

# The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond

*Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miracles  
and Its Reception*

*Edited by*

Victoria Smirnova,  
Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu and  
Jacques Berlioz



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## Caesarius of Heisterbach in the New Spain (1570–1770)

*Danièle Dehouve*

Caesarius of Heisterbach's *exempla* enjoyed a new and unexpected life in the New World. Central Mexico was conquered by Hernán Cortés in 1521 and placed under the rule of the Spanish crown under the name of New Spain. In 1523, three Franciscan monks from Flanders came to Mexico, and the following year they were joined by the 'twelve' sent by Pope Adrian VI and Emperor Charles V. Twelve Dominicans arrived in 1526, followed by Augustinians in 1533. By the end of the sixteenth century, there were 380 Franciscan monks in 80 houses, 210 Dominicans in 40 houses and 212 Augustinians in 40 houses in Mexico.

Following Robert Ricard,<sup>1</sup> it is customary to call the 'first evangelisation' the efforts of conversion of the Pre-Tridentine period. The Franciscans distinguished themselves at this stage and produced the first dictionaries and a grammar of the nahuatl language, spoken by the descendants of the Aztec empire. They also wrote pious works in this language, such as catechisms, confession manuals and sermons.

The Council of Trent took place between 1545 and 1563 and its goal was two-fold: on the one hand, it was to fight against the Protestant Reform and conquer souls, on the other, to convert the population of the newly discovered territories to Christianity. The Company of Jesus which more than any other Order incarnated the Post-Tridentine spirit arrived in Brazil in 1549. Several Jesuits were martyred in 1566 in Florida. The Company settled in Peru in 1569 and, finally, in Mexico in 1572. Its arrival in these countries coincided with the end of the 'first evangelisation' and the beginning of a new phase of Christianisation. The Jesuits settled in Mexico and they were dealing with Indians, Spaniards and people of mixed race in more than a dozen important cities.<sup>2</sup>

1 Robert Ricard, *La "conquête spirituelle du Mexique": essai sur l'apostolat et les méthodes missionnaires des Ordres Mendiants en Nouvelle-Espagne de 1523–24 à 1572* (Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1933).

2 On the history of the evangelisation, see Danièle Dehouve, *L'évangélisation des Aztèques ou le pêcheur universel* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2004), 59–66, and Dehouve, *Relatos de*

Confession was at the heart of their method of conversion. Preaching was an essential tool in the process of preparing a penitent for confession, and preachers resorted to descriptions of infernal torments much more often than to promises of celestial bliss. This 'pedagogy of fear' led them to develop a rhetoric that relied heavily on imagery. The sermons were accompanied by *saynetes* (one-act plays) and other theatrical plays that were performed by students of the seminaries and Indians during religious holidays. These plays often had an exemplary quality; they showed sinners and demons and could end with a representation of hellfire.

Jesuit sermons in nahuatl language were held in very high esteem, especially those given by the fathers of the College of San Gregorio in Mexico City. This college became famous for its teaching to the Indians up until the expulsion of the Company of Jesus from New Spain in 1767. For instance, numerous manuscripts containing texts in nahuatl, now preserved in the National Library of Mexico (Mexico City), were produced there. This work reached its highest point with the publication of the catechism in nahuatl by the Jesuit Ignacio Paredes<sup>3</sup> in 1759 that was recommended to all the clergy in New Spain and had a very wide distribution.

One important aspect of the texts written by the Mexican Jesuits will interest us here: they contained a number of the short educational stories that we call *exempla*. It is important to remember that from the end of the sixteenth century onwards the Company of Jesus actively participated in the revival of the *exemplum* tradition.<sup>4</sup> This is the reason why some of Caesarius of Heisterbach's stories were translated into nahuatl and were granted a second life among the population however distant from the medieval monastic circles.

### How Caesarius of Heisterbach Arrived in New Spain

Several of Caesarius's edifying tales were reused by Arnold of Liège in his *Alphabetum narrationum* (1297–1308) and by Johannes Gobi in his *Scala coeli*

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*pecados en la evangelización de los indios de México* (Mexico, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2011), 65–72.

3 Ignacio Paredes, *Promptuario manual mexicano* (Mexico: Imprenta de la Bibliotheca Mexicana, 1759).

4 Dehouve, *L'évangélisation des Aztèques*, 49–50.

(1327–1330);<sup>5</sup> however, in the Renaissance period they were known chiefly via the *Speculum exemplorum*<sup>6</sup> which served as a link between the medieval and the modern *exemplum* traditions. It was first published in Deventer<sup>7</sup> in the Netherlands in 1481, and the edition contained 504 in-folio leaves and 1266 *exempla*, as well as an index in 164 columns. This anonymous work was edited by Richard Pafraet, from Cologne, and its distribution was probably facilitated by the fact that Deventer held five big annual fairs. The *Speculum* became known to later generations of readers thanks to its multiple editions. Apart from the first edition, three incunabula editions were published in Cologne and Strasbourg between 1485 and 1495. The work was then reprinted by Heinrich Gran in Haguenau in Alsace in 1507, 1512, 1515 and 1519. Copies of these last editions circulated widely in the sixteenth century and can be found in modern libraries, for example, in Mexico City.

The missionaries who preached in nahuatl were most certainly familiar with the stories from the *Speculum exemplorum* via a Spanish *book* written by Juan Basilio Sanctoro or Santoro. Sanctoro was born in Calahorra, trained as a lawyer and became Philip II's chronicler.<sup>8</sup> He was the author of several works, including the *Prado spiritual* which he claimed to have translated from Greek. In fact, it seems that Santoro used the title of a famous Greek text, the *Spiritual meadow* (*Pratum spirituale* in Latin translation) by John Moschus (c. 550–619), but the content of his *book* is completely different. In fact, a comparison between the Deventer edition of the *Speculum exemplorum* and Santoro's *Prado espiritual* leaves no doubt whatsoever: the latter is the Spanish translation of a Latin copy of the *Speculum*.

5 Arnoldus Leodiensis, *Alphabetum narrationum*, (ed.) Elisa Brilli, Corpus christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis 160 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015); *La Scala coeli de Jean Gobi* [Ulm, 1481], (ed.) Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu (Paris: CNRS, 1991).

6 Anonymous, *Speculum exemplorum* (Deventer: Richardus Pafraet, 1481). About this text, see Reiner Alsheimer, "Speculum exemplorum," in *Enzyklopädie des Märchens: Handwörterbuch zur historischen und vergleichenden Erzählforschung*, (eds.) Kurt Ranke and Rolf Wilhelm Brednich (Berlin – New York: De Gruyter, 2007) 12: cols. 961–68.

7 ISTC No.: iso0651000, see *Incunabula Printed in Low Countries*, (eds.) Gerard van Thienen and John Goldfinch (Nieuwkoop, De Graaf, 1999), n° 2005.

8 Juan Basilio Santoro, *Prado espiritual. Quarto, quinto y sexto libro del Prado espiritual, recopilados de antiguos, clarissimos y santos doctores* (Burgos: Philippe de Iunta, 1592).

