical one—it is a poem only considered to be aesthetic in a secondary sense. To prove this, we must first assume that there is no formal or conceptual correspondence between Sor Juana's works and the contents of the poem *Soledades* (*Solitudes*) by the Spaniard Luis de Góngora, although they are contemporaries. In the frontispiece to her philosophical poem, the nun dubs it as follows: "First Dream, which Madre Juana Inés de la Cruz entitled and composed in imitation of Góngora," but this is just a recognition of the Baroque style of both poems, an indisputable point in view of their meter, vocabulary and the use of hyperbaton. In contrast, the topics she touches on and her use of concepts and metaphors, are not borrowed.

> Pyramidal, doleful, mournful shadow
> born of the earth, the haughty confirmation
> of vain obelisks thrust towards the Heavens,
> attempting to ascend and touch the stars.[80]

> [Piramidal, funesta de la tierra
> Nacida sombra, al Cielo encaminaba
> De vanos obeslicos punta altiva,
> escalar pretendiendo las Estrellas.] [81]

That is why Karl Vossler, a German philosopher and a specialist in this poem, has shown that "externally, *Primero Sueño* appears to be an updated version of the *Solitudes*. But at its deepest level, one might say that this is a case of the urgency of scientific research."[82] For Sor Juana, intellect arises and searches for a supreme light, knowledge at its peak, whereas Quevedo and Góngora describe the beauty of the apparent movement of the sun through the mountains. Sor Juana, in contrast, describes the journey of reason.

Sor Juana's philosophical poem is clearly an abstract and conceptual text that speaks of the journey of the soul, "the adventure of the spirit" in the words of Ramón Xirau:[83] "Sor Juana suggests, even states outright, that we can come to a relative knowledge of the universe via Aristotelian categories."[84] Additionally, *Primero Sueño* must not be classified as the story of a mystical experience, like the poetry of St. John of the Cross. The subject of *Primero Sueño* is reason, while mystical poetry uses metaphor to express something ineffable: the presence of divinity. In the nun's text she explores the noetic sense of reason. The topic is the Aristotelian *intellect agent* and the experience of human understanding that comes when one realizes pure intuition

is not sufficient for knowledge. By this, Sor Juana means that intellect must proceed deductively in order to attain the supreme *prâxis*: contemplation.

The itinerary of the rational part of the soul reveals an almost unintelligible circularity –unintelligible because its principles are rooted in a preconceived knowledge– that can only be fully communicated through poetic categories, despite the fact that the concepts themselves are highly logical and abstract. So, when the soul is dealt with, she treats it as being sovereign:

The soul, therefore, suspense	El alma, pues, suspensa
of the exterior government - in which occupy	del exterior gobierno —en que ocupada
in employ material,	en material empleo,
or good or bad assumes the day spent–,	o bien o mal da el día por gastado—,
only dispensed,	solamente dispensa
remotely, if all separeted	remota, si del todo separada
no, to the temporarily opressed death	no, a los de muerte temporal opresos
languid extremities, sedated bones...	lánguidos miebos, sosegados huesos...[85]

A dominant soul of the vegetative part:

the segments of vegetative heat,	los gajes del calor vegetativo,
the body being, in serene calm,	el cuerpo siendo en sosegada calma,
a cadaver with soul...	un cadaver con alma...[86]

Describing the vital parts of human body subordinated to the heart, the master organ that functions mechanically:

dead alive and to death live,	muerte a la vida y a la muerte vivo,
of the latter giving delayed signs	de lo segundo dando tardas señas
of the human clock	el del reloj humano
vital wheel that, without a hand,	vital volante que, si no con mano,
with arterial concert,	con arterial concierto, unas pequeñas
some little samples, pulsing,	muestras, pulsando, manifiesta lento
slowly states of its well regulated movement,	de su bien regulado movimiento. (vv. 192-209) [87]

As Zubiri[88] has demonstrated, the legitimacy of the *pulchrum* is a path for metaphysical exploration, and *Primero Sueño* is a sample of that path, something nearly unheard of in the 17th century.

Much has been said about the influence of Luis de Góngora on the nun's writings, in particular because of the similarities between *Primero Sueño* and *Soledades*. The differences between the two poems stem from the fact that the former contains clear-

cut concepts, concepts about knowledge, with an intellectual language that recounts the experience of the spirit. Octavio Paz emphasizes the opposition of content between this pair of poems,[89] and claims Sor Juana's poem is in "black and white," while Góngora's has "colors".

...And in the still contentment
of the silent empire,
submissive only voices consented
of the nocturnal birds,
so obscure, so severe,
still the silence was not interrupted.

[...y en la quietud contenta
del imperio silencioso,
sumisas solo voces consentía
de las nocturnas aves,
tan obscuras, tan graves,
que aún el silencio no se interrumpía.] (vv.19-24)[90]

In the first composition, the formality of the philosophical argumentation is due to the act of knowledge. On the contrary, the second composition's topic and argument are sensual and aesthetic, communicating the psychology and emotion of solitude.

Primero Sueño describes a reality that by definition is not visible: it is a reality seen by the soul. "It is not intellectual poetry," emphasizes Paz, "it is poetry of the intellect as it confronts the cosmos," that is, it is reason's exploration of the ground of the physical (the principle of the cosmos or metaphysics) by the act of knowing.[91] "The content of the poem is an abstraction of that we think"[92]; a travelogue of a 'spiritual journey.'"[93] Xirau sees *Primero Sueño* as "a poem of maturity, a true confession, in which Sor Juana narrates her spiritual adventure and subjects it to examination."

Sor Juana's longstanding hunger for knowledge led her to ultimately crown her studies and reflections with this magnificent philosophical text: "this is the best philosophical poem in the Spanish language."[94] Sor Juana transforms the Spanish Baroque into images and concepts. "What was metaphorical in Góngora here becomes a paradox of reason."[95]

Aristotle and his reflection in *Primero Sueño*

The contents of the poem are as follows. In *Primero Sueño,* Sor Juana narrates the nighttime journey of the soul, of human understanding, on a search to capture the meaning of the entirety of creation either in a single intuitive act, or else in a gradual process of analysis, as taught by Aristotle.[96]

Noûs is fundamental for the human soul, since it permits the illumination of the agent intellect; however, Sor Juana will show that this unceasing illumination is insufficient for human knowledge. In *De Anima* Aristotle holds that intellect cannot orient itself without the assistance of an image.[97] This story demands the inclusion of the

possible intellect (also known as the patient intellect), which also requires the reception of an image. The drama grows with the necessity of *empeiria* for abstraction, while induction remains insufficient for fully achieving the intuitive vision.

The poem connects the difficulty found in the anthropological structure of the human being with a relationship to the organic potencies and functions of the soul. Here, Sor Juana draws an analogy with a boat that plows through the waves and winds. The external and internal senses are initially required for knowledge, but later must be suspended and put aside in order to achieve illumination. In turn, the organic functions (vegetative and sensitive) must be suspended without being halted completely. Breathing is not fully suspended, nor is the beating of the heart or the use of the tongue (language), vision, or hearing.

Nevertheless, the experience of the spirit is not sufficient to adequately follow these steps. It is impossible that intellect alone, or *noûs*, could achieve a total vision, and thus the fall of the intellect comes to pass.

Neither gnoseology nor psychology suffice to find the first truth. This is what the collapse consists in: the intellect penetrates the deepest truths through the exercise of reason, but it is impossible for *noûs* to grasp the vision of the cosmos in its totality. Instead, the soul must have recourse to deduction. Intuition may be superior to deduction but, nevertheless, human reason can only penetrate to the truth with the formulation of syllogisms. Human knowledge is aspectual, partial; thus, one must proceed by parts, going from less to more.

Sor Juana has expressed the circle of Aristotelian reason in a poem: at its origin it demands the agent intellect, since without its illumination nothing would be knowable. Nevertheless, this primitive dignity is subordinated to exterior reality, to the sense datum, to the phantasm and to the patient intellect. Nor do illuminative abstraction and the act of knowledge suffice. One must instead follow the itinerary of the *corpus* of the Aristotelian *Organon*: start from the categories, and from there spin, interlace, infer, penetrate and deduce the truth.

Here one arrives at the main philosophical focus of the poem: the search for knowledge. The course of reason does not refer just to the intellect or *noûs*: it is also *epistéme*. Human reason cannot function any other way.

This discovery of reason implies the use of the Aristotelian method, justifying the Stagirite's logic and theory of science. The noetic and epistemic trajectoryof reason is the path of wisdom. Some interpreters of the poem have seen, in the fall[98] of the intellect, a gnoseological skepticism on the part of Sor Juana, the philosopher.[99]

However, interpretations like these betray an incomplete understanding of the Aristotelian theory of knowledge and logic. Aristotle himself notes that it is impossible for the intellect to reach the full vision of the principle by itself,[100] and states that there is another act of reason that provides knowledge of principles and causes.[101] For the St-

agirite, *the fall of the intellect* points to the greatness of deductive reason. It is through this type of reason that the soul achieves the *"vision"* of things.[102]

The philosophical poem *Primero Sueño* begins with the symbolism of *noûs* in the pyramid, since the intellect tends towards the infinity of being (the stars). Nevertheless, the poem does not conclude with that vision, because the direct ascent to the absolute is overwhelming, producing blindness.[103] The nature of human knowledge prohibits any vision of the cosmos that comes about by a sudden illumination of the sphere[104] The fall gives way to the search for another path whereby the intellect can achieve a complete vision of the world. This plunge from a great height does not imply skepticism or defeat, but rather the inclusion of the method and of a second act of reason. In the second part of the poem, after the *fall,* light appears and with it, an awakening:

> *in the poem the spirit is unlinked but subjugated to the body... it seeks to interpret creation, the unknown night in which the human being lies sleeping. But when daybreak comes, the half-consciousness that precedes awakening, and, with this, in the end, there is an abandonment of that intellective temptation, the pure day in which only the senses are able to touch the appearances of things, and the soul is grateful to the work of the light.*[105]

Collapse entails the possibility of authentic illumination. In the Aristotelian theory of knowledge, contemplation is "the supreme form of *prâxis*";[106]but it cannot be attained by a single act separated from the *noûs.*[107] In this way, the trajectory of the rational soul implies passing from one to another.[108] That is, from the categories[109] to composition or predication, and from statements or premises to the deductive inference.[110] Penetration to the first truth is only possible through syllogisms –this is what learning about the fall concludes in–because it is there that one obtains knowledge.[111]

Saying this does not mean that Aristotle and Sor Juana place deduction above the dignity of *noûs*. Still, for both authors the *noûs* penetrates and illuminates vision when the third act of reason concludes that something is necessarily mediating the essence in a deductive inference.[112]

The paradox of the pathway of reason (a paradox that leaves the soul "speechless")[113] arises because this deductive knowledge, in turn, is founded on an intellective pre-knowledge that is derived from *epagogé.*[114]

Seen in this way, the poem is a dialectic, circular journey of the soul due to a regress in the acts of reason.[115] This movement of the intellect, however, is not tautological, for it is a penetrative illumination, an unceasing flow from simple apprehension to judgment, and from judgment to reasoning. It is an increasingly penetrating illumination

of the cause and of the principle, always guaranteed by the constant act of the *noûs*, which moves on through method and process.[116]

First Dream does not have as its object the emptiness of knowledge; rather, it celebrates the joy of the act of knowledge. Its novelty relies on the fact that it recounts the act of the adventures and misadventures of knowledge.[117]

These are the misadventures of knowing, because while knowledge is an act, it is not the supreme act of intellection (*noesis noeseos*)[118] that marks the path towards the light. There is an explicit reference and analogy between *Primero Sueño* and the Platonic Myth of the Cave. In this myth Plato is unsurpassed when he writes of human knowledge as being a feat of the soul.[119] In the darkness of the cave, misfortune lies in thinking that the reflected shadows are the true essence of things. Only the collapse of reason's certainty allows an escape from the darkness of the night[120] in order to rise to true knowledge, to the light. [121]

We must sustain a rational caution about infinity and let go of the arrogant presumption[122] that the vision of the intellect is all-encompassing. The Aristotelian interpretation of *First Dream* is similar to Plato's explanation of the cave. The vision of the stars—the true reality, the principle and ground of being[123] —requires the dialectic of *epistéme*.[124]

First Dream is the story of a failure: a search that ends in the impossibility of knowing... What kind of dream is this? Is it one of impossibility and failure? It is a strange dream. It is an intellectual dream that leads us (as much as it too is led) to the world of the intellectual categories. In the first place, *First Dream* invites us to distinguish clearly between vision and knowledge, *qua* conditions or dimensions or qualities of the soul. For in this poem by Sor Juana there is vision, or better, an astounded gaze: the soul, "in seeing everything, saw nothing." This gaze, upon transmitting to the intellect what has been looked at, does not understand the meaning, the order or the causes of what it sees a seeing that is, of itself, vision[125]

The Aristotelian Theses in the Sor Juana's Philosophical Poem

The analysis of *Primero Sueño* up to now throws light upon the poematic structure of the work. It demonstrates that the text by Sor Juana is philosophical, and that it contains Aristotelian theses about the theory of knowledge, logic, and anthropology.

If *Primero Sueño* is read attentively, the reader will see that it contains 975 verses. Indeed, Sor Juana inserted an explicit division in the meter of the text.

This division marks the two great conceptual and thematic axes of the text—it separates the poem into two sections: one from line 1 to line 487, and the other from line 487 to line 975. It is exactly in line 487 that the poem announces "the fall of reason."[126]

In the first part of the poem the primary topic is intuition and the vision of the truth, within which there are certain subtopics that Sor Juana develops:

1. Reason *qua* intellect or *noûs* open to the infinity of knowledge, symbolized by the pyramid and the stars.[127]
2. The agent intellect and its illumination, topic that is anticipated at the beginning of the poem: a proud pyramid symbolizing knowledge and consequently the necessity of *empeiría*.
3. Possible intellect is what receives the forms from the exterior world through external and internal senses.[128]
4. Abstraction as contact with the world, the sphere and the objective level of knowing.[129]
5. The connection between theory of knowledge, psychology and anthropology.[130]
6. The soul in its rational and irrational parts.[131]
7. The topic of pre-knowledge by intuition alone.[132]
8. The fall by looking at everything, the intellect sees nothing, nor can it discern anything.[133]

The thesis I advance here—and which, it appears, other commentators on the work have not taken into account—refers to the second part of the text. The philosophical issue at the center of the second part of the poem is of rational discourse or deductive inference—necessarily, human knowledge proceeds in stages and employs a certain method.[134]

The inclusion here of the Aristotelian categories marks the starting point for the itinerary of the *Organon*, *i.e.* Aristotle's logic: simple apprehension in *Categories*,[135] composition, and division of judgment[136] in *Peri Hermeneias*, and reasoning or passing from one judgment to another in the *Prior and Posterior Analytics*.[137] It is by discursive reason that one journeys from the necessary to the probable[138] and, in turn, to dialectic and poetic questions[139] concerning reason.[140]

The secondary topics touched on in the second part of the poem are the following:

9. The ascent after the fall, and the necessity of deduction.[141]
10. The Aristotelian categories and the necessary connection between logic and existence.[142]
11. Reasoning.[143]
12. Scientific reasoning.[144]

13. Wisdom and vision.[145]
14. Practical reasoning and, with it, biographical knowledge of Sor Juana.[146]
15. The dream and awakened reason[147]: in order to awaken, one must sleep, for dreams produce light.

In conclusion, the main topic in *Primero Sueño* is the path to contemplation. It is the passage from the dream state to the waking state of reason. It is a conceptual story that describes—poetically and metaphorically—the course of the operations of the understanding that lead to the contemplation of the truth and the principle of the cosmos.

The aim of the poem is the theory of knowledge and of rationality.

While I have already investigated the possibility of an Aritotelian interpretation of *Primero Sueño*, no interpretation of the poem can be exclusive: as with any poem, Sor Juana allows multiple interpretations. This multiplicity is a virtue possessed by every great poetic-philosophical text, just as in the philosophy of classic authors such as Plato, who philosophizes through myth. The poem has been interpreted in various ways and can be seen through a Platonic standpoint,[148] from a Presocratic-atomist point of view,[149] and through the Hermetic and humanist vision of Renaissance authors.[150] Furthermore, it can be seen as clearly influenced by the theses of Thomas Aquinas[151]; it has also been considered a scientific treaty,[152] a dissent from the Inquisition,[153] a psychiatric text,[154] a text about mysticism and religiousness,[155] feminism,[156] and Cartesianism.[157] This is the greatness of the work. Here I have analyzed a clear dimension of the gnoseological theses presented by *Primero Sueño*, but there are many other paths suggested by the poem.

Primero Sueño is, without a doubt, the first great synthetic work of Mexican philosophy. The text contains major Novohispanic philosophical influences together with the incipient philosophizing of Latin American *Criollismo*.[158] It exemplifies a way of thinking previously unbeknownst to the West, one which reveals the face of a new philosophical identity: the Mexican one.

Chapter II

Sor Juana and her idea of freedom

Sor Juana's Humanism and its Connection with Novohispanic Baroque Art

In recent years, I have developed an interpretation that specialists in Sor Juana know little about.[159] It relates to the theological influence of a group of Pueblan Jesuits who were contemporary to the nun. Shortly after my article was published, an in-depth study by Dr. Ramón Kuri Camacho was published by the Universidad Autónoma de Veracruz.[160] After translating a number of 17th-century philosophical texts in Puebla, he was able to show that philosophers Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina once had an influence on Sor Juana, in particular, regarding the issue of freedom. Kuri Camacho has shown that certain *Criollo* philosophers put these proposals to work—especially that of Suárez—in order to develop a new project for a nation in America. This group of Pueblan Jesuits included Fr. Miguel Sánchez, who spoke of the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Lasso de la Vega, Becerra Tanco, Nuñez de Miranda, who was Sor Juana's confessor, and others. As a group, they extended certain theological theses of Luis de Molina and Francisco Suárez regarding middle science or conditioned science. The theological problem they were working on was the relationship between grace and freedom. In their writings, Suárez and Molina had begun with the question of whether free acts were meritorious in themselves or whether they necessarily required the cooperation of divine grace. They wondered whether virtuous acts are meritorious when the person was in mortal sin, or whether such acts lacked merit because of the sin. These questions augured a greater autonomy for the acting person because of his or her freedom, a possibility that opened the doors to fictionalism and probabilism, together with the theory of possible worlds, which is where the Jesuits parted ways from traditional Aristotelian-Thomistic realism. Suárez's and Molina's proposal conceded a greater autonomy to human beings, something decisive for their political project. If good human acts are meritorious despite the fact that the person is in grave sin, this would mean that freedom participates more than grace in the divine project—even putting certain limitations on God. Traditional Catholic theology argued that if the human being sins, none of his or her

actions have merit. In contrast, the proposals of Suárez and Luis de Molina threw new light on the understanding of moral autonomy. This movement was called "Jesuit humanism," and, on the political plane, offered an alternative national project, challenging the theory of the liberal state that Luther's Reformation had promoted. The theological axiom on which these authors relied was the dual nature of Christ, fully human and fully divine. Because the human being is similar to God, even being called an image of Him, the topic of human freedom had to be studied from two points of view: one of theology and one of political humanism.

The Theological Assimilation of the Jesuit Tradition in Colonial Times

The Jesuit proposal fit hand in glove within the Novohispanic context: the 17th century was one of great climatic calamities in America. These included harsh winters, floods and droughts that ruined crops, famines, a decrease in population because of the conquest itself and because of plagues, epidemics and pestilence, all of which reminded New Spain of the brevity of life. At the same time, it was a century of economic reforms and of a vice regal policy of expansion to the North. This gave rise to a thriving *Criollo* aristocracy. In the religious terrain the Jesuits were celebrating the canonization of Francisco de Borja, the third general of the Society of Jesus, with festivals featuring political competitions, works of theater, carnivals and other activities. Basing themselves on the theological proposal of a double manner or mode of dealing with the incarnation of Christ, the Jesuits developed a new project for society and a new manner of interpreting the infidelity of the natives and their actions. In this context, the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum* contributed greatly to the formulation of a language with precise aesthetic expressions, uniting images and rhetoric with speculative theologies and expressing in art the theological consequences of the reform that was underway. Thus, the Baroque art of their time evolved from a mere repetition of styles brought from abroad, to a consciously adopted way of life that expressed the moral and political autonomy that *Criollos* were slowly beginning to affirm. Probabilism solidified in the Novohispanic Baroque, promoting a capricious art, affective and with little connection to classical canons. It began with the typical features of the European Baroque: counterpoints, chiaroscuros, twisted columns reminding the viewer of Solomon's columns: this new Baroque tears down the barriers between culture and architecture, bringing together literature, science and myth, silence, and voice. In New Spain, the Baroque slowly began to adopt its own rules: this new style was syncretic and exalted the new lands, asserting not just that the Earthly Paradise was in America, but also that God had been understood better by the natives. This process went hand

in hand with the formulation of myths and legends, such as the identification of Quetzalcóatl with St. Thomas the Apostle. These stories and assertions demonstrate the incorporation of the new theories into art.

The Novohispanic Baroque is the first artistic expression in Mexico that has its own identity, and Sor Juana will occupy the apex of its literary variant. The reader might think that there is no connection whatsoever between the literary Baroque of the nun and the theological thesis mentioned above, but a close examination of three Sorjuanian texts—*La Carta Atenagórica*, *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*[161] and *Primero Sueño*—demonstrates the connection between her theological posture and the literary Baroque style she used to construct her poems. Sor Juana states, in the dedication of *Primero Sueño*, that she *is writing in the style of Góngora*, and one might think—as others have done— this means her poem merely copies models from the Spanish Baroque. However, if we read her prose work carefully, we will uncover the criteria that influenced her in her artistic itinerary. In the *Carta Atenagórica*[162] we have an invaluable prose text: Sor Juana is commenting on a sermon by Fr. Vieira, a contemporary Portuguese theologian, who in that era was recognized as an authority. In his sermon, Vieira spoke about the greatest or best benefit of love (*fineza*[163]) Christ had left for human beings. Classical theologians of the stature of Augustine of Hippo, John Chrysostom and Thomas Aquinas had all written on the topic. In his analysis, Vieira stated that for St. Augustine the greatest *fineza* offered by Christ had been to give his life for his friends, while for Thomas Aquinas—on the opposite side—the greatest benefit of Christ's love was that he remains for us in the sacramental species of wine and bread, not leaving the human being alone. Finally, for John Chrysostom, the greatest benefit of Christ's love was his washing the feet of his disciples, proving his subordination to the human race and thus saving it. Sor Juana sought to comment on Vieira's sermon in order to participate in the theological commentaries of the fathers and doctors of the Church. She presented her own interpretation of the greatest *fineza* and legacy that Christ had conferred on the human race. But she frames her commentary in a peculiar manner: she is not just adding one more theological opinion to those proffered by two fathers of the Church, Augustine of Hippo and Chrysostom, a Doctor of the Church, Thomas Aquinas, and a renowned bishop and theologian of her time, Vieira the Portuguese. Rather, she was interested in demonstrating there were various valid theological interpretations of a single problem. Sor Juana introduces her interpretation by noting that Vieira's sermon cast light on divergences within the Catholic tradition itself. Hence, she is enabled to offer her own interpretation against the backdrop of tradition, showing that, in the first place, the tradition is not monolithic. In the second place, in the *Carta Atenagórica* she comes out against these diverse traditions, claiming one shouldn't necessarily affiliate oneself with a particular tradition, but instead one should think for oneself, with one's eye on the life of Christ and his

teachings. In assuming this posture, not only does she place herself at the same level as Vieira, a major theologian, but she also states that as a Christian believer she can contribute to the Magisterium of the Church and the tradition of the holy Fathers. This insulting claim can only be understood in the context of the flourishing humanism of her time, which was peculiar the group of Pueblan Jesuits that, following Suárez and Molina, developed certain theological-political theories relating to freedom. Next, Sor Juana presents her theological proposal: the greatest *fineza* of Christ had not left us any *finezas* whatsoever. The argumentation is rigged, for while Vieira and the theologians spoke of the "legacy or inheritance of Christ," Sor Juana began astutely by distinguishing in her letter between a "legacy" and a "benefit of love" [*fineza*]. In this way she proposes an interpretation that differs from those of the men, all while attempting to avoid any direct contradiction. She begins her reflections by saying that a "*fineza*" is not the same as a "legacy," and that she is writing about the greatest *fineza* Christ left the human race. In her opinion, the great legacy of the second person of the Verbum was to leave human beings in freedom, that is, in not imposing any *finezas* upon them.

In *Carta Atenagórica* Sor Juana's participation in the debate involves three interventions, and in all of these moments the nun maintains the definition of the human intellect as free agency. In the first moment, she discusses the diversity of interpretations regarding the greatest legacy of Christ, while in the second she places herself at the same level as the great Portuguese theologian instead of subordinating herself to his judgment. Finally, in the third moment she presents a new way of understanding the issue, one which also has an explicit modern content: that *imitatio Dei* is not the supreme operation of the intelligence, even when one is discussing the Faith. For if the greatest *fineza* of Christ consisted of not giving any *fineza* at all to humans, free will acquires a crucial importance in their concrete convictions and actions. It is noteworthy to remember that in his Introduction to the *Discourse on the Method* René Descartes proposed a role for the will, even in the context of scientific knowledge. Descartes broke with arguments based on tradition and authority, proposing that individuals should think for themselves, and that as grounds for knowledge they should value experience more than authority. In addition to drinking from the Jesuit theory of *scientia media*, which characterized the intellect as a free intellectual power, Sor Juana was also influenced by the philosophy of her time. But the novel—and still poorly explored—point is the Jesuit contribution to the question of freedom, and how the nun assumed the same position. For both Sor Juana and the Jesuits, it is true that from an absolute perspective, human beings are saved by the grace of God, but from the human, temporal perspective human beings are saved because of their concrete merits, obtained by the exercise of freedom. "Nothing enjoys greater freedom than the human understanding; if God does not violate the mind, then why would I even try?" wrote Sor Juana in the Prologue for the Reader from the first edition of her *Complete*

Works. In *Romances filosóficos y amorosos (Philosophical and Amorous Romance)*, she reiterates:

Let us pretend to be happy,
melancholic thought, for a while;
perhaps you can persuade me,
though I know the contrary is true.

For since on mere apprehension
they say all suffering depends,
if you imagine good fortune,
you will not be so downcast.[164]

[Finjamos que soy feliz,
triste pensamiento, un rato;
quizas podréis persuadirme,
aunque yo sé lo contrario.

Que pues sólo en la aprehensión
dicen que estriban los daños,
si os imagináis dichoso
no seréis tan desgraciado.][165]

Knowledge is not necessarily tied to reality—it is capable of thinking and feeling what is contrary to evidence, thus obtaining another sense of knowledge. But this is something that stretches the meaning of the lines.

Let my understanding at times
allow me to rest awhile,
and let my wits not always be
opposed to my own advantage.

[Sírvame el entendimiento
alguna vez de descanso,
y no siempre esté el ingenio
con el provecho encontrado.]

Freedom allows intelligence to be creative and ingenious, for there is variability and probability in knowledge:

All people have opinions
and judgments so multitudinous,
that when one states this is black,
the other proves it is white.

[Todo el mundo es opiniones
de pareceres tan varios,
que lo que el uno cree es negro,
el otro prueba que es blanco.]

In the *Carta Atenagórica*, she equoalizes her own convictions to the tradition of the Church. Also, she debates with the great ecclesiastical authorities, even lifting up her beliefs to the level of the protagonists of the Greco-Roman tradition:

The two philosophers of Greece
offered perfect proofs of this truth;
for what caused laughter in one man
occasioned tears in the other.

[Los dos filósofos griegos
bien esta verdad probaron:
pues lo que en el uno risa,
causaba en el otro llanto.]

The emphasis on freedom has an effect even on judgments:

A proof is found for everything
a reason on which to base it
and nothing has a good reason
since there is reason for so much.

All people are equal judges,
being both equal and varied
there is no one who can decide
which argument is true and right.

[para todo se halla prueba
y razón en qué fundarlo:
y no hay razón para nada,
de haber razón para tanto.

Todos son iguales jueces;
y siendo iguales y varios,
no hay quien pueda decidir,
cuál es el más acertado.]

Furthermore, she deems divine creation responsible for having created human beings with moral autonomy:

Since nobody can adjudicate,
why do you think, mistakenly,
that God entrusted you alone
with the decision in this case?

[¿Pues, si no hay quien lo sentencie,
por qué pensáis, vos, errado,
que os cometió Dios a vos
la decisión de los casos?]

Sor Juana's lines gradually adjust their content to the formal literary structure of the Baroque. Thus, in Redondilla 85, one sees both the use of counterpoints and contrasts in their phonetics and structure, as well as in the content of the lines.

I have two doubts to choose among,
and I don't know which I prefer:
for you feel I don't want to,
and I feel that I do.

So that, if to either side
I desire to incline myself,
it will be forced, with one happy,
while the other is unhappy.[166]

[Dos dudas en qué escoger
tengo, y no sé cuál prefiera:
pues vos sentís que no quiera,
y yo sintiera querer.

Conque, si a cualquier lado
quiero inclinarme, es forzoso,
quedando el uno gustoso,
que otro quede disgustado.][167]

In the *Décimas* of love and discretion she demonstrates how the force of reason resists the tyranny of a violent love:

[T]ell me, predatory victor,
conquered by my constancy,
what has your arrogance achieved
in threatening my firm peace?
That while the door of your harpoon
can conquer the hardest heart,
what worth has the violent shot
if despite being defeated
reason remains alive?[168]

[(D)ime vencedor rapaz,
vencido de mi constancia,
¿qué ha sacado tu arrogancia
de atentar mi firme paz?
Que aunque de vencer capaz es la puerta
de tu arpón el más duro corazón,
¿qué importa el tiro violento
si a pesar del vencimiento
queda viva la razón?][169]

The Merging of Baroque Style and Philosophical Content in Sor Juana's Work

As has been said in previous sections, Sor Juana composes what is the apex of Mexican Baroque in a poem written in *silva* or *free movement*. Written all at once in 975 verses, the poem synthesizes literary form and philosophical content, in addition to combining mythic and Hermetic ideas taken from the scientific discoveries of her time, such as the Englishman Harvey's discovery of the circulatory movement of the blood.

The maximum expression of a Sorjuanian union between body and spirit, rational life and supernatural life, intuition and deduction is found in the unceasing dialectic apparent in the formal and material structure of *Primero Sueño*. In the poem, Sor Juana describes the unceasing journey of the soul towards the first intuition, together with the impossibility of attaining it all at once. The content of the poem revolves around the ascension of knowledge, revealing pride, even arrogance, as the soul seeks to achieve complete wisdom. In the ascending journey the poem describes the vertiginous fall of intellect and the need to follow the footsteps and slow processes required for abstraction. Here the organic faculties are suspended and one proceeds with a rational method, where what is achieved is intensely penetrated. The teaching of the double face of the Incarnation of the Word permits the nun to hold a dual theory of knowledge, deriving both from the Platonic navigation of the myth of the cave, and from the Aristotelian interpretation of science in *Posterior Analytics* II-14 and I.1. Sor Juana sees the ascent of intellect towards the light in both; however, in the first case, the ascent occurs only suddenly and by faith, while in the second, it occurs without such faith. Furthermore, the poem interprets knowledge from the Thomist viewpoint, as proceeding by induction and deduction.[170] The nun also employs here Descartes' gnoseological perspective from the *Discourse on Method*.[171] However, because a description of *Primero Sueño* is not the goal here, I will not dwell on the dialectics implied by knowledge. Instead, I will move on to the inclusive synthesis proposed in the very process of attaining full wisdom. Light, acquisition, and completeness in truth is the form and ground, just as the Incarnation of the God is open to two readings, that Christ is both true God and true man. As a result of this, her teachings are both an *ethos*[172] and a *paideia*[173] for non-believers, as well as a revelation and theology for those who are believers. The constant assimilation to a divine life explodes in history in order that we might imitate it; others, in contrast, can seek the light through rational effort.

In Sor Juana, the Baroque is the conscious assimilation of this theology of the Incarnate God, a theology that has an impact on the condition of humanity. Salvation is of a person as a whole, not just his or her soul, since it is in freedom that each individual affirms his or her moral actions, and eternal life is at play. Thus, it is through con-

crete moral acts that human beings can access Heaven, whether they are believers or not. If there is an adequate name in New Spain to reflect this inclusive vision of the Incarnation, it is Emmanuel: God with us. The connection between theology and art in the Novohispanic Baroque lies in that it expresses itself in form, both being inseparable. God—who is absolutely other and totally immaterial—becomes incarnate, yet the Incarnation does not cancel out his divinity at all. If the human being is like God in his freedom, the anthropological conception that emanates from the theology of the Incarnation will be different. This is a new point of view on human beings, who are treated on the basis of the intrinsic compound that comprises them. Their passions are affirmed, as well as their appetites and desires, their inclination to pleasure and to their faith, their struggle for salvation, and their attainment of eternal life.

In Novohispanic Baroque, form and content are indiscernible. One does theology with images and figures that are in movement, no longer via the medieval syllogisms that extended Aristotelian argumentation to the theological realm. Nothing is static in Baroque art, because the barriers between the spatial and the temporal are broken. In the Baroque, heaven is on earth, and vice versa: the earth is ruled by a celestial rhythm. An example that demonstrates this inclusion is the cooking recipes of the Pueblan nuns of the 17th century. They measured the cooking time of a sauce by the number of rosaries they could pray—depending on whether a sauce thickens early or late. Something so primitive and normal as kitchen labor was carried out while contemplating the life of Jesus, including amorous expressions or "winks" (litanies or short prayers). In the Baroque mentality, the time for cooking was connected to the time for contemplation. Even though the Gospel passage about Martha and Mary prefigured the separation between active life and contemplative life, what is characteristic of the Novohispanic Baroque is the synthesis of the two.

In the literary realm, Sor Juana's intent is precisely to overcome the contrasts inherent in the Baroque itself—she expresses and structures her poems within the Gongorean categories of the Spanish Baroque, while always maintaining an inclusive synthesis. Such synthesis may occur via the fusion of sounds and words, either by a cathartic liberation in the dialectics of her lines on love and hate, on sleep and awakening at first light, or else in those lines where sentiment and duty confront each other.

In *Primero Sueño*, a Baroque structure is clear. The counterpoints are between intellect and reason, both of which strive to arrive at the light or truth. It is here that the first journey is an ascent that ultimately fails. There is, however, a solution—albeit much more modest—which the poem proposes after the fall: a method or path for achieving the truth.

Let's carefully observe the *mythos* or drama that develops over the course of *Primero Sueño*. We know from Sor Juana herself that this *silva* was the only poem she composed in complete freedom. The poem, undoubtedly written after the *Carta At-*

enagórica and *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, deals not just with the tragedy of the human intellect that arises, arrogant and ambitious, to capture everything via primary intuition, thus resulting in a vertiginous fall.[174]

Pyramidal, doleful, mournful shadow
born of the earth, the haughty confirmation
of vain obelisks thrust towards the Heavens,
attempting to ascend and touch the stars;
if very well, beauty it reflects
forever exempt, forever iridescent-
the tenebrous war
which with black fumes intimated
the dreadful fugitive shadow
teased from afar,
that his swarthy brow
no yet arrived to a superior convex
of the orb of the Goddess…

[Piramidal, funesta, de la tierra
nacida sombra, al Cielo encaminaba
de vanos obeliscos punta altiva,
escalar pretendiendo las Estrellas;
si bien las luces bellas
–exentas siempre, siempre rutilantes–
la tenebrosa Guerra
que con negros vapores le intimaba
la pavorosa sombra fugitiva
burlaban tan distantes,
que su atezado ceño
al superior convexo aún no llegaba
del orbe de la Diosa…][175]

The lines at the middle part of the poem relate to a turning point as reason fails frightened by the possible vision of the complete light:

In which an immense elevation,
joyous more so suspended,
suspended yet proud,
and astonished while proud, the supreme,
of the sublunar and sovereign queen,
the perspicacious vision, free of glasses,
of the beautifully intellectual eyes
(without fear of distance
nor obstacle so opaque it distrusts,
of that some object interposes jealousy),
freedom tended by everything menial:
which immense aggregate,
incomprehensible cluster,
even though in sight manifest
gives signal of the possible,
to comprehension no, what –hindered
with the surplus of objects, and extended
of their grandiose potency–
cowardly retreated.

[En cuya casi elevación inmensa,
gozosa mas suspensa,
suspensa pero ufana,
y atónita aunque ufana, la suprema,
de lo sublunar y reina soberana,
la vista perspicaz, libre de anteojos,
de sus intelectuales bellos ojos
(sin que distancia tema
ni de obstáculo opaco se recele,
de que interpuesto algún objeto cele),
libre tendió por todo lo criado:
cuyo inmenso agregado,
cúmulo incomprehensible,
aunque a la vista quiso manifiesto
dar señas de possible,
a la comprensión no, que –entorpecida
con la sobra de objetos, y excedida
de la grandeza de ellos su potencia–
retrocedió cobarde.][176]

After its fall, reason starts climbing again toward the light, but this second time, in a methodic way:

that, in its operation itself reported
though conveniently judged
a singularly reduced affair,
or separately
one for one reason things
that come to cling to the artificials
five categories twice
metaphysics reduction that teaches
(the entities conceiving generals
in only some mental fantasies
where the matter is disdained
the abstracted discourse)
science of forming of the universal
repairing, warned,
with the art the defect
of not being able to with intuitive
to know act all raised,
although, making scale, of a concept
another goes ascending degree by degree,
and of comprehending relative order
continues, in need
of understanding
limited vigour, that a successive
discourse trusts its exploitation...

[que, en su operación misma reportado
más juzgó conveniente
a singular asunto reducirse,
o separadamente
una por una discurrir las cosas
que vienen a ceñirse artificiosas
dos veces cinco categorías:
reducción metafísica que enseña
(los entes concibiendo generals
en solo unas mentales fantasias
donde la materia se desdeña
el discurso abstraído)
ciencia de formar de los universales,
reparando, advertido,
con el arte el defecto
de no poder con un intüitivo
conocer acto todo lo criado,
sino que, haciendo escala, de un concepto
en otro va ascendiendo grado a grado,
y el de comprender orden relativo
sigue, necesitado
del entendimiento
limitado vigor, que a sucesivo
discurso fía su aprovechamiento...][177]

Sor Juana justifies the methodic steps of reason after its fall purports the need for logic, the transition from induction to deduction, as a method required for partial knowledge or enlightenment. But the poem underlines the various paths in which knowledge can search its light; however, it also proves it is impossible for reason to acquire immediate knowledge.

Primero Sueño is, in part, autobiographical: it is a poem about the silence the nun experiences when she was ordered not to speak, an instruction she received from her confessor Nuñez de Miranda and the bishop of Mexico City. Her poem, thus, seeks to communicate or express *the saying of silence.* This particular dialectic is drawn with images in counterpoint: shadow versus light, night and sleep versus light and waking. Her recourse to the *hybris* of Greek tragedy reinforces the drama of keeping silence

with the phrase *I say* ["digo"], which appears in various verses.[178] The intensity is greater when she says that reason strives to see, but in fact she sees nothing.

Sorjuanian humanism has come down to us via two paths: by embracing the freedom-affirming Pueblan Jesuit theology, and by the *Discourse on Method*, which proposes an intervention of freedom in knowledge. In both cases, the key is in the fact that literary *imitatio* gives way to a creative elaboration and interpretation, free from the rules of production. *Imitatio* does not disappear in Sor Juana's poems, but rather serves a variety of purposes. Through it, Sor Juana provokes new alterities: Hermetism and the new science, natural mechanicism against individual freedom, and the possibility of knowledge against the impossibility of a complete intuition. Sorjuanian humanism expresses itself in a Baroque literary structure because it reveals the variability in knowledge and the unsustainability of unilateral and dogmatic philosophies. In Sor Juana, the Baroque overcomes contrarieties by the affirmation of human freedom in the processes of knowledge and of the truths of the Gospel.

The many censures applied during the 17th century in New Spain hit close to home for Sor Juana. José Pascual Buxó tells of how her confessor, Núñez de Miranda, was involved in the censures of the Holy Office:

> *[T]here were many brilliant Novohispanics that—throughout the 17th century—occupied themselves with composing almanacs, lunar calendars and predictions of weather, including Juan Antonio Mendoza y González, José Antonio Villaseñor y Sánchez, Antonio de León y Gama and Mariano José Zúñiga y Ontiveros [...] but few were as constant as Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, who by 1690 had already published some twenty works of the genre. In them—adapting himself to the inquisitorial auto of 1642—he says that he just wanted to promote the health of his countrymen. The inspectors of the Holy Office, however, were not always willing to approve his prognoses without censure. The priests Antonio Núñez de Miranda—confessor of viceroys and of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz—and Agustín Dorantes singled him out as being as reckless and presumptuous, since Don Carlos allowed himself, with a certain regularity, to mock that supposed science that he himself had created in 1667 [...].*[179]

Sigüenza was able to get away with the same mockery and irony that imposed an order of silence on Sor Juana after *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*. In addition, both Sigüenza and Sor Juana wrote about solar prognoses and Galenic doctrines in order to determine the complexion of temperaments and humors, as well as to identify the celestial origin of certain illnesses. Moreover, in the *Astronomical and Philo-*

sophical Libra of 1681, Sigüenza shows how advanced his scientific knowledge is, rejecting the influence of the souls of mortal men in favor of the alterations of the heavens. In *Primero Sueño,* Sor Juana established the laws of mechanic rule the circulatory movement of the blood, just as those that determine breathing. Furthermore, she framed her poem in a sun cycle, which can be followed from sundown to rebirth. Eclectic in their ideas for solar predictions and almanacs, and modern in their scientific notion of the natural world, both Sor Juana and Sigüenza suffered the displeasure of Núñez de Miranda. In response to this, they developed a path to avoid inquisitorial orthodoxy—the artistic Baroque, in particular, its literary variant. In it they included the Hermetic tradition, teeming with myths, images and symbologies. According to Sor Juana, this type of Baroque becomes autonomous from its European progenitor. In *Primero Sueño*,

The literary agreement of topics existing between the two parts (sleeping and waking, rising-falling, getting up) is admirable. The sensation is like that of the contemplation of the concert that holds between the celestial bodies. Think, for example, of the correlation established with the antithetic function of night birds, aberrant creatures of nature. These birds make sounds that are opposed to those of diurnal birds, which have harmonic songs and the natural function of being heralds of the awakening of living beings.[180]

There are many more rhetorical correspondences in the poem. At the most general level, she has composed an epic in the form of a *silva*, reflecting both her vast knowledge and the order to keep silent. The *mythos* consists on the elevation to the truth expressed in the Baroque by pyramids, and in the ascension to the light. However, a paradox arises, namely, that this ascension can only be attained by one who is silent, sleeps, and suspends contact with external reality in order to let the soul take flight in its adventure. Dolores Bravo Arriaga tells us that "the evocation of Plato's myth of the cave links these models of knowing, and once again Sor Juana is the protagonist of the oscillation between appearance and truth."[181] But the poem should not be excessively personalized. The key is how the lines are structured literarily. This Novohispanic Baroque cannot be understood except in urban centers where the Counter Reformation predominated, and with it the inquisitional and censuring operations of ecclesiastic authorities.

The necessity that both spirit and the written word should be perceived through sight originated at the Council of Trent, as a response to the need for making the sacred become sensorial—at times in the form of polychromy, at others via a constant mixing of ideal and real elements. Baroque churches attend to this need, just as the confront the infinite with the eternal in the color of images, the flesh of martyrdom, and the golden immediacy of miracles.[182]

The structural reconsideration that the Baroque imposes lies in granting a new order to time and space, as well as in providing new categories to thinking, which is, thus, able to express itself in unsuspected ways. There is a new world that involves transformation, movement, *metamorphosis*. Art in New Spain acquired a theatrical, artful character, achieving an identification of thought, reality, sound and movements in those who, like the nun, do not fall into the frivolity of fancy words. It is not accidental that for *Primero Sueño* the structure of a *silva* was chosen. In that format, movement and freedom are the formal axis. A poem that shows why this synthesis expresses itself in Sor Juana is Romance 2,[183] which she dedicates to the Countess of Paredes, excusing herself from sending a book of music. In verse 110 it says:

Teaching music to an angel?
Who won't laugh
at the idea of the intelligences
being ruled by the
coarseness of humanity?

Even more, if I am to speak truth,
it is that I, some days
in order to gladden my sadnesses,
ended up having this mania,

and I began to write a treaty
to see if it reduces
to greater ease
the rules that run around written.

In this treaty, if I remember correctly,
it seems to me that it said
it is a spiral line:
harmony is not a circle.

And because of its form,
curved over upon itself,
I entitled it "Snail,"
because it curves that way.[184]

[¿Enseñar Música a un Ángel?
¿Quién habrá que no se ría
de que la rudeza humana
las Inteligencias rija?

Mas si he de hablar con la verdad,
es lo que yo, algunos días,
por divertir mis tristezas
di en tener esa manía,

y empecé a hacer un Tratado
para ver si reducía
a mayor facilidad
las reglas que andan escritas.

En él, si no mal recuerdo,
me parece que decía
que es una línea espiral,
no un círculo, la Armonía;

y por razón de su forma
revuelta sobre sí misma,
lo intitulé el Caracol,
porque esa revuelta hacía.]

The association of music with the Virgin is due to the fact that in Heaven music is the only human activity permitted.[185] Thus, the Virgin serves as a bridge between heaven and earth, just as music and literary phoneticism are able to unite the sublunar with the supralunar world. Sor Juana holds that music is what is best able to express ideas and concepts. However, there are exclusively conceptual interpretations of several Sorjuanian poems; in particular, this is true in *Primero Sueño*: as Octavio Paz

has said, it is a philosophical poem written in black and white. The classification used in the *Complete Works* of Sor Juana, created by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, divides the sonnets into *philosophical-moral* and the romances into *philosophical* and *amorous*. The type of poem doesn't suffice; its poetic content is required as well. There are eminent scholars that analyze *Primero Sueño* exclusively from the point of view of its philosophical content,[186] and at the same time there are studies dedicated exclusively to the content and literary analysis of the poem.[187] Many others explore a combination of both factors.[188] According to Vasconcelos, who deems architecture as the supreme art, it was in the 17th century that Mexican architecture became consolidated. Similarly, the concept of the Mexican nation solidifies at this point. While in the 16th century there was merely an imitation of the various architectural trends from Spain, in the 17th century buildings adapted to the tastes, sensibility, and functional necessities of America. The residents of New Spain have become aware of the variety of climates, territory, materials, uses and customs that contrast with those of the metropolis. There are many reasons for this change: artistically speaking, Novohispanic houses were adapted to the emerging classes of *Criollos* and *Mestizos*, who lived in separate zones fitting their tastes and needs. In the realm of religion, the big project was the construction of the Cathedral of Mexico, as ordered by Philip III. This building passed through the hands of various architects, and its lateral nave doors were only emplaced in 1680. In the judgment of many specialists, "in Mexico this gave rise to a period of Solomonic Baroque in the capital."[189] While the Cathedral was only completed much later, in these years the city saw the completion of the altarpieces in the chapels of Holy Christ of the Relics, of Saint Peter and of Solitude, as well as the paintings in the sacristy by Cristobal de Villalpando and Juan Correa. This display of cathedral art served as a paradigm for the rest of New Spain. In the 17th century, as Rogelio Álvarez Noguera informs us, ten parishes were built in Mexico City, ten hospitals, and many convents for nuns. The aesthetic impact of these buildings was felt throughout the territories of the Viceroyalty.[190] The role of the convents of nuns seems to be of special relevance, since Sor Juana felt at home in them: they were her habitat and were the source of her artistic imagination. While Protestant Europe closed them, in New Spain cloisters and other buildings mushroomed. Their proliferation strengthened uses and customs that were typically Baroque. There are literary testimonies of nuns' lives, such as *Parayso Occidental* by Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, chaplain and confessor for nuns in the convents of Puebla. These works give us knowledge of the use of relics and the fervor they produced. In addition, the text tells us of the many apparitions experienced by the nuns, the constant mystical raptures and a synthesis of piety and aesthetics as well as the sacred and the profane. Sor Juana lived for twenty-seven years in the convent of the Hieronymite nuns. The ecclesiastical regulations of the time required convents of nuns to be separated from the buildings inhabited by

male monks and brothers. Those for women generally lacked inner patios, since there was no space provided for study and academic activities, in contrast to buildings for men. There would be, however, an inner garden, and the nuns' cells generally looked directly onto the streets. This type of architecture produced a specific mentality in female convents. On the one hand, the nuns were separated from the world, and with the large windows with a view to the exterior the experience of isolation was made more explicit[191]; on the other, the convents turned into microcosms, self-ruling cities supplied with everything the nuns might need. In a convent, heaven and earth were directly united, while at the same time the cell became somewhat prisonlike, since the cloister implied enclosure or separation. Nevertheless, one must take care not to anachronistically exaggerate this aspect: all of Novohispanic society was marked by a powerful religious imagination, and in the female convents the synthesis between *logos* and *pathos* could occur in greater fullness.[192]

Let us return now to *Primero Sueño*: it is a monumental work in the style of the intellectual production of the Novohispanic academic chairs of the 17th century. Since she was forbidden from teaching, Sor Juana built something akin to a great cathedral of knowledge in verse. In her poem the absence of color prevails, so that at the appropriate moment the golden sparkle of the light can be presented, in the manner of the altarpieces of the Hispano-American Baroque. What is golden is pursued, one ascends to it; in addition, the light of wakefulness awaits at the end of the poem. The drama develops over the course of a journey, which can be compared to the transit of the space that stretches from the cathedral entrance to the final altar, with the background full of light from the gold leaf of the *altarpice* and the sculpted upholstery. The accumulation of knowledge, the Sorjuanian outpouring from her knowledge, can be compared with the lateral naves with all their altars and relics, combined with the Baroque expression of Solomonic columns, pedestals, angels, and celestial choirs. However, in the poem, this outpouring consists of symbols and metaphors, of Greco-Latin mythical allusions, the use of Virgil and Cicero. It is an entire epic poem in which the search for truth constitutes the plot. The protagonist, the tragic hero, is reason: it is that reason that knows it is free, and which, through its freedom, is able to stand up proudly. The contents of the poem consist of a description of the events that play a part in the intellect achieving its objective. The fragility of the soul is shown by its advance and transit, in its slow journey through the shadows and caverns of the world beneath the world; the light of this goal animates it, giving it access to a golden place that reason can attain and possess.

If the lines of *Primero Sueño* are counted, it is possible to see Sor Juana divided the poem mathematically at exactly the midpoint of the poem, similarly to an architect who traces the measurements on the ground in order to build a temple. At that midpoint, it shows the haughty reason falls from a precipice, showing its freedom requires a technique and a path for getting up and starting again.

Sor Juana employs logic as a solution in search for wisdom. There is, thus, a fusion between the Baroque and the structure of the second part of the poem. The Baroque is certainly a capricious style, and in order to achieve it the artist must—consciously and in a structured manner—construct those games in movement function by filling the empty spaces. Thus, the vice of the Baroque has been that it is over-blown: it is profoundly rational even while its goal is that its result should not seem rational, all of which the artist conceals so that affectivity can flourish.

In *Primero Sueño*, the first dream of Sor Juana, Novohispanic reason stands haughtily. It is an arrogant type of reason because it has discovered the road to freedom. The road is difficult but its ascension is worth the effort. In this book, I will constantly return to *Primero Sueño* and to Sor Juana's theory of freedom in order to puzzle out that struggle from various perspectives.

But before that, let us learn about Sor Juana's education and context, and let us understand the rules of engagement in a Mexican convent during 17th century.

Women's Education in New Spain

In this chapter, I will explore the education available to women in New Spain. I will focus primarily on the 17th century in order to understand, through the experience of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the contributions and limits presented by the educational model in what is today called Mexico City. The decision to analyze colonial education, beginning with the 17th century, is due to the fact that Novohispanic culture had been consolidated by that time. Furthermore, the stage of cultural appropriation had been consolidated among *Criollo* intellectuals, who reflected on their own condition and on the colonial administration.

The Imaginary of the Novohispanic 17th Century

Politically, New Spain had a Viceroy, a governing board (*Audiencia*) constituted entirely by Peninsular Spaniards, and a City Administration (*Ayuntamiento*) comprising indigenous people, *Mestizos* (mixed race individuals), *Criollos*, and Spaniards. These served as bases for the colonial political structure, whose economy relied on mining and on the cultivation of the lands in the *haciendas*. The Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church had balanced out their functions through a Royal Board, together with the Laws of the Indies and Peninsular Laws, which regulated their relationship. The legitimacy of Spanish rule in New Spain was based on the evangelization of the indigenous peoples; however, the Crown also understood the economic importance of the discovery of the New World, and this issue influenced the goals of the colonial administration.

The fundamental role in the dissemination of Spanish-American culture was performed by women: Josefina Muriel tells us that[193] women passed on Christian values by integrating the family, society and convent life. From six to twelve years of age, girls were taught how to read, write and learn the catechism; they were also given basic knowledge of arithmetic, and were taught to carry out women's tasks. At the age of 15, women could enter a convent. The cloister was an important form of Novohis-

panic life, reflecting as it did the Spanish Crown's need to evangelize conquered lands in order to justify its domination over them. The other female role was marriage, typically arranged for the benefit of both families. If, on the other hand, the couple chose one another freely, they had to be careful with the differences of race: for instance, a marriage between a peninsular Spaniard and an indigenous person would place the couple in a different caste and would lead to a suspension of their political privileges.

Novohispanic society was one of castes—each caste had its own spaces and specific roles, different manners of life, and different ranks. The same was true in the schools and convents exclusively for the daughters of peninsular Spaniards and *Criollos*. When women joined a convent, they underwent a year of training in the novitiate. It was there that they learned to live under the rules of their religious order. As nuns, their occupation now was to imitate the life of the Virgin Mary and of such exemplar nuns as St. Rose of Lima (1586-1617)—the first American saint, whose image often presided over the hall where the novices made their vows of cloister, chastity, obedience, and poverty.

The practice of poverty varied among the different religious orders; for example, there were convents for shod and barefoot nuns.[194] In the latter, poverty was lived in a rigorous manner, with fasting, and the maintenance of absolute detachment and submission. In contrast, the convents for shod nuns were much more flexible: there, the nuns could bring possessions and servants, while living a less rigorous life, although in both cases certain vices were punished, such as drinking chocolate,[195] being frivolous and prone to giving things away, violating the privacy of the cloister, and not maintaining purity and chastity. Convent life involved a multitude of activities: there were administrators, archive catalogers, bookkeepers, spiritual directors, nuns dedicated to the kitchen, to catechize the children, and to caring for the sick. Some made food products and toiletries for sale, others studied, some worked as teachers. The Novohispanic convent was a microcosm, with all the jobs necessary for community life. There are many chronicles of the lives of nuns from the 17th century. A relevant testimony is that of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, a chaplain for female convents. In his work *Parayso Occidental* (*Western Paradise*),[196] this priest and intellectual relates the heroism certain nuns showed in their quest to gain full union with Christ, whom they considered to be their spouse from the day they took the habit. In his chronicles, he compared the behavior of religious women to the original paradise of Adam and Eve. Sigüenza saw convent life as fostering the clean and pure inclinations that, according to Scripture, the first couple had prior to the fall caused by original sin. The female convent model had as its purpose a life of prayer and submission to the heavenly will, and the nuns carried out their corresponding duties by following the counsel given to the nuns and the spiritual direction given by their confessors.

The lack of a specific curriculum meant the occasional individual nun interested in intellectual growth had to be self-taught. Her education could be strengthened via the direction of her confessor, who in those cases guided the nun not just towards a life of sanctity, but also recommended readings in theology, sacred books, and philosophy. In broad strokes, education in the Colonial era followed the Medieval model brought from Europe to the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico, and to the convents and colleges. But Renaissance-era contributions and the experience with the American other (the natives discovered in the New World, and the new forms of rationality that expanded European criteria) helped to give a unique character to Novohispanic culture. As a result, a change of mind-frame occurred in the 17th century. The new generations born on the American continent, and the *Criollos* or Spanish-Americans, no longer saw themselves as equal to their peninsular parents, despite sharing a creed and many customs. Being born in the Americas meant a person had different privileges and possibilities.

The Cultural *Habitus* and Sor Juana's Literary Influences

As I have said in previous chapters, the Baroque style is key for understanding the Novohispanic environment in the 17th century, and in particular the literary works of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. The term "Baroque" refers both to an artistic style as well as to a way of life and thought. It comes from the word *berrueco*, meaning an irregular pearl. In painting, the Baroque style employed chiaroscuro, creating those portraits of saints that appear dark but whose faces are illuminated by a light. In architecture, the key to the Baroque is that it is integrated into sculpture, producing a figure that breaks out of the construction, with the viewer unable to distinguish where the architecture stops and the sculpture begins. The typical Baroque column is, thus, the Solomonic column in a twisted form. This is a style that synthesizes differences by explicitly contrasting them. As a result, in literature, the Baroque unites cultural hyper-sophistication with the emotions, thus creating an incessant dialectic between wanting and knowing:

Let us pretend to be happy,
melancholic thought for a while;
perhaps you can persuade me, though I know the
contrary is true,

for since on mere apprehension
they say all suffering depends,
if you imagine good fortune,
you will not be so downcast.[197]

[Finjamos que soy feliz,
triste pensamiento, un rato;
quizá podéis persuadirme,
aunque yo sé lo contrario,

Que pues sólo en la aprehensión
dicen que estriban los daños,
si os imagináis dichoso
no seréis tan desgraciado.][198]

In poetry, the structure of the Baroque expresses unceasing movements:

He who ungratefully leaves me, I lovingly long for
he who lovingly pursues me, I ungratefully leave;
steadfastly I adore him who abuses my love;
abusing him who steadfastly seeks my love.[199]

[Al que ingrato me deja, busco amante
al que amante me sigue, dejo ingrata;
constante adoro a quien mi amor maltrata;
maltrato a quien mi amor busca constante.]

And as we saw in the previous chapter, Sor Juana wrote long poems such as the *silvas*[200] with distant punctuation and the combination of contraries through sophistication, hermetism, and *pathos*[201]:

Pyramidal, doleful, mournful shadow
born of the earth, the haughty confirmation
of vain obelisks thrust towards the Heavens,
attempting to ascend and touch the stars
whose resplendent glow
(unobscured, eternal scintillation)
mocked from afar
the tenebrous war
blackly intimated in the vapors
of the awesome, fleeting adumbration
this glowering shadow
touched the edge but did not wholly absorb
the Goddess's orb
(three, Diana's faces
that show her beauteous being in three phases),
but conquered only air
misted the atmosphere
that darkened densely with each exhalation
and in the quietude
of this silent kingdom
only muted voices could be heard
from nocturnal birds,
so solemn and subdued
the muffled sound did not disturb the silence.[202]

[Piramidal, funesta de la tierra
nacida sombra, al Cielo encaminaba
de vanos obeliscos punta altiva,
escalar pretendiendo las Estrellas;
si bien sus luces bellas
–exentas siempre, siempre rutilantes–
la tenebrosa guerra
que con negros vapores le intimaba
la pavorosa sombra fugitiva
burlaban tan distantes,
que su atezado ceño
al superior convexo aún no llegaba
del orbe de la Diosa
que tres veces hermosa
con tres hermosos rostros ser ostenta,
quedando sólo dueño
del aire que empañaba
con el aliento denso que exhalaba;
en la quietud contenta
de imperio silencioso,
sumisas sólo voces consentía
de las nocturnas aves,
tan obscuras, tan graves,
que aún el silencio no se interrumpía.][203]

In Alfonso Méndez Plancarte's edition,[204] the initial part of *Primero Sueño* is entitled "The Invasion of Night" ("La invasión de la noche"). Sor Juana speaks here of a "pyramidal shadow" that ascends to the stars, in an analogy of reason's quest for wisdom. The pyramid is a symbol for ancient Egyptian wisdom, in a typically Hermetic allusion. The

"superior convex" is the Moon, which presents three phases. Under its light the sublunar world, so named by Aristotle, remains a world of shadows—nighttime birds—as in Plato's Myth of the Cave. These birds are in flight, rising at night towards the light. This is why everything is in silence: the speaker takes the reader on a journey—it is a poem in motion, without color, in black and white, ad it reveals that while its own structure is decidedly poetic, its contents are essentially philosophical or conceptual. The sophistication of the expression is rooted in the fact that to unravel the meaning one must have broad knowledge about various disciplines; here Sor Juana meshes astrology with mythology and the Baroque.

The literary asymmetry of the Baroque is attained through the complex figure of the syllogism: in opting for argumentative abundance, she produces complicated poetic syllogisms. It is the case of a style that expresses exuberance, and which fits America like a glove because of what the *Criollos* were living through.

The Jesuits who arrived in America towards the end of the 16th century were in charge of the education of the *Criollos*; they were sent by the pope with the mission to fight against Martin Luther's reform and prevent Protestant ideas from gaining entry into New Spain. Luther's reform preached three key points: 1) the *sola fidei* or the position that faith is sufficient to attain salvation, 2) the free interpretation of the Bible, *i.e.* the rejection of the intervention of the magisterium of the Church in the reading of the sacred books, and 3) non-subordination to Rome and the pope. The Jesuits developed a counter-reformist doctrinal program that affirmed the necessity of the participation of personal freedom in salvation. They emphasized that faith was insufficient for being saved, and they also reinforced the role of the tradition and the magisterium of the Church in the interpretation of the Bible, responding to their mandate to strengthen papal power.

With these objectives, they turned to art as a vehicle for expression so the people would assimilate Catholic, counter-reformist doctrines. Thus, in 17th-century New Spain, architecture, sculpture, painting and all other forms of artistic expression, especially literature and poetry—whose style descended from the Spanish Baroque—strengthened Catholic principles. If Luther had eliminated mediations from the churches, the Jesuits had brought saints into these houses of worship together with Marian iconography, patron saints for every possible trade, angels and other characters from the celestial court. The underlying theological aim of this was to humanize the divine project by emphasizing the incarnation of the God and the defense of freedom, linking the contingency of the world to the transcendence of life in Christ. For Luther, the salvific plan was carried out by God, and it was sufficient for the person to have faith, since God knows how human fragility affects the search for salvation. In contrast, Novohispanic art was integrated into a vigorous expression of Catholic values, affirming human responsibility for our capacities and individual subordination to the corporat-

ist project, the Catholic, Jesuit alternative to the national projects of the Protestant countries in the north of Europe.[205] In order to understand Sor Juana's thought, the cultural environment in New Spain should be considered as being appropriate for a new national consciousness, which the *Criollos* were slowly acquiring.