<i>Speculum exemplorum</i> (1512 edition by Heinrich Gran)	<i>Prado espiritual</i> de Sanctoro o Santoro (1592 edition)
<i>Distinctio I.</i> Ex Dialogo Gregorii Papae (75). Ex Epistolari Petri Damiani (36 ou 39).	<i>Book IV.</i> Flores de San Gregorio papa, en sus diálogos (54). Flores de Pedro Damiano, en sus epistolas (34).
<i>Distinctio II.</i> Ex primo libro Vitas patrum quem beatus Hieronymus presbyter dicitur scripsisse (212). Ex Collationibus patrum (1). Ex Institutis sanctorum Patrum (13). Ex Climacho (14).	<i>Book V.</i> Flores de las historias eclesias-ticas de (Eusebio, Nicephoro Calixto, Socrates), Theodorato, Sozomeno y Evagrio (29). Only the last three are from the Desert Fathers. Flores de San Joan Climaco (17).
<i>Distinctio III.</i> Ex gestis Anglorum (9). Ex libro de illustribus viris ordinis Cisterciensis (57).	<i>Book V.</i> Flores de las Hazañas espiri-tuales de Cister (37).
<i>Distinctio IV.</i> Ex Speculo Historiali. Ex prima parte Speculi Historialis, Distinctio quarta (59). Ex scriptis Helinandi (5).	<i>Book IV.</i> Flores de Helinando, monge (2).
<i>Distinctio V.</i> Ex libro de proprietatibus apum (136).	<i>Book V.</i> Flores de las Abejas (42).
<i>Distinctio VI.</i> Ex libro exemplorum Cesarii (103).	<i>Book V.</i> Flores de Cessareo, monge de la orden Santa de Cister (30).
<i>Distinctio VII.</i> Ex vita et actibus Sancti Francisci (41). Ex vitis fratrum ordinis Praedicatorum (9). Ex vitis fratrum ordinis Eremitarum (16). Ex vita sancti Hieronymi (10). Ex vita sancti Pachomii (12). Ex dia-logo Severi de vita sancti Martini (8).	
<i>Distinctio VIII.</i> Ex vitis sanctorum (163).	<i>Book VI.</i> Vidas de santas y santos.
<i>Distinctio IX.</i> Speculum exemplorum ex diversorum auctorum scriptis col-lecta (218): <b>Abstinencia. Adulterium. Apostata. Avaricia. Beneficium. Castitas. Confessio. Contritio. Conversio. Chorizare. Detractio. Excommunicatio. Gloria celi. Gula. Humilitas. Jesus. Infirmetas. Invidia. Iudicium. Justitia (injustitia). Labor manuum. Locutio. Misericordia in pauperes et infirmos. Missa. Mors. Munera. Nicromantia.</b>	<i>Book IV.</i> Prado de Enrique Gran, por el Abecedario (56): <b>Abstinencia. Adulterio. Apostasia. Avaricia. Beneficios y rentas eclesiasticas. Castidad. Confession. Conversion. Danza. Enfermedad. Excomunion. Galardon. Gula. Hablar. Humildad. Jesus. Infierno. Juramento. Justicia. Lymosna. Maria. Invencion del Rosario. Misericordia. Muerte. Malas com-pañías. Murmuracion. Oracion. Ornato.</b>



(cont.)

<i>Speculum exemplorum</i> (1512 edition by Heinrich Gran)	<i>Prado espiritual</i> de Sanctoro o Santoro (1592 edition)
<b>Oratio.</b> Patientia conjugum. <b>Parentes honorare.</b> Penitentia. Periurium. Prelatus. Pastor. Propetarius. <b>Purgatorium.</b> <b>Sacramentum.</b> Sanctorum festa. <b>Scriptura.</b> Societas mala. Superbia. <b>Tentatio.</b> Tyrannus. Timor. Verbum dei. <b>Usura.</b> Ydolum.	<b>Padres han de ser honrados.</b> <u>Pasion del Señor.</u> <b>Predicador.</b> <b>Purgatorio.</b> <b>Sacramento.</b> <b>Scriptura.</b> <b>Tentacion.</b> <b>Tiranía.</b> <b>Usura.</b>
<i>Distinctio x.</i> Incipit decima et ultima distinctio speculi exemplorum in qua habentur exempla quae aut verissima relatione didici, aut in libris Teutonicis scripta inveni, vel ipse facta cognovi (30).	

The order of the *Speculum exemplorum* was slightly changed by Santoro who put in his *Libro quarto*:

Flores de San Gregorio papa, en sus diálogos (54 out of 75),  
 Flores de Pedro Damiano, en sus epistolas (34 out of 36 or 39),  
 Prado de Enrique Gran, por el Abecedario (56 out of 218),  
 Flores de Helinando, monge (2 out of 3).

And then in his *Libro quinto*:

Flores de las historias eclesiasticas de Eusebio, Nicephoro Calixto, Socrates, Theodorato, Sozomeno y Evagrio (29),  
 Flores de San Joan Climaco (17: 3 new exempla)  
 Flores de las Hazañas espirituales de Cister (37 out of 57),  
**Flores de Cessareo, monge de la orden Santa de Cister** (30 sur 103),  
 Flores de las Abejas (42 sur 136).

Finally, in his *Libro sexto*:

Vidas de santas y santos: This last part called *Book vi* has nothing to do with the *Speculum* and contains lives of saints borrowed from other works.

To sum up, Santoro's text is a slightly less complex version of the *Speculum*: 21 rubrics are omitted (the rubrics of the *Abecedario* identical with the *Speculum exemplorum* are printed in bold in the table) but the work adds a number of rubrics (underlined), the sources of which need to be identified: Galardon, Infierno, Juramento, Lymosna, Maria, Invencion del Rosario, Murmuracion, Ornato, Pasion del Señor, Predicador. Where Caesarius of Heisterbach in particular is concerned, *Distinctio* VI of the *Speculum* contains 103 of his *exempla*, and Book V of Santoro's *Prado espiritual* has 30.

The principal vehicle of the *Speculum*'s transmission, however, was John Major's new edition (1603 and 1605) of the work published in Douai under the title of *Magnum speculum exemplorum*. The first editions of the text were faithful to the original, with a division into ten sections, or *distinctiones*. However, in 1607 John Major completely reworked the classification of the *exempla*, abandoning the *distinctiones* in favour of a division into 300 *loci communes* presented in alphabetical order, from *Abstinencia* to *Zodomia*. At the same time, he added many new *exempla*, increasing their number from 1,266 to 1,526 stories. From that point on, this version was re-edited more than a dozen times and was constantly enriched with new anecdotes and new entries up until 1747; it was also translated into vernacular languages.<sup>9</sup>

Whereas the clergy in general appreciated exemplary anecdotes, the European Jesuits gave them particular importance in their summaries of the Christian doctrine. These *books* did not strictly speaking belong to the domain of preaching and were meant to be meditated upon rather than listened to. They were written by the great theologians such as Robert Bellarmine, Peter Canisius and Francis Coster at the end of the sixteenth century. Since the Company of Jesus operated in many countries, these works had a world-wide distribution and actively participated in the revival of the *exemplum* tradition in the modern period. Without a doubt, they provided essential sources to numerous monks who dedicated themselves to writing pious *books* in vernacular languages in the seventeenth century, such as Alonso de Andrade, Juan Eusebio Nieremberg and Cristobal de la Vega who were famous in the Hispanic world, and there is no surprise that we find them in Mexico.<sup>10</sup>

9 Among multiple editions, see for example Johannes Major, *Magnum speculum exemplorum* (Cologne: Wilhelm Friess, 1672). About Polish and Russian translations of the *MSE*, see Reiner Alsheimer, *Das Magnum Speculum Exemplorum als Ausgangspunkt populärer Erzähltraditionen: Studien zu seiner Wirkungsgeschichte in Polen und Russland* (Bern: Herbert Lang; Frankfurt am Mein: Peter Lang, 1971).

10 For more information, see Dehouve, *L'évangélisation des Aztèques*, 47–50.

The library of the College of San Gregorio was knocked down when the Jesuits were expelled from the New Spain. The *books* were dispersed and we find some of them in different collection of the National Library of Mexico. Among them is the *Speculum exemplorum* in Heinrich Gran's edition, Santoro's *Prado espiritual*, different editions of the *Magnum speculum exemplorum* and works by Andrade, Nieremberg and de la Vega.

Compilers of sermons in nahuatl had a habit of attributing an *exemplum* not to the author of one of these recent collections but to an ancient source, for example St Augustine or Gregory the Great. When Caesarius is mentioned, there is a marginal note reading "Cesareo." But he is not the only one who is cited as the source of an *exemplum*; Mexican Jesuits often prefer to cite other sources. Even though the stories of the "wild hunt" and the "miner buried alive"<sup>11</sup> belong to the Cistercian corpus, they are attributed by the Jesuits to Antoninus of Florence or Peter Damian. By contrast, Caesarius's name remains attached to the *exempla* condemning excessive drinking. He was considered to be the unique source of this type of stories to which the missionaries attached great importance, convinced as they were that this was the most common and dangerous vice among the Indians.