The *Criollo* perception that they were different from Peninsular Spaniards gave rise to an exaggeration of the goodness of the new lands, which they described with flowery exuberance, as having an abundance of fruits, and characterized by a Catholic religiousness superior to the European. Novohispanic Catholicism was represented by *Guadalupe,* the dark-skinned virgin who appeared to the native Juan Diego, according to a legend popularized by the Jesuits. In addition, the *Criollos* sought to gain back the mythic past of the ancient Mexicans, Quetzalcóatl, Netzahualcóyotl, and the first Moctezuma, which would legitimate their past by an appropriation of the former lords of the lands where they had been born. This provoked a fusion between the Catholic counter-reformist spirituality, Nahuatl mythology, an exaggeration of the good aspects of America and the Baroque in the formulation of ideas and feelings. All of this is expressed in Sor Juana's poem *Primero Sueño*, which recounts the journey of reason itself to the heights, to full Wisdom.

But there was another key occurrence, which specialists on Sor Juana have avoided, but which seems to be decisive for the understanding of her work. During the 17th century, the Spanish Crown promoted the reading of books by Stoic authors, both in peninsular Spain as well as in its overseas territories. This was in order to educate the Spanish bureaucracy according to ethical values and thus resolve the issues of corruption and partiality towards persons, vices that were ever-present among high churchmen and in the viceroy's court.[206]

In New Spain, the Spanish authorities promoted the reading of Roman classics from a Renaissance perspective. These readings were meant to foster eloquence, ethics, and the civic values of a colonial society. This had an important impact on the Latin American idea of homeland, since the emphasis on the common good made the various groups and castes become aware of the place they belonged, both in terms of territory and of geography. Such readings impacted *Criollo* literary and poetic culture, as is demonstrated in Sor Juana's writings. In her *Neptuno alegórico* (*Allegorical Neptune*), she establishes an analogy between the recently-arrived Viceroy of La Laguna and the Roman god of water, Neptune:

> As on the crystalline royal beach
> the Great Lord of wet trident
> is loyally accompanied, obediently served
> the cerulean deity by marine pomp.[207]
>
> [Como en la regia playa cristalina
> al Gran Señor del húmedo tridente,
> acompaña leal, sirve obediente
> a cerúlea deidad pompa marina].

The Neo-Stoic influence was due to its humanistic and scientific perspective on reality, something foreign to the traditional, Scholastic view. Still, this assimilation was not the only philosophical path available, since a robust renovation of Thomist thought was underway.[208]

These reforms did only reach an elite. Overall, the Church continued to monopolize education on all levels: the towns and farmlands, the life of the university, as well as in both colleges and convents. However, the Viceroy's court and the bureaucracy were nourished by these new literary currents, which would later have an influence on Novohispanic society and on the intellectual and cultural education of the *Criollos*. Sor Juana pours into her poems a type of Renaissance-flavored Roman wisdom. In her *loa* (praise-song) for the liturgical drama entitled *El Divino Narciso* (*The Divine Narcissus*), she chose *human nature,* the synagogue, and the pagan world as her main characters. Choice is essential to her message, since nature relates either to the synagogue (the Church, the Faith) or to the gentiles (human wisdom, or that of those who disbelieve).

Nature
[O]ne of you applauds God
the other celebrates a man.
Listen to what I tell you
pay heed to my reasons
Since I'm mother to you both
and by virtue of nature's law
it is good for you both to hear me. [209]

Naturaleza
[A Dios aplaude la una
y la otra celebra a un hombre:
escuchadme lo que os digo,
atended a mis razones,
que pues soy la madre de entrambas,
a entrambas es bien que toque
por ley natural oírme.][210]

The Synagogue is subordinated to nature when she says:

Long has my love recognized you
O nature, common
mother of all humanity.[211]

[ya mi amor te reconoce,
¡Oh naturaleza!,
madre común de todos los hombres.][212]

and she also recognizes the *Gentiles* as the epitome of truth and goodness when they say to nature: "instead my love venerates you" (line 35).

A relevant case of that cultural transformation is that of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, the most famous intellectual of his era, whose works incorporate Baroque nuances. His retrieval of the indigenous past was achieved by a classicalization of the ancient Mexican monarchs, whom he describes as wearing the clothes of the great Roman emperors.[213]

Sigüenza attended the school of Tepozotlan, run by the Jesuits. He later attained the rank of Chair Professor in Astronomy and Mathematics at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. He achieved international fame as a cosmographer, and participated in a debate with the recently-arrived Jesuit Eusebio Kino,[214] from which he emerged triumphant, demonstrating the level of scientific sophistication that had been achieved in New Spain. His fame grew due to the publication of the debate and his mathematical demonstration of the path of a comet, as well as a de-mystification of the bad omens it portended. In 1680, the City Council of Mexico City asked Sigüenza to build a triumphal arch[215] for the welcoming of the new viceroy, Tomás Antonio de la Cerda y Aragón, Count of Paredes and Marquis de la Laguna. Sigüenza wrote a piece entitled *Teatro de las virtudes políticas que construyen a un príncipe* (*Theater of the Political Virtues that Make a Prince*), where the new viceroy exemplifies the ancient Mexican monarchs' gift for governance. All of this was reflective of a certain patriotism that characterized the Criollos, as well as the relationship they had established with the indigenous past. For this viceregal reception the cathedral authorities requested that Sor Juana produce a second triumphal arch, in response to which she wrote the famous *Allegorical Neptune.* This is a work with clear Stoic features in which the use of Roman myths confirms the influence of Stoic texts over the course of the 17th century[216].

But Sigüenza was a male and had a better education than Sor Juana; as a result of this, his possibilities of making his way into Novohispanic society were greater. He studied with the Jesuits, the Renaissance religious order that boasted the best academic level of the time. Even though he never completed his initiation into the Company, he was educated by that Catholic elite. After his years in the school at Tepozotlán, he was ordained a priest of the secular clergy, and later achieved the rank of Chair professor of Astronomy and Mathematics in the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. His impact and fame were strengthened by his wealth, and Sigüenza knew how to find his way in the spheres of royal and ecclesiastical power. As a priest of the secular clergy, he obtained the position of chaplain to female convents, in addition to being an advisor to the Viceroy himself. Sigüenza's fame and his economic means meant he was able to buy codices and libraries from the families of noble natives, such as those of the De Alva Iztlixochitl family. In addition, he was able to obtain scientific instruments and recent works on science from Europe, none of which were available to a woman in Sor Juana's time.

Despite this fact, and even though the feminine education described above was the only one possible for the majority of women of New Spain, there was nonetheless a better education available to the elite women of the vice regal court. The opportunities for education were larger for the spouses of functionaries, ladies in waiting and women close to people of the court. At the court one needed a sense of humor in

order to deal with the fast-paced courtly life: courtly innuendoes, dances, and theatrical representations, lectures on Latinity and debates on political and scientific topics.

The education available to men in monasteries and at the university was more in-depth than that which was available to women in the court. Indeed, it was in male institutions of learning the true peninsular and *Criollo* intelligence was rooted. These places were where scientific and theological debates were held; they were institutions and organizations reserved for men of the upper class, some of whom were unable to occupy the most powerful posts in government. The *Criollos*, as children of Spaniards born in America, could not occupy high royal or ecclesiastical posts, which were reserved to peninsular Spaniards in order to place limits on the power of the Spanish-Americans. Separate from this privileged space, female education was also available in convents, but not to married women. The family life of a woman in this era, restricted to being a spouse and mother, was defined by the limits that the female gender had to observe, in accordance with a well-established mindframe concerning any type of manual or spiritual labor.

In conclusion, female education in New Spain was fundamentally available at the court and in the convent. The hypothesis I am proposing in this investigation is that this type of education strengthened female capacities, which waned when women were deprived of a kind of prominence almost entirely restricted to men.

Sor Juana, Her Production and Fame

Sor Juana herself reveals why she professed as a Hieronymite nun; in her autobiographical letter *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* she tells us: "And so I entered the religious order, knowing that life there entailed certain conditions […] most repugnant to my nature, but given the total antipathy I felt for marriage, I deemed convent life the least unsuitable and the most honorable I could elect […] [there] was the matter of all the trivial aspects of my nature that nourished my pride, such as wishing to live alone, and wishing not to have any obligatory occupation that would inhibit the freedom of my studies, nor the sounds of a community that would intrude on the peaceful silence of my books."[217]

We have many first-rank works available for tracing the life and works of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.[218] To aid the reader in entering into the bio-bibliography of the nun I will refer fundamentally to three relevant works: the one by Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, o las trampas de la fé* (*Sor Juana, or the Traps of Faith*),[219] a compulsory work for those wanting to become acquainted with the life and deeds of the nun; there are also the *Obras Completas de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (*Complete Works of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*),[220] the canonical text for studying her and understanding her

teachings. Finally, as an introductory text to her life and works, I should mention a little book by Ramón Xirau entitled *Genio y Figura de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (*Genius and Figure of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*),[221] an excellent work for those coming to the study of Sor Juana for the first time. It is brief in its exposition and clear in its contents, and provides the reader with the fundamental chronology of her life and works. The text claims that Juana Ramírez de Asbaje was born in 1651, the daughter of Captain Pedro Manuel de Asbaje y Vargas Machuca, a Basque, and of Isabel Ramírez de Santillana, a *Criollo*. Juana herself was born in San Miguel Nepantla, near Mexico City, and she began to educate herself at the hacienda of Panoayan, where her maternal grandfather lived. This man had an important influence on her, caring for her as would a foster father, since although her father recognized her as a legitimate daughter, he never returned to take care of the family. There she accompanied her sister to the school in Amecameca, where she learned to read starting at the age of three. Between 1657 and 1658, she wrote her first work, a *Loa eucarística* (*Laud to the Eucharist*) which is not extant.

As a child, she wanted to go to university, and begged her mother to dress her as a man so she could get in. In 1659, she moved to the capital of Mexico, living with her uncle Juan de Mata and his spouse, an educated woman with relations in the court. It is said that by 1660 she had learned Latin in twenty lessons. In 1664 the viceroy Sebastián de Toledo, Marquis of Mancera arrived in Mexico City with his spouse, a fact that would constitute a turning point in Juana's life. Having heard about her genius, the Marquises brought her to live with them in the capital. It was Viceroy Mancera himself who arranged for Juana to be examined by forty professors of the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico, which increased her fame even more.

Juana lived three years at the vice-regal court. As Octavio Paz has noted, she would certainly have had experiences of love and heartbreak, of literary learning, and of learning about the political and academic problems of the world and New Spain. During that time, she had a confessor and spiritual director, the Jesuit priest Antonio Núñez de Miranda, a powerful man and confessor of viceroys, who would be decisively important in her life. In 1667 Juana entered the order of Barefoot Carmelites as a nun, but later changed to the Hieronymite convent of St. Jerome, an order with a more relaxed rule. She herself, in her autobiographical work *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*,[222] explains the reason that she entered the convent of the Order of St. Jerome:

> *reading and more reading, […] study and more study, with no teacher but my books […] I learned how difficult it is to study those soulless letters, lacking a human voice or the explanation of a teacher. But I suffered this labor happily for my love of learning.* [223]

Sor Juana stayed in the convent until her death on 17th April, 1695. The greater part of her production was written during those twenty-seven years. Outside the convent, she wrote poems on her own initiative, as well as by request, in particular during her stay at the court. However, the greater part of her production dates from her time in the convent—praises, Christmas carols, exercises of the Incarnation, Triumphal Arches like *Neptuno alegórico* (*Allegorical Neptune*), her great intellectual poem *Primero Sueño*, the *Auto del divino Narciso* (*Auto of the Divine Narcissus*) together with her entire work in prose. In fact, during her life in the convent, Sor Juana knew not only fame but also the publication in 1689 of her *Obras completas* (*Complete Works*), entitled *Inundación Castálida* (*Castalid Inundation*). We also have documentation that the ex-viceroy Mancera, and in particular his spouse, promoted this new book in Spain. In 1690 a second volume was printed: it was entitled *Complete Works* and was reissued several times over the following years. In 1700, after her death, the third volume of her *Complete Works* was published under the title *Fama póstuma de la Fénix de México* (*Posthumous Fame of the Phoenix of Mexico*).

At this point one might wonder, what moved Sor Juana to develop her talent and capacities if the intellectual environment of the 17th century was so limited for women? The question prompts us to explore in greater depth the relations the Sor Juana cultivated within her convent.

The Education and Knowledge of Sor Juana

In a stupendous article,[224] Antonio Rubial describes the spaces of communication that those who entered monasteries and convents had available: the nuns informed themselves about the exterior world through visits, letters, interactions with other nuns, relationships with family, interactions with their religious teacher, sermons at Mass, confession with the priest and chats in the *locutorium.* The *locutorium* was a space delimited by the bars that separated the convent from the street or the exterior world; at the same time the locutorium was seen from the inside as the space between the bars and the cloister. This intermediate zone was the forum for social gatherings, family visits, instructive chats, exchange of medicines and products made by the nuns. The sale of products permitted the nuns to socialize, and they took advantage of these exchanges to give spiritual direction to laypeople, chat about recent events, receive visits from friends and, in particular, allow their conventual experiences to pass out through the bars: apparitions of saints, miracles, their communication with the souls now in Purgatory, etc. In addition to her relations via the *locutorium*, Sor Juana received special visits in a hall of the convent unattached to the cloister. We know that she welcomed important visitors there, such as Viceroy

Mancera, who strengthened her intellectual life. In addition to these forms of communication, there was an epistolary relationship: Sor Juana used letters to communicate with the bishop of Puebla, who read her writings and kept her briefed on academic talks given by the Pueblan Jesuits. It was also through letters that she maintained communication with the Countess of Aveiro, an intellectual woman of the Portuguese aristocracy who informed her about literary and scientific matters. In addition, she communicated by letter with Portuguese nuns of a high intellectual level, as well as with marchioness Mancera when she returned to Spain, where she supported the publication of Sor Juana's *Complete Works*.

Another contact with the exterior world was her spiritual director and confessor, who most eagerly provided the nuns with knowledge on the two worlds: that outside the cloister, and that in Heaven. For example, Antonio Núñez de Miranda encouraged the nun to develop her capacities and intellectual talent, but he demanded that she write poetry related to the sacred scriptures rather than erotic poetry. Nevertheless, all these means of communication pale in comparison with the communication with the world Sor Juana enjoyed by way of the books she devoured in her cell at night. When she died, 400 books were found in her personal library. This is where the true intellectual formation of the nun took place: she had works by Descartes and many other modern thinkers. Her knowledge was attested to by *Primero Sueño* (here *P.S.*); she would later claim in the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* that it was the only poem she had writen out of pleasure. *Primero Sueño* is perhaps the most relevant testimony about her knowledge: it is through this work that we know she was up to date on Descartes's mechanistic conception of nature, (*P.S.*: 165; 200-216; 570ff; 580ff; 701) and she had read the *Discourse on Method* (*P.S.*: 435-454), that she knew the theory of knowledge of Aristotle,[225] the myth of the cave in Plato,[226] Greco-Latin mythology,[227] the Hermetism of Atanasio Kircher and the influence of neo-Platonic philosophy,[228] Thomist philosophy,[229] the theme of solitude in Góngora,[230] Sor Juana herself employs Góngora's simile at the beginning of her poem), the Culteranism of Quevedo and Góngora[231] the idea of space in Gracián,[232] Stoic thought,[233] the Latin rhetoric of Ovid,[234] the works of Macrobius, etc.[235] In addition, the poem constantly intertwines the cycles of the heavens in its verses, *e.g.* the phases of the Moon and the eclipsing of the sun. For instance, this is the case with the final awakening announced at the end of the poem, which is paired in the final verse with the rising of the sun; it reads "the World illuminated and I awoke".[236] This last approach to the poem is of special relevance, since the poem describes an eclipse of the moon, which was later demonstrated to coincide with a real eclipse.

Sor Juana herself explained the diversity of all these topics and authors she knew: "I continued to study ceaselessly divers subjects, having for none any particular inclination, but for all in general; and having studied some more than others was not owing

to preference, but to the chance that more books on certain subjects had fallen into my hands, causing the election of them through no discretion of my own."[237]

In her account of her own readings she provides an educational itinerary for minorities who were not members of an educational institution. For instance, she cites Portuguese editions of theology, works by Atanasio Kircher—on whom Atanasio Quirqueiro draws attention in his work *De Magnete*—the Fathers of the Church, scientific treatises, etc. She argues that being unable to select works in accordance with their subject matter need not be an unsurmountable challenge, since "[the books' subjects] conform and are joined together with admirable unity and harmony"[238] and hence one can mitigate the problem of not having a large library available. However, she writes about the great difficulty she confronted in her pursuit to educate herself: "I undertook this great task, without benefit of teacher or fellow students with whom to confer and discuss, having for a master nothing other than a mute book, and for colleagues an insentient inkwell"[239]; with this phrase Sor Juana shows she considers dialogue to be essential in the educational task, a novel issue if we take into account the educational system of her time placed the argument of authority in the books of the tradition. Furthermore, she complains about accidental difficulties in finding time to study: "and in the stead of explication and exercise, many obstructions, not merely those of my religious obligations [...] rather, all the attendant details of living in community,"[240] such as reading in her cell with the nuns in the next cell singing and playing the guitar, or to be studying and have two quarreling handmaids show up, begging her to be the referee in their argument, or to be writing and to receive in her cell the visit of a well-intentioned, but clumsy, nun friend. In her autobiographical description, which extended to the interests which moved her to study, it can be seen that she opts for a naturalistic interpretation of human capacities, such as when she recounts her initial steps in reading the great works of the Western tradition. She says: "from the moment I was first illuminated by the light of reason, my inclination towards letters has been so vehement, so overpowering [...] [due to a] natural impulse that God placed in me."[241] For Sor Juana "letters" are a "black inclination."

Specialists in the thought of Sor Juana have interpreted this way of seeing her inclination as a consequence of the repression she was suffering at the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities due to her taste for profane letters. We are fortunate to have documentation that shows this repression slowed her down, for she had to somehow to get around the prohibition of the authorities. However, I do not want to focus now on those restrictions but rather on the explanation she gives for her inclination. For Sor Juana, the human capacities, tendencies and preferences that present-day pedagogy labels as vocational are derived from the temperament, that is, from an impulse that freedom would not be able to restrain.

The educational itinerary that underlies her account proposes a structure in accordance with the neo-Stoicism to which I have referred, *i.e.* a structuring of the potencies together with organic, psychological, mental and rational faculties, in order to channel that impulse. In this way, Sor Juana promoted the free, self-taught practice of appropriation and relation between the distinct types of knowledge, lessening the importance of authority. On the other hand, she notes the strength of the impulses on the inclinations, thereby absolving herself of guilt. She tells of a significant occurrence in the convent: "they have asked that I be prohibited from study [...] at one time they did this through a saintly and ingenuous Abbess [...] who commanded me not to study. I obeyed her (for the three some months her power to command endured)." Sor Juana claims that during those months she continued to read the "book of nature," *i.e.* the universal machine.[242]

She narrates next how she was able to study the geometric forms and their relations by observing a storage room, and how the prohibition was in fact a stimulus for perfecting her study: "I looked on nothing without reflection, I heard nothing without meditation."[243]

Respuesta is Sor Juana's ideological testament. It is here that we can see her struggle, her inspiration and her educational proposal for women. She demonstrated women have participated in the making of history: "I find a Deborah administering laws, both military and political, and governing a people among whom there were many learned men, and governing the city where there were so many wise men. I find a most wise queen of Sheba, so learned that she dares to challenge with hard questions the wisdom of all wise men."[244] She also proposes a female educational itinerary for New Spain: "Oh! how much injury might have been avoided in our land if our aged women had been learned, as was Leta [...] and failing this, and because of the considerable idleness to which our poor women have been relegated..."[245] Sor Juana explains the state of things: "the force of necessity, and the absence of wise elder women."[246] She goes further and shows that it is possible to educate women: "because through the immediacy of contact and the intimacy born from the passage of time, what one may never have thought possible is easily accomplished."[247]

Sor Juana's prose illustrates what she had already been stating in her poetry. As I have said, in the poem *Primero Sueño* Sor Juana describes her intellectual journey towards full wisdom, an outlook that coincides with *Carta Atenagórica*. It was in this missive that she refutes the teaching of the Jesuit Antonio Vieira, the great Portuguese theologian of the era, in response to his *Sermon of the Mandate*.[248]

In both, the debate and the written text, Sor Juana says:

> *we need to recall that God gave human beings free will, with which they can want or not want to do good or evil, without therefore suffering violence, since it is an homage that God pays them and an authentic letter that he granted them.*[249]

For Sor Juana, the greatest benefit of love (*fineza*) that God has bestowed on man is freedom. The text of Vieira deals with the greatest *fineza* Jesus has given humanity and cites the opinions of St. Augustine, of Aquinas and of Chrysostom. Sor Juana, however, astutely points the conversation towards the legacy of Christ, which some interpret as having given his life for men, others as having washed the feet of his disciples, and finally, as having made himself Sacrament in the Eucharist. We are on an absolutely different level when she says she shall not speak of the greatest *fineza* of Christ but rather of the greatest gift God has given to human beings: retiring from the world of humans in order that perfect liberty might exist among them. And the consequence of this act of giving is that now, "at the root of this freedom, it is not sufficient that God wants to be of the human race, if humans don't want God to be theirs."[250]

Here we have both Sor Juana's humanism and her cosmopolitan proposal, each stemming from the Jesuit tradition. Freedom is the first distinguishing feature of man; it is what makes people into siblings and diversifies them. Sor Juana has a freedom-based conception of human understanding; for her, the human being is perfected to the degree in which he or she makes free decisions. God does not grant over-protective benefits because his greatest legacy is giving freedom to humankind. This point marks a difference from both the *sola fidei* of Luther and the traditional individual subordination to authority in Catholicism. We are in the presence of an alternative proposal for understanding the human being, a new educational project where faith has a place, but within a humanist framework in which personal freedom and the intellectual capacities of every individual are the limit for personal autonomy.

The argument concerns whether divine authority (even higher than the ecclesiastic one) can connect with people if they don't want him to participate in their lives. In contrast to Luther, Sor Juana envisions a more active participation of the subject in regards to faith. It is individual people, with the active participation of their freedom, that act out their lives in the world and their transcendence beyond this world. Against the Catholicism of her time, the nun held that the rectitude of human action emanates from the subject *qua* efficient and final cause of his or her actions. As a result, neither beliefs nor moral or rational interpretations can be imposed. Sor Juana was undoubtedly influenced by the philosophical arguments of members of the Society of Jesus[251] and by the Portuguese positive theology of her times. Sor Juana sets out an integral education that she puts at the apex of theological knowledge. Still, what type of theology does she conceive of in *Carta Atenagórica*? She herself responds:

> *One needs much knowledge of history, customs, ceremonies, proverbs and idioms of the times in which they were written in order to know the nature of the references and allusions in many passages of the Holy Scripture.*[252]

Scholastic speculative theology did not include these scientific disciplines, which had been developed by Renaissance scholars. By demanding such knowledge, Sor Juana commits herself to the so-called positive theology. This influence comes from Portugal, where the Jesuits of the University of Coimbra were translating the works of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. They had adopted the new methods and approaches that Suárez and Molina had created for reforming Scholasticism, submitting the medieval Latin texts to a philological, grammatical and rhetorical scrutiny, as taught by the Renaissance. Sor Juana says in *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* and in other recent discovered texts that she aspired to study theology but in order to attain that she had to begin by studying natural sciences, logic, rhetoric, physics, arithmetic and all the auxiliary sciences: history, geography, law, learning the customs of the gentiles, [together with] music and astrology.[253] In a word, Sor Juana aspired to an intertwined knowledge that includes the various particular disciplines and the scientific advances of her time. This knowledge is not subordinated to any imposed tradition, and is able to fly of its own accord. Just as reason is elevated in the poem *Primero Sueño*, this is a rational knowledge that is the same in men and women, and that has as its foundation a dialogue between distinct persons and personal observation.

Closing this topic, we may question the following: Why is the work of Sor Juana still alive today? I claim that, as with no other poet or intellectual in colonial Mexico, Sor Juana's thought represents the discourse of minorities in the face of the authorities of their time. The life of Sor Juana incarnates this exclusion: she was an out-of-wedlock daughter in a society in which Christian marriage was a requirement, and not being the child of a Spanish mother she did not form a part of the peninsular elite. Moreover, she was a woman in a society in which privileges were for men, and she stood out as an intellectual and poet in a world in which the activity of reason was also for men only. She was a critic and analyst of theologians who were recognized in Europe, and she refused to obey religious authority when its mandates went against her convictions. She achieved public fame when she was cloistered in her convent, and from there she criticized the backwardness of the education available for women in New Spain. Moreover, she made use of irony in referring to the academic authorities. But Sor Juana also made constructive proposals, and thus she cannot be classified as merely a dissident whose merit derived from her protests. In fact, she was able to develop her intellectual and poetic capacities, overcoming the obstacles she faced. This is her great legacy to women: in the realm of science she proved to have advanced knowledge concern-

ing the movement of the stars, and was up to date with the debates and advances in Renaissance science that were opposed, at times, to Scholastic science. In literature, she demonstrated her knowledge of the Latin tradition, and in science she also knew of the advances in the physics and anatomy of her time. In the terrain of theology, she showed she knew the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, together with those advances of the Jesuits of her time that related to the controversy about freedom and its relationship with grace and divine providence. In the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* she proposes a project for feminine education.

In her poetry, Sor Juana takes the psychology of the human being into account, expressing both its contradictions and the arising of a Latin-American *Criollo* identity, even in the face of Spanish colonialism. This is why the so-called *Phoenix of Mexico* remains a paradigm for the Americas, for all the minorities that are struggling against the establishment. Her work represents the formulation of a counter-power discourse that shows the path to freedom.

Chapter III

Sor Juana and the Influence
of the Coimbra Jesuits

The Philosophy of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Five Philosophical Journeys in *Primero Sueño* and a Heterodox Proposal

In this chapter I present two points that should be taken into account when reading the poem *Primero Sueño*[254] by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. First off, I have sought the philosophical-poetic justifications for the text, as well as its possible interpretations, in order to demonstrate that any unilateral focus on its content and meanings must be shunned. *Primero Sueño* has to be read as it is, an open and polysemic philosophical poem that incorporates the cultural influences of a recently-born Novohispanic *Criollismo* in a novel fashion.

Secondly, my investigation proposes a new reading of the poem, focusing on the connection and relevance of 17th century Jesuit theology to the author's lines.

In my opinion, the emphasis on the differences between the nun and Núñez de Miranda—Sor Juana's confessor for two decades—have eclipsed a key point of influence in the spiritual direction and counseling of the Jesuit confessor. I refer to the budding development of the theological thesis of the middle science, or conditioned science. In his *Tractatus de scientia Dei*, Núñez de Miranda advocates having the students learn that there exists a vast and complex terrain dependent on the decisions of the human being, decisions through which "in learning to use freedom, the human being will learn the capacity to respond to a society that has determined patterns and structures."[255] It is likely that this theological influence was transmitted from the confessor to the nun, and that it strengthened many of her decisions. The problems between Núñez de Miranda and Sor Juana occurred after years of spiritual direction, during which there were apparently no conflicts. What was the intellectual environment of Núñez de Miranda that could have influenced Sor Juana so? In the recently published work by Ramón Kuri Camacho entitled *El barroco novohispano: la forja de un México posible* (*Novohispanic Baroque: The Forge of a Possible Mexico*), Camacho presents a translation of unpublished works by Jesuits from the 17th century, writing

on the topic of conditioned science. These texts open a new hermeneutic path for Sorjuanian writings. The theory of the middle science proposes the formation of a patriotic consciousness that is forged by incorporating certain ethical and political theses of Francisco Suárez. It seems likely that this science had an influence on the nun, specifically via the Jesuits.

In the present chapter I point out the connections between these texts and the life of Sor Juana, along with a theological renovation of the conditioned science of her times. I wish to emphasize that the hypothesis I present here would not have arisen without the recent studies conducted by Kuri Camacho.

The methodology I have followed in my research consists of the analysis of three key Sorjuanian texts: *The Athenagoric Letter*, *Response to Sor Filotea de la Cruz* and *First Dream*.[256] On the basis of these texts, I present an intertextual analysis that connects them with the theses of middle science, the theology of her time.

The Historical Context of Jesuit Theology in 17th-Century New Spain

The Jesuit *ratio atque institutio* is known to all—it is an integral methodology that systematized the intelligence and perfected polemical reasoning, which gave the order a great degree of strength and popularity. In the century and place discussed here, the Jesuits were already professors of diverse forms of language and communication, due to a *ratio* that made them worthy of "a multitude of signs, images and perceptive, theoretical and literary genera that drenched the entire population, from the Sunday worshippers to the convents and political hierarchies."[257] This form even found its way to the prisoners and the slaves, the students and nuns, since the Jesuits had an "endless supply of strategies and methods useful for each social class and cultural level."[258] For those in the Company, the key to this dissemination was theater, since it facilitated an eclectic language that united theological teachings with compendiums of Mexican history through a type of Baroque art with strong social impact. The second half of the Novohispanic 17th century is rich in key occurrences that foster this incorporation. For instance, there is a consolidation of Jesuit Guadalupanism: once Fr. Miguel Sánchez (1606-1674)[259] began to speak of the dark-skinned virgin, he was followed by the writings of Jesuits like Lasso de la Vega, Becerra Tanco y Florencia.[260] Additionally, in 1647 the canonization of Francisco Borja—third Superior General and saint of the Society of Jesus—was being celebrated in a multitude of events, such as poetry contests, carnivals, and comical, theatrical masks that mocked bishop Palafox, opponent of the Company. In this epoch, this can also be seen reforms in university studies and the growing autonomy of the various

Novohispanic castes from the Peninsula, which gave rise to a consciousness that was different from that of the metropolis. The 180-degree turn we see in the 17th century was also due in part to an economic surge resulting from mining, commerce, and textile manufacturing.[261]

New Spain was also influenced by the vice regal policy of expansion toward the North and the emergence of an autonomous *Criollo* aristocracy. This gave rise to a generation that Antonio Rubial has called "pre-Enlightened," with Jesuit intellectuals and lay and religious thinkers that were attracted to them, as was the case for Francisco de Florencia, SJ (1605-1681), Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora and Juana Inés de la Cruz.

In this environment of renewal and reformulation, Sor Juana is influenced and in turn becomes influential through her own texts. *Carta Atenagórica*[262] proves her opposition to traditional influences that hindered her development and autonomy in thought and action.[263] If we did not take into consideration this particular heterodox confluence from the past and the present of the 17th century, we would be interpreting the writings of Sor Juana from a traditional perspective,[264] or else through modern enlightened categories, alien to her context.[265] In contrast, it is precisely in the 17th century that there was a 180-degree turn in mentalities, which is a result of Jesuit theology, a turnaround that is expressed through the Baroque, both literary and architectural.[266]

This influence is so clear in Sor Juana that the political-theological fusion typical in Jesuit authors already appears in her early sacramental works.[267] Several Sor Juana specialists have underscored the modernity of the nun in defending her freedom in the face of the bishop's command.[268] Nevertheless, they fail to establish a connection between her confessor, Núñez de Miranda, the Suarezian theological theses and Sor Juana's literary texts. For example, Puccini holds that *Carta Atenagórica* was not precisely a reply to Antonio Vieira regarding what the greatest *fineza*[269] or proof of love left by Christ to humankind was: it was rather a defense of her intellectual freedom. According to Suárez, and to Sor Juana herself, both questions, as seen from the perspective of the theology of conditioned science, arise from a single problem: the greatest *fineza* of Christ upon his advent was to not bequeath any *fineza* at all, *i.e.* to leave human beings with the freedom to decide their future by free acts. Decisions about Christ's greatest legacy had to do with free will, since the conditioned science affirmed the human being has full moral autonomy in the practical-prudential domain, in particular with respect to the saving life of grace. That is, in the theological polemic between grace and freedom, Novohispanic Jesuits believed divine grace saved in an absolute manner; however, from the efficient perspective of freedom, grace does not act, but leaves the human being in autonomy.