### The Evolution of One of Caesarius's Tales

When a Latin story originally written by a Cistercian in the thirteenth century and reused by later medieval authors finds itself translated into nahuatl language in the seventeenth century for the use of the Indians by a Jesuit of New Spain, one may wonder what changes are introduced in order to operate such a 'graft.' The analysis of an exemplary tale on the fate of drunks in the other world will help find an answer to this question.

The plot of the *exemplum* that I shall call "Rüdinger the drunk" is rather straightforward. The knight Rüdinger gets drunk on religious holidays. He dies and appears to his daughter, a pitcher full of burning liquid in his hand. The story (n° 1795 of Tubach's *Index*)<sup>12</sup> can be found first of all in Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum* (XII, 41). Caesarius claimed to have heard the majority of the stories he put in his collection from his fellow monks and

11 Cf. *DM*, XII, 20 (for a story that shares some elements with the traditional plot of the "wild hunt") and *DM*, x, 52 (for the "miner buried alive" story).

12 Frederic C. Tubach, *Index exemplorum. A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales*, Folklore Fellows Communications 204 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1969).

clerics.<sup>13</sup> These events were supposed to have taken place in the eighty years preceding the composition of the *DM* (1219–1223), that is in the second half of the twelfth – the beginning of the thirteenth century. The story of Rüdinger who lived in “in Dioecesi Coloniensi, non procul a Colonia” (“in the Cologne diocese, not far from Cologne”), therefore, formed part of the oral tradition of local clerics.

From the *DM*, this story made its way (apparently without any intermediary) into the *Speculum exemplorum*<sup>14</sup> and from there into the *Magnum speculum exemplorum*<sup>15</sup> under the rubric *Dedicatio*. The name of the rubric – “Dedication” – refers to the consecration of a church or a chapel, later commemorated in a yearly festival. In fact, it is the holiday of the patron saint of a town, a village, a farmstead or a parish. It is, therefore, important to note that this *exemplum* does not feature in the rubrics *Gula* and *Ebrietas* where the stories of drunkenness are collected. It was adapted in nahuatl twice, in the collection of homilies found in ms. 1481, completed in 1731, and in the undated ms. 1493, probably from the first half of the eighteenth century. Both manuscripts are preserved in the National Library of Mexico.<sup>16</sup>

Four major aspects of Rüdinger’s story evolve over the centuries of its transmission: the structure of the story, its moral, the mental image associated to it and its linguistic expression.<sup>17</sup> The comparison between Caesarius’s text, copied word-for-word in the *Magnum speculum exemplorum* with the exclusion, however, of the dialogic structure (Appendix, Text 1), and its adaptation in nahuatl in the ms. 1481 (Appendix, Text 2) makes it possible to identify where exactly the transformations take place.

### *The Structure of the Story*

The *exemplum*’s history spans over centuries and, in order to survive, the story needed to acquire signs of identification, that, for the most part, are contained in the succession of episodes. Rüdinger the drunk is identifiable through three successive episodes: Rüdinger gets drunk, dies and appears to his daughter

13 See Brian McGuire, “Friends and Tales in the Cloister: Oral Sources in Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Dialogus Miraculorum*,” *Analecta Cisterciensia* 36 (1980): 167–247.

14 *Speculum exemplorum* (Strasburg: Heinrich Gran, 1487), VI, 97.

15 Johannes Major, *Magnum speculum exemplorum*, *Dedicatio* 4.

16 The story from ms. 1481 figures in the Appendix to this article (Text 2) and that from ms. 1493, fol. 365–67, is transcribed in Danièle Dehouve, *Rudingero el borracho y otros exempla medievales en el México virreinal* (Mexico City: Miguel Angel Porrúa, Universidad Iberoamericana, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 2000), 131–35.

17 Dehouve, *L’évangélisation des Aztèques*, 23–7.

carrying a pitcher full of burning hot metal in his hand. These episodes, memorised in a set order, remained unchanged over time. Nevertheless, the second episode (Rüdinger's death) is slightly modified in the nahuatl texts. Whereas in the *DM* the drunk's death is natural, for the Mexican Jesuits it is the result of divine punishment: "The true God who is judge is angry for certain when his solicitude is not wholeheartedly received. He did not want to postpone the punishment of the great knight drunkard. (He sent him) an illness (that) made him suffer, made him burn, (thinking that) maybe the drunkard would wake up and learn the lesson. But he learned nothing from it, because drunks have a head hard as stone, [...] The drunk died" (Appendix, Text 2, §3 et 4). The slight change in the story occurs in accordance with the 'pedagogy of fear' that the Jesuits employed to prepare believers for confession in the post-Tridentine period. Furthermore, to be used for the edification of the Indians, the *exemplum* needed to acquire a more general character and be stripped of its original context. This is why Rüdinger's hometown of Cologne is not mentioned and Rüdinger, a "knight" in the original version, became a "soldier," the term that could easily be understood by the inhabitants of the New Spain.

### *The Moral*

The story could have been used with a number of different purposes in mind. As Brother Diego de Valadés stressed, "a single example can adapt itself to all circumstances if we really want to analyse everything in detail."<sup>18</sup> The preachers had the freedom to draw a moral lesson from the *exempla* in accordance with the type of teaching given, which can explain some of the transformations that occurred as the story travelled from medieval Europe to Mexico. Why was Rüdinger's behaviour seen as reprehensible by Caesarius? To answer this question, we have to go back to the details of the medieval story. The protagonist of the *exemplum* is a *miles*, a knight and a member of the aristocracy who divided his time between military commitments and tournaments, on the one hand, and overseeing the work on the farms surrounding his castle, on the other.<sup>19</sup> It is in the latter part of his life that he gave himself to the vice which would cause his demise at the village feast of the *dedicatio*. In these feasts we can recognise the origin of the *ducasse*, still celebrated in Northern France.<sup>20</sup>

18 Fray Diego Valadés, *Retórica cristiana* (Perugia: Pietro Giacomo Petrucci, 1579, repr. Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989), 319.

19 Jacques Le Goff, *Pour un autre Moyen-Âge* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), 85 and 166.

20 Du Cange, Charles Du Fresne, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, 7 vols (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1840–1850), rubrics *villa*, *dedicatio*. Available online, URL <http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/dedicatio> and <http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/villa>. Accessed 9 January, 2015.

Very quickly, the Church became offended by the banquets that accompanied these religious festivals and perverted the sacred character of the celebrations. The expression 'faire la ducasse' (celebrate the *ducasse*) acquired the meaning of 'indulging in excessive eating and drinking.' The scandalous nature of Rüdinger's behaviour, therefore, was due not so much to his excessive drinking as such but to the context of his drinking. It was the intrusion of a secular pleasure in the domain of the sacred that was considered reprehensible.

The missionaries in the New World, on the other hand, did not read the story in the same way. For them, the Indians' principal vice was drunkenness and the preachers felt that they were not well equipped to fight against it because of the European Church's leniency in this respect. Sure enough, intoxication is part of gluttony, together with excessive eating. But is it really a mortal sin? In 1668, the Peruvian clergyman Peña Montenegro<sup>21</sup> argued that it was indeed but only when it was followed other sins such as murder, abortion and incest. By contrast, for the Augustinian Brother Manuel Pérez<sup>22</sup> who was in charge of the Indian parish of San Pablo in 1713, drunkenness always led to other sins. As a consequence, this vice was considered reprehensible not only when it collided with the sphere of the sacred but on every occasion. The taverns of Mexico City where the Indians consumed *pulque*, an alcoholic drink made with agave juice, became the new location for Rüdinger's story in its nahuatl version: "[he went to the religious feast] for the only reason that he could enter to all the taverns that served *pulque*, the places of drunkenness; and he did not care to prepare to obtain absolution for his sins. He knew nothing else but the pitcher of the *pulque*" (Appendix, Text 2, §2). Moreover, the Indians thought a person inebriated only if he drunk himself senseless. In nahuatl language there are terms to express just such a state, for example, *xocomiqui* – 'to die of a sour thing'. This is precisely the state in which Rüdinger often found himself as he was a "great drunkard who was always completely drunk" (Appendix, Text 2, §2).

In Caesarius's version, the main reason for Rüdinger's apparition to his daughter was to inform her that he was in the place of suffering, where his "hope of salvation was reduced or non-existent" (see Appendix, Text 1, § 3.). There is, however, a great difference between these two options: a non-existent hope indicated that the knight was in Hell, a reduced hope that he was atoning for the errors of his ways in Purgatory. As is well-known, the Cistercian was writing at the time when belief in Purgatory was spreading in the Christian world; there was still no well-defined 'third place,' which explains

21 Alonso de la Peña Montenegro, *Itinerario para parrochos de indios* (Madrid, Joseph Fernández de Buendía, 1668; Madrid: Pedro Marin, 1771).

22 Manuel Pérez, *Farol indiano y guía de curas de indios* (Mexico City: Francisco de Rivera Calderón, 1713).

this ambiguity.<sup>23</sup> However, for the Mexican Jesuits, no more doubt remained: because of his drunkenness which they qualified as a mortal sin, the sinner ended up in Hell. The unfortunate father said: "It is not possible for me to be helped, to be saved, because Hell is a place of neither help nor salvation. [...] Hell's torment will never end, will never be lost, will never end // For eternity it will exist, for eternity it will make suffer" (Appendix, Text 2, §6 and §7). In the nahuatl text, Rüdinger appears to his daughter only in order to leave an edifying message to all drunks. As is often the case in Jesuit sermons in nahuatl, Hell replaces the medieval Purgatory every time if there is a question of punishment.

### *The Mental Image*

A certain mental image which incarnates the story's identity is associated with each *exemplum*. In the case of Rüdinger, it is the appearance of the drunkard, his pitcher in hand, condemned to drinking a potion of melted metal for eternity. This mental image does not remain unchanged over the centuries and, together with the *exemplum* itself, undergoes an evolution.

In the Middle Ages, the sin and its punishment were included in a system of inversions where pain was substituted for pleasure.<sup>24</sup> Caesarius's *exemplum* opposed the pleasure of drink to the suffering that follows, two antinomic sensations represented by the contents of the vessel; after the sinner's death, the good wine is transformed into sulphur.

Out of a wealth of images communicating rich medieval symbolism, only a small number was retained in the nahuatl version. It preserved only very stereotypical imagery of Hell with its flames, its stench and its burns. If Rüdinger is always drinking liquid fire, it is because of these characteristics and not in response to a system of inversion: "He comes all burning, he comes all aflame, he comes in tongs of fire, and to his hand is attached his pitcher of *pulque* [...] The pitcher of *pulque* is the instrument that served me to get heavily inebriated and now by God's will it is my instrument of drinking, it is the instrument that serves me to drink a mixture that is very smelly, very repulsive and very burning; it is bitumen, powder of a firearm // that burns, and scorches //

23 Jacques Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981).

24 Medieval *artes moriendi* expressed the belief that every sinner will be punished by the members by which he sinned and offended God to teach them that we're punished by where we sin. See, for example, Anonymus, *Ars moriendi* (1492) ou *l'Art de bien mourir*, (ed.) Pierre Girard-Augry (Paris: Dervy-Livres, 1986), 124–25. Caesarius expresses a similar idea in the *DM*, II, 7: "Deus secundum qualitatem et modum peccati ipsum punit peccatum" (God punishes a sin according to the quality and the means of the sin).



my mouth, my tongue, my throat, and my gut, and my suffering will have no end; it is what I deserve, this is the payback for my profound drunkenness" (Appendix, Text 2, §4 and §5).

### *Linguistic Expression*

It is not surprising that the style of the author of the nahuatl version is very unlike Caesarius's. There are three main reasons for this difference. First of all, the Cistercian *exemplum* is expressed in a concise style because it is a written text. It is possible, however, that when it became an oral performance as it was integrated into an edifying sermon the *exemplum* underwent considerable changes. Secondly, the Jesuits were writing in the century when sermons were written in a refined baroque style. Oppositions, concessions, similes, dialogues, exclamations, interrogations, asides and citations were widely used.<sup>25</sup> These techniques were systematically employed in the composition of sermons in Spanish which, in this respect, were drastically different from the medieval sermons which were expected, at least in theory, to be free from rhetorical artifice. Moreover, the resources of the nahuatl vocabulary itself also contributed to the style of the Mexican version. According to a Jesuit from Michoacán, nahuatl had "palabras más eficaces para exortar y reñir particularmente; y más abundancia, sin comparación que tiene la española, ni aún el latín" (words more effective to exhort and especially to reprimand, and in greater number, without doubt, than Spanish and even Latin).<sup>26</sup> To express such new notions as sin, pain and Hell, the missionaries used an archaic style that imitated pre-Colombian ceremonial discourse.<sup>27</sup> In particular, the preachers resorted to "pairs" or series of synonyms characteristic of the pre-Colombian ceremonial language, especially appreciated by the Indian nobility that proudly used it in rituals and solemn speeches. These formulae are indicated in the Appendices by the use of the italics, for example: "*made him suffer, made him burn // when he was going to die, when he was going to perish // He comes all burning, he comes all aflame, he comes in tongues of fire*" (Appendix, Text 2, § 3 and 4).

Having discussed the reasons for the transformations Caesarius's story undergoes when it is adapted by the missionaries in the New Spain, I shall now turn to the process of selection that led the preachers as well as their congregations to manifest their preference for certain medieval stories.

<sup>25</sup> On this point, see Dehouve, *L'évangélisation des Aztèques*, 141ff.

<sup>26</sup> Francisco Ramírez, *Relación sobre la residencia de Michoacán (Pátzcuaro)*, in *Monumenta Mexicana*, (ed.) Félix Zubillaga vol. 2, 1581–85 (Rome: Monumenta Missionum Societatis Iesu, 1959), 529.

<sup>27</sup> Dehouve, *L'évangélisation des Aztèques*, 159ff.



### The Making of a Successful Story

Certain *exempla* enjoyed more success in the New Spain than others, as is demonstrated by the history of many of Caesarius's anecdotes. Whereas the story of Rüdinger had only a limited circulation, another edifying story for drunks was much more popular.

The story of the 'drunk pilgrim' (*DM*, XII, 40) is about a drunk who goes to Hell, repents and returns to the land of the living. Caesarius places the event "tempore schismatis inter Ottonem et Philippum Reges Romanorum" (at the time of the schism between the kings of Rome, Otto and Philip), that is Otto IV, duke of Brunswick, and Philip, duke of Swabia; the dispute in question took place between 1197 and 1206. The anecdote contains five episodes: 1. The pilgrim exchanges his penitential habit for some strong wine and drinks himself unconscious. 2. His spirit is taken to the gate of Hell where he witnesses the arrival of the abbot of Corvey, from the diocese of Paderborn in Germany, and sees the Prince of Darkness throwing the abbot in the abyss of fire. 3. The pilgrim is noticed by the Devil. 4. The pilgrim turns to his angel and promises never to get drunk again if he is delivered from this peril. 5. Back to his country, he learns that the death of the Abbot of Corvey occurred when he had his vision of descending into Hell. We see that, as in the case of Rüdinger, the story is not castigating intoxication as such but its intrusion into the domain of the sacred. This intrusion manifests itself first of all in the fact that the pilgrim exchanges his penitential habit for wine and then in the condemnation of the abbot, "an excessively worldly man, who was more like a knight than a monk" (Appendix, Text 3, §4).