The dispute about the greatest gift of Christ and the detonator of the problem with the bishop is found in the *Athenagoric Letter. Letter from mother Juana Inés de la*

Cruz, religious of the convent of St. Jerome of Mexico City, in which she renders a judgment on the sermon of the mandate preached by the Most Reverend P. Antonio de Vieira, of the Society of Jesus, in the Colegio *of Lisboa*.[270]

In her letter, she defines human understanding as "a free power that assents or dissents necessarily according to what it judges to be or not to be the truth, to yield to the sweet flattery of desire."[271]

Augustine of Hippo believes that Christ's greatest gift to us was his death.[272] From Thomas Aquinas we learn the greatest bequest of Christ was to have remained with us in the sacramental host[273] while Chrysostom teaches that his greatest legacy was to have washed the feet of his disciples. According to Sor Juana, Christ's greatest *fineza* was renouncing all corresponding love because "Christ did not want the corresponding love from us for himself, but wanted it for us."[274]

In getting to know the theology of the middle science as presented by the Novohispanic Jesuits of the 17th century, one can more deeply appreciate Sor Juana's argument in *Carta Atenagórica*. In it, Sor Juana defends the exercise of her own freedom at the same time she champions her interpretation of the greatest *fineza* given by Christ. In the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* the nun responds sharply to the bishop with a defense of free will. It is then that the bishop of Puebla and the bishop of Mexico City join together to demand obedience and silence. The poem in *silva*, *Primero Sueño*, appears after this theological-ethical controversy as a muted reply. For Sor Juana, the paradox of *Dream* is that it communicates at the same time that it maintains silence; it consists in saying poetically what silence is, that silence that the nun, by express episcopal authority, must conform herself to. The poem is a testimonial text that narrates a contradictory event in a tragic mode, even though it lacks a biographical content: the speaking of silence.[275]

The *Reply to Sor Filotea de la Cruz* demonstrates her silence and shows she knows how to keep quiet:

> *Forgive this digression, my lady, which the force of truth has torn from me. I confess I was looking for a subterfuge that would allow me to evade the difficulty of responding to you. I had nearly determined to let silence be my response. But silence is a negative thing, and although it explains much through its emphasis on not explaining, it is necessary to affix some brief label to it so that it is understood to be signifying silence. Without this label silence would not be saying anything, because its proper office is to say nothing.*[276]

There is a constant use in *Primero Sueño* of the tragic *hybris* of the *Poetics* of Aristotle. In lines 74, 226, 380-382, and 947, Sor Juana's first word appears, with the term

"I say" and is linked to the constant drama of a soul that is at the same time the creator and the protagonist of the *silva*. Upon wanting to see everything, "she saw nothing." The tragic hero of the poem is reason, which arrogantly seeks a full understanding of the Cosmos and which goes astray in the attempt, albeit without any cause or fault. Sor Juana uses the Aristotelian *hamartía* in order to reveal a mistake: the attempt by reason to gain access to complete knowledge in one fell swoop, thus violating the imposed order. For this reason, Maria Dolores Bravo has proposed the tragic hero of the poem is Phaeton,[277] who incarnates *pathos*. As Bravo says, "the key is that by the daring decision of his will—the glory of the good charioteer, safe from any challenge from authority, consists of his also being a *sinecdoque*[278] of the disturbing tragic element that inspires human beings to excel through the daring decision of their own free will. They escape the limits imposed on their freedom and their imagination." As conceptual philosophy, the poem achieves an artistic-theological identity via the counterpoints of the Baroque and the Suarezian chasm between grace and freedom. Sor Juana herself gives us a synthesis of the poem: "Since it was night, I slept, and dreamed that I wanted to understand, all at once, all the things that constitute the universe. I could not even make out a single individual by its categories; disappointed, dawn came and I awoke."[279]

Georgina Sabat Rivers is, perhaps, the scholar who has provided the best summary of the poem:

> *The narration begins with a description of the arrival of night and of how all animals sleep. This description constitutes a kind of prologue to the human dream, strictly speaking, which occupies the center of the poem, and which contains a main action. Later on the individual begins to awaken. The day comes and they awaken completely. This epilogue is shorter than the prologue, but formal symmetry is evident.*[280]

There is a threefold structure in the poem: from night and sleep, the dream of the soul, and the final awakening. The structure is achieved via the Baroque tool of the contraries: sleep - awaken; shadow - light; night - day; seeking knowledge - doubting it; calm - movement; high - low... it is a "poetic polysemy, Hermetic, plastic and deliberately conceptual."[281] Sor Juana emphasizes the growing drama involved in the search for knowledge. The drama is better emphasized if we understand the Jesuit renewal that was underway at the time; the Jesuits freely seek knowledge once the autonomy of the free will has been emphasized through the Suarezian theory of middle science.[282]

The interpretation of the poem in the light of its historiographic context becomes complicated if we do not keep in mind what knowledge meant in the 17th century. Beatriz Ferrús Antón, in her interesting article entitled "Me obligaba a que escribiera

todo el tiempo: sobre las vidas de las monjas en el período virreinal,"[283] draws attention to an essential point about knowledge as it was seen in Sor Juana's epoch, and notes that *imitatio* remained in use during the Baroque period as an artistic, moral, and religious principle. As a result, there appear numerous references to fathers of the Church, Eastern authors, both Greek and Roman, in addition to the mandatory medieval Christians.

Imitatio has to do with the classical concept of *episteme*, which represents an objective and external world where the subject is still passive. Sor Juana is found precociously at the epistemic crossroads between the objective tradition and the subjectivizing tradition that is activated by freedom. But those interpreters who believe there is an anticipation of enlightened modernity in the poem's active valuation of knowledge are deluded. The nun found herself participating in the alternative epistemic project promoted by the Jesuits as a response to the Scholastic tradition and the European Enlightenment. In Sor Juana, *imitatio* is reformulated, thus bringing the ancient symbols of the medieval tradition and of Renaissance Hermeticism into the present. Her interest in profane things is understood together with her theological inspiration. This is a new religious focus that affirms the human being: it is a humanism based on social and political action in favor of the exercise of freedom. This human revitalization is a new patriotic project.

Primero Sueño and Its Viewpoints

We have arrived now at the possibility of unearthing the deeper meaning of *Primero Sueño*. Written between 1690 and 1692, the poem is a *silva* and its measures evoke free movement. This is a poem in which *imitatio* covers the history of ideas in Mexico, as Gaos correctly indicates, since it presents the state of philosophical knowledge of Sor Juana's age. It is a poem that—due to its multiple meanings—can be interpreted from diverse standpoints. Because it is a poem, and since it holds an ambiguous message, its conceptual content is integrated within a Baroque structure. This is how there can be a correspondence between beauty and ideas, musicality and intellectual flow, as well as between imagination and thought.

In addition, it is a text that, in the on-the-mark words of Sánchez Robayna, "belongs in the category of limit texts"[284]: it delves into what is unutterable, the silence of the soul, in order to access primal knowledge.

We can also speak of an *imitatio* of Góngora's poem *Soledades*. It is clear that the text alludes to the Spaniard, something typical of the Mannerism of the 16th century

and which continued in the 17th century in New Spain. However, Sor Juana selected a model, chose a master and afterwards wrote "in her own way."[285]

In writing in her own way, the model consists in continuing the *imitatio*—originally combined—and bringing the sources up to date. We need to keep in mind here that the alternative Jesuit project of the Baroque is clarified by observing the Hermetic-Renaissance path of *Primero Sueño*. By bringing mythic and religious characters from years gone by into the present time, Sor Juana gives them a totally different meaning. They are no longer gods or real myths; rather, they are ideas represented and brought into play in order to affirm the freedom and heterogeneity of knowledge.

The general plan of the poem separates it from the repertory of names, myths, and codices that must be clarified prior to philosophical conceptualization. Rocío Olivares Zorrilla is the author who has perhaps best analyzed this perspective in *Primero Sueño*.[286] She was the first to point out its Renaissance resonances,[287] and has shown that the topic of silence in the poem derives from the Pythagorean silence that Juana took from the *Hieroglyphica* of Valeriano and the *Dialogs* of Luciano. In the latter, the "days of Alcion," as Zorrilla tells us, "appear as winter days of silence and of doldrums on the sea, as Aristotle described them in *History of Animals.*"[288] Following Olivares Zorrilla, it is important to note that, as with every Baroque poet, Sor Juana combined freely and creatively the elements she took from texts like *On Isis and Osiris* in Plutarch or from the repertory of Baltazar de Vitoria in his *Theater of the Gods of Paganism*. In order to bring in the ancients, Sor Juana had to liberate them from pagan content and, in accordance with her Christian faith, making them into mere symbols of their poetic mission. The setting produces a poem that combines the rhetorical planes of the *inventio* and of *elocutio*, and in her text Sor Juana creates a code for herself. Here, the central idea is a vision of the world that discreetly suggests a silence of content that is biographical, poetic, and theological.[289]

There is, then, a thread that connects the classical-oriental, the Greco-Roman, and the Early Modern, for example, with the appearance of Harpocrates (lines 70-80), who is associated with the Orphic night of Pico della Mirandola in his *Magical and Kabbalistic Conclusions*.[290]

This relationship between dream and microcosm shows that the *imitatio* of Sor Juana is no longer passive. It should be clear that the Hermetic-Renaissance aspect of the poem has an artistic purpose, *i.e.* it is subordinate to the Baroque. On the other hand, there are epistemic contents in the reading of the text which can be dealt with from multiple philosophical points of view, such as the Platonic perspective, the Aristotelian categories, the Scholastic vision of a Thomistic stripe, even Hermetic and Cartesian proposals. On the basis of this conceptual combination, one could hold that in the poem, starting with Plato and continuing through the *Iter extaticum* of Kircher, names appear that are contributed by the Latin tradition of Cicero and Macrobius;

this is demonstrated by an allusion to the infinite circumference and another to the pyramids (lines 340ff.).

In contrast, Aristotelian arguments[291] are more prominent in the poem. The doctrine of the sublunar and supralunar zones is clear (lines 285-291), the hylemorphic theory (lines 157-160), substance and accidents, which are also predicated of the categories (lines 285-291 and 576-583); the theory of potency and act (for example in lines 446-450); the agent intellect (lines 192-209 and 240-264) as well as the Stagirite's cosmogony (in lines 151-191).

Her allusion to the degrees of life can be interpreted as Scholastic[292] (lines 620-660); likewise, with the issue of the inner and outer senses (lines 255ff). The doctrine of intentional species (in line 402ff) clearly evokes Thomas Aquinas, as do Sor Juana's allusions to the first cause (in 408ff). In addition, there are allusions to Scholastic logic in the verses and in the general structure that they mention, compose and divide; further, there are mentions of the Bible and the Neoplatonic elements that survive in Thomism, such as analogy *ad unum*.

Alternatively, one might adopt a Cartesian point of view regarding the use of dreams and the awakened state in the poem, because of the mechanicist explanation of human physiology (verses 205-212, 216) and Descartes's vision of the world as a machine (verse 165). The Cartesian method is also found in the poem (line 570ff), in a verse regarding gnoseological skepticism in 701, as well as at the fall of reason (line 470ff). Some say Francis Bacon influenced the poem, for instance in line 680ff. The same has been said with regard to the topic of induction in line 583.[293]

A possible path would be an analogy with the *Ascent of Mount Carmel* of St. John of the Cross. The silence and the dream provide ground for John's negative platform, and his wager on freedom; this is shown in the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*:

> *The holy chosen vessel, St. Paul, having been caught up in paradise, and having heard the arcane secrets of God, heard secret words that men may not utter* [Audivit arcana Dei, quae non licet homini loqui.]. *He does not say what he heard, he says that he cannot speak it. So, of things one cannot say, it is needful to say at least that they cannot be said, so that it may be understood that remaining silent is not the same thing as having nothing to say; rather, it is being unable to express the many things there are to say.*[294]

She also alludes to St. John the Evangelist and later reiterates the point explicitly:

> *St. John the Evangelist says that if all the marvels our Redeemer wrought "were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that would need to be written." (St. John 21:25) [...] because in those words St. John said everything left unsaid, and expressed all that was left to be expressed.*[295]

As an open text, *Primero Sueño* is filled with references common to all times and affiliations and expresses heterodox values that are typical of the Jesuit mentality of the 17th century.

The Theological Proposal of *Primero Sueño*, or towards a Re-reading and Contextualized Integration of the Perspective of *Primero Sueño*

As Carmen Beatriz López Portillo has accurately noted, every reading of Sor Juana has to take into account a multitude of points of view and influences, a variety of psychological-cultural elements and principles, power and counter-power, both philosophical and scientific, thus guarding against any illicit reduction of her contribution through falling into dogmatisms. López Portillo tells us that

> *the dichotomous vision of the world has insistently split reality into extremes opposed to one another, and has reduced the possibility of its understanding to nothing more than dialectical discourse. This an attempt that totalizing will carries out as a dominating expansion of what Sor Juana criticizes when she says "a proof is found for everything, / a reason on which to base it, / and nothing has a good reason / since there is reason for so much."*[296]

The rules of the philosophical outlook underlying her writings are clarified by understanding the variability of factors in the personality and poetry of Sor Juana. A study by Elías Trabulse[297] shows how multiple viewpoints are necessary to understand even just Sor Juana's personality. To counter the common belief that she entered the Hieronymite convent exclusively in order to study and dedicate herself to the intellectual life, Trabulse presents an edict signed by the prioress of the Hieronymites in 1688, where Sor Juana appears as the bookkeeper and administrator of the convent.

Note that this convent was the richest of New Spain, and between nuns, servants and slaves, it accomodated three-hundred people.

One must also keep in mind that Sor Juana published many of her writings between 1688 and 1695. This included the *Carta Atenagórica* of 1690, where she disagrees with Vieira, the famous Portuguese bishop and theologian.

If we consider her work as bookkeeper for the convent, together with her intellectual production, there appears a personality and character connected to the day-to-day world, one who was able to make time for economic-administrative activities as well as the reading, research and writing of texts. This distances us from a false interpretation of the 17th-century nun who wanted to hide away in solitude in the convent in order to study when she was punished by the authorities. While it is true Sor Juana suffered and had to struggle against the traditional ideas of her age, a unilateral and simplistic vision of her situation causes us to lose sight of the truth about her personality and capacities. Reductionism separates us from the authentic *leitmotiv* of her philosophy: Sor Juana does not deal—as a priority—with the topic of solitude and absence, as her best interpreters have held.[298] For the nun, the topics of solitude, absence, and deprivation are prolegomena to a philosophy emphasizing the autonomy of personal freedom. This was a key issue in her view on free will, one which she had inherited from the theological disputes in the Jesuit schools of her time.

As I have said before, during the 17th century, a debate about the middle science or conditioned science arose among the *Criollo* Jesuits of Puebla. This was a doctrine of science inherited from Luis de Molina and Francisco Suárez[299] in Spain. The Mexican Jesuits nuanced it, moderating certain theses of de Molina while privileging others by Suárez in order to articulate a new project for Novohispanic society.[300]

There were three theological ideas that evolved through the reflection of *Criollo* Jesuits: the relation between grace and freedom, the autonomy of the person in the exercise of his or her free will, and the consequent fictionalism and probabilism which arose from this proposal. Camacho[301] holds that one cannot understand either the Mexican Baroque, or the 17th and 18th centuries in general, if one does not study the theological evolution of this problem. This theological proposal had repercussions in the public and private realms of society. It is a social project that provides an alternative to that proposed by enlightened European modernity, and which drinks from a renewed Scholasticism founded on certain theses of Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Ockham, Vitoria and Soto. These theses were ultimately integrated into the political theology of Suárez.

Matias Blanco was the American to formulate the state of the question: reconciling Thomas Aquinas with Scotus and Suárez on the issue of human will as the *topos* of freedom. The proposal consisted in confronting human freedom in its daily exercise of choice with the concrete situation of New Spain and its encounter with the Other. The solution lay in demonstrating that the people have sovereignty, even against a tyrant,

a right that is common to all peoples. As previously presented, in the Jesuit proposal there was an underlying theological axiom: the dual nature of the Son of God made possible the difference between idol and image; in turn, the Incarnation of the Word justified the knowledge of oneself and of the other via visual production. For the Jesuits, if Catholicism is the religion of the Incarnation and of appearance, the world and the flesh are affirmed at a deep level. Human beings are similar to God due to their freedom, and it is in free will that affirmation and acceptance are to be found. They clinged to the necessity of grace as a relation to the divine, but emphasized the efficacy of human freedom as contributing to the Creator's plan. Jesuit *Criollos* like Pedro Abarca and Miguel de Castilla[302] defined the problem; others like Figueroa Valdés[303] proposed a change and reform in teaching; some, like Tomás Alfaro,[304] connected the issue of grace and freedom with the Ignatian experience of the Spiritual Exercises. Núñez de Miranda[305] discussed the issue of contingent possible future events, demonstrating a fine-grained and subtle appreciation of the autonomy of free human action. Others, like Diego Martín Alcázar and Pablo Salcedo,[306] delve into the compatibility between grace and freedom, proving there is no incompatibility between the two. Some, such as Matías Blanco, take a step in the study of this conditioned science by developing its logical ground. They begin with human intentionality and prove that its logical truths do not have any causal nexus, *i.e.*, that they are counterfactual.

Basically, the Jesuits are eliminating Aristotelian naturalistic necessitarianism while privileging the ethical and political environment of the human being, to the detriment of traditional essentialism. At the same time, the theological thesis of the middle science permits an appreciation of the depth of the Mexican Baroque. It was never just a question of an artistic style brought from Europe and incorporated into Latin-American society by cultural hybridism; rather, it was a concrete expression of a new project for society.[307] The Novohispanic Baroque—inseparable from the Jesuit and Criollo proposals of the 17th century—appears as a new way of seeing the world and understanding God. This is a theology of freedom that looks at the world with surprise and incorporates the issues of solitude, privation and the conscience—not in a solipsist or interiorist manner, but rather as a personal drama of the human *ethos* that decides with autonomy. Due to freedom, invention, and creativity, the concrete human being knows the world better, emerging with new capabilities by making art and personal decisions. A *Criollo* celebration of Guadalupe is at the apex of this integration. Guadalupe is both the dusky indigenous virgin and the Mother of God of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The *Criollo* Jesuit Miguel Sánchez[308] relates her appearance to the text of Apocalypse 12. In a paragraph, Kuri Camacho explains the socio-political project this theological-aesthetic proposal generated during the Novohispanic 17th century:

> *The Jesuits conceive the state of the indigenous person in a radically distinct manner: since they have no consciousness of their acts, unsophisticated and barbarian men can irretrievably lack knowledge of the existence of God, without therefore being guilty of infidelity or grave sin.*[309]

It is not just a question of the justification, on the part of the native people, of acts due to lack of knowledge of the new gospel law, but also of the autonomy of moral freedom when the human being acts in a world which does not know God.

I will return to this point after a theological digression concerning the influence of Pueblan Jesuit *Criollismo* upon Sor Juana, who was contemporary to them. It is important to note there is a tendency amongst scholars to uproot the personality of the nun from her religious and spiritual environment. It is true Sor Juana is of a rational character, and that any mystical idealization of her persona is wrong. It is another thing, however, to wish to unlink her from the Baroque Catholicism of her era and from the theological openness the Jesuits maintained in her times.

In my view, her participation in the development of this *Criollo* theology has been minimized. This is shown by her works and her trajectory. "For Sor Juana, humanizing and Christianizing are partners."[310] In her the issue of the Other and of Catholicism are indissolubly united; this is shown by her Christmas carols for Black and Indigenous people[311] and her *Incarnation Exercises*, whose title alone reveals its affiliation with the Jesuit Criollo theology discussed above. Her syncretism, typical of her spirituality and theology, appears in the *Divino Narciso (Divine Narcissus)* where she speaks of Aztec communion as an anticipation of the Eucharist; Sor Juana incorporates different times in an optimistic and inclusive way, unifying ruptures, conciliating contraries. Her interpretations of differences reveal an active intellectual exercise that is not subordinated to grace in the predestined fashion advocated by Augustine of Hippo. For her, the central mystery of Catholicism is the Incarnation of Christ.[312] This was the topic of the dispute with her confessor Núñez de Miranda, who followed Vieira in putting the Eucharist at the ceter of things. This theological background leads to her prioritizing her passion for knowledge and action as shown in her *Carta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*.[313] Sor Juana regarded freedom as the primary legacy of Christ:

> *God gave us free will, the power to desire or not desire to do good or evil. When we do not exercise it, we suffer violence to ourselves, because it is a tribute that God has granted us and a deed of authentic liberty that he has awarded us.*[314]

And concerning the greatest *fineza* of Christ according to Sor Juana: "The greatest demonstrations of divine love, in my opinion, are the *finezas* God omits performing because of our ingratitude."[315]

If Sor Juana includes the issue of absence and privation in her texts, it is because from that consciousness human beings make the act of deciding possible. Juliana González reiterates the thesis proposed here when she claims that Sor Juana was not Augustinian in the sense of believing that in the absence of divine grace human beings are unworthy, nor was she fearful about her own salvation.[316] The active participation of free will develops one's imaginative soul, turned towards the particular and outer; this is how knowledge in Sor Juana is representative, poetic, and visual. Now we can fully understand the philosophy written in poetic form in *Primero Sueño*, which has the purpose of representing the eternal universe to the soul. The theology of middle science had opened the doors to a dialectic between the exterior and the interior, the temporal and the spiritual. In the poetic opening of *Primero Sueño* all philosophical positions have their place: there is here an unavoidable Cartesian rationalism, whose skepticism and doubt form the mesotes or middle ground in the poem.[317] However, there is, at the same time, a place for the Hermeticism of Kircher, which develops out of awe in the face of the cosmic mystery.[318] The Aristotelian theory of the agent intellect is present, in the sense that the image refers to time as well as to what is atemporal, timeless.[319] The Platonic dualism of soul and body is to be found here and, at the same time, it is possible to trace the Scholastic structure of the poem[320] as a theory of knowledge that begins with the simple grasping of judgment, and migrates from the latter to reasoning and back again.[321]

All of this is possible; what we have here is a philosophical poem that, like the great myths of Plato, can be interpreted in several ways.[322]

This is the open, mythic-poetic formulation of philosophy. However, in Sor Juana's *Primero Sueño* there is something more: there is the syncretism and heterodoxy of a philosophy that expresses itself poetically. This is not just in order that it might remain open and always prevailing, as in the myths of Plato, but also so that it would be formulated in the eclectic and syncretic manner in which philosophical identity arises in these Latin American lands. It is an original philosophical proposal that seeks to express all possible paths in an integrated fashion. For the nun, the underlying axiom in these American lands is that God, out of love, had given to a concrete person the divine gift of freedom. The amazement at the cosmos expressed in the poem is the art of the legacy of this humanizing task. Solitude consists of the fact that concrete human beings must exercise their own freedom.

This hermeneutic proposal can be connected with the historic context in which the final events of Sor Juana's life took place, in order to conclude her proposal. If we compare the response Sor Juana gives to the Núñez de Miranda, who had repri-

manded the nun for getting involved in worldly things rather than remaining with the spiritual, we encounter the justification for her fame in the world and for her passion for a theology that affirms freedom, and the possibility that women might one day enter that field. In the letter Sor Juana defends the right and duty of women to use their intelligence in religious matters.[323]

In *Primero Sueño*, one can find all of the following: intellectual curiosity; rationalism and moral autonomy; eclectic positions; the topic of the Other; the synthesis between the Judeo-Christian tradition and that of Greece and Rome; the heterodox integration of modes of argumentation; the frank Hermeticism of the Jesuit Kircher; her lacking any obsession with miracles; the presence of mythologies; exuberance in form; and the conceptualization of the background of the poem in black and white. All these elements of *Primero Sueño* reflect a serious philosophical position regarding the world and human reason, in the manner of the middle science or determined science of the Novohispanic 17th century.

As I have mentioned before, in 1690 Sor Juana had an argument with bishop Antonio Vieira, who promoted a spirituality close to Jansenism, as would Juan de Palafox y Mendoza. The first of Palafox's reprimands of the Jesuits consisted in denying them permission for their theatrical representations. If one understands the fusion between the Jesuit Baroque and theater, it will become obvious that this punishment went to the core of Jesuit pretensions. Afterwards, he eliminated the Jesuits Chair in rhetoric. Sor Juana defends—as the Jesuits would also do—the theology of Thomas Aquinas united with that of the Fathers of the Church. Confronting her own confessor, Núñez de Miranda, who believed the Eucharist was the greatest legacy of Christ, Sor Juana responds that "the greatest *fineza* of Christ lay in not giving us any *finezas* at all," in order to prove that God had provided the human race with absolute freedom.[324]

Here we have the nexus between Sor Juana and the conditioned science of the *Criollo* Jesuits of the 17th century. Nonetheless, that kind of response to the episcopal authorities was—in the words of Elias Trabulse—a genuine provocation. For Bishop Vieira, to deny and displace interest in the priority of the Eucharistic gift of Christ implies violating Rule 18 of the fundamental principles of the Congregation of the Purest that he supported, a Rule that dealt with frequent communion:

> *Sor Juana underestimated the theological judgment, as well as the convictions of the brothers that Núñez indoctrinated [...] From the point of view of her political relations, the entirety of her argumentation could well have turned out to be suicidal. And if the jokes of Sor Serafina are added to this, we are authorized to come to the conclusion that Sor Juana was not just politically imprudent and indiscreet, but was in fact overtly reckless.*[325]

In the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea* we witness the frontal collision between Sor Juana, the bishop Santa Cruz and Vieira. She states:

> *If the problem is with the* Athenagoric Letter, *was it not a simple expression of my feeling, written with the implicit permission of our Holy Mother Church? For if the Church does not forbid, in her most sacred authority, why must others do so? It was audacious that I proffered an opinion contrary to that of Vieira, but, as a Father, was it not equally audacious that he spoke against the three holy Fathers of the Church?*
>
> *My reason, such as it is, is not as unfettered as his, as both issue from the same source. Is his opinion to be considered a revelation, as a principle of the Holy Faith, that we must accept it blindly?*
>
> *I did not touch a thread of the robes of the Society of Jesus [...] if it is, as the censor says, heretical, why does he not report it? [...] if it is rash, [...] then laugh!"*[326]

But Sor Juana's imprudence had been present throughout the entirety of her works, and not just in defending the cultured and the profane in the face of religiosity. Her works were marked through and through by her affirmation of the world, of love, of philosophical knowledge and of the science of her time, issues deeply related to the theological position of the middle science. Her proposal concerning the relationship between grace and freedom responded by incorporating the issue of the "Other" from the perspective of her feminine nature, together with the topic of the indigenous peoples and blacks. In a word, she affirmed the moral autonomy of every person, as well as their equality. The *Criollo* Jesuit project involved a theological-poetic proposal that was questionable from the perspective of orthodox Catholicism, even though none of the authors I have mentioned were accused of heresy in New Spain. It also involved a new mentality, a *habitus*, of which the poetry and prose of Sor Juana had been made carriers: independence-minded and favoring popular autonomy. The result of the conditioned theology in Suárez was the legitimate insubordination of people against a tyrant. Ultimately, it was a question of a political renewal on the basis of a re-reading of the Scholastic sources themselves. Philosophy, politics, and morality brought the thinkers and poets much closer to their people. While profoundly Catholic, this mentality was nevertheless dissident: in their program, they one-sidedly criticized the excesses of the political and ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Conceptually, in the speculative environment, Sor Juana expressed the "whereto" of philosophy in New Spain through a "black and white" poem. It is no accident the philosophy that arose in the 18th century in Mexico, after the expulsion of the Jesuits, is the eclecticism of Benito Díaz de Gamarra. But from a practical point of view, Sor Juana's work narrates the journey of the soul towards emancipation.[327]

The Presence of Suárez in the Work of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

In recent years there has been an important change in how scholars approach the prose work of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. On the one hand, many journal articles and works about Sor Juana's cloister have appeared, in addition to contributions by philosophers, philologists and men and women of letters, all of whom have strengthened the interdisciplinary dialog that permeates her writings. On the other hand, we have now acquired a certain distance from Octavio Paz's book *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o de las trampas de la fe*, a distance responsible for a greater equilibrium and adjustment regarding the poet's interpretations. The masterful command of Paz's pen and the wit and erudition of his theories dominated the first years after the book's publication, but later authors such as Tarsicio Herrera Sapién, Aureliano Tapía Méndez, Alejandro Soriano Vallés, Dolores Bravo Arriaga, and Dorothy Schons, to mention only a few, proposed new interpretations of the nun's works. In addition, after the publication of Paz's work, new writings by Sor Juana were discovered and new translations were produced of a number of philosophical works from the Novohispanic 17th century. These translations forced a reworking of some of the hypotheses that were in play during the 1980s. This time saw an explosion of literary criticism about Sor Juana's work, and many critics left Octavio Paz and his ideas out of their writings. Among the new documents that surfaced was Ramón Kuri Camacho's translations of treaties by Pueblan Jesuits contemporary to Sor Juana. These texts are relevant to better understand certain poems and prose works of the nun, as well as the contact she had with the group of Pueblan Jesuits. Recall that Antonio Núñez de Miranda was Sor Juana's Jesuit confessor for more than twenty years and she maintained a constant epistolary relationship with the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz. It is time to re-examine the influence these philosophical discussions on the relations between grace and freedom had upon Sor Juana.

In this chapter I will not take into account the interpretations of Octavio Paz, nor will I refer to the Pueblan Jesuits who participated in these debates, having dedicated a

previous analysis to these controversies. What I purport to demonstrate here is the presence of Francisco Suárez in the works of the nun. I take as settled the question of the reception of the texts of Suárez and Molina by the Pueblan Jesuits, as Kuri Camacho has clearly demonstrated; in addition, I consider that the matter of the connection Sor Juana had to those texts through her confessor has also been settled. She also corresponded with Bishop Santa Cruz of Puebla and other Jesuit colleagues. As I suggested in an earlier chapter, it seems now is an ideal time to trace the Suarezian stamp on the nun's works, in order to better delimit this particular philosophical path in the understanding of her thought.

Philosophical Backgrounds in Suárez on the Topic of Freedom

Three topics are crucial for understanding the defence of freedom that Suárez mounts: 1) the choice of a new manner of accessing sources, both classical and theological; 2) an anthropological proposal that responds to Luther's denial of freedom in *De servo arbitrio*, and 3) the alternative project of nationhood that Suárez proposes, which involved a rejection of absolutism. Some of these issues can be found formulated in Sor Juana, and I will sketch them towards the end of this chapter. Concerning the first point, *i.e.* that Suárez chose a new method for accessing theological and philosophical sources, we must bear in mind that his starting point is in the *Disputationes metaphysicae* (*Metaphysical Disputations*, Salamanca, 1597), which is where his separation from the Scholastic tradition began. In that work, Suárez holds that theologians must know philosophy, since otherwise they will not be able to carry out their task. He is one of the first thinkers that no longer speaks simply of theology, but rather of a *Christian philosophy*, a combination with a religious element, but has given priority to philosophy.[328]

We know that Suárez, prior to writing his commentaries on the third part of the *Summa theologica*, paused in order to study what in its day was called natural wisdom:

> *I am momentarily obliged to interrupt them [...] (referring here to his theological writings) [...] or, rather, to leave them until later, with the goal of reviewing—and enriching, now that years have passed—my notes about natural wisdom. Many years ago, when I was still a young man, I prepared them and taught them publicly, with the goal that they might be communicated to everyone for the common good.*[329]

The "Proemio a las Disputaciones Metafísicas" (Preface to *Metaphysical Disputations*) reveals both the *intentio auctoris* and a radical change: it is no longer possible to

do theology without philosophy, something that Thomas Aquinas had already stated in the 13th century. In this text, Suárez maintains the position that philosophy is the handmaid of theology, but grants to reason a preponderant role in the explanation of theological questions. This led, for example, the Suárez specialist J.F. Courtine[330] to claim Suárez seems to be saying that if we possessed the common *rationes* of being, *i.e.* substance, causes and other similar notions, we would be prepared for the study of theology. The issue is not trivial, since it connects Suárez to a slow secularization of theological knowledge at a moment when he had begun to explore the problem of the relationship between grace and freedom. In his commentary on the relationship between philosophy and theology in Suárez, Víctor Sanz Santa Cruz claims a proof of this can be derived from the fact that at the beginning of the second part of the *Disputationes metaphysicae*, specifically in disputation 29, Suárez defends his decision to place the study of God as known by natural reason there, instead of placing it at the end of his work, *i.e.* in the third and final part, as the metaphysical theologians of a medieval stamp habitually did, following the criteria given in Book XII of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. It is obvious that "prescinding from the starting point of revelation" did not, to Suárez, imply a separation from what is known by faith. Rather, it established a different methodology, a certain theological naturalism that placed an emphasis on human freedom as opposed to grace. In so doing, Suárez is laying the groundwork for a new form of humanism, different from that humanism of a supernatural flavor characteristic of Scholasticism.[331]

The point is that Suárez was slowly distancing himself from the traditional Scholastic interpretation of an Aristotelian-Thomistic persuasion. He is moving instead to an Aristotelianism of a Renaissance character, something that can also be seen in Sor Juana. What is the Suarezian response in the face of this Aristotelian option? A rational, critical and aporetic approach to the interpretation of the world painted by the Aristotelian texts. The University of Coimbra, the last place where Suárez taught, would bear witness to this choice.[332]

It is well known the 16th century saw a wide array of Aristotelianisms which differed according to their reception of Alexandrian influences, the tradition of the humanists of Padua, Averroist influences, or those of a medieval Aristotelian-Thomistic type, etc. In contrast to the interpretations that had prevailed in the curriculum of the University of Paris after so many fights between the mendicant religious orders, the Spanish Jesuits, led by Suárez, formulated a type of Aristotelianism that demanded a direct study of the sources and a critical analysis of the texts and their arguments. In this era, the texts of Aristotle provided the guiding framework for the four faculties of Arts, Theology, Medicine, and Law. There were also certain points developed by the reading of the four basic works studied each semester in Arts schools: the *Organon*, *Ethics*, *Metaphysics*, and *Physics*. There was only one of the obligatory texts not written by Aris-

totle, namely the *Summulae* of Peter of Spain, which were used as a prolegomenon to logic. The texts of Aristotle served as a pretext for analyzing contemporary issues and their implications. Nevertheless, there were certain key issues that influenced the Jesuits' choice to change their approach to Aristotle. The first had to do with moral pre-knowledge, a topic in natural law that concerned Suárez greatly, since he could not see how to reconcile it with the individual freedom he defended. The Aristotelian conception of moral pre-knowledge, formulated in the *Topics* and in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, was seen as the fruit of a principle not universal among human beings. Instead, it was the product of convictions held by the various peoples, the product of the interpretations of a community's elders and wise citizens, *i.e.* of those most highly reputed and listened to. For Aristotle, traditions play a preponderant role in the rightness of the moral act, and Suárez opted for this formula as a solution to the defence of freedom, and as a conciliating solution for resolving the problems that arise from differences in uses and customs among different peoples.[333]

The second point Suárez takes from Aristotle, and which undoubtedly comes to him from the Salamancan imprint of Victorian vein, is his approach to ethical and political problems in the light of the four Aristotelian causes. Regarding moral action, Suárez shares the Augustinian idea that in itself an action is neither good nor evil, but is so by the rightness or perversion of the form or intention of the agent, with that intention being united intrinsically to the matter of the moral act. This view permits the Jesuit to emphasize the personal will of the human being and his or her effort. In opposition to Luther, Suárez wanted to give greater autonomy to freedom, to personal merit, and to the responsibility of the agent. The problem is complicated, because, to the degree that Aristotle opens a space for the traditions of a people, Suárez is left vulnerable to falling into moral relativism. He avoids this problem by emphasizing the key to freedom is not in the efficient cause, which, to express it in a colloquial and vulgar way, would imply that anyone could do as they please. Rather, freedom is in the final cause, since it is with a view to the end that human beings commit themselves to projects and invest personal effort in order to act according to virtue. Daniel Schwartz, a specialist in Suárez at the University of Cambridge,[334] is perhaps the person who best understands this point in Suárez. He explains the problem Suárez confronted in emphasizing freedom arose because his proposal had immediate consequences in the realms of politics and the family. The family is a pre-political organization exempt from the law, and it was unclear how the autonomy of individual freedom meshes with the governance of the family. Schwartz claims that for Suárez,[335] as with Aristotle, the family is conceived of as the space for friendship relations of a moral type, thus saving him from the pitfall of a freedom without responsibilities or any center of authority; the emphasis was placed on virtue instead. Individual freedom is sometimes seen as being potentially in conflict with the political life, but Schwartz says that Suárez saw no opposition, for

the public space has laws. A conception of autonomous freedom for all human beings certainly undermines the political theory of the legitimacy of the absolute monarch and his or her dynastic inheritance. Still, the nation isn't therefore stripped of authority, since the community itself holds supreme power.[336]

The second antecedent for understanding Suárez's commitment to freedom is noting he has Martin Luther as an interlocutor.[337]

We know Luther's interlocutor in *De servo arbitrio* is Erasmus of Rotterdam, to whom Luther explicitly dedicates his arguments. However, recent studies[338] have demonstrated that in the *Metaphysical Disputations* Suárez has Luther as his implicit interlocutor. In *De servo arbitrio*, Luther claims that human certainty derives from faith, and that the academics are skeptics, stealing inner peace from the faithful. For Luther, the discussion about human wisdom must be preceded by a clarification of our capacity for free will, in order to establish the importance, it has in the face of God's grace, and whether, in the divine pre-science, there remains freedom for the free play of contingencies.[339]

Luther responds that there is no such freedom; God sees everything beforehand, and things occur necessarily by his will. For Luther *omnia necesario fieri*, everything happens by necessity. The result is that God separates himself from human beings once he has created them, with the divine plan thoroughly predetermined. The issue of separation from God will be extensively dealt with by Suárez and by Sor Juana, but they will use a completely different approach. To Luther, this separation from men means He's a hidden God, while to Suárez and Sor Juana, God retreats so freedom may appear.[340]

For Luther faith is confidence about things that are hidden; he holds that salvation depends on God and what humans must do is abandon themselves. Against this interpretation, Suárez enters into the discussion about whether the knowledge (science) of God is the cause in act of all things. This has to do with the old Augustinian argument in *De Trinitate*, lib. 15, chap. 13, followed by Thomas Aquinas in *S. Th.*, 1 q., a, 8 and which Luis de Molina takes up again in his *Concord of Free Will*.[341] However, in regard to the issue that brings us together, Luther's conclusion is that:

> *Everything we do, everything that happens, even though it appears to occur mutably and in such a way that it could have occurred in another manner, in fact occurs necessarily, without being able to occur in any other way, and speaking immutably with the will of God.* [342]

Luther closes the arguments in his treaty by saying "the will of God is efficacious and cannot be impeded."[343] Suárez formulates his new concept of freedom based

on this conclusion, beginning with the nominalist notion of subjective law that he encountered at the University of Salamanca.[344]

Recent studies have shown that the authors belonging to the so-called School of Salamanca extended or adopted, each in his own way, the notion of "rights of the people" —an antecedent of human rights—, a faculty that Francisco de Vitoria had himself developed from Augustine and Thomas Aquinas with a few nominal contributions of Jean-Charlier Gerson and Conrad Summenhart.[345]

For this moderate tradition of late nominalism, the capacity to overview the rights of the people was considered a faculty, which was understood as the ontological power any being has of acting in accordance with its nature. It is by following this reasoning that Gerson went so far as to offer rights to animals and inanimate beings.[346] On the other hand, since human acts are rational Suárez would only interpret law as the *potestas* of a moral order in human beings.

Here I need to provide some context about Suárez's intellectual education: Francisco Baciero tells us Suárez and his uncle Cardinal Francisco Toledo were the "ambassadors" for the political philosophy of the School of Salamanca at the Collegio Romano. Suárez studied at Salamanca between 1566 and 1570 and it was there that he wrote his *De legibus ac Deo legislatore* in 1612, and his *Defensio fidei* in 1613. It was first in *De legibus* that he expressed the idea of subjective right as a moral faculty. "[T]hese faculties belong to human beings, and it is they that are owed rights, since rights are properties of the man or woman.[347]

According to the analysis of Charles Lohr, the Jesuit Aristotelianism of Suárez took shape as an academic philosophy in the following manner: as a professor in the University of Alcalá, 1585-1592; as professor in Salamanca, 1593-1597; and finally, as professor in Coimbra, 1605-1617. Suárez wrote *De Incarnatione* in 1590 in Alcalá, although he published it in Salamanca in 1595; from that time on, Suárez began to prepare the polemical work *De Auxiliis*, which would be published posthumously. Beginning with the treaty *De incarnatione* Suárez connects the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius with the theology of the divine Word and with the connection between grace and human freedom. This treaty would be the definitive work for configuring the present problem. The *Metaphysical Disputations* date from 1597 in Salamanca, from the same period in which he finishes *In Tertiam Partem Divi Thomae*.[348]

His proposal is that work grants autonomy to freedom; however, human beings are not just conceived as being able to dominate the physical realm, but the spiritual as well, and as a result they can control themselves in body and soul. This reflecting upon one's own self is what makes personal freedom into a right.[349]

Suárez calls freedom an active potency of the will, and believes human beings exercise a specific causality because of that freedom. The divine concurrence does not determine the act of free will but rather leaves to that will the decision to act or not act,

to do something or its opposite. In Baciero Ruiz's opinion, Suárez dedicates *Disputations* XIII-XXVII to a reconstruction of the problem of freedom on the basis of the four Aristotelian causes, defining a cause as "the principle that inserts being into another essentially." In his theory of the virtual act, Suárez explains that the step from potency to act in the understanding and the will is taken by these faculties by themselves and not by something outside the subject. It is therefore possible to act without divine concurrence. In *De Legibus*, II-14, Suárez states: "if we speak of natural law as a power or dominion, then it is true that freedom is from the natural law positively, because nature itself has conferred on humankind a true dominion over freedom." His conclusion is that the force that obliges the subject to act morally is intrinsic, that it does not stem from the subject as an efficient cause, but is instead a final cause; *i.e.* that as a subject it is better and more appropriate for his or her life. This last part is what justifies the political consequences in Suárezian anthropology.

The Presence of the Thought of Suárez in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Next, I will analyze certain poems by Sor Juana, poems where there is an anticipation of what she will present in her own prose works. She wrote a "Prologue for the Reader" for the first part of her complete works (entitled *Castálida Inundación*); later on, the same prologue would be used at the beginning of the critical edition of the Fondo de Cultura Económica, edited by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte. She states: "[...] there is nothing more free / than human understanding, / to which God does no violence, / so why should I?"

The lines clearly allude to the problem of the relationship between grace and freedom—they are intended to show that God parts from the life of human beings, thus respecting their freedom. A poem explicitly about the topic proposed here is the second piece catalogued by Méndez Plancarte as a *philosophic romance*. Note that light that appears in this and further poems under the perspective underlined; these poems had been previously mentioned, but now with Suárez's lectures, acquire a profound meaning, Sor Juana's true intention. At the beginning of the poem the verses allude to the free and creative understanding, full of opinions, able to reflect on itself and not limited to working with additional data:

Let us pretend to be happy,
melancholic thought for a while;
perhaps you can persuade me, though
I know the contrary is true:[350]

[Finjamos que soy feliz,
triste pensamiento, un rato;
quizá podréis persuadirme,
aunque yo sé lo contrario.]

There she shows the struggle between knowledge, learning and studying, and her confessor's prohibition to study profane things:

For since on mere apprehension
they say all suffering depends,
if you imagine good fortune,
you will not be so downcast.

Let my understanding at times
allow me to rest a while,
and let my wits not always be
opposed to my own benefit.[351]

[Que pues sólo en la aprehensión
dicen que estriban los daños,
si os imagináis dichoso
no seréis tan desdichado.

Sírvame el entendimiento
alguna vez de descanso,
y no siempre esté el ingenio
con el provecho encontrado.]

Sor Juana makes constant allusions to free understanding:

All people have opinions and
judgments so multitudinous
that when one states that this is black
the other proves it is white.[352]

[Todo el mundo es opiniones
de pareceres tan varios,
que lo que el uno que es negro
el otro prueba que es blanco.]

This is far from Lutheran immutability, where determinism constitutes the core of the divine plan for human beings. Instead, Sor Juana speaks of variety in judgement and the contingency of things, which she proves through philosophy:

The two philosophers of Greece
offered perfect proof of this truth
for what caused laughter in one man
occasioned tears in the other.[353]

[Los dos filósofos griegos
bien esta verdad probaron:
pues lo que en el uno risa,
causaba en el otro llanto.]

Furthermore, this goes against the universality of knowledge, and against the imposition of criteria:

A proof is found for everything
a reason on which to base it
and nothing has a good reason
since there is reason for so much.[354]

[Para todo se halla prueba
y razón en qué fundarlo:
y no hay razón para nada,
de haber razón para tanto.]

And for the same reason she rejected harsh judgments and the absurdity that they imply from God's perspective:

All people are equal judges,
being both equal and varied
there is no one who can decide
which argument is true and right.[355]

[Todos son iguales jueces;
y siendo iguales y varios,
no hay quien pueda decidir,
cuál es el más acertado.]

Later come the key line in her interpretation of pre-knowledge or the guarantee of an immobile principle that establishes criteria:

If no one can adjudicate,
why do you think, mistakenly
that God entrusted you alone
with the decision in this case?[356]

[Pues si no hay quien sentencie,
¿por qué pensáis vos errado,
que os cometió Dios a vos
la decisión de los casos?]

She coincides with Luther on the fact that only God can judge, and thus criticizes ecclesiastical authority due to its interventionism in personal consciences:

Oh why, inhuman and severe
and acting against yourself, in
the choice between bitter and sweet
do you wish to choose the bitter?

If my understanding is my
own, why must I always find it
so slow and dull about relief
So sharp and keen about distress?[357]

[¿O por qué contra vos mismo,
severamente inhumano,
entre lo amargo y lo dulce,
queréis elegir lo amargo?

Si es mío mi entendimiento
¿por qué siempre he de encontrarlo
tan torpe para el alivio,
tan agudo para el daño?]

She reiterates that God gave humans freedom, which they might use it in their understanding:

This appalling, daunting practice
this harsh and onerous toil
God gave to the children of men
for the sake of their discipline.[358]

[Este pésimo ejercicio,
este duro afán pesado,
a los hijos de los hombres,
dio Dios para ejercitarlos.]

But Sor Juana also criticizes so much knowledge and wishes that there were a school of ignorance:

Oh, if only there were a school
or seminary where they taught
classes in how not to know,
as they teach classes in knowing.[359]

[¡Oh, si como hay de saber,
hubiera algún seminario o escuela
donde a ignorar
se enseñaran los trabajos!]

As I previously mentioned, the philosophical poem *Primero Sueño* is the apex of Sor Juana's exploration into human knowledge and the impossibility of grasping knowledge suddenly, a poetic argumentation which sustains reason must advance step by step until it achieves a certain vision of things. It follows that *Primero Sueño* is where the Sorjuanian theory of knowledge has its foundation; but it is in her prose work that the she dives into the discussion about the autonomy of Suarezian freedom. In the *Carta Atenagórica*—as Elias Trabusle interprets it in his commentaries on the facsimile edition—one encounters Sor Juana's opposition to traditional forces. Instead, she dedicates herself to the autonomy of thought and action, which explains her use of certain Suárezian theological theses. Far from being a response to the Portuguese bishop Vieira, the letter is a defense of intellectual freedom: this is precisely what Luther criticized, a rational theology and the false belief that human freedom is capable of making decisions.[360]

There, Sor Juana defends human understanding just as Suárez did in the *Disputations:* it is "a free power [...] that assents or dissents necessarily according to what it judges to be the truth."[361]

We must remember that in this letter she also gives her interpretation of the *Sermon of the Mandate*, the text—referred to later—that Bishop Vieira had composed for Holy Thursday of the Holy Week. Let us remember that Vieira cites St. Augustine, who said that the greatest gift Christ gave us was dying on the Cross for us. For Chrysostom, in turn, Christ's greatest legacy was the washing of his disciples' feet, since in so doing he humbled himself before human beings. Vieira also cites the interpretation of Thomas Aquinas, for whom the greatest bequest of the Lord was his real presence in the Eucharist. But the entire discussion that the nun recounts was nothing more than a pretext for explaining her own position: instead of speaking of Christ's legacy, Sor Juana chooses the word *fineza*, thereby avoiding a frontal opposition to these theologians by using another term. She claims the greatest *fineza* that Christ gave to humanity was not giving them any *fineza* at all, instead leaving us men and women in freedom. In the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, Sor Juana is blunt regarding the free will of human knowledge. Letters relating to this key issue were discovered after the publication of Octavio Paz's book—letters where Sor Juana revisits the issue of the autonomy of freedom. However, Sor Juana received a great deal of pressure from her confessor, who imposed silence upon her. In response, she writes the philosophical poem *Primero Sueño*, which, as we know, was the only text she had composed for pleasure, instead of at the behest of another. In this poem, Sor Juana seeks to say what silence says, and hence she says she will say nothing about silence, for silence holds its tongue and its office is to say nothing. In the *Carta Atenagórica* she accepts that Vieira has a son's affection for the holy religion, posing the problem in theological fashion while giving three reasons for the debate:

> *[...] these reasons, joined to the general one of hating controversy, would have been more than enough to silence me, had I not your command to the contrary. However, all of them together do not suffice for forcing human reason—a free power that assents or dissents necessarily according to that which it judges to be the truth—to yield to the sweet flattery of desire.*[362]

In her analysis of each of the theologians' proposals, Sor Juana lays out the implicit argument that interests her, which is that God retreats in order that human freedom might appear. She says that the *fineza* is the terminus *a quo* of the one who brings it into being, and that its cost is found in the lover and terminus *ad quem* of the one who achieves it: "the greatest of all demonstrations of love must cost the lover and profit the beloved."[363] Here we have the Sorjuanian theory of the relations between God and human beings: it is God who suffers, while it is the beloved man or women who creates an impediment to divine love. She says, "if dying was the costliest gift for Christ, the demonstration of love that was most useful was that which saved humanity from death, the Redemption."[364] She also says, confronting another theologian, that "the *fineza* of dying was greater than that of becoming incarnate because in becoming incarnate, he did not lose the being of God. Rather, in dying he was unlinked from his body and soul." She holds the Incarnation was "the means for [Christ's] death, and that in dying he redeemed us [...] the means is at the end; for even though the Incarnation might be a great marvel, the even greater *fineza* is the memory that the beloved wants to fix upon the lover." For Sor Juana, the greatest absence is death, where God retreats from the life of the human being, although he certainly remains in the Eucharist and the washing of the feet. It is, furthermore, an interest without correspondence, since "Christ wanted the interest of our love for himself, for the use of humankind [...] Christ wants everything to be for humankind." And in another passage of the letter Sor Juana concludes:

> *God gave us free will, the power to desire or not to desire to do good or evil. When we don't exercise it, we do violence to ourselves, because it is a tribute God has granted us, and a deed of authentic liberty that he has awarded us. So, this freedom is why it is not sufficient for God to desire to be ours, if we do not desire to be God's.*[365]

A Sorjuanian Kaleidoscope: The Cell, the Heavens and the Defense of Intellectual Freedom

Let us finish the journey through Sor Juana's *Primero Sueño* and her prose by joining together all the pieces of the navigation –her context and biography, her scientific interest and her passion for literature– in one final dissertation.

As I have previously mentioned, in recent years I have dedicated my studies to Sor Juana's prose works and to *Primero Sueño*, her philosophical poem.[366] In 2014, on the occasion of the commemorative festivities for Octavio Paz's birthday, I wrote two works on the theological dimension of Sor Juana's work in its relation to her concept of freedom. In these studies, I demonstrated the influence of texts by Pueblan Jesuits and by Francisco Suárez[367] showed Paz's interpretations of the events surrounding the end of Sor Juana's life were not entirely correct. According to Paz, the nun became trapped between a rock and a hard place due to the conflict between Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla, and the Archbishop of Mexico City Aguilar y Seijas. My disagreement with Octavio Paz has to do with the fact that he presented the life of Sor Juana as though it were a drama, introducing the thesis that because of the *hamartía* of her character the dénouement of her life played out amid a chain of events that, without cause or guilt, brought her to her death.

In *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o las trampas de la fe* (*Sor Juana, or the Traps of Faith*),[368] the erudite essay I have previously mentioned, the Nobel awardee builds a complex drama with contretemps and anagnorisis, in which the nun is overwhelmed by circumstances and interests that are foreign to her. Something told me that this schema did not respond to the authentic personality of Sor Juana, but rather was the result of a tremendous exhibition of poetic skill that flowed from Paz's pen in the form of a fictionalized drama. It was not, however, until I had access to new documents that I was able to confirm those suspicions.[369]

In reading his work, it is obvious that Octavio Paz did not write as a historian or a philosopher, but rather as one of the literati that praised Sor Juana, viewing her as a

poetic genius. After Paz's work, many scholars took his essay as recounting the historical truth of Sor Juana's life, while in fact it was a literary text and not the product of scientific research. As a result, many false interpretations about Sor Juana's life and work arose, basing themselves on Paz's book as a source of Gospel truth. As a member of the literati himself, Paz took the occasional poetic license, distancing himself from the facts and basing his work exclusively on literary rules, proposing explanations in accordance with the norms applicable to fictionalized writings. Nonetheless, some commentators on Sor Juana took Paz's poetic work as providing historical truth, which is unjustifiable. In the terrain of the historicity and scientific value of knowledge about Sor Juana, it is the philologists and specialists in classical letters like Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, Antonio Alatorre, Tarsicio Herrera Sapién, Andrés Sanchez Robayna and José Pascual Buxó, philosophers such as Ramón Xirau, Alejandro Soriano Vallés and Mauricio Beuchot, specialists in gender and literature such as Dorothy Schöns, Georgina Sabat de Rivers, and Rosa Perelmuter, and scholars interested in Mexican culture of the stature of Ernesto de la Torre Villar, Aureliano Tapia, Dolores Bravo Arriaga, etc., who together, each from their respective specialties, have correctly analyzed the life and production of Sor Juana. It is well-established that in the realm of poetry, Octavio Paz has taken on the task of being the principal interlocutor of the nun; however, there is as yet no one to provide leadership to the philosophical-theological project that investigates the production of Sor Juana; my recent research is a step in this direction.

Among the issues I have worked on, and which must be taken into consideration after Paz's work, the translation of texts by the Pueblan Jesuits of the 17th century is of particular importance. These writings clarify the relationship between Sor Juana and the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de la Santa Cruz. In addition, there is the impact that Portuguese literature had on the nun, the analysis of her theological posture, and the concept of freedom found in the previously unknown works of Antonio Núñez de Miranda. Finally, there is the stamp that Coimbran Aristotelianism left upon her, together with the influence of certain passages of the work of Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina, found both in *Primero Sueño* and in the nun's prose work. For reasons of space my analysis focuses only on the influence of the *De Concordia* of Luis de Molina, although I occasionally refer to some of the issues mentioned above.[370]

Topics relevant to Sor Juana, such as her life in the convent, her conception of dreams and of knowledge, her idea of the heavens and her concept of freedom, are understood better if we interpret them together with the newly translated documents mentioned above, and relate them all to the writings of Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina. However, in this chapter much of the bibliography on the nun[371] will be omitted, in order to exclusively follow the presence and influence of certain arguments from the treaty *De Concordia* by Luis de Molina, and in order to prove its connection to Sor Juana's prose work and to her poem *Primero Sueño*.[372] In order to conduct this theo-

logical analysis, both *Primero Sueño* and her prose works will be re-examined in this chapter, providing a full balance of the texts examined at the end.

The Relation Between Molina and Sor Juana's Conflicts

The relationship between Molina and the works of Sor Juana is not explicit: she neither cites Molina nor mentions him. Nevertheless, in this chapter I have drawn up a detailed tracing of the arguments about freedom, moral responsibility and judicial astrology found in *De Concordia*, pointing out similarities in topics and coincidences between arguments in the works of the two thinkers. There are reasons to justify Sor Juana's lack of citations of Molina: recently Molina had been questioned by the ecclesiastical authorities in regards to his contribution to the *De auxiliis* polemic between Jesuits and Dominicans. Domingo Báñez had published his treaty *Apología de los hermanos dominicos contra la* Concordia *de Luis de Molina* (*Apology of the Dominican Brothers Against the* Concordia *of Luis de Molina*),[373] rejecting Molina's interpretations of the relations between grace and freedom. In addition, it should be recalled that in New Spain, the bishops were already concerned about certain Jesuit reforms of the curricula of their schools.[374] Sor Juana herself produced the works that we are analyzing in an especially turbulent moment of her life. Among the writings and conflicts of those years, the critique of the *Sermon of the Mandate* of the Portuguese theologian Vieira stands out,[375] as do the pressing problems that she had with her confessor and the epistolary relationship she maintained with the bishop of Puebla, Santa Cruz.[376] These are facts that coincide with the influence of Lusitanian literature in New Spain and with the epistolary communication Sor Juana maintained with her Portuguese interlocutors.[377]

The relationship with Portugal antedates Sor Juana's knowledge about the University of Coimbra. In order to understand the influence of the treaty of Luis de Molina, the reader should know that the so-called *School of Salamanca* of the Spanish Golden Age had as its paradigmatic representatives two great universities that influenced the Hispano-Portuguese crown of the 17th century: the University of Salamanca in Spain and the University of Coimbra in Portugal. This institution distinguished itself from the former by labelling its teachings *Baroque Scholasticism*. Its thought was characterized by the prevalence of theologians of the 16th century, especially Fonseca, Suárez and Molina, who commented on the complete works of Aristotle; Salamanca, on the other hand, followed the Dominican path based on the thought of Francisco de Vitoria, Domingo de Soto, and Domingo Báñez, who commented and based their writings on the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas and his commentaries on Aristotle. We must avoid undue simplification and dichotomies, for it is clear that both universities

knew and worked with the thought of both Aquinas and Aristotle, also having Scotist, Nominalist and Renaissance influences. However, in the realm of methodology and of philosophical assimilation, each institution was determined by the specific emphasis indicated.

In my opinion, and as I will attempt to demonstrate here, Sor Juana pursued the topic of intellectual freedom in a different way from the Salamancan Scholastic tradition.[378] Regarding argumentative content, authors such as Grossi have stated that "through her principal conclusions, Sor Juana holds that dogmas and doctrines are the product of human interpretation, which is fallible."[379] Her arguments suggest that she knew and followed the thought of Suárez and Luis de Molina; that is, she followed the Coimbran tradition. The hypothesis of a link between Sor Juana and Coimbra is reinforced by her contact with Puebla. There are clues that allow us to acknowledge this relationship: it was in Puebla that the Jesuits developed the subject of middle science. In addition to their works there are texts by Núñez de Miranda, the Jesuit confessor of Sor Juana. Finally, we know today that the bishop of Puebla, Santa Cruz, constantly purchased works of Portuguese literature and spirituality[380] as well as that he maintained an epistolary relationship with Sor Juana.[381]

But the most solid criterion for drawing attention on the connection between Sor Juana, Portugal, and Coimbra are the writings of the nun herself: it is there we can establish a link with the topics and arguments of *De Concordia*.

The new findings that came after the work of Octavio Paz reinforce my hypothesis: in particular, the *Letter from Monterrey* entitled *Carta de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz a su confesor. Autodefensa Espiritual.* (*Letter from Sor Juana de la Cruz to her Confessor. Spiritual Self-Defense*), found by Aureliano Tapía Méndez in 1981, which proves Sor Juana previously had a good working relationship with her confessor for many years, and that he encouraged her to study theology. This, together with the Pueblan writings about the *De auxillis* polemic, suggests that Sor Juana was familiar with these discussions. As previously stated, in the Novohispanic period a confessor oriented and educated the nuns under his care, and the confessional, locutorium and sermons[382] were the places where the nuns established contact with the exterior world. If we unite this with the collection of books that we have documented in the personal library of Sor Juana, the point made in this chapter is strengthened.[383]

Another point to keep in mind is that, despite Octavio Paz's having written the introduction to the *Spiritual Self-Defense*—a document found by Aureliano Tapía and published in Monterrey—, we know by the dates of publication that Paz wrote that introduction in the same year as he published his book *Sor Juana, or the Traps of Faith*. The coincidence between the dates shows that Paz had already concluded his book when the *Spiritual Self-Defense* appeared, and he could not have taken it into consideration in his study of Sor Juana. In addition, other letters by Sor Juana appeared

after Paz's book came out, such as that of Alejandro Soriano Vallés from the Palafoxian Library of Puebla, and that of Margo Glantz.

This, together with the recently translated writings of the Pueblan Jesuits, urges us to be open to other possible influences on the thought of the nun. The Pueblan writings referred to were theological dissertations contemporary to Sor Juana; the text of Núñez de Miranda is among them, a work that apparently was known neither to Octavio Paz nor to Dolores Bravo Arriaga.[384] These texts prove that the polemics regarding *De auxiliis* and the *middle science* of Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina had an impact on the mentality of the time. The conflict seems to involve more than a quarrel between two hierarchs: indeed, Sor Juana's final destiny came to be due to her philosophical-theological defense of freedom. It seems that this exploration has not yet been undertaken, but it would allow us to reunite the pieces of the kaleidoscope of the life and literary production of the nun.