The story, mentioned in Tubach's *Index*<sup>28</sup> (n° 2249 and 3784), immediately proved a much greater success in Europe than the *exemplum* of Rüdinger. In the fourteenth century, the *exemplum* of the drunken pilgrim was used in Arnold of Liège's *Alphabetum narrationum* and Johannes Gobi's *Scala coeli*<sup>29</sup> and, in the fifteenth century, in Gottschalck Hollen's *Sermonum opus exquisitissimum* (published from 1481) and Johannes Herolt's *Sermones Discipuli* (published from 1480).<sup>30</sup> In the seventeenth century, it was integrated

28 Tubach, *Index exemplorum*, 180 and 292.

29 Arnoldus Leodiensis, *Alphabetum narrationum*, n° 290 (Ebrietas); Johannes Gobi the Younger, *Scala coeli*, n° 466 (Ebrietas 1).

30 Gottschalck Hollen, *Sermonum opus exquisitissimum* (Haguenau: J. Ryman, 1517), aest. 101; Johannes Herolt, *Sermones Discipuli de tempore et de sanctis, cum Promptuario exemplorum et Promptuario de miraculis b. Mariae Virginis* (Nürnberg: Aanton Koberger, 1480; Mainz: Bernard Gualter, 1612), Ebrietas 2.

into the *Magnum speculum exemplorum*,<sup>31</sup> in the rubric *Ebrietas*. In Mexico, a first version (ms. 1481, Appendix, Text 4) that presents itself as a faithful translation of Caesarius' story<sup>32</sup> was written before the *exemplum* was reused in Paredes's famous catechism,<sup>33</sup> which is a proof that the text enjoyed a certain reputation.

How can this reputation be explained? Most certainly by the mental image associated with this *exemplum*. Whereas the story of Rüdinger communicated the image of an active drunk who administers himself a drink of fire, the drunken pilgrim presents a figure of a passive sinner at the hands of devils who force him to swallow a stinking and burning drink (Fig. 11.1). The Europeans preferred this image because it presupposed the idea of Hell as the place of torture where the devils play the role of the executioners (Fig. 11.2). Moreover, the representation of the Devil forcing the drunk to swallow the burning drink was used, after adaptation, as a metaphor for the suffering inflicted by the Indians of the New World on their prisoners. A Spanish conquistador, Pedro Arias de Ávila, nicknamed 'tigre del istmo' (tiger of the isthmus) because of his notorious cruelty, was also depicted swallowing molten gold administered by the Indians in Darién.

Even though he had merited this punishment, not because of love of drink but because of his taste for gold, it is easy to understand the meaning given to this image. Molten gold corresponds to the passion for gold in the classical system of inversion that substitutes pain for pleasure and requires that one be punished through the source of one's sin. The Indians take the place of the devils, and a real event (Pedro Arias de Ávila's execution) is seen through the prism of infernal imagery. The imagery of passive sinners became popular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in the post-Tridentine period, when the concept of the 'pedagogy of fear' was developed and many descriptions of Hell and its inhabitants were produced.

Another reason for the anecdote's popularity is to be found in its structure. Unlike Rüdinger, the drunken pilgrim is only a witness, during his alcohol-induced 'coma,' to what happens in Hell. This description must have been profoundly disturbing for the Indians who frequently drunk themselves to oblivion and heard this cautionary tale from the Jesuit fathers. Even so, a preacher of the College of San Gregorio (ms. 1475, Text 5, fig. 11.3 in the Appendix) wrote for the instruction of other Indians of this area the story of one of them who had the same experience as the drunk pilgrim and went on to tell it in confession:

31 Major, *Magnum speculum exemplorum*, *Ebrietas* 3.

32 The sermon in nahuatl mentions Caesarius (Cesareo) as a reference and not the *MSE* or any other potential intermediary source.

33 Paredes, *Promptuario manual mexicano*, 343.

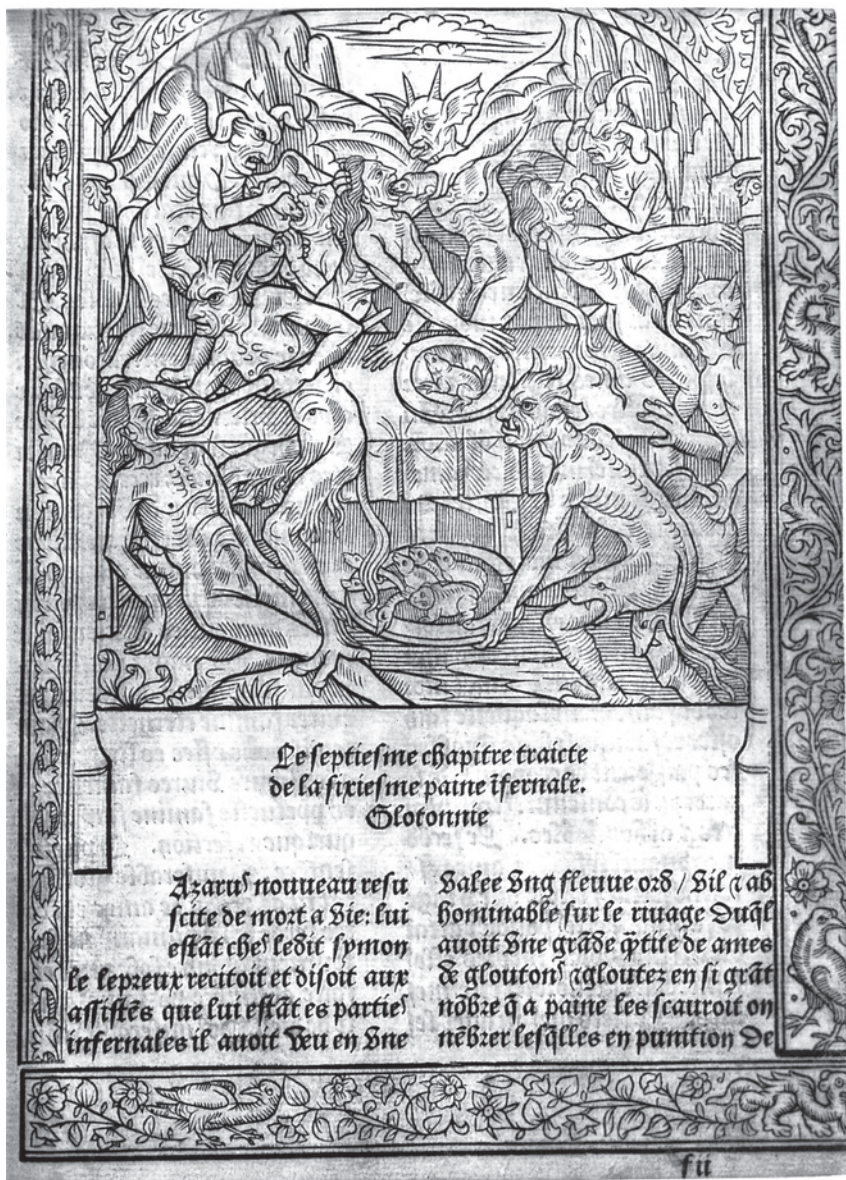


FIGURE 11.1 *The punishment of the gula in Hell, according to the Ars moriendi ou l'Art de bien mourir, published by Antoine Vérard (Paris, 1492).*  
IMAGE COURTESY OF BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE.



Indi Hispanis aurum sitientibus, aurum lique- XX.  
factum infundunt.



FIGURE 11.2 *The torture of Pedro Arias de Ávila in Darién, according to Theodore de Bry: Americae pars IV sive insignis et admiranda historia de reperta primum occidentali India a Christophoro Columbo (Frankfurt, 1594).*

IMAGE COURTESY OF BIBLIOTHÈQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON. RÉ S 29621 (4),  
PLANCHE 20.

“My children, I want to tell you a certain very frightening miraculous example that did not take place in Castile nor in any other place in the world, but here at your own doorstep, and that did not happen to a Castilian but to one of you tributary Indians . . . [The Indian] went to San Gregorio to tell a helpful priest, he went to confess, he told what had happened to him . . .

Oh my children, this happened to one of you Indians who pay tribute, the father told this so that other drunks who lose themselves in the same way could draw a lesson from knowing it” (Appendix, Text 5, § 2, 8 and 9).

The story contains the following episodes: 1. The Indian is a great drunkard, he spends all his money on *pulque*, he ruins his family and beats his wife. 2. When he is about to go and get drunk, a young man invites him to follow him to a place of drunkenness. Together they climb a steep mountain and arrive at

a pond of liquid coals where the devils are bathing. They offer him a burning drink and look as if they are about to throw him in the pond. 3. The drunkard appeals to the Virgin. An angel tells him that the Virgin heard him and advises him to change his ways. 4. The angel brings him back home; the drunkard confesses to a Jesuit of San Gregorio. His wife confirms that he has changed his ways.

The structure of Caesarius's tale is easily recognisable in the story in nahuatl, but here we also observe a hybrid vision of Hell which is situated on the top of a steep mountain where, according to pre-Colombian beliefs, the god of mountains and rain dwells. In fact, this detail testifies to a certain degree of hybridisation of the imagery.

This tale's evolution, however, does not end there. Passing through a nahuatl village in the Guerrero state of Mexico in 1988, I collected an anecdote of the same type containing the following episodes:<sup>34</sup> 1) A young man likes drinking so much that he goes to live with the landlady of a tavern (a *cantina*). When he no longer has any cash left, he leaves to borrow some and comes back much later and asks for a beer from the lady who grew old when he was away. 2. The drunkard falls dead drunk on the table and his spirit is led away by Death. Together they climb a mountain. The drunk knocks and a door in the rock opens and he enters a bar. 4. He is in Hell but he is not bothered about it, all he wants is more drink. He asks for a beer, then another. Drunk and reckless, he demands snacks but the devils reply that there are none. Then he seizes a devil and devours him.

The first episode is constructed on the model of the story of San Gregorio. It describes excessive drunkenness that can no longer be compatible with life in society. The beginning of the second episode is equally conventional, only with Death replacing the guardian angel. The Indian then enters the mountain where Hell is situated. But, in this case, Hell appears in the form of a bar, where, far from being forced to swallow burning potions, he drinks beer for pleasure. Whereas in the edifying Jesuit story, the drunkard promises to mend his ways, in the modern tale, his obstinacy and his stupidity allow him to overcome the demons. Without even realising it, he devours a devil.

Without any doubt, this anecdote is a parody of the eighteenth-century Jesuit story and it has a strong anti-clerical message. In fact, we should bear in mind that anti-clericalism was very strong in Mexico throughout the nineteenth century and during the rule of some of the presidents of the early twentieth century.

34 This story is published in Dehouve, *Rudingero el borracho*, 150–5.

## Conclusion

Between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, Caesarius of Heisterbach's stories circulated between different monastic orders, but in most cases they were appropriated by the Dominicans and then by the Jesuits. The Jesuits brought the *exempla* to the New World in the post-Tridentine period. In the course of the five centuries of their history, these tales went backwards and forwards between oral and written media, circulated in the form of rumours before being finally committed to paper, were communicated during sermons, relived by the faithful, told at confession, again noted down and used in preaching etc.

The stories survived through the centuries, but the effect of the passing of the time becomes apparent in the transformations that concern the structure of the anecdote, its moral message, the mental image associated with it and its linguistic expression. These *exempla* managed to adapt to the needs of conversion of the Indians in the period between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Moreover, the process of selection, which was not guided by any authority, meant that some stories were forgotten, while others became very successful and remain in circulation until the present day. These preferences are not manifested in a conscious manner. They result from the social importance of the mental image associated with each *exemplum*, as well as from certain details of the structure of the anecdote. To be successful, a story needs to appeal to both the preachers and the Indians.

It becomes apparent that both the ability to believe that characterises believers and the ability to make believe (*faire croire*) which is the domain of missionaries rely on the same techniques. There is no doubt that the *exempla* were very efficient conversion tools. As stories, they circulated freely in towns and in the countryside of the colonial Mexico, in the same way as rumours, to which they were considered similar. The protagonists of these tales were individuals who went through unusual experiences. But these experiences could also be lived by other individuals, the Indians themselves. The abundance of images concentrated in these stories was meant to boggle the imagination. The mental image attached to every anecdote (for example that of an active or a passive drunkard), the imagery of Hell (with its burning potions and its devils-executioners), the system of inversion of pleasure and pain, associated emotions, all this contributed to the exceptional longevity of the Cistercian *exempla*. Finally, as is demonstrated by the existence of a contemporary burlesque imitation of Caesarius's *exemplum*, the 'refusal to believe' of the Mexican anti-clerical movements expressed itself in the form of a parody of the techniques heretofore used to express belief and to make others believe.

## Appendix

### *Rüdinger the Drunkard*

Text 1.

The story in Latin.

Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, XII, 41.

De poena Rudingeri et potu eius

1. In Dioecesi Coloniensi, non procul a Colonia, miles quidam erat nomine Rudingerus, sic totus deditus vino, ut diversarum villarum dedicationes tantum propter bona vina frequentaret. Hic cum infirmatus moriturus esset, filia eum rogavit, ut infra triginta dies sibi appareret. Quo respondente, "hoc faciam si potero," exspiravit.

2. Post mortem vero filiae per visum apparens, ait: "Ecce praesens sum sicut postulasti." Portabat enim vas parvum et fictile quod vulgo *cruselinum* vocatur in manu sua in quali in tabernis potare solebat.

3. Dicente filia, "pater quid est in vase illo?" respondit: "Potus meus ex pice et sulphure confectus. Semper ex illo bibo nec eum epotare valeo." Sicque disparuit. Et statim intellexit puella, tam ex praecedenti vita quam ex poena, modicam vel nullam esse spem salvationis eius.

4. Vinum quidem hic blande ingreditur, sed novissime mordebit ut coluber.

English translation:

Of the punishment of Rüdinger and his drink

1. In the diocese of Cologne, not far from Cologne, lived a knight by the name of Rüdinger, so fond of wine he was that he was a regular participant in the dedication feasts of different villages solely because of the good wines.

As he was ill and was on the point of dying, his daughter asked him to show himself within thirty days of his death. Answering: "I will do it if I can," he expired.

2. Appearing to his daughter in a vision, he said: "Here I am present as you have asked."

In fact, he was carrying in his hand a small earthenware vessel commonly known as *cruselinum* from which he had the habit of drinking in the taverns.

3. His daughter said to him: "Father, what is in this vessel?" He answered: "My drink made of bitumen and sulphur. I am endlessly drinking from it without being able to empty it."

Then he disappeared. And the young girl understood that, because of his past life and also of his punishment, his hope of salvation was reduced or non-existent.

4. It is true that wine enters nicely, but in the end it will bite like a serpent.<sup>35</sup>

Text 2. Story in nahuatl translated into English

Ms. 1481, fol. 230–233

1 – There was a soldier, a great captain called Rudingero, very valorous but most of all a great drunkard; he was always completely drunk. And while the others were at church where feasts are celebrated, he went with them.

But he did not go there in order to pray to the saint so that the Lord appears to him, nor did he go there to listen to God's word or *take a lesson, change his mode of life*,<sup>36</sup> the only reason was to spend the feast in drunken stupor.

2 – And once, in a certain church, a saint was celebrated, and there the believers were obtaining absolution of sins, like in many other places where it can be obtained.

The soldier went with the others, but not to obtain absolution – only the *good, the just* obtain it, those whose hearts do not know any sin and *follow, complete* the instructions that are given to them to merit it –

(he went there) for the only reason that he could enter all the *taverns that serve pulque, the places of drunkenness*;

and he did not care to prepare to obtain absolution of his sins. He knew nothing else but the pitcher of *pulque*.

3 – The true God who is judge is angry for certain when his solicitude is not wholeheartedly received. He did not want to postpone the punishment of the great knight drunkard. (He sent him) an illness (that) *made him suffer, made him burn*, (thinking that) maybe the drunkard *would wake up and learn the lesson*. But he learned nothing from it, because drunks have a head hard as stone.

4 – And *as he was going to die, as he was going to perish*, one of his daughters who was very pious asked her father the soldier that, once he is dead, he may show himself to her and reassure her heart (telling her) where he had arrived.