Coimbran Aristotelian science and Sor Juana

When Octavio Paz analyzes the poem *Primero Sueño* he opposes the Scholastic tradition to the Hermetism of Kircher, leaving aside an entire scientific tradition that explains Sor Juana's gaze up to the firmament. Did the thought of Núñez de Miranda and that of the Pueblan Jesuits—who commented on Aristotelian works in the style of Coimbra and Luis de Molina—influence Sor Juana's interpretations of the heavens?[385]

Sor Juana did not connect with Jesuit philosophy just through her confessor; we also know that she maintained correspondence with the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, a proof of it is the fact that it was he who published the *Carta Atenagórica* for her. Fernández de Santa Cruz sympathized with the Portuguese Jesuits' writings, and knew texts by the Portuguese bishop Vieira and the commentaries of Pueblan Jesuits on the works of Suárez and Molina. In addition, we know the Pueblan bishop promoted academies and gatherings of laypeople to discuss these problems, and that Sor Juana participated in these debates via the reports and writings that she got from the bishop. There is a great deal of documentation on this issue, which has not yet been properly studied.[386]

The Jesuits of Sor Juana's time had a specific idea of science that they derived from a re-reading of the Aristotelian *Corpus*, an approach that came from a policy promoted by Fonseca in Coimbra and supported by Aquaviva in Rome. They emphasized the observation and induction of natural phenomena, a method that was better suited for Aristotle's works of natural science than for the syllogistic interpretation that the Scholastic-medieval tradition had promoted. In this recuperation, the issue of

method and the importance of mathematical measurements of natural phenomena were crucial; this is a theme in Sor Juana's *Primero Sueño*, where reason requires a method in order to reach the highest truth. Seen from that perspective, the ascent of reason in the poem is not an example of the Cartesian method, but rather appears to derive from the recuperation of Aristotle that was occurring in New Spain thanks to the Jesuits, although it cannot be doubted that the poem possesses[387] certain Cartesian elements I will discuss later. However, the point is that Sor Juana borrows from the Aristotelian-Coimbran school, despite using a discourse and terminology that are largely Scholastic.[388]

In this era, Novohispanic philosophers shared certain organicist and animist conceptions of nature, which were transmitted by influences from the north of Italy, there where Jesuit Kircher had drunk from oriental scientific outlooks less esoteric than what has frequently been thought. The curricular reforms the Jesuits had designed came from Coimbra and showed a well-known sympathy for experimentation.[389] This combines with an emphasis on rhetoric and grammar, something typical of Renaissance models, but also of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola and of Aristotelian rhetoric. These curricula provided an idea of science and of education that was different from those of the medieval Spanish tradition. Sigüenza y Góngora was also influenced by the Jesuit current that had embraced scientific novelty; however, in contrast to European scientists, who—beginning with the Renaissance—had distanced themselves from Aristotle, the Novohispanics argued against modern scientists by basing themselves on Aristotle himself, as is seen with Sigüenza in his *Libra astronómica y filosófica* (*Astronomical and Philosophical Libra*) where, with Aristotelian arguments, he refutes the positions taken by Kino.[390] The result was that in New Spain, Aristotelianism continued to be a key philosophy, one in which the topic of the heavens had a decisive importance.

Luis de Molina and the treaty *De Concordia liberi arbitrii*

A brief introduction to Luis de Molina is needed here. This Jesuit theologian was born in Cuenca, Spain in 1535 and died in Madrid in 1600. He studied grammar and letters in his native land, and later studied Law at the University of Salamanca from 1551 to 1552 and the *Summulas* at Alcalá. In 1553, he took the Jesuit habit and left for the University of Coimbra in Portugal; he concluded his studies in Évora, another Portuguese Jesuit university that had the same regulations and rights as Coimbra. Molina lived 29 years of his life in Portugal as a student and later professor at the University of Coimbra, where he wrote all his works, including his still-untranslated *Curso de filosofía* (*Course of Philosophy*), which

consisted of a number of commentaries on the works of Aristotle. Indeed, the philosophy of Suárez and Molina cannot be grasped without understanding their recuperation they did of a naturalistic Aristotle that employs a mathematical methodology. In addition, the Jesuits reordered the Aristotelian logic, giving priority to grammar and rhetoric instead of imitating the medieval emphasis on the syllogism. This is where the topic of freedom appears, with the inclusion of the ethical works of the Stagirite, a relevant inclusion in the light of the connection that they developed.

After his commentaries on the works of Aristotle, and not without many problems with Fonseca, Luis de Molina wrote his masterwork in 1588, *Concordia libero arbitrii cum gratiae donis divina praecientiae,* in which he detailed his theory of future contingents in order to reconcile grace with freedom. The *Concordia* continues to employ the Suarezian idea of countering the providentialist determinism of Luther by an affirmation of the participation of free will. This is an old theological problem, dating back to St. Augustine, and which had blossomed anew with the *De servo arbitrio* of Luther, in which the German denies the participation of human freedom in salvation.

Molina's *De Concordia* is divided into seven parts, each of which is divided into numbered *disputations*. He begins the first part, *Disputation* 1, with the topic of "On the Capacity of Free Will to Do Good," where he states the methodology he will use, the principle he begins from and the objective he has in mind. He establishes his method by saying he will analyze "how the freedom of our will and the contingency of future things in one or another sense, can be composed and made to agree with prescience, providence, predestination and divine retribution." He lays out the starting place of his arguments, saying that "we must see that in us there is freedom of will." Lastly he provides the goal of the treaty: "we must establish how and in what degree we have freedom of will," passing next to give the state of the question,[391] stating that he relies on the authority of Thomas Aquinas in *S.Th.*, I, q 83, and cites Augustine in *De Civ. Dei*, LV chap. 1 and *Confessions* 12-4, ch. 3. Then, Molina says some had claimed that Marcus Tullius Cicero did not understand how to reconcile human freedom with future contingent propositions and the immutable character of God. The point is relevant since Molina includes the dispute with Luther and his refutation in a problem that had been worked over by the tradition of the holy Fathers, who from the time of Stoicism had fought against the proposal that it was the stars that had influence on human will.[392]

Molina says that certain philosophers and astrologers dedicated to judicial astrology thought that everything that happens in the sublunar realm—which includes both good human actions and bad— "should be attributed to a necessity that would arise from the place, the configuration and the influence of the stars." In his opinion, this idea annulled the freedom of the human being at the same time that it moved God away from his providence, with his opponents thinking that it was "fate" that connect-

ed the heavens and the planets. Radicalizing their interpretation, these philosophers and astrologers argued that, if all effects were ordered by "fate" and came from God, even vices and sins would have to be attributed to God, since he would be the one that had created this ordering of things.[393]

Facing this kind of error, Molina says there arose a Christian tradition that defended freedom, but there was a problem with their view, in that they praised freedom excessively; this was also the case with Pelagius and his followers. Molina discusses and interprets the errors of his time on the basis of these two traditions, for he held that Luther harmed human freedom by enlarging divine providence, and ended up considering freedom from a strictly nominalistic point of view. In contrast, the opposing party, in order to save freedom, ended up granting it absolute autonomy.

From that point on, the treaty is an attempt to demonstrate that God does not act by necessity, that human beings are responsible for their actions, that the will is not passive—as Luther thought—, because, should this be true, God would be the cause of evil. Indeed, the efficacious production of actions does not make the human being independent from the Creator. With this point the itinerary of the treaty is laid out: the problem for Molina consists in affirming the human will without at the same time compromising the participation of God in the order of the world. The reasoning with which he initially unlocks the problem was philosophical and, although he does not cite it, Molina is following the ethics of Aristotle when he says

> *the act through which the will wants something or the understanding understands something, is a vital operation that proceeds from the vital powers themselves, since these powers, or whatever underlies them, cannot receive a denomination on the basis of these appetitive acts, unless they proceed in an efficient manner from these powers.*[394]

This being established, in the second disputation of the treaty Molina asks: "What should be understood by the name 'free will'?" He defines freedom as what is opposed to necessity: "that person is free who, with all the requisites for acting being fulfilled, can act or not act, can do one thing or its contrary." And he says the agent can act thusly if the will and the judgment of reason precedes him or her. Molina mentions certain cases where moral responsibility is not imputable or guilt-acquiring in human beings: he cites the case of children and the demented, who have free will because it is in their power to do or not do things, but those who do not have full use of their reason cannot be held responsible for the morality of their acts. He mentions, for instance, the case of people who are mature and fully rational, but who, when they pass from sleep to waking lack the full use of their reason. Since they are either "fearful or sleeping," their acts cannot be considered culpable. After analyzing this case, to which

he dedicates ample space, we are able to see how the science of his time deals with dreams. He holds that those who are sleeping have a perfect use of reason when they are awake and that, upon sleeping, they preserve in their memory "all the species of objects" necessary for using reason. As a result, if they do not use it while asleep, this is due to "[...] the moistness of the brain obstruct[ing] the pathways through which the sensitive spirits flow towards the organs of the senses," and he says that when the organ again becomes moist, the human body awakes and recuperates reason. In his interpretation of the dream state, which he holds to be "supported by experience," he adds that in its recuperation the moistness suddenly bursts in, occupying the organs of the senses, and this is why sleepers awaken suddenly.[395]

The connection between *De Concordia*, the Primero Sueño, and Sor Juana's prose

Turning to the issue at hand, namely Sor Juana's prose work and her poem *Primero Sueño*, the first element to consider in Molina is his understanding of freedom. Due to the Ignatian emphasis on the Incarnation, Jesuits such as Suárez and Molina treated the issue of freedom in a different way from Spanish Scholasticism. Molina's treatment gave rise to a more radical humanism: upon Christ's withdrawal, the full freedom of the human person reveals itself. The proposal connects with Sor Juana's prose work: in her *Carta Atenagórica* she analyzed the *Sermon of the Mandate* by the Portuguese Jesuit Vieira, on the question of what was the greatest legacy that Christ gave to humanity. Let us remember that in *Carta Atenagórica* she writes that

> *God gave us free will, the power to desire or not to desire to do good or evil. When we do not exercise it we do ourselves harm, because it is a tribute that God has granted to us and a deed of authentic liberty that he has awarded us. So, this liberty is why it is not enough for God to desire to be ours, if we do not desire to be God's.*[396]

In *De Concordia,* Molina had defined human freedom as what is opposed to necessity, and as the possibility for the agent to act or not act, given the conditions for choosing whether will and reason would prevail. It is also noteworthy that the principal argument of the *Carta Atenagórica* consists of analyzing the proposals of Vieira, Augustine of Hippo, John Chrysostom and Thomas Aquinas regarding the greatest legacy that Christ gave to humankind, then it shows that Sor Juana argues the greatest *fineza* that Christ left to humankind was not having left any *fineza* whatsoever. This is how Sor Juana introduces her own philosophical proposal on the topic of freedom.

Sor Juana defends the autonomy of intellectual freedom against her confessor in both the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* and in the *Letter from Monterrey*, as well as in two others recently discovered letters. The binomial of *free understanding* appears frequently, incorporating the operative vitality of the higher faculties as well as the reciprocity and efficacy between the operations carried out and the act of decision. For the moment, I will not focus on this point; rather, I want to point out that the guiding thread of freedom that appears in her prose works. Beyond her prose, I believe the central core of the issue of free understanding is found in her philosophical poem *Primero Sueño*, where it appears together with the topic of the intellect. In addition, she references the issue of the intellect and components of judiciary astrology, thus supporting the hypothesis of the influence of *De Concordia.* In her poem Sor Juana relates the intellectual journey of the soul towards full autonomy and the light of the intellect, connecting the phases of the moon and the occlusion and rising of the sun with the movement of the intellect. She also mentions a contemporary solar eclipse, an issue in judiciary astrology that Luis de Molina had also discussed.

As I have stated above, in the *De Concordia* Molina holds that during dreams—because of the dullness produced in reason both when falling asleep and awakening—human acts lack full moral responsibility due to an impeded functioning of the faculty of choice and of the faculty of judgment, both of which are needed in order to act efficiently. The hypothesis to be tested here is that in *Primero Sueño* Sor Juana used Molina's theory as a justification for expressing what she wanted to say about the stars and about the free intellectual ascent of the soul. She finds protection in a theory of freedom that exempts from moral responsibility those who are sleeping or who enter the dream state. In my opinion, the teaching of *De Concordia* allowed Sor Juana to develop her defense of freedom by focusing on profane things.

The *Cartas* and *Primero Sueño* have parts that coincide with the treaty by Luis de Molina. In the first part of *De Concordia*, one encounters a notion of freedom resembling features in *Carta Atenagórica* and *Respuesta Sor Filotea de la Cruz.* In the second part of Molina's treaty, there is a description of the passage from the awakened state to sleeping and dreaming that is similar to what is found in *Primero Sueño*: a slow suspension of the sense faculties and a separation of the humors despite maintaining the intelligible species. The poem also says that awakening from a dream is sudden. Later I will return to the connections between *De Concordia* and the *Primero Sueño* of Sor Juana. For the time being, however, I will explain the use of judiciary astrology, a fundamental topic in *De Concordia* and in *Primero Sueño*.

Some authors, such as Américo Larralde Rangel,[397] have shown that Sor Juana connects the sun's movements in the sky—together with the prediction of a specific eclipse—with the journey of reason in *Primero Sueño.* Starting in the final years of the 17th century, judiciary astrology was in common use by the professors of the Royal

and Pontifical University of Mexico. Sigüenza y Góngora developed this line of thought, which he worked on in parallel to his demonstrations regarding comets. Furthermore, he used contributions from the indigenous peoples, such as the measurements of the Aztec calendar, which he combined with astral data and celestial entities that have a determining influence on human humors. In a book on games of chance attributed to Sor Juana, José Pascual Buxó[398] says that either Enrico Martínez or Heinrich Martin was the author of the first book of "healthy astrology" written in the colonies: *Repertorio de los tiempos and Historia Natural desta Nueva España* (*Repertory of the Times and Natural History of this New Spain*), published in Mexico by Heinrich Martin himself in 1606. Even though Martínez shows that he has read—in New Spain—the *De revolutionibus orbum caelestium* (1543) of Copernicus, where the Pole demonstrates his heliocentric theory, it is clear that to a large extent New Spain in the 17th century was still holding on to the geocentric theories of Plato, Aristotle, and Ptolemy. Martínez' text reveals people still believed the celestial region and the various orbs, planets and movements had the capacity to produce numerous differing effects in the world of the four elements (the sublunar domain).[399]

Buxó analyzed Martínez's treaty, and said despite the fact that the scientific treaty of the era revealed knowledge of the works of Copernicus, this treaty is proof that Martínez still distinguishes the supralunar world from the sublunar. Indeed, he writes

> *that human beings receive their natural complexion and temperament at the time of their conception, [and he] accepts an occult celestial influence that partially determines the luck or bad fortune of human beings, beginning with the moment of their conception, according to the alignment of the planets."*[400]

Thus, those who were born under the sign of Aries have a "complexion" and characteristics that are different from those who were born under the influence of Pisces or Cancer. In 1586, Pope Sixtus prohibited all the judiciary sects in Europe, but the Novohispanic Inquisition had to issue a new decree in 1616. In Spain in 1547 there was an *auto* in which the functionaries were ordered to rigorously apply the *Index of Forbidden Books* to works about astrology, predictions of births and the creation of astrological charts. In addition, in New Spain, Buxó documents that even Melchor Pérez de Soto, the Master of Works of the cathedral, practiced judiciary astrology. Indeed, in 1664 he wound up in jail, accused of heresy by the Holy Office.

Sor Juana's confessor, Nuñez de Miranda, was at the same time a *calificador* (qualifier) for the Holy Office or Inquisition on these issues, and it was he who accused Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora of practicing judiciary astrology. In his *Manifesto Against Comets*, Sigüenza y Góngora refuted the idea of bad omens while at the same time

he mocked the timid and generated horoscopes and sold *lunarios* (astrological predictions by the moon). For Núñez de Miranda, Sigüenza's *Lunarios* usually embraced the vices of judicial astronomy. In his introduction to the *Almanac of 1690*, Sigüenza connected the planetary conjunctions and the phases of the Moon with the natural virtue that resides in the liver and which can produce epilepsy when the moon is found cold in the three degrees and wet in the four degrees.[401] Buxó says that:

> *Despite the sustained efforts of the Holy Office to impede the circulation of all the texts susceptible to 'sinister suspicion' and despite the attempts by an Enrico Martínez or a Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora to convert ancient astrology into a scientific discipline, the image of the human being and of the world that prevailed in the mind of the Novohispanics at the end of the 17th century [...] remained an amalgam of the organicist thought of Aristotle, Ptolemy and Galen with Neoplatonic esotericism.*[402]

In reality, the Novohispanic mentality of this epoch was one of transition; scientists like Sigüenza, in his *Libra astronómica y filosófica*, knew how to describe the trajectory of comets, but at the same time they accepted and played with judicial beliefs, provided they were not opposed to the truths of their religion.

A culminating point in this transition was found in certain games of chance and in the handling of dreams, because in the dream state there is no moral evaluation of what "happens." On this point, the text of Luis de Molina is relevant for the analysis proposed in this chapter, for Molina sees judiciary astrology as "a case where one falls into culpable wrongdoing, but this sin is not attributed to those who sleep."[403] Molina accepted providentialism opposing the Pelagians who extol freedom too greatly, ever since St. Augustine wrote *De libero arbitrio*.[404] But, at the same time, when defending freedom, Molina discussed Martin Luther's perspective on the problem, saying that for the protestant leader "free will lacks efficacy in relation to internal volitions, "[405] that means that he considered Luther limited free will as to emphasize providentialism. Molina, in turn, begins his treaty by refuting Luther's position in *De servo arbitrio*: the point served him as an introduction for presenting his own theory of freedom. According to Molina, the efficacious production of volitions does not depend just on God, since the human will does not remain passive when it desires a good. His argument about the exercise of the will is as follows:

> *when the will wants something or the understanding wants something, it is a vital operation that precedes the vital potencies themselves. These potencies, or whatever underlies them, cannot be named in accordance with appetitive acts, unless they proceed in an efficacious manner from those potencies.*

Molina reinforced his argument, saying that it was corroborated by the natural law, by the authority of the Church and by philosophy. He held that freedom could be understood as what is opposed to service, or, as what pleases, and that the second sense gives rise to two dimensions of freedom: 1) freedom as opposed to impulses and to coercion, and 2) freedom as opposed to necessity. For him, the latter's meaning was what really had to do with human freedom, and "the free agent is that person who, when given all the requirements for acting, can act or not act, can do something or its contrary."[406]

In distinguishing what occurs when children act in this way, as opposed to adults or those who dream or who have recently awakened from a dream, Molina indicates that the transition from sleep to the waking state was like a trance, a midway point, undergone by those who migrate from dormant reason to the state of those who act freely:

> *[...] in no way can those who pass from sleep to waking be held to be culpable for the acts they perform—at least while their use of reason has not been totally rid of a certain dullness that invades the internal senses and the members of the body, impeding action. The acts would, in that case, only be carried out in response to their enjoyable aspect, in the absence of all knowledge of the act's moral good or evil, or else in the face of the fear that the goodness or evil of these acts might contravene the law of God.*[407]

This passage is relevant to *Primero Sueño* since it sheds light on the purpose the nun had for writing the poem. We know the poem was written in 1691, precisely one year after the frontal collision between Sor Juana and her confessor. Thanks to the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, and to the *Letter of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to her confessor. Spiritual self-defense*, we know that the nun broke with Núñez de Miranda, claiming that he failed to respect her freedom and that he would constantly recriminate her for using her intellect on things that he considered to be vain. The *Letter of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to her confessor* deals with this issue at length: "[...] the greater his authority is the more my credit is prejudiced [...] why is it a sin to write verses? [...] this is why I beg that you not remember me ever again."[408] Sor Juana previously had problems with her confessor beginning in 1683, although from *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* we know that the definitive breakdown in their relationship came in 1690. The *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* makes it clear that Núñez de Mirada held that the use of reason to investigate profane issues was culpable. Because of her rational capacity, said Núñez, Sor Juana was capable of discerning between good and evil, and if she did not obey her reason, she was going against the will of God. But Sor Juana discovered a way out in the text of Luis de Molina: during the dream state and the passage to the waking state, the journey of reason remained exempt from moral imputation.

The person who dreams cannot act efficaciously, and as a result being in a dream state exempts one from moral culpability. This also occurs with people who are entering the sleep state or who have recently awakened, since in both cases the dulling that invades the senses and the members of the body impedes action. The result of the poem and of de Molina's arguments about freedom is that there is no culpability when one's reason has consented to doing something wrong during the dream—thinking about profane things, allowing the reason to wander among myths, pagan ideas and philosophical concepts, playing with judicial astrology—since when one is in a dream state or partial awakening, when one enters into a dream state or is just beginning to leave sleep. Molina states

> *it is evident that these acts are not culpable, because the same people that have consented to the realization of an evil act while in a dream state, later, when they enter into possession of freedom and a perfect use of reason, are totally certain that, had they not been in that state, but rather had been awake, they would not have consented to carrying out the culpable act.*[409]

Primero Sueño, seen from this perspective, becomes a moral triumph over Sor Juana's confessor, both regarding judicial astrology and her delight in science as profane things in general.

The parting of Sor Juana from her confessor was justified partially by the concept of personal freedom in Molina, who defended the autonomy of the will in free acts proceeding from their respective operations during the waking state. Indeed, Molina teaches that it is licit to think with freedom and fulfill the innate capacity of human beings to be free, provided that their voluntary acts are inclined to the good. For Sor Juana, her inclination towards profane topics was good: science, measurements, literature and reflections on the human body and the heavens were all legitimate areas of knowledge deriving from a rational inclination. The escape route that Sor Juana discovered in order to justify her investigation of the good things of the world without moral imputability was found in Molina: he had concluded that, while one sleeps, one lacks moral responsibility despite delighting in one's actions.[410]

It is then through dreams that Sor Juana discovers how to enter without culpability into the study of pagan ideas, poetic metaphors, philosophy and the questions of astrology that her contemporaries reflected—and wrote—upon. Therefore, the poem descends from its apex in its second part: there is a slow waking of the bodily humors, and then every possibility of rational investigation ceases at the moment when the final verse arrives: "the world illuminated, and I awake." There, Sor Juana comes to the perfect state of wakefulness. Molina says:

> *[T]hose who sleep have a perfect use of reason before starting to sleep, and conserve in their memory all the species of objects necessary for reasoning; further, they are only deprived of the use of reason by the moistness of the brain, which obstructs the paths by which the sensitive spirits direct themselves towards the sense organs, thereby enabling the human body to recuperate. Therefore, those who sleep tend to migrate from sleep to waking and to the perfect use of reason suddenly, when the sensitive spirits burst in suddenly and occupy the sense organs.*[411]

The influence of Molina is proven by the final phrase in *Primero Sueño*, "the world illuminated, and I awake": there, Sor Juana arrives at the state of wakefulness at the same time as she puts an end to the journey of reason in the poem. It is then that Sor Juana breaks cleanly with the argument of culpability pressed upon her by her confessor. Instead she follows the criterion of Molina, who says:

> *once those who sleep have come to a perfect state of wakefulness, they are tormented by the worry that they might have offended God, consenting to impulses arising as a response to an enjoyable attraction or any other passion, thanks to the innate freedom of their will. They fear that perhaps they had the possibility of not consenting in their power, by suppressing the passion and the act.*[412]

However, Molina calms those who suffer anxiety as a result of this situation, saying it is evident that these acts are not subject to guilt. He closes his argumentation by saying that "God remains totally hidden in us while we live in the body's dark prison," that is, in the dream state.[413]

The Quest for Freedom by the Concept of the Dream State in Sor Juana's Work

What is the dream state for Sor Juana? From where does she obtain the idea? For Sor Juana, the literary figure of the dream state serves as an escape hatch for those aiming at intellectual freedom: the triumph of free understanding that she proclaims in the poem.

Baroque literature used the figure of the dream frequently; we know from specialists in Baroque literature Sor Juana was influenced by Calderón de la Barca in *La vida es sueño* (*Life is a Dream*), by Francisco Quevedo in *Sueños y discursos* (*Dreams and Discourses*), by Cervantes en *Viajes del Parnaso* (*Journeys to Parnassus*) and by Baltasar Gracián in

El criticón (*The Critic* I- II). Gracián, even though he is a novelist and not a poet, deals with all the topics that Sor Juana's poem featured: night, the labyrinth of stars, silence, humors, the heavens, the journey to wisdom. Sor Juana feeds off all these influences in her own work and uses each one with a distinct purpose: from the *Soledades* (*Solitudes*) of Góngora, which do not deal with the issue of dreams, she takes the elements of the Baroque style: pagan ideas and mythologies, elements that help her introduce the dream; from Quevedo she takes the poetic genre of the *silva* and certain formal elements; but it is Gracián who influences her the most, despite being so different. Gracián is a balanced writer, while Sor Juana overflows; in her the technique of the Baroque and the fusion of literary currents and subject areas complicate the plot. What in Baltasar Gracián is stability and pause, Sor Juana accelerates and overlaps; these superpositions comprise the key to understanding the dream in her poem. In *The Critic*, the story has colors, while in the poem by Sor Juana there is only light and darkness: it is a conceptual poem in black and white. In addition, the *Primero Sueño* of Sor Juana is bulkier, since her strategy consists in intermixing planes, a technique she finds employed in Virgil, Cicero and Statius. Nonetheless, in my opinion, the life and work of Baltasar Gracián are the most relevant influences in Sor Juana's poem: Gracián is a Jesuit, as is her confessor Núñez de Miranda and Suárez and Molina. In addition, Gracián employs the idea of a hidden God that distances him from human reality, and he employs conceptist literary style and laconic language with aphorisms, as Sor Juana also does. The focus on the profane, the Baroque gaze and the idea of the world as a machine are all essential elements in *The Critic*, and Sor Juana introduces them into the poem *Primero Sueño*.

Undoubtedly, as Paz holds, Statius provides poetic resources from the Greco-Roman tradition: he is the author of *silvas* that hark back to the Hellenism of Virgil and Cicero, among many other authors that I am not analyzing here, such as Ovid, Macrobius, etc. However, I believe that it was Virgil, Cicero, and Statius who wrote the poems about dreams that most influenced Sor Juana.[414]

Statius is said to have had the strongest formal influence on her because of the *silvas* he composed, a poetic genre that was inherited through the medieval tradition. The *silva* of Statius was written with dactylic hexameter and is characterized by the apostrophe, a poetic figure that is directed to someone who is absent. Statius, a poet from the 1st century CE (45-96), entitles his poem *Somnus* (*Dream*). He speaks of the pain of Orpheus and tells of how the stars view the tears of the unsleeping. In her poem, Sor Juana follows the Roman poet by opening with a scenario wherein everything is sleeping and in silence. Statius defines the moon as that which eclipses the earth when it interposes. The character in the poem suffers insomnia because of pain, spending nights without sleeping while gazing at the sky. Sor Juana disrupts the order of Statius's poem, narrating instead the drama of the journey of reason towards the light and the impossibility of achieving full understanding due to the fall of the intellect.

But it is not just Statius who employs the technique of connecting the topic of the dream to the presence of the stars and their movements: this poetic tool came from Virgil, who inspired him. However, specialists in Statius[415] say that his greater popularity in Medieval times—in contrast to Virgil—resulted from Statius having converted to Christianity, which Medieval writers saw as an attractive feature. Another reason for his greater popularity is that Dante, in his *Divine Comedy*, employs him as a guide through purgatory. However, Dante does not permit him to enter Heaven: although Statius had converted to Christianity, he maintained a pagan façade in public for fear of persecution. Virgil, in contrast, does reach Heaven in the *Divine Comedy* because it seemed to Dante that he was a precursor to Christianity. Another philosopher who influenced the literature of dreams was Cicero, who relates the dream of Scipio in his treaty *De re publica*,[416] when Scipio's grandfather makes an appearance. The elder man speaks of the future of his country, while also touching on astrology, the soul, numbers and music. Curiously, as with colors, music is another reality that does not appear in the *Dream* of Sor Juana, in which even the fish are said to be mute. The key to the drama is found in remaining silent, a topic that connects with her prose[417]; Góngora's *Solitudes* is the source for another trait of her poem, where she draws an analogy to the cell in which her confessor sought to imprison her.[418]

The *silva* of Statius stands out due to the influence that it had on later literature — "the planets trace their orbits in the sky, thereby marking the passage of time in a subject that remains impassible in his pain,"—an influence that was very strong in Europe, especially in Spanish literature.[419]

Statius established the recurring topics in his *silva*; it is thanks to Paz's wit and literary erudition that it is possible to note the importance of Statius in *Primero Sueño,* even though the stronger poet influencing themes is Cicero. It is due to Scipio's dream that Sor Juana is able to construct the key overlap of her poem: instead of the planets contemplating the weeping of the sleeper, she, from her cell, can contemplate the planets, a view that cannot be taken from her. In her *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, Sor Juana narrates that even when they took away her books she was able to continue using her imagination and eyes for observing the sky. The inversion of Scipio's dream finds a common point in the stars and in the gaze. It is here that Sor Juana's idea of science and the issue of her cell become intertwined in another interjection.

In conclusion, for Sor Juana the heavens were not just a figure from the literary Baroque; rather, she used Baroque conventions regarding dreams in order to discuss her astral observations and the need for intellectual freedom in the process of gaining knowledge. Nor is her poem a mere game of judicial astrology; it was instead an opportunity that permitted Sor Juana to make scientific observations from the convent without committing a sin. With this peculiar fusion of science and versification the nun discovered a way out of her cell, making it possible for her to unleash the impressive

force of her intellect. In so doing, she proved that fundamental freedom resists even the greatest efforts to suppress it. This was her idea of intellectual freedom.

In the scientific realm, as with Sigüenza y Góngora, in *Primero Sueño* Sor Juana represents the transition that science in the Americas was undergoing: a review of the scientific topics found in *Primero Sueño* shows her recognition of the mechanical processes of nature, as well as her knowledge of the movement of the planets. This latter issue would later give rise to a frontal collision between traditional Scholasticism and the transition to modernity, a transition that would not fully take place in New Spain until after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. This does not mean that the colony failed to undergo a process of intellectual opening and modernization. Rather, its enlightenment would come via other routes and would be formulated from a different point of view. The science of the 17th century in New Spain could dialog on the same level as many European scientists, but was completely different. It responded to a different situation and different choices, and connected with political problems of the Colonial government, where traditional Scholasticism had joined forces with official Catholicism and the Spanish Crown. People of the stature of Sigüenza and Sor Juana had committed themselves to the observation of the heavens as well as to the philosophical advances that authors like Descartes had achieved: a concrete example of the scientific value of Sor Juana's *Primero Sueño* is found in her mechanical conception of the human body. The Englishman Harvey had recently discovered the circulatory movement of blood, which was key to Cartesian mechanicism, and Sor Juana employed this conception of the movements of the body without questioning it. In addition, the reference in *Primero Sueño* to a specific eclipse proves the precision of her measurements; she connects the journey of reason to the advance of the moon towards the quiet part of the night and the eclipse of the earth.

The result of this philosophical melting pot was an eclectic and heterodox theory, something typical of the new style of Mexican philosophizing born from Sor Juana and Sigüenza. Sor Juana is thus the protagonist of a new philosophical advance, coming from New Spain, *i.e.* her proposal of intellectual freedom. However, we ought not to jump for joy about the contribution of the nun and praise her exaggeratedly. Her vision of the heavens and of the earth retains an organicist stamp that is typical of her time, coming as it does from an Aristotelianism that had just been replanted in the Americas. She is the creator of an eclectic style of thought[420] that brings with it cultural consequences that would eventually overcome the conventionality of the old philosophical-theological tradition.