The drunk died and not thirty days after his death by the will of God he showed himself to his daughter.

35 “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when I moveth itself aright. At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder” (*Proverbs*, 23:31–32).

36 The passages in italics indicate the presence of a synonymous or metaphorical ‘pair,’ a device characteristic of the parallelistic style.



*He comes all burning, he comes all aflame, he comes in tongues of fire* and to his hand is attached his pitcher of *pulque*.

When his daughter saw him, *she got very scared, her hair stood on end from fear*, and, as he was talking to her, her heart died [she swooned], but later she took courage, she conjured him to tell her who he was, what he wanted and why his pitcher of *pulque* was attached to his hand.

5 – The unfortunate drunkard said in response: “I, the miserable one *who does not have an astrological sign*,<sup>37</sup> *who has no merits*, me, your father, God damned me because of my profound drunkenness.

And the pitcher of *pulque* is the instrument that served me to get heavily inebriated and now by God’s will *it is my instrument of drinking, it is the instrument that serves me to drink* a mixture that is *very smelly, very repulsive and very burning*; it is *bitumen, powder of a firearm || that burns, and scorches // my mouth, my tongue, my throat, and my gut*, and my suffering will have no end; *it is what I deserve, this is the payback* for my profound drunkenness.”

6 – Again the young girl *asked, said*: “My poor father, is not it possible to help you *with a mass, with a fast or by carrying a cross*? Maybe there is something that *I could do, which I can take care of*?”

And the unfortunate father said: “It is not possible *for me to be helped, to be saved*, because Hell *is a place of neither help nor salvation*; when one is there, one can neither pray to all the saints nor prostrate oneself in front of God.

And *on me was verified, with me was completely accomplished* the word of God our Lord, written in the Scriptures:

‘Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”<sup>38</sup>

7 – After having said that he emitted a frightening cry: “Such bitterness!” that is “Alas! *How it makes suffer, how it burns, how it pricks and how is it bitter*, Hell’s torment.”

For the second time, he cried: “Such multitude!” that is “Alas! There are many things *that one cannot taste, that one cannot encounter* in Hell’s torment.”

For the third time, he cried and said: “Such eternal suffering!” – “Alas! Hell’s torment *will never end, will never be lost, will never end. // For eternity it will exist, for eternity it will make suffer*.”

Then he disappeared in an instant, because the devils took him away down to Hell.

37 ‘Not to have an astrological sign’ is an expression of pre-Colombian origin.

38 Matthew 22, 13, often cited at the time, for example in the Anonymus, *Ars Moriendi* [1492], 127. See also Luke 13, 28, *Ars Moriendi* [1492], 128 and Matthew 25, 41, *Ars Moriendi* [1492], 93.

### *The Drunken Pilgrim*

Text 3. Text in Latin

Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, XII, 40.

De poena Abbatis Corbeyae

1. Tempore schismatis inter Ottonem et Philippum Reges Romanorum, peregrinus quidam de transmarinis veniens partibus, sclaviniam suam pro vino quod in illis partibus fortissimum est exponens, in tantum bibit, ut inebriatus a mente sua alienaretur, sic ut mortuum cum aestimarent.

2. Eadem hora ductus est spiritus eius ad loca poenarum, ubi super puteum igneo operculo tectum residere conspexit ipsum principem tenebrarum.

Interim inter ceteras animas adductus est Abbas Corbeyae, quem ille multum salutans, cum calice igneo poculum sulphureum ei ministravit.

3. Qui cum bibisset, amoto operculo missus est in puteum. Peregrinus vero cum ante limina infernalium staret, et talia videndo tremere, diabolus fortiter clamavit:

“Adducite etiam mihi dominum illum qui foris stat, qui vero vestem peregrinationis suae pro vino exponendo inebriatus est.”

4. Quo audito peregrinus ad angelum Domini promisit quia nunquam inebriaretur, dummodo illa hora de imminente periculo liberaret eum.

Qui mox ad se reversus, diem et horam notavit, rediensque in terram suam, eodem tempore praedictum Abbatem obisse cognovit.

Ego eundem Abbatem Coloniae vidi, eratque homo valde saecularis, magis se conformans militi quam monacho.

Novicius: Qui hic dediti sunt ebrietati, puto quod in inferno male potentur.

English translation

On the punishment of the abbot of Corvey

1. At the time of the schism between the kings of Rome, Otto and Philip, a certain pilgrim who came from across the seas offered his cloak in exchange for wine which is very strong in these regions; he drunk so much that drunkenness deprived him of reason and people thought he was dead.

2. At the same time, his spirit was taken to the place of punishment where, in a well covered with a lid of fire, he saw the Prince of Darkness himself.

In the meanwhile, among several souls was brought the abbot of Corvey, to him, with many greetings, he [the Devil] administered a drink of sulphur in a chalice of fire.

3. After he drunk, they took the lid away and threw him into the well. But as the pilgrim stood at the border of Hell and trembled contemplating these things, the devil exclaimed with force:

“Also bring me this man who is standing outside who got drunk last night after having exchanged his pilgrim's habit for wine.”

4. When he heard this, the pilgrim promised the angel of the Lord that he would never get drunk again if he were swiftly delivered from this imminent peril.

He quickly came to his senses and made a note of the day and time and, when he returned to his country, he learned that at that moment the abbot about whom we have told had died.

I saw in Cologne a similar abbot, it was an excessively secular man, who was more like a knight than a monk.

The Novice: Those who dedicated themselves to drunkenness, I think that they will drink a bad drink in Hell.

Text 4. Story in nahuatl translated into English

Ms 1481, fol. 234–236

1 – Here is a sort of example: this is how certain Christians become travellers, with faith, *they go away, they go to pray*, to a place where there is either a sanctuary of a saint or a relic that is kept there.

And a man *dressed himself as a pilgrim, prepared to do penance* in order to go and pray somewhere.

And the devil, our common enemy, who always envies us every good deed that we do, tempted him (made him taste) so that *he got drunk, he got inebriated*, that he drank *his cover, his garment*,

2 – and when he fell down, naked, *he is not moving, he is not aware of anything, he is similar to //a stone and a stick*, everyone thinks that he is dead.

Then by God's will an Angel took his soul so that he can contemplate *Hell, the place of suffering*. And there he saw the prince of the devils seated on a throne of fire.

There numerous sinners were brought in his presence, sinners who *lived, died* in evil, *who did not do penance, who did not repent*.

He also saw a governor whose soul was brought by the devils, and he saw the prince of the devils who greatly rejoiced and greeted him with joy, he said:

"You have come, oh my dear, you followed my teaching well, and you knew only one thing, you made *your soil, your mud* [your body and your material life] rejoice, and now *you come tired, you come suffering*, you followed a long way, *all in fire, all burning*. // *Rest a little, catch your breath*."

And the devils made him drink *not water, not wine* nor any other kind of drink but *powder for the firearm, a mixture of fire* that made him suffer greatly;

and after having made him drink, *they threw him far away, they cast him far* down in the well of fire so that he may suffer there for all eternity.

3 – And after having seen that, the pilgrim immediately *got very scared, panicked greatly*, as the prince of the devils spoke again:

"Also bring in front of me the pilgrim standing there, who drank his garment of penitence."

The pilgrim appealed to *his angel, his guardian* who had brought him there to help him and to speak in his favour in front of God, and he promised to God *never to get drunk again, never to get inebriated again*, if he helped him now.

4 – The angel helped him by taking him away from there. And *he lived, he healed himself* [he woke up], he kept in his memory the moment when this wonder happened to him,

and when he arrived there, *in his house, in his village*, he learned that the moment of the death of the governor was the one when he saw what happened to him in Hell.

Text 5. Story in nahuatl translated into English

Ms 1475, fol. 75–78

An Indian saw the sufferings of Hell and from then on abandoned his drinking

1 – My children, I want to tell you a certain very frightening miraculous example that did not take place in Castile nor in any other place in the world, but here at your own doorstep, and that did not happen to a Castilian but to one of you tributary Indians.