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Endnotes

1 "Wise man" or "philosopher" in Náhuatl. The singular form is *Tlamatini.*
2 Religious Native Americans from distant communities and *Mestizo* and *Criollo* intellectuals such as De Alva Ixtlixóchitl, interested in recording ancient wisdom.
3 In his *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España*, also known as the *Florentine Codex*.
4 Discourses of the elders in Tlatelolco.
5 Cf. Virginia Aspe Armella, *Las aporías fundamentales del periodo novohispano*, Mexico: Conaculta, 2002.
6 Bernardino Sahagún, *Historia general*. Diego Durán, *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España,* edited by José F. Ramírez. Mexico: J.M. Andrade and F. Escalante, p.1867-1880; F. De Alva Ixtlixóchitl, *Obras históricas*, edited by Alfredo Clavero, Mexico: Nacional, 1892; Fray Jerónimo De Mendieta, *Historia Eclesiástica Indiana*, Mexico: Salvador Chávez, 1945. Fray Juan Torquemada, *Monarquía Indiana*, Mexico: Porrúa, 1964.
7 These were composed by a *tlacuilo*, who functioned much as a medieval European secretary or scribe would.
8 W. Lehmann (ed.), *Coloquio de los doce sabios o tlamatinime*, p.100-106. Selection trans. by Erik Norvelle.
9 Miguel. León Portilla, *La Filosofía Náhuatl*, México: UNAM, 2001, p.130-131. Selection translated by Erik Norvelle; Cf. Miguel León Portilla, *Coloquios y doctrina cristiana,* Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, UNAM, 1986, p.100ff.
10 León Portilla. *Coloquios*, pp.130-131.
11 Miguel León Portilla, *Los Antiguos Mexicanos a través de sus Crónicas y Cantares*, Mexico: SEP, 1983, p.45.
12 Informants of Sahagún. *The Matritense Codex of the Royal Academy*. Vol. VIII fo. 118r. The poem appears in León Portilla, *Los Antiguos Mexicanos*, p.124. Segment trans. Erik Norvelle; Cf. also Miguel León Portilla, *Poesía Náhuatl*, Mexico: Dianoia, 2006.
13Checar Pendiente
14 López Austin, *Educación Mexicana*, pp.20-45.
15 Bernardino Sahagún, *¿Nuestros dioses han muerto? Confrontación entre franciscanos y sabios indígenas*, Mexico: 1524. Edited, with an introduction and translation from the Nahuatl by Miguel León Portilla, Mexico: Es. Jus, 2006.
16 Trans. Erik Norvelle.
17 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Prologue to the Reader," in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Selected Works*, trans. E. Grossman, New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014↑, p.3.
18 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Ballad 2," in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Selected Works*, trans. E. Grossman, New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014↑, p.7. Note that Grossman labels as "Ballads" those poems that were called "Romances" in the nun's *Complete Works*.
19 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Romances filosóficos y amorosos" (undated), *Obras Completas. vol.1*, editing, prologue, and notes by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, México: F.C.E., 1995, p.5. For an analysis of the Mexican Baroque, the text by Irving Leonard is still pertinent: *Baroque Times in Old México: Seventeenth Century Persons, Places and Practices,* Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1960. In my opinion, the person who has best analyzed Baroque poetry is the prolific Georgina Sabat de Rivers (State University of New York at Stony Brook). Notewirthy is her re-editing of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Inundación Castálida*, Madrid: F.C.E., 1982; and *Estudios de Literatura Iberoamericana: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y otros poetas barrocos*, Barcelona: P.P.U.,1992.
20 The Jesuit Núñez de Miranda.
21 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," p.7.
22 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," p.7.
23 Sor Juana, "Romance 2," p.5.
24 He writes letters under the pseudonym of Sor Filotea de la Cruz, to whom Sor Juana responds.
25 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," pp.7-8.
26 Sor Juana, "Romance 2," p.5.
27 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *First Dream*, in *Poems, Protest and a Dream*, trans. with intro. Margaret Sayers Peden, New York and London: Penguin Books, 1997, p.75.
28 De la Cruz, Sor Juana, *Obras Completas*, vol. 1. Lírica Personal, *El sueño*, Poema 216, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995.
29 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño,* vv. 435-453.
30 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño,* vv. 435-453.
31 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño,* vv. 454-458.
32 Sor Juana, P*rimero Sueño*, vv. 454-458
33 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño,* vv. 463-480.
34 Sor Juana, P*rimero Sueño*, vv. 463-480.
35 Sor Juana, "Ballad 1", 4.
36 Sor Juana, "Romance 1," 3.
37 Sor Juana, *Obras Completas*, 5-171.
38 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2", 9-10.
39 Sor Juana, "Romance 2", 5.
40 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2", 11.
41 Sor Juana, "Romance 2", 7.
42 For example, in her lifetime she saw it published in Madrid in 1689 under the title *Castalid Inundation*. For an approach of Sor Juana as philosopher see: "El poema-filosófico *Primero Sueño* de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, in *Aristóteles y aristotélicos,* Mexico: Universidad Panamericana-Publicaciones Cruz, 2002, pp.27-40.
43 José Vasconcelos, Pitágoras, una Teoría del Ritmo, in *Obras Completas*, vol. I, Mexico: Libreros mexicanos unidos. Colección Laurel, 1921, p.3.
44 José Vasconcelos, *Pitágoras*, pp.11-12.
45 José Vasconcelos, *Pitágoras,* p.9.
46 José Vasconcelos, *Pitágoras,* p.11.
47 José Vasconcelos, *Pitágoras*, pp.13-14.
48 José Vasconcelos, *Pitágoras*, p.16.

49 José Vasconcelos, *La Revulsión de la energía,* in *Obras Completas*, vol. 1, Mexico: Libreros mexicanos unidos. Colección Laurel, 1921, p.364.
50 José Vasconcelos, *Revulsión*, p.364.
51 José Vasconcelos, *Revulsión*, p.366.
52 José Vasconcelos, *Estética* in *Obras completas*, vol. 3, Mexico: Libreros Mexicanos Unidos, 1957, pp.112- 115.
53 Vasconcelos, *Estética*, p. 1139.
54 Vasconcelos, *Estética*, p. 1187.
55 Vasconcelos, *Estética*, p.1207.
56 Vasconcelos, *Estética*, p.1366.
57 Cf. Antonio Ibargüengoitia, *Suma Filosófica Mexicana*, Mexico City: Porrúa, 1955, p.122.
58 Paula Gómez de Alonso, "Ensayo sobre la filosofía en Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz". *Revista de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*, vol. 60-61-62, 1956. pp. 59-74. Dorothy Shons does not endorse this claim. She holds that Sor Juana did not have four thousand volumes in her library, but only four hundred texts, the same ones that she inherited from the Bishop of the town of Aguilar and Seijas. This position is supported by Ermile Abreu, in "Nuevos datos para la bibliografía de Sor Juana," *Contemporáneos*, 1929.
59 Cf. Sor Juana Inés De la Cruz, "Letter to Sor Filotea de la Cruz," in *Poems, Protest and a Dream: Selected Writings*, trans. Margaret Sayers Feden, New York and London: Penguin Books, 1997. p.13.
60 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "The Trials of a Noble House" in *Poems, Protest and a Dream: Selected writings*, trans. Margaret Sayers Peden, New York and London: Penguin Press 1997. p. 241.
61 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Los Empeños de una Casa" in *Obras completas*, vol. IV, ed. and notes by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951-1957.
62 Cf. Georgina Sabat de Rivers, *En Busca de Sor Juana*, Mexico City: UNAM, 1998, pp. 367-368.
63 Cf. Elías Trabulse, *Los orígenes de la ciencia moderna de México*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995. Also from the same author: *Historia de la Ciencia de México*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2000. pp. 116-129.
64 Cf. Mauricio Beuchot, who dedicates entire pages to demonstrating this thesis in *Estudios de historia y de filosofía en el México Colonial*, Mexico City, UNAM, 1991, pp. 177-190. Also from this author: *Historia de la Filosofía en el México Colonial,* Barcelona: Herder, 1997; Alfonso Méndez Plancarte favors this thesis in *Obras completas de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz,* vol. I, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995, pp.194-196.
65 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y figura de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz,* 2nd ed., Mexico City: UNAM, 1997, pp. 147 and 72.
66 Juan Ignacio Castorena, editor of *Fama y obras póstumas del Fénix de México*, Madrid: 1700,, asserts Sor Juana wrote some *summulae*, that is, a lesser logic taught by R. P. M. Joseph de Porras, of the Society of Jesus, in the Colegio Máximo de San Pedro y San Pablo de Méjico (cited by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, *Obras completas*, p. XLIV of the introduction).
67 Cf. Irving Leonard, *Baroque Times in Old Mexico*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1959.
68
69 Cf. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *First Dream,* in *Poems, Protest and a Dream*, trans. Margaret Sayers Peden, London and New York: Penguin Books, 1997, v. 582.
70 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 285.
71 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 583.
72 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 292.
73 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 583-599.
74 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 160.
75 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 151-191.
76 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 192-209 and 240-265.
77 The work of José Pascual Buxó is the most solid Aristotelian analysis of the philosophic poem *First Dream*. Cf. also Carlos González Boixó, *Introducción a Juana Inés de la Cruz*, Mexico: REI, 1993.
78 Cf. Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, *Comentario, Introducción y notas al poema Primero Sueño,* in *Obras completas*, p.72.
79 Cf. Mauricio Beuchot, *Estudios de historia y de filosofía en el México colonial*, Mexico City: UNAM, 1991.
80 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, First Dream, in *Poems, Protest and a Dream*, trans. with intro. Margaret Sayers Peden, New York and London: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 75.
81 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 1-4.
82 Karl Vossler, *La poesía de la Soledad en España*, Buenos Aires: Losada, 1946; Cf. by the same author *Die Zehnte Muse von Mexico*, Munich: Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1934; and *Die Welt im Traum*, Berlin: 1941.
83 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y Figura de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz,* Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1996, p.158.
84 The emphasis that Xirau places on the relative knowledge of the universe appears to weaken the meaning that Sor Juana confers on illumination and the contemplation of the truth by demonstration and deduction, as I will address later.
85 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 192-199.
86 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 200-203.
87 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 192-209.
88 Cf. Xavier Zubiri, *Sobre el sentimiento y la volición*, Madrid: Alianza, 1992, p. 392.
89 Cf. Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, o de las Trampas de la Fe*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1982, p.470.
90 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 19-24.
91 Cf. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Florilegio. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz,* Mexico: Promexa Editores, 1979, p.146.
92 Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana*, p.471.
93 Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana*, p.469.
94 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y Figura*, p.70.
95 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y figura*, p.72.

96 In the previous paragraph, I followed the summary by Georgina Sabat de Rivers: *En busca de Sor Juana*, p. 369. However, I do not agree with her interpretation of the poem.
97 Cf. Aristóteles, *De Anima*, III-7, 431a14-16.
98 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 440-458.
99 This is the case for José Gaos, "El sueño de un sueño," *Historia mexicana* 10, 1960. 54-71. Xirau sees this scepticism in certain verses. Other authors locate the origin of Sorjuanian fideism here.
100 Cf. Aristotle, *De Anima*, III-5, 430a14-18; 430a22-25; III-7, 431a14-16.
101 Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I-1, 71a; I-2; 71b 10-20. I suggest comparing the preface that Thomas Aquinas wrote for this work. In this text the acts of reason are explained in accordance with the Aristotelian *Organon*. The *Posterior Analytics* characterizes intuition as reason's highest form of knowledge; nevertheless, wisdom demands *epistéme*. Aristotle addresses the problem in APo, II-19, 99b 26-34.
102 Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I-1, 71b7-20.
103 Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 516a.
104 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 428.
105 Frida Shultz de Montovani, *Apasionados del nuevo mundo*, Buenos Aires: Someville, 1952. Selection translated by Erik Norvelle.
106 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, X-8, 1179-1179b; *Metaphysics*, XII-7, 1072b 20-30.
107 Cf. Aristotle, *De Anima*, III-7, 431b 1-7; III-8, 432a I-8.
108 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 510-520.
109 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 583-588 and 540-599.
110 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 510-520; 586-597.
111 Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I-7, 75b-76a.
112 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I-6. "[D]emonstrative knowledge must be knowledge of a necessary nexus [...] otherwise its possesSor will know neither the cause nor the fact that his conclusion is a necessary connexion." Translated by G. R. G. Mure, URL: http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/posterior.1.i.html
113 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv.757-780.
114 Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I-2, 72a31-34.
115 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I-3, 72a-72b. The dialectic that is established is not tautological. That difficulty was resolved by Plato in the *Meno*, 88e ff. A passage that textually synthesizes this journey of the soul is *Posterior Analytics*, II-9, 99b15-100b15.
116 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 958-975.
117 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y figura*, p.158.
118 Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, XII-7, 1072a-1073a.
119 Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 514a ff.
120 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 90-112.
121 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 4-5.
122 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 413-415; 757-780.
123 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 266-239.
124 Cf. Plato, *Theatetus*, 184b.
125 Sánchez Robayna, Andrés, *Para leer Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1991, pp.138-142.
126 Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 487; 413-494.
127 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 1-38.
128 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 266-291.
129 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 292-302.
130 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 302.
131 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 340-412.
132 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 413-454; 454-494.
133 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 454.
134 The emphasis on method has given rise to a Cartesian interpretation of the poem. I believe that it is the itinerary of Aristotle's *Organon* and not the *Discourse of Method* that marks the path that *First Dream* follows. Nevertheless, there remains a possibility of a Cartesian interpretation of the text because it—like Descartes' treaties—enters into a number of questions also analyzed by the French philosopher: the starting point of knowledge, the anthropological implications involved in knowing, and the problem of the connection between soul and body.
135 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* v. 582.
136 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 510-520.
137 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 704-729.
138 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 756-780.
139 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 781-827.
140 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 896-975.
141 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 455-494.
142 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 460-616.
143 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 617-703.
144 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 510-520.
145 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 595-640.
146 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 704-780.
147 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream,* vv. 896-975.
148 This has been suggested on occasion by José Gaos, "El sueño de un sueño."
149 I have avoided this topic of the poem, but it was brought up by the students of my class on Philosophy in Mexico at the School of Philosophy of the Panamerican University. Course dates: August to December of 2000.
150 Cf. Trabulse, Elías, *El círculo roto*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica-SEP, 1984.
151 A topic investigated by Mauricio Beuchot in *Estudios de historia y de filosofía en el México colonial,* Mexico City: UNAM, 1991.
152 Cf. Georgina Savat de Rivers and Elías Trabulse, *Los orígenes de la ciencia.*
153 Cf. Abelardo Villegas, "Entre el cielo y la tierra en el Sueño de Sor Juana," Revista de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Vol. 53-54, 1954; 243-244.
154 Cf. A. Ezequiel Chávez, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, Mexico City: Porrúa, 1970.
155 Suggested by Octavio Paz in *Las Peras del Olmo* and *Sor Juana...*
156 Cf. Francisco Larroyo, "Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz o la defensa de la Educación femenina superior," *Revista de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*, Vol. 55-56 (1954), 197 note 1.

157 This is the thesis of Ermilo Abreu Gómez, José Gaos and others. The issue is developed further in Francisco López Cámara, "El cartesianismo de Sor Juana y Sigüenza," *Revista de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras*, 1950: 107-131.
158 I have explored this interesting dimension of the poem in another work: Virginia Aspe Armella, *Las aporías fundamentales del periodo novohispano*, Mexico City: CONACULTA, 2000.
159 Virginia Aspe Armella. *The Philosophy of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Five Philosophical Journeys and a Heterodox Proposal*, Master class. This was a philosophical opuscule published by the Centro de Estudios de Filosofía Clásica (CEFIC UNCUYO 2009 Year II, No. 4) and is included in the present work, in the section that examines Sor Juana's theology.
160 Ramón Kuri Camacho. *El barroco novohispano: la forja de un México posible*, Mexico: Universidad de Veracruz, 2008.
161 Cf. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Carta de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz a su confeSor. Autodefensa espiritual*, with studies and notes by Aureliano Tapia Méndez, Monterrey, N.L.: Al voleo el Troquel S.A. 1993.
162 Sor Juana Inés De la Cruz, *Athenagoric Letter* in *Sor Juana de la Cruz, Selected Writings*, trans. and intro. Pamela Kirk Rappaport, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005. In Spanish: Elías Trabulse, *Carta Atenagórica*. Facsimile, 1690, Mexico City: Condumex, 1995; and Mexico City: Porrúa, 1981.
163 "Fineza" is a word that lacks a satisfactory English translation. Sor Juana defines it as "demonstrations or benefits of love," "those external demonstrative signs, and actions that the lover practices, which have as their cause the motive of love" (Sor Juana, *Athenagoric Letter,* 232). As a result, I have chosen to employ the word as it exists in Spanish, without trying to fit it to an English word that will not do justice to the subtleties of the word as Sor Juana employs it.
164 English version: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Ballad 2", in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Selected Works*, trans. Edith Grossman, New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2014, 7ff. The English lines cited on this and the next page are all from this translation.
165 Spanish version: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Romances filosóficos y amorosos* (undated), in *Obras Completas*. Vol. 1. Edition, prologue and notes by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, Mexico City: F.C.E., 1995, 5ff. The Spanish lines cited parallel to the English translation on this and the following page are from this work.
166 English version: translated into free verse by Erik Norvelle.
167 Spanish version: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Redondilla 85", in *Lírica Personal*, edition, introduction and notes by Antonio Alatorre, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2012.
168 English version: translated into free verse by Erik Norvelle.
169 Spanish version: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Décima 99", in *Lírica Personal*.
170 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *First Dream*, in *Poems, Protest and a Dream*, Margaret Sayers Peden (trans.) (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1997), vv. 547ff.
171 The brings to mind the use of the sleep-awake opposition throughout the entire text. See the mechanicist explanation, vv. 205, 212, 216 and 165, a critique of the Aristotelian categories as being contrived (vv. 580ff), and the impossibility of complete metaphysical knowledge, v. 701.
172 Meaning mode of character.
173 Meaning a way of life.
174 This is a a clear allusion to the *Discourse on Method.*
175 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 1-13.
176 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 435-454.
177 Cf. Sor Juana, *First Dream*, vv. 575-599.
178 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño,* vv. 74, 226, 380-382 and 947.
179 José Pascual Buxó, *El Oráculo de los Preguntones de Sor Juana.* Coordinación de Difusión Cultural. Ediciones del Equilibrista. Mexico City: UNAM, p. 32.
180 Dolores Bravo Arriaga, *La excepción y la regla*, Mexico City: UNAM, 1997.
181 Bravo Arriaga, *La excepción*, p. 33.
182 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y figura*, p. 17.
183 This is the famous Sorjuanian text, *El caracol* (*The Snail*), her treaty on music. Cf. T. Díaz Sapién, *Virgilio y Horacio en el Primero Sueño*, Mexico City: UNAM, 1999, 268- 269. Verses 110-132. Translation by Erik Norvelle.
184 Translation into free verse by Erik Norvelle.
185 In the judgment of Dr. Tarcisio Herrera, op. cit., 269, citing Ricardo Miranda. In *Virgilio y Horacio en el* Primero Sueño, Mexico City: UNAM, 1999.
186 For example, the study by Alejandro Vallés, *El Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, bases tomistas,* Mexico City: UNAM, 2000.
187 For example, Juan Coronado, *Sor Juana y su sueño frente a las soledades gongorinas*, Vol. II in "Prolija Memoria," Mexico City: UNAM- Claustro de Sor Juana, 2005.
188 As Georgina Sabat de Rivens does in "Veintiun sonetos de Sor Juana y su casuística de amor," in Sarah Poot Herrera, *Sor Juana y su mundo*, Mexico: Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, 1995.
189 José Rogelio Álvarez, "Un siglo arquitectónico" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica- Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, 1995, p. 205.
190 Álvarez, *Un siglo*, p. 207.
191 For the architecture in female convents, *cf.* the text of José Rogelio Álvarez cited here.
192 Cf. Virginia Aspe Armella, "La influencia de Aristóteles en el Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" in *Aristóteles y Aristotélicos*, H. Zagal and A. Fonseca, compilers, Mexico: Cruz, 2002, pp. 27-40.
193 Josefina Muriel, *Cultura femenina novohispana,* Mexico City: UNAM, 1982.

194 Calced: also called "particular" or "urban"; discalced: also called "of the common life" or "of strict observance." Convents practicing the former had a more relaxed rule, as in the convent of the Hieronymite nuns, which in addition did not accept mestizas or natives.
195 A drink of American origin, considered an aphrodisiac, and which was prohibited to the nuns—at least during Holy Week.
196 *Cf.* Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora, *Parayso occidental,* forward by Manuel Ramos Medina, introduction by Margo Glanz, Mexico City: UNAM-Centro de Estudios de Historia de México CONDUMEX, 1995.
197 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Ballad 2," in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Selected Works,* trans. Edith Grossman, New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2014, p. 7.
198 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Romances filosóficos y amorosos. (sin fechas conjeturables)," *Obras Completas. T.1,* edition, prolog, and notes by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, México: F.C.E., 1995.
199 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Sonnet no. 168", in *Madres del Verbo*, Nina M. Scott (ed.), Albuquerque: UNM Press, 1999, p. 98.
200 A stanzaic form consisting of lines of 11 and 7 syllables with irregular rhyme, which due to its openness ,gives much freedom to the poet, as I will show in lines 1-25 of *First Dream.*
201 The term comes from the Greek *pathos*, which means passion, emotion, and sorrow. The word *pathos* does not have a literary translation to English.
202 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Primero Sueño,* in *Poems, Protest and a Dream*, trans. Margaret Sayers Peden (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), p. 79.
203 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño*, in *Obras completas*, vv. 1-25.
204 Sor Juana, *Primero sueño* in *Obras completas,* notes: p. 603.
205 Cf. Ramón Kuri Camacho, *El barroco jesuita novohispano. La forja de un México posible,* Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana, 2008.
206 Cf. Cárdenas Gutiérrez Salvador, "La lucha contra la corrupción en la Nueva España según la visión de los neoestoicos," *Revista Historia Mexicana* 3, 2006. Cf. also Jorge Velázquez Delgado, *Antimaquiavelismo y Razón de Estado. Ensayos de Filosofía Política del Barroco,* Mexico City*:* Ediciones de Lirio, 2011.
207 This has to do with the arch that Sor Juana designed for the arrival of the viceroy, who placed himself in front of the eastern door of the Cathedral of Mexico. At another door Sor Juana's reception speech was given, entitled *Neptuno alegórico, océano de colores, simulacro político…* (*Allegorical Neptune, Ocean of Colors, Political Simulacrum*), published in *Castálida Inundación,* Facsimile, Madrid, 1689. Trans. Erik Norvelle. Cf. also José Pascual Buxó, "Función política de los emblemas en el *Neptuno alegórico* de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y sus contemporáneos,* ed. Margo Glantz, Mexico City: UNAM/Condumex, 1998, pp. 245-255.
208 Cf. Mauricio Beuchot, *La filosofía del México colonial*, Madrid: Herder, 1996, and Virginia, Aspe Armella, "Un hilo conductor de la filosofía novohispana: el concepto de justicia distributiva", *Pensamiento Novohispano* 14, 2013: pp. 53-74.
209 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Allegorical Neptune", in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Selected Writings*, trans. and intro. by Pamela Kirk Rappaport, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005, pp. 48-49.
210 Sor Juana, "Neptuno alegorical," in *Obras completas*, vv. 20-27.
211 Sor Juana, "Allegorical Neptune", vv. 28-30.
212 Sor Juana, "Neptuno alegorical," in *Obras completas*, vv. 28-30.
213 Cf: Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora. *Teatro de virtudes políticas que constituyen a un príncipe,* Mexico: Viuda de Calderón, 1680. In this work, Sigüenza welcomes the new viceroy and tells him that the ancient Mexican monarchs were an example to be followed, in view of their political virtues. The text demonstrates the *Criollo*'s conscious appropriation of his indigenous past.
214 Cf: Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora, *Libra astronómica y filosófica,* prologue José Gaos, Mexico City: UNAM, 1959.
215 These triumphal arches were imitations of those which the Roman emperors were awarded whenever they returned from battle. The maker of the arch stated the requirements of production and design (including actors, type of flowers, type of architecture, sowing of seeds if necessary, etc.). On this particular occasion, the author included the welcoming discourse that was imparted at the ceremony for the recently arrived viceroy.
216 Cf: Irving Leonard. *Baroque Old Times in Mexico*. Mexico City, Fondo de Cultura Económica.
217 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Response to the most illustrious poetess Sor Filotea de la Cruz," in *Poems, Protest and a Dream,* ed. and trans. Margaret Sayers Peden, New York: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 17. In Spanish, I recommend to the reader the facsimile edition that is found at *bibliotecadigital.tamaulipas.gob.mx/documentos/descargar/4131/.*
218 A compulsory reference is that of Antonio Alatorre Rangel entitled *Sor Juana a través de los Siglos,* Mexico City: Colegio de México, 2007, in two volumes, with a catalogue of publications on Sor Juana extending from 1668 to 1910.
219 Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, o de las trampas de la fé*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1982. Also available in English as Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz or the Traps of the Faith*, trans. Margaret Sayers Peden Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1990.
220 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Obras Completas de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz,* edition, prologue, and notes by Alfonso Méndez Plancarte, Mexico City: F.C.E., 1995.
221 Ramón Xirau, *Genio y Figura de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1996), a work that Octavio Paz read

before writing his famous book. The book was later republished by UNAM, Mexico City, 1997.
222 Sor Juana published her famous *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* (*Response to Sor Filotea de la Cruz*) in 1691. The letter is a defense against the accusations certain ecclesiastical authorities brought against her; its contents are of the first order, because in it she expresses her ideas and feelings. We also have the biography that the Jesuit Calleja wrote shortly after she died, *Vida de Sor Juana,* Mexico City: Minerva, 1963.
223 Sor Juana, *Respuesta*, p. 17.
224 Antonio Rubial García, "Las ánimas del locutorio," in *Prolija Memoria*, Vol. 2 nos. 1-2, Mexico City: UNAM, 2006, pp. 113-128.
225 *P.S.*: 157-160; 151-191; 280-291; 576-583; 582-588; 850-853.
226 *P.S.*:193-198; 300-310.
227 *P.S.*: 129-139.
228 *P.S.*: 25-39; 340; 400.
229 *P.S.*: 255-265; 402; 408; 547, 580-590; 680.
230 *P.S.*: 1.
231 *P.S.*: 86, 740-742.
232 *P.S.*: 88-90; 560-570.
233 *P.S.*: 660-670.
234 *P.S.*:13.
235 *P.S.*: 391-398.
236 *P.S.*: 975. Américo Larralde Rangel has demonstrated this in his study *El eclipse del* Sueño *de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, Mexico City: F.C.E., 2011.
237 Sor Juana, *Respuesta,* p. 7.
238 Sor Juana, *Respuesta, p.* 23.
239 Sor Juana. *Response,* 25.
240 Sor Juana. *Response.* 25
241 Sor Juana. *Response*, 11.
242 Sor Juana, *Respuesta*, 39.
243 Sor Juana, *Respuesta,* 39.
244 Sor Juana, *Respuesta,* 45.
245 Sor Juana, *Respuesta,* 53.
246 Sor Juana. *Respuesta*, 53
247 Sor Juana. *Respuesta*, 53
248 As it turns out, Sor Juana read the text by Vieira and proposed an interpretation that parted from that of the theologian on several points, with the nun daring to comment on the theology of St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. John Chrysostom. When she presented her theological interpretations, the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, proposed to her that she write down her reflections on the issue. Juana did so, but to her surprise, the bishop titled the resulting text *Carta atenagórica* ("worthy of the wisdom of Athena")—in reference to her Greek wisdom—and published it without telling her. The bishop's action caused the nun many problems, especially the well-known displeasure of the bishop of Mexico City, Aguilar y Seijas, who reprimanded both Fernández de Santa Cruz as well as Sor Juana's confessor, Núñez de Miranda, demanding that they have the nun apologize, which she refused to do. Neither the theological discussion of *Carta atenagórica* (*Athenagoric Letter*) nor the development of the conflict is an appropriate topic for this book. Rather, what is important is that Sor Juana explains the idea of freedom that she proposed in her text, since it marks her separation from the Scholastic philosophy dominant in New Spain. This *Athenagoric Letter* deals with the defense of individual freedom in the face of the repression imposed by royal and ecclesiastical power.
249 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, lines 788-805.
250 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, lines 788-805.
251 It is known that Francisco Suárez analyzed human freedom through the four Aristotelian causes, and that Luis de Molina penetrated into human action in the light of divine middle science.
252 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, 239.
253 After Sor Juana's publication of her *Complete Works,* Mexico City:1951, various texts were discovered. Among those, special relevance must be given to *Carta de Sor Filotea de la Cruz a su confesor. Autodefensa Espitiual,* a letter known in Mexico by the common denomination of its origin: *Carta de Monterrey* (ie. *Monterrey's Letter),* Monterrey, N.L., Producciones Al Voleo El Troquel. S.A. 1992, pp. 31-50. Also see in this book: *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz.* pp. 93-111. In both writings Sor Juana lists the disciplines and sciences that she developed.
254 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Obras completas,* Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995.
255 Ramón Kuri Camacho, *El barroco novohispano: la forja de un México posible*, Mexico City: Universidad de Veracruz, 2008, pp. 191-192. Unpublished texts from the Jesuit archives in Puebla, from the Special Collection of the Palafoxian Library of Puebla and various archives and libraries in Zacatecas.
256 Given the availability of these works in English translation, I cite the English versions here.
257 Here the analysis followed is that of María Dolores Bravo in her splendid work *La excepción y la regla*, Mexico City: UNAM, 1997.
258 Bravo, *Excepción*, 185.
259 Miguel Sánchez, *Imagen de la Virgen María madre de Dios de Guadalupe. Milagrosamente aparecida en la ciudad de México. Celebrada en su historia, con la profecía del capítulo doce del Apocalipsis*, Mexico: Viuda de Bernardo Calderón, 1648.
260 Kuri Camacho, *Barroco novohispano*, 287
261 Following the analysis of Antonio Rubial García in "Las generaciones preilustradas novohispanas y la literatura compendiosa en la época de Sor Juana" in *Sor Juana and Her World: a Contemporary Glimpse. Proceedings from the International Congress*, coord. by Carmen Beatriz López Portillo, Mexico City: Claustro de Sor Juana/UNESCO/Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998, p. 391.
262 Octavio Paz, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. *Las trampas de la fe*, 3d ed., Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1983.
263 Cf. Elias Trabulse, *La carta atenagórica de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, Facsimile 1690, Mexico: Condumex, 1995.
264 For example, the analysis by Tarsicio Herrera Zapién, "El sueño: divina comedia virgiliana," in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, 263, is correct regarding the

connection with Virgil but unilateral in his theocentric interpretation of the poem.

265 For example, in Jesús Maiso González, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz el desastre católico y político de la contra reforma hispana" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, pp. 310-311. The author does not grasp the alternative project of modernity brewing among the Jesuits.

266 The Baroque was expressed in theaters, archways, poems, and music. The excellent article by Antonio Rubial leaves out this key point about the 17th century, and only mentions the Creolism of the 18th.

267 Elena Granger Carrasco, "Las obras sacramentales de Sor Juana: aspectos teológicos e históricos," in *Sor Juana y su mundo, una mirada actual. Memorias del congreso internacional* (1998): 236-246. There we encounter an interpretation of Sorjuanian stories as a canonical-political struggle; for example, in the *Scepter of Joseph*, IV, 185-186: 35-52. This is the new evangelization, alluded to constantly by the nun, but which Carrasco does not herself point out. This is the novelty of Jesuit theology.

268 Darío Puccini, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Studio d´una personalitá del barroco mexicano*, Rome: Ateneo, 1967.

269 She defines *finezas* as "demonstrations or benefits of love": "those external demonstrative signs and actions that the lover practices, which have as their cause the motive of love." Cf. Sor Juana, *Athenagoric Letter*, in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Selected Writings*, trans. and intro. by Pamela Kirk Rappaport, New York: Paulist Press, 2005, p. 232.

270 Cf. Sor Juana, *Obras Completas*.

271 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica,* 178.

272 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, 226.

273 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, 229.

274 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica,* 232.

275 The thesis that I propose coincides, from another viewpoint, with that of Maria Dolores Bravo in "Significación y protagonismo del oír y el ver," *La excepción y la regla, cit*., 33.

276 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, 255.

277 Bravo, *Excepción,* 34.

278 A rhetorical figure whereby which one expresses the whole through one of its parts: this is one of the most common ways to characterize a fictional character.

279 Quoted in Diego Calleja, *Aprobación biográfica,* cited in Margo Glantz (ed.), *Obra selecta,* Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1994, LIX.

280 Sabat de Rivers, Georgina, *El sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*: *Tradiciones literarias y originalidad*, 129.

281 Bravo, *Excepción,* 26

282 An interesting text that demonstrates that this interpretation corresponds to that of the Ecuadorian Jesuit Pedro Mercado is "Tirar el ídolo ¿Qué dirán?" In "Destrucción de la *Revitalización jesuita el ídolo ¿Qué dirán?*", Facsimile edition 1655, Mexico City: UNAM-Porrúa, 2004. Here, Mercado states: "How many times have you failed to do good works so that no one will speak ill of you? Look, in the book of your life there are many blank pages, so fill them by doing good, paying no attention to what they will say," 83.

283 Beatriz Ferrús Antón, "Me obligaba a que escribiera todo el tiempo… Sobre las vidas de monjas en el período virreinal" "He forced me to write at all times…On the life of nuns during the Viceroyal Period". in *Prolija memoria* (2008) no. 3.

284 Sánchez Robayna, A (1991)

285 In Juan Coronado. "Sor Juana y su *Sueño* frente a las *Soledades* gongorianas". In *Memoria prolija*, UNAM- C de S. F: México, 2005, p. 66.

286 Rocío Olivares Zorrilla, "Noche órfica y silencio pitagórico," *Memoria Prolija* 3 no. 1-2 (2006): 92-112.

287 Rocío Olivares Zorrilla, "Los tópicos del *Sueño* y del microcosmos: la tradición de Sor Juana," *Sábado 965*, 1996.

288 Olivares Zorrilla*, "Los tópicos del Sueño,"* v. 97.

289 For the topic of the Hermetic interpretation of the Renaissance and its meanings, *cf*. Susana Arroyo Hidalgo. "El Primero sueño de Sor Juana: estudio semántico y retórico" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, ed. Carmen Beatriz López-Portillo*,* Mexico City: Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, vv. 98-103. Arroyo Hidalgo explains the mysticism present in Sor Juana and its interpretation through Hermetism. There is here a magnificent analysis of the myths in the poem.

290 Olivares Zorrilla, "Noche órfica." Cf. also Edgar Wind, *Los misterios paganos del renacimiento*, Barcelona: Barral, 1972.

291 Virginia Aspe Armella, *Las aporías fundamentales del periodo novohispano*, Mexico City: CONACULTA, 2000. Cf. also Virginia Aspe Armella, "La influencia de Aristóteles en el Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" in *Aristóteles y Aristotélicos*, H. Zagal and A. Fonseca, compilers, Mexico: Cruz, 2002, 27-40 and Virginia Aspe Armella, "El poema-filosófico Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz," in *Perennidad y apertura de Aristóteles. Reflexiones poéticas y de incidencia novohispana*, Mexico: Cruz O, 2004, pp. 197-213.

292 Mauricio Beuchot, "Ideas tomadas de la filosofía escolástica en algunos poemas de Sor Juana" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, ed. Carmen Beatriz López-Portillo, Mexico: Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, 1998, pp. 128-133. Beuchot points out the presence of the Thomistic idea of the primacy of the speculative order over the practical, and the scholarly joining of philosophy and theology. This issue is also present in Mauricio Beuchot, *Historia de la filosofía del México colonial*, Mexico: UNAM, 1987.

293 The lines and their philosophical relations are the result of the analysis developed by the students of my doctoral course on the Novohispanics; in particular, I appreciate the work of Dr. Vicente De Haro. School of Philosophy, Universidad Panamericana, 2008.

294 Sor Juana, *Obras Completas*, p. 828.

295 Sor Juana, *Obras Completas*, p. 828. I am greatly indebted to Jorge Medina and Emilia Khienle, who showed me that this path through the poem

and the influence of St. John of the Cross needed to be considered.
296 In López Portillo, *Sor Juana y su mundo,* 59. For its original context, cf. Sor Juana, "Ballad 2", 9.
297 Trabulse, Elías, "Los años finales de Sor Juana: una interpretación (1688-1695)" in *Sor Juana y su mundo,* p. 26.
298 Ramón Xirau makes this point in *Genio y Figura de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, Mexico: UNAM, 2000. *Cf*. in addition Juliana González, "Sor Juana y la docta ignorancia" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, pp. 39-51; as well as Darío Puccini in "Las máscaras del yo en la poesía de Sor Juana: donde está el centro de su concepción poética" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*. p. 54.
299 Cf. Luis de Molina, *Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae dones, divina praescientia, providencia et reprobatione*, Mexico: Venecia, Biblioteca Palafoxiana, 1611. Cf. also Francisco Suárez, *Defensio fidei*, Mexico: Venecia, Biblioteca Palafoxiana, 1613.
300 From here on, Mexican works will be cited in their original editions. The thesis of a new Jesuit project for society and the translation of sources is discussed in Kuri Camacho, *El barroco jesuita novohispano*.
301 Kuri Camacho, *El barroco jesuita novohispano*, p. 30.
302 Pedro de Abarca, S.J. *Tractatus de voluntate Dei,* disputatio IV, disputatio XIV, Valladolid: Colegio de San Ambrosio, 1657.
303 Miguel Castilla, *Tractatus de divina gratia,* Ms. 547, Mexico: Biblioteca Nacional de México, 1687. Cited by Kuri Camacho in *El barroco jesuita novohispano*.
304 Figueroa and Antonio Valdés, *Tractatus de libero arbitrio sub divinis decretis*, Mexico: Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo.
305 Antonio Núñez de Miranda, *Tractatus de Scientia Dei, Tractatus de Scientia media et auxilis*, Mexico: Colegio Máximo de San Pedro y San Pablo, 1667-1669.
306 Diego Marín Alcázar. *Tractatus de conscientia probabilii*, Mexico: Colegio Máximo de San Pedro y San Pablo, 1667.
307 *Cf*. Kuri Camacho, *El barroco jesuita novohispano*, p. 257.
308 Miguel Sánchez. *Image of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God of Guadalupe, who miraculously appeared in the City of Mexico. Celebrated in its history with the prophecy of chapter 12 of the Apocalypse*, Mexico, Viuda de Bernardo Calderón, Biblioteca Palafoxiana.
309 That is, without cause or fault, and without going against the natural law. Cf. Kuri Camacho, *El barroco jesuita novohispano*, p. 357
310 Marie-Cecile Benassy-Berling. "La religión de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" in *Sor Juana y su mundo, p.* 37.
311 Sor Juana, *Obras Completas*. For example, see her famous Tocotines.
312 Cf. De la Cruz, Sor Juana Inés, *Obras Completas*. t. IV. Ejercicios de encarnación, 2nd día.
313 De la Cruz, Sor Juana Inés, *Obras Completas*. t IV, 444.
314 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica,* p.240.
315 Sor Juana, *Carta Atenagórica*, p.245.
316 "Sor Juana y la docta ignorancia" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, 44.
317 Sor Juana, *Primero Sueño,* vv. 333-359. It is especially interesting to note that in this *silva* of 975 verses, the fall of the soul occurs exactly half way through. From 453 to 487 the poem itself turns upside down. Cf. vv. 346-347.
318 For example, in *Primero Sueño*, vv. 80-112.
319 Verses 400-411, for example.
320 For example, *Primero Sueño* vv. 575 to 599.
321 For example, *Primero Sueño* vv. 607 to 622
322 For example, *Primero Sueño* vv. 1 – 24 and 192 – 202.
323 This issue was pointed out by Marie-Cécile Bénassy-Berling. "La religión en Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz" in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, 34.
324 Elías Trabulse develops this theme in the text: "Los años finales de Sor Juana: una interpretación," 1688-1695, in *Sor Juana y su mundo*, pp. 25-33.
325 Trabulse, "Los años finales," p. 28.
326 Sor Juana. *Respuesta*, pp. 61-63.
327 Trabulse states that Sor Juana was not accused of heresy by the Holy Office; still, the bishop could act autonomously from the Inquisition, according to Canon Law, title eight, chapter 9. This legal doctrine allowed the bishop to impose punishments for disobeying legitimate authority, for suspicion of heresy, and for obfuscating doctrine. Trabulse reinforces this hypothesis with a copy of a document that provided for the confiscation of Sor Juana's property when she died. This was unusual, because the goods of a nun normally remained with her convent instead of going to the bishop. Cf. Sor Juana, *Respuesta,* p.33.
328 Cf. Víctor Sanz Santa Cruz, "Filosofía y política en Francisco Suárez," in *La intermediación de filosofía y teología,* ed. Ángel Luis González (Pamplona: Cuadernos de Anuario Filosófico de Navarra, 2011), 92.
329 Francisco Suárez, *Disputaciones Metafísicas.*
330 In *Suárez et le Systeme de la Metaphysique*, Paris: P.U.F., 1990, p. 197, cited by Santa Cruz, "Filosofía y política."
331 There was a Scholastic Christian humanism that exacted the equality of the human race from the fact that human beings were created *imago Dei*. Suárez, however, was interested in formulating his humanism beginning with the selfsame human person.
332 Cf. Disputaciones *Metafísicas, 1597: carácter aporético en la filosofía del aristotelismo suareciano.* Also cf. Charles Lohr, "Jesuit Aristotelianism and Sixteenth-Century Metaphysics" in *Paradosis: Studies in Memory of Edmund A. Quain,* New York, 1976.
333 Aristotle, *Topics, I-1, 100a25 b23, 105a10-19.* Also cf: *Topics, I-2, 101a25-40; 101b1-3* for the relevance he gives to this logical art.

334 Daniel Schwartz, "Suárez on Distributive Justice" in *Interpreting Suárez: Critical Essays,* Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 163-184.
335 Schwartz, "Distributive Justice," 170ff (following the text of: *De Legibus., III-1.1*).
336 Francisco Suárez, *Disputatio de iustitia., I-12, Opera Omnia XII.*
337 Cf. Luther, *De servo arbitrio.*
338 Cf. Luther, *De servo arbitrio, I.*
339 Luther, *De* servo *arbitrio, III.*
340 Luther, *De servo arbitrio, V.*
341 Cf. Luis de Molina*, Concordia del libre albedrío con los dones de la gracia y con la presciencia, providencia, predestinación y reprobación divinas,* trans. Juan Antonio Hevia*,* Oviedo: Biblioteca de Filosofía en España: Fundación Gustavo Bueno, 2007.
342 Luther, *De servo arbitrio, IX.*
343 Luther, *De servo arbitrio, X.*
344 Cf. Francisco Baciero Ruíz, "El concepto de derecho subjetivo y el derecho a la propiedad privada en Suárez y Locke," Anuario Filosófico 45, 2012, pp. 391-421.
345 Cf. Antonio Guzmán Brito, *El derecho como facultad en la neo escolástica española del siglo XVI*, Madrid: Iustel, 2009. Also, regarding the nominalist *via* in Suárez cf. Daniel Schwartz, "Suárez's Nominalist Masters Argument: Metaphysical Disputations V-1," in *Proceedings of the Conference on Suárez's Metaphysics:* Disputationes Metaphysicae *in their* Historical *Systematical Context,* eds. David Heider and David Svoda. For more on the issue of nominalism, the most important reference continues to be Heiko Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Times: Gabriel Biel and Late Nominalism*, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1963.
346 Cf. Virginia Aspe Armella, *Jean Charlier Gerson: Tratados. De Potestate Ecclesia. De Mystica,* Mexico: Novohispania, 2010).
347 Cf. Francisco Baciero Ruíz, *Poder, ley y sociedad en Suárez y Locke (Un capítulo en la evolución de la filosofía política del siglo XVII),* Salamanca: ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, Colección Vítor, 2008.
348 This was reiterated by Eleuterio Elordy, "Suárez en la historia de la moral," *Cuadernos Salmantinos de Filosofía* 7, 1980, pp.133-147. And Jean-Claude Coujou, "*Bibliografía Suareciana,*" *Cuadernos de pensamiento español* 41, 2010. Also *cf.*: Rainer Muller, "Educación estudiantil. Vida estudiantil," in *Historia de la Universidad Europea* (ed.) Bilbao, Universidad del País Vasco, 1999. There the author says that "the works of Aristotle were the teachers that served as a basis for our debates." There are solid studies about this kind of Aristotelianism, e.g. in Ángel Poncela Gonzalez. *Francisco Suárez. Lector de la Metafísica: Posibilidad y límite de la aplicación de la tesis onto-teológica en las* Disputaciones Metafísicas, México: Celaryn/ Novum, 2010.
349 Suárez, *De legibus, III-1.1.*
350 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz↑, "Ballad 2," in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Selected Works*, trans. E. Grossman*,* New York City: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, p. 7. In Pancarte's version of Sor Juana's *Obras completas* (Complete Works), this poem is known as a "romance," but I will follow Grossman's lead here in deeming it a "ballad."↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑↑
351 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," ↑p. 7.
352 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," ↑p. 7.
353 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," p. 8.
354 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," p. 9.
355 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," p. 9, vv. 50-70.
356 Sor Juana, "Ballad *2*," p. 9, vv. 50-70.
357 Sor Juana, "Ballad 2," p. 10
358 Sor Juana, "Ballad *2*," p. 13, vv. 125-145.
359 Sor Juana, "Ballad *2*," p. 13, vv. 130-135.
360 Cf. Darío Puccini, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Studio d´ una personalitá del barroco messicano*, Roma: Ateneo, 1967.
361 Cf. Sor Juana Inés De la Cruz, *Athenagoric Letter* in *Sor Juana de la Cruz, Selected Writings*, trans. and intro. Pamela Kirk Rappaport, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005*,* p. 178.
362 Sor Juana, "*Carta Atenagórica*," p. 178.
363 Sor Juana, "*Carta Atenagórica*," p. 182.
364 Sor Juana, "*Carta Atenagórica*," p.
365 Sor Juana, "*Carta Atenagórica*," p. 198.
366 Aspe Armella, "La influencia de Aristóteles en el Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz", *Aristóteles y Aristotélicos*, comp. H. Zagal, A. Fonseca, Mexico: Cruz, 2002, pp. 105-121; "La filosofía de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: cinco navegaciones filosóficas en el Primero Sueño y una propuesta heterodoxa", *Opúsculo Filosófico,* Argentina: Publicación del centro de estudios de Filosofía Clásica. Universidad de Cuyo, 2009, año II, núm. 4., pp. 15-40.
367 Aspe Armella, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y la Polémica sobre la Libertad" in *Segundo Congreso sobre Congreso sobre Controversias filosóficas en México,* Mexico City, Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas de la UNAM, 2014.
368 Octavio Paz, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, o de las trampas de la fé*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1982.
369 Specifically analyzing the *Obras Completas de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, 1989, the *Carta Athenagorica* of Sor Juana and the *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, as well as the *Letter of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Autodefensa espiritual.* Studies and notes by Aureliano Tapia Méndez, 1993. Cf. also Francisco Suárez, *De Legibus., II-14; III-1* and the *Disputationes Metaphysicae., disp.., X, XI, XIII-XX-VII,* 1960; de Molina, L. *Concordia libero arbitrii cum Gratiae donis* or *Concordia*, *Disputationes XXII, XXIV, XXVIII, XLI, XLIX, LII,* 2007.
370 specifically, the work of Ramón Kuri Camacho, *El barroco jesuita novohispano: la forja de un México possible,* México: Universidad Veracruzana, 2008, stands out. To write his work, he translated a number of texts by Pueblan Jesuits discovered in the Jesuit Archive of the José María Lafragua de la Benemérita Library at the Autonomous University of Puebla, and it is thanks to those texts that one can trace the rele-

vance of Coimbran Aristotelianism in certain texts of Suárez and Molina, which, in turn, relate to the work of Sor Juana. Among the works mentioned by Kuri Camacho that prove the influence of Suárez and Molina on the Pueblan Jesuits we find *Propositiones aliquot, quae in scholis Societatis non sunt edocendae*, and the *Cartas. Bundle 24-148, 161-162* also stands out among the *Fuentes Manuscritas* de la Biblioteca Nacional de México. Also, by Antonio Núñez de Miranda: *Tractatus de Scientia Dei. Tractatus de scientia media et auxiliis,* Mexico: Colegio Máximo de san Pedro y san Pablo, 1667-1660, ms. 533., as well as texts by Tomás de Alfaro, 1960; and de Molina, L., 2007.

371 Many interpretations of the thought of Sor Juana have arisen after her death. An example of this is the work in two volumes by Antonio Alatorre Rangel, *Sor Juana a través de los siglos*, Mexico City: Colegio de México, 2007, with a total of 1408 pages. The 20th century production has not been documented yet, nor has that which corresponds to the part of the 21st century that we have behind us. Sor Juana has been a paladin and a battle flag for feminists, Catholics, conservatives, multi-culturalists, libertarians, defenders of the excluded, poets, theologians, dissidents and contra-power discourses, artists and nuns, covering the sociological, psychiatric and philosophical aspects of Sor Juana. This multifaceted interest in the personality and work of the Hieronymite nun should not cause us scholars to turn on one another, showing loyalty to only one's own interpretations and perspectives. Rather, this enormous, complex interest in her should lead us to conclude that, as with Quetzalcóatl and Guadalupe during the Novohispanic period, the Mexicans of today are still capable of recognizing ourselves in icons of the stature of Sor Juana and Frida Kahlo.

372 Specifically, in this chapter, the point of departure will be *Disputationes I, II and III* of the first part of the treaty *Concordia.* A few arguments from *Disputationes XXII, XXIV, XXVIII, XLI and LII will follow.*

373 Domingo Bañez, *Apología de los hermanos dominicos contra la Concordia de Luis de Molina*, trans. and notes by Juan Antonio Hevia Echeverría, Oviedo: Peñalfa, 2002. In addition, there is the manuscript MS. 862 of the Angelicum Library in Rome entitled *De eficacia divini auxilii* of 1595, a text that is been worked over thanks to the dispute.

374 A point that has been avoided by specialists is that it is frequently said that the Jesuit reforms of the Novohispanic curriculum took place in the 18th century, but in the middle of the 17th century the conflict between the Jesuits and the Pueblan bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza had gone beyond being a simple legal petition to be able to hear confessions and preach. Rather, the controversy took on a political-jurisdictional coloring. In my opinion, the issue at base was differing theological outlooks. Palafox's sympathy for mystical theology—which the Jesuits considered Jansenist—was opposed to the rationalist and naturalistic emphasis of Suárez and Molina, whose writings touched on important theological issues such as the Incarnation and the meaning of human freedom. The dispute even reached to the university curriculum of the Society of Jesus, proof of which is the letter of Felipe IV of 1648 to Palafox, in which the king reprimands him and pressures him to "permit the Jesuits to impart their classes of grammar." In addition to his critiques and precautionary statements against the Society of Jesus, Palafox had eliminated the teaching of grammar and rhetoric from their curriculum, something which the Jesuits were later able to regain. Cf. José A. Ferrer Benimeli, *El obispo Palafox y los jesuitas. Análisis de una doble manipulación*, Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 2013, p. 39.

375 Robert Ricard tells us that he probably preached in Lisbon around 1650, but Sor Juana only had contact with the sermon in a much later edition. Regarding this topic cf. Robert Ricard, "Antonio Vieira y Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz," *Revista de Indias* 11, no. 43-44, 1951; 61-87. In *Excursus I,* Ricard writes extensively about the date of the sermon of Vieira and the edition that Sor Juana read.

376 It seems likely that Santa Cruz maintained epistolary communication with Sor Juana, and that it was he who gave her Vieira's *Sermon of the Mandate* to read. This hypothesis has been looked into by authors such as Robert Ricard, Méndez Plancarte, Alejandra Ricci and Octavio Paz himself, who in his magnum opus about Sor Juana reports that: "the admiration that the bishop of Puebla felt for Sor Juana is well known [...]," in Paz, *Sor Juana,* p. 518.

377 We have documentation stating that Santa Cruz requested books from Portugal and spent large sums of money on these acquisitions. In addition, there is a topic that merits further research: in the article by Robert Ricard, "Antonio Vieira," *Excursus II,* the author discusses the relevance of Portuguese thought to understanding Sor Juana, on the occasion of Vieira's sermon and *Excursus III* of his article, entitled *Sor Juana y la relación con Portugal,* where he mentions specialists who have taken this pathway into account. Ricard himself studied certain texts available at the National Library of Lisbon, from the collection of documents by Antonio Vieira and Sor Juana relating to Portugal. Alfonso Méndez Plancarte also found the influence of Portugal in the posthumous homage to Sor Juana that eight nuns, the majority recruited from famous convents of Lisbon, put together. Finally, *cf.* Enrique Martínez López, "Enigmas ofrecidos a la discreta inteligencia de la soberana Asamblea de la Casa del placer, por su más rendida y fiel admiradora, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Portal Hispánico del Instituto Cervantes," in *Prolija Memoria* 2, Mexico, 2005, p. 139; in his article, he analyzes the *Libro de suerte y adivinaciones* by Sor Juana that was also found in Portugal. In addition, the nexus tying Sor Juana and Portugal came via the duchess of Aveiro, a great friend of Sor Juana, whom she got to know through the countess Paredes y Mancera, the wife of the viceroy. Aveiro was a promoter of the Jesuit missions in Mexico; she also wrote poetry and belonged to the refined

aristocracy of Portugal. We must remember that Sor Juana's *Oráculo de los preguntones* appeared in Portugal in 1894; *cf*. Martínez López, "Enigmas ofrecidos," p. 134.

378 For an investigation of the 180 degree change made by the Baroque in the face of Spanish Thomism, *cf*. Ezquiel Gonzalez Mas, Historia de la Literatura Espanola, Puerto Rico: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1989, pp. 322-323. *Cf*. also the famous text of José Antonio Maravall, *La cultura del Barroco. Análisis de una estructura histórica*, Barcelona: Ariel Letras, 2012.

379 Cited by Jesús Joel Peña Espinosa "Autores portugueses del siglo XVII para un obispo de Nueva España," *Revista Lusitania Sacra* 25, 2012, pp. 55-56.

380 *Cf*. Jacques Lafaye, *Albores de la imprenta: el libro en España y Portugal y sus posesiones en altamar. Siglos XV y XVI*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2002. In a later article on Portuguese literature of the 17th century, Lafaye documents what Santa Cruz paid for acquiring Portuguese literature of interest to him.

381 As mentioned in Aureliano Tapia Méndez, Monterrey, N.L.: Al voleo el Troquel S.A. 1993. The issue is also treated in the article by Rafael Ruiz and Janice Theodoro da Silva, "La Carta Atenagórica y los caminos de la reflexión teológica," *Estudios de Historia Novohispana* 29, 2003, pp. 77-95.

382 *Cf*. Virginia Aspe, "Una aproximación a Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: educación femenina en Nueva España," in *Filosofía de la Educación en México*, coord. Ana Cecilia Galindo Diego, New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.

383 A sample of what this search casts light upon is that in this era "there was an open communication between the locutorium and the Palace [...] the nuns read and discussed the literature and poetry of the viceroy's court. It was preferred that it be nuns that belonging to the nobility that were involved with this, and even more so in Lisbon," as is the case with Sor María de Ceu, Sor Feliciana de Milao, and Sor María dos Sandades. It was precisely in the convent of Sor Feliciana de Milao, who was the author of a critique of the sermon *Sementeira (Sowing)* by Fr. Vieira, that the *Enigmas* of Sor Juana were published in 1695. Cf. Enrique Martínez López, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz en Portugal: un desconocido homenaje y versos inéditos", in *Prolija Memoria* 2, Mexico, 2005: 143. Martínez states that the text is in the *Miscelánea Colecao de Curiosidades*, MS. Fg-589, FO. 82 Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa.

384 The work by Núñez de Miranda is largely unknown, and commentators widely judge his personality negatively. For example, María Dolores Bravo Arriaga, in her work *La Excepción y la Regla,* Mexico City: UNAM, 1997, mentions only his texts about spirituality, ignoring his theological works concerning middle science or conditioned science. Bravo Arriaga, in "*El discurso de la espiritualidad dirigida Antonio Núñez de Miranda, confeSor de Sor Juana*", Mexico City: UNAM, 2001, dedicates much ink to criticizing Núñez de Miranda's harshness with women, and the debate on this issue has completely eclipsed other issues, such as the Jesuit's concept of freedom. In addition, the writings of M.A. Méndez Herrera, "Antonio Núñez de Miranda, confeSor de Sor Juana y las mujeres," *Hommage a Georges Baudot*, Presses Universitaires du Marail, 2001, pp. 411-42, and Méndez Herrera, "Versiones encontradas sobre Antonio Núñez de Miranda, confeSor de Sor Juana," *Prolija Memoria* 1, no. 2, 2005, move in the same direction. Nor did Octavio Paz know of Núñez de Miranda's texts on freedom, or his connection with Luis de Molina. Today we know that Núñez de Miranda not only wrote on mystical topics and about rules and behavior; he also produced theological works regarding the middle science, and about probabilism, which had a strong impact on his notion of freedom.

385 There is documentation that the *Tractatus de Scientia Dei* and the *Tractatus de Scientia et auxiliis* and others are from the hand of Núñez de Miranda himself. However, the present-day secondary literature does not show more than a marginal interest in Núñez de Miranda, and does not analyze these sources. For example, cf. Méndez Herrera "Antonio Núñez de Miranda," in *Hommage*, 411-420; and Méndez Herrera, "Antonio Núñez de Miranda, confeSor de Sor Juana: un administrador poco común," *Anales de Literatura Española* 13, 1999: 143-154., pp. 143-154. In contrast, a relevant text regarding the relationship between Sor Juana and Coimbra is that of Alberto Pérez-Amador Adam, *De finezas y libertad. Acerca de la Carta Atenagórica de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y las ideas de Domingo de Báñez*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica 2011.

386 Cf. Peña Espinoza, J.J., "Autores portugueses del siglo XVII para un obispo de Nueva España," *Revista Lusitania Sacra* 25, 2012, pp. 33-51. Cf. also Jacques Lafaye, *Albores de la imprenta: el libro en España y Portugal y sus posesiones en altamar. Siglos XV y XVI*, Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2002; and Martínez López, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz en Portugal: un desconocido homenaje y versos inéditos," in *Prolija Memoria* 2, México, 2005, pp. 139-175.

387 One of the key elements in the Jesuit philosophy of Coimbra was its Aristotelian approach to science, taking a metaphysical vision of reality that is nonetheless characterized by a mathematical emphasis. As a result, far from abandoning the demonstrative syllogism of the *Posterior Analytics*, they incorporated it into questions of astronomy, such as the observation of the heavens.

388 The Aristotelianism of Sor Juana has been studied by: Marie Cecile Benassy, *Humanismo y religión en Sor Juana*, Mexico City: UNAM, 1983; Beuchot, Mauricio, "El universo filosófico de Sor Juana," *Memoria del Coloquio Internacional Sor Juana y el pensamiento novohispano*, Mexico: Instituto mexiquense de Cultura, 1995, pp. 29-40; Herrera Zapién,

"El aristotelismo de Sor Juana" *Virgilio y Horacio en el Primero Sueño,* Anejos de Novohispania 4, 1999, pp. 52-64, and other authors such as Ramón Xirau, José Pascual Buxó, Octavio Castro, C.M. Montross, Méndez Plancarte and Aspe Armella; however, this aspect of her thought has been studied by more writers from the Aristotelian-Thomistic school than by those following the renewed Coimbran Aristotelianism of the 17th century.

389 And, as discussed earlier—noting the letter of King Philip IV in 1648 to bishop Palafox—these reforms were already producing conflict in 17th-century Puebla.

390 In the *Astronomical Libra,* Sigüenza includes a definition of comets that in reality is Aristotle's definition of *meteors*; despite being wrong there, the identification of meteors with the nature of comets helped Sigüenza to demystify the supposed "bad portents" that comets bring.

391 Luis de Molina, *Concordia libero arbitrii cum Gratiae donis* or *Concordia*, intro., trans. and notes by Antonio Hevia Echevarria, Oviedo: Biblioteca de Filosofía en Español, Fundación Gustavo Bueno, 2007, part I, disp. 1, p. 5.

392 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 1, p. 5.

393 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 1, p. 37. Cf. Aristóteles EN, III-I, 1110a15-18.

394 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, no. 18, p. 44. Cf. Aristotle, EN. III-1,1110a15-18.

395 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. II, point 12, p. 52.

396 Sor Juana, "*Carta Atenagórica*," p. 240. The *Sermon of the Mandate* by Vieira was published in Portugal in 1650; the *Carta Atenagórica* by Sor Juana appeared in 1690. It is in this latter work that the issue of the relationship between grace and freedom appears in Sor Juana's work. Cf. Robert Ricard, "Antonio Vieira y Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz," *Revista de Indias* 11, no. 43-44, 1951. Octavio Paz situates the struggle between grace and free will correctly, but is mistaken in believing that the events were due to a conflict between church authorities. A suggestive text is that of R. de Ruíz and J. T. da Silva, 2003, pp. 77-95. It is interesting that some of these authors hold that it is an issue of a confrontation between *Criollo* Jesuitism and its European variant, as happened when Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora confronted Fr. Eusebio Kino in a debate regarding comets. The topic is suggestive, but in my opinion the fundamental issue is the Novohispanic conflict regarding freedom.

397 Américo Larralde Rangel, *El eclipse del Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, México: F.C.E., 2011, pp. 21-24.

398 J.P., Buxó, 1991, pp. 25-30. I follow closely the contributions of Andrés Sanchez Robayna, *Para leer el Primero Sueño de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, F.C.E., 1991. I am following J. P. Buxó "El arte de la memoria en un poema enigmático" in. Sr Juana y su Mundo, ed. Sara Poot Herrera. Universidad Claustro de Sor Juana, F.C.E.-CONACyT-Carso, 1995, pp. 307-352.

399 J.P., Buxó, 1991, p. 27.

400 Cf.J.P., Buxó, 1991, p.30.

401 Cf. J.P., Buxó, 1991, p. 34.

402 J.P., Buxó, 1991, p. 36.

403 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 11.

404 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 12.

405 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 18.

406 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 3.

407 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2.

408 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Carta de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz a su confesor. Autodefensa espiritual*. Studies and notes by Aureliano Tapia Méndez. Monterrey, Al voleo el Troquel S.A., 1993.

409 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2.

410 I have still not encountered this interpretation, which I have identified in literature; but *cf*. A. Alatorre, "La carta de Sor Juana al padre Núñez de Miranda," (Mexico City: Colegio de México, Colegio Nacional, UNAM, 2007) and in *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 35, pp. 618-673: the rigorism of the Jesuit is emphasized, and Núñez is portrayed as being anti-Hermetic and anti-mystic, as well as being opposed to judicial astrology.

411 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 12.

412 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 12.

413 Luis de Molina, *Concordia*, part I, disp. 2, point 3.

414 There is a lot of literature on this topic. A very erudite study that deserves to be cited—because of how the author tracks down influences—is that by Herrera Zapién, "El aristotelismo de Sor Juana," in *Virgilio y Horacio en el Primero Sueño,* Anejos de Novohispania 4, Mexico City, UNAM, 1999, where the author claims that Virgil is the principal influence on the nun and poet. Other studies, such as that by Octavio Paz in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o de las trampas de la fe,* are indispensable for this tracking of influences; in particular, Paz correctly assigns a critical importance to Statius and Macrobius.

415 Cf. Gabriel Laguna Mariscal, "La Silva 5.4 de Estacio: *Plegaria al Sueño."* HABIS 21, 1990, pp. 121-138.

416 Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De República*, Barcelona, Gredos, 2010, pp. 158-171.

417 Herrera Zapién, *El aristotelismo de Sor Juana*, 24.

418 Cicero, *De República,* pp. 158-171.

419 G. Serrano Mariscal, "La Silva 5.4 de Estacio," Translated by J. O. Crosby in *Francisco Quevedo Villegas. Poesía Varia,* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1981), 130.

420 At the end of the 18th century, Benito Díaz de Gamarra would call this philosophy *eclecticism*, and proposed it as an authentic philosophy for the Americas.

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