He was scared thanks to the great compassion that our God made reach him, because he was indulging in profound drunkenness, *he was getting up and going to bed // in the hallucination of profound drunkenness*.

2 – Listen, my children, what happened to one of you Indians who pay tribute, a man living in Mexico City, who took care of provisions, a dignitary responsible for the food supplies.

He drank a lot, he spent everything on *wine, the pulque*, he gave nothing to his spouse, even though his children were dying of hunger and went naked, and he made them suffer in poverty every day (and) tormented his wife.

And when it was *the hour, the moment* for God to take him in his pity with his great compassion

3 – once, early in the morning, as he was getting up, he could not think of anything but his *pulque*, he got up asking himself where he was going to get drunk and where he would find money to get intoxicated.

As he was thinking about it and getting up, in front of him stood, he saw, a young man *who spoke to him, who told him*:

"Come, oh my brother, come with me, I am going to take you where you will accomplish *your will, your desire*, where *you will fill yourself to satisfaction, content yourself with drunkenness, you will swell // with pulque, with wine*."

4 – And when the young man had led him to a steep mountain, he ascended, he descended, he arrived to the place with a pond of liquid burning coals that was very obscure and very smelly, with very malodorous vapours,

the liquid coals sizzled, the tongues of fire went far as they took fire, suffocating like powder,

and he saw how in this pond of liquid fire were bathing Lucifer the lord of Hell and *the numerous, the innumerable* (beings) who worked there, *the dirty (beings) blackened by smoke, the dirty and disgusting (beings), the dirty and frightening (beings),*

5 – and one of them said : “Listen, you have come, this bathing pond of fire that you see is our home, the pond of turquoise, the king of turquoise” – because this is how Mexicans who were still venerating idols spoke –

And the one who spoke then filled a vessel from the abyss of liquid fire that sizzled and said: “Do you want to drink the drink that is the drink of *the drunks, of the inebriates?*”

Seeing the abyss of coals in the vessel of flames that sizzle, the drink that the dirty disgusting drunkards drink in Hell, he died of fear – he trembles, clatters with his teeth, so frightened he is,

He turned his head away in order not to see the infernal *pulque* that they were giving him that he wanted neither to see nor to take because its disgusting horror inflicted suffering.

6 – And when he came to standing up like a dead man at the end of a few days, he wanted to vomit; this is how he wanted to vomit as if he had inhaled burned smoke that had made him want to vomit,

and straightaway Lucifer told the devils who worked: “What do you have? Why are you stopping? How come you are not taking this man? How come you are not submerging him so that he drinks? There he will be satiated with fire!”

So the devils raised him in order to throw him in the pond of coals.

7 – And the moment when they were going to throw him, he cried with terror addressing Saint Mary, always a virgin, and said: “Lady, help me!”

And when the young man saw that the sinner was crying this way from terror and addressing Saint Mary, he said to him:

“Oh man of the Earth, obey the Lady Saint Mary, because if it weren't for her the devils would have abandoned you to suffer in the pond of fire, and, thanks to His compassionate Mother, God will still let you repent and take a resolution.

See how you will live, because the drunks who do not abandon *the hallucination* of their *pulque* are brought here and liquid fire will eternally be put in their mouths.”

8 – And this young man who was speaking was his guardian angel. And he woke up, he was dead of fright, and even though he had not been simply asleep, he got up trembling of cold, feeling weak, clattering with his teeth,

then he decided not to forget – unlike you who forget your repentance – (and) went to San Gregorio to tell a helpful priest, he went to confess, he told what had happened to him, he cried with hot tears while he was confessing, *in order to change his life, to arrange his life.*

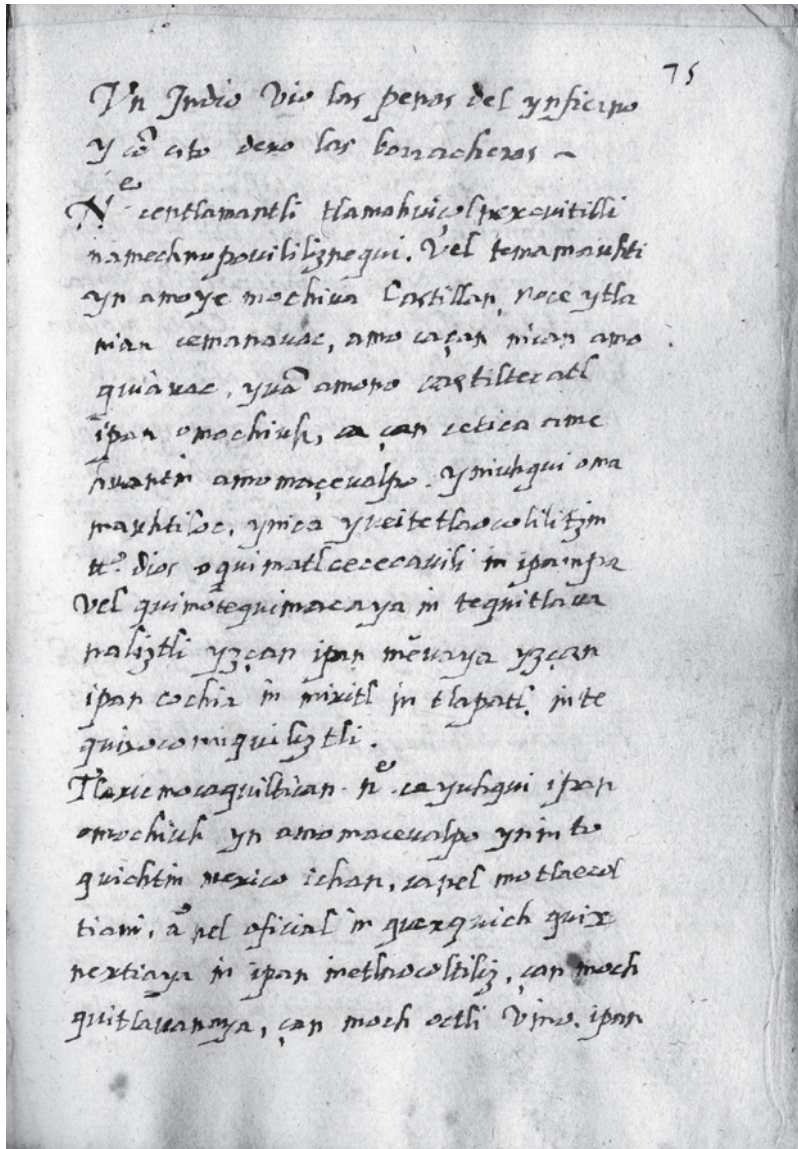


FIGURE 11.3 The folio 75 recto of the ms. 1475 of the National library of Mexico, with a story of an Indian who saw the torments of Hell and abandoned his drunkenness.



His spouse couldn't recognize him anymore, as if the old drunkard were no longer the same. The lady went to San Grigorio to speak to the father and told him: "Father, what happened to my husband, what did you tell him, because, oh dear father, I am really full of shame in his presence, so much has he changed his life, so much has he become a good man."

9 – Oh my children, this happened to one of you Indians who pay tribute, the father told this so that other drunks who lose themselves in the same way could draw a lesson from knowing it.

And now I speak to all those among you who lose themselves in this way, abandoning themselves to the *hallucination* of profound drunkenness.

Because you reject God, *you do not tell, you do not confess*, when Justice punishes you; you say that you got drunk, that you do not know what you have done;<sup>39</sup> and how much more difficult will it be for you to remember God when you are lost because of drink!

And you who *merit a punishment, a pain, // who will speak to you, who will wake you up?* You who made yourself unhappy by your own means, if you are condemned by a judgement given by my hand, will you repent in the same way that the drunkard repented on whom God took pity thanks to his dear Mother?

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39 The preacher is alluding to the fact that there was no distinction between the civil punishment of drunkenness and the spiritual sanction of confession. Thus, in confession the Indian said that he did no longer have the memory of the trouble he had caused because he had been drunk, according to Pérez, *Farol indiano*.