

**CONTRIBUTIONS**  
**IN NEW WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY**  
Volume 14

# CONTRIBUTIONS

## IN NEW WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY



**Contributions in New World Archaeology** (ISSN 2080-8216) is a semi-annual journal dealing with various aspects of North and South American archaeology, anthropology and ethnohistory. Its main aim is to publish results of archaeological excavations and surveys conducted in various parts of the New World as well as to present papers devoted to the studies of collections of archaeological artefacts discovered in either American continent. Moreover, the journal addresses such subjects as theory, methodology and practice in New World archaeology.

[www.cnwajournal.org](http://www.cnwajournal.org)

E-mail: [cnwajournal@gmail.com](mailto:cnwajournal@gmail.com)

### EDITORIAL OFFICE:

Department of New World Archaeology  
Institute of Archaeology  
Jagiellonian University  
Golebia 11 Street  
31-007 Krakow  
Poland  
Telephone: +48 126631595

### EDITORS:

Janusz Krzysztof Kozłowski  
Jarosław Żrałka  
Radosław Palonka  
Michał Wasilewski

### EDITORIAL BOARD:

#### Robert H. Brunswig

Department of Anthropology, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, USA

#### Víctor González Fernández

Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, Bogotá, D.C., Colombia

#### Christophe Helmke

Institute of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

#### Michał Kobusiewicz

Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Poznań Branch), Poland

#### Krzysztof Makowski

Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Peru

#### Aleksander Posern-Zieliński

Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

#### Mariusz S. Ziolkowski

Centre for Precolumbian Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland



JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY  
IN KRAKÓW



JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

**CONTRIBUTIONS  
IN NEW WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY**

Volume 14

*Proceedings of the 24th European Maya Conference  
Cracow, November 11-16, 2019  
Part 2*

Edited by  
Christophe Helmke, Harri Kettunen and Jarosław Żrałka

Kraków 2020

Cover image:  
Details of the murals from the chapel of Santa María Xoxoteco, Mexico.  
Photo by Mikkel Bøg Clemmensen

Linguistic editors:  
English: Steve Jones (GB), BA in Modern Languages – English, Director of Distinction Language Centre, Gdańsk, Poland; Colleen Sunderland (USA), MA in Modern Languages – English, TOEFL tests evaluator, Bellingham, USA  
Spanish: Ewa Palka (PL), Departamento de Filología Románica – Universidad Jaguelónica, Kraków, Polonia

Scientific editors  
Christophe Helmke, Harri Kettunen, and Jesper Nielsen

Cover art design  
Filip Szyber

Graphics editing and DTP  
Profil-Archeo Publishing House and Elżbieta Fidler-Żrałka

© Copyright by:  
Jagiellonian University – Institute of Archaeology  
Kraków 2020

ISSN 2080-8216  
DOI: 10.33547/cnwa

The print version of Contributions in New World Archaeology  
is the primary, reference version of this journal

Publikacja finansowana przez Uniwersytet Jagielloński

Zwiększenie poziomu umiędzynarodowienia oraz poprawa dostępności czasopisma  
*Contributions in New World Archeology* - zadanie finansowane w ramach umowy  
nr 678/P-DUN/2019 ze środków Ministerstwa Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego  
przeznaczonych na działalność upowszechniającą naukę



Ministerstwo Nauki  
i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

Indexed on  **BazHum**

## Contents

- 7 From the editors
- 9 Vasijas no conquistadas. Patrones de continuidad de la cerámica maya  
*Dora Maritza García Patzán*
- 33 Didactics and cosmos: heaven and hell in the early colonial murals of Santa María Xoxoteco, Hidalgo, Mexico  
*Mikkel Bøg Clemmensen*
- 59 Chilam Balam “prophecies” and the Spanish invasion and occupation of Yucatan  
*Bruce Love*
- 77 Linguistic archaeology in the Poqomchi’-speaking area: tracing language contacts before and after the conquest  
*Igor Vinogradov*
- 97 New World *words and things* in the Old World: how the Americas conquered the world  
*Harri Kettunen*
- 201 The peninsular Maya’s unfinished spiritual conquest  
*Lorraine A. Williams-Beck*



## FROM THE EDITORS

This issue of the *Contributions in New World Archaeology* journal contains the second set of papers presented at the 24<sup>th</sup> European Maya Conference (EMC) that took place in Kraków between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of November, 2019. The title of the 24<sup>th</sup> EMC was *Contact and Conquest in the Maya World and Beyond*, and it concentrated on the events 500 years ago, since the start of the conquest of Mexico, as well as the colonization and collision of cultures from the early sixteenth century onwards, the changes it brought about, and the dawn of globalization. The conference also addressed the subject of conquests and contacts between different Mesoamerican societies and cultures before the European arrival.

During the conference, more than twenty papers were presented. The first part of contributions has been published in volume 13 of CNWA. The present volume contains another set of six papers that are mostly concentrated on the subject of Spanish conquest and changes it brought to Mesoamerica as seen in the art, ceramic production, languages, and religion, and how the Columbian exchange influenced not only the New World but also the Old.

The volume begins with an article by Dora Maritza García Patzán titled *Vasijas no conquistadas: Patronos de continuidad de la cerámica maya*. The author describes changes brought by conquest and colonization in the process of ceramic production in Guatemala and Mexico. The author also shows that despite the introduction of new European ceramic modes, many production techniques and decorations of pre-Columbian origin were maintained in the manufacture of ceramics not only during the colonial period but even up until today.

The following article, *Didactics and cosmos: heaven and hell in the early colonial murals of Santa María Xoxoteco, Hidalgo, Mexico* by Mikkel Bøg Clemmensen, reports on the fascinating colonial period murals that were used in the process of evangelization and conversion of indigenous people of central Mexico. Clemmensen concentrates on presenting many iconographic elements of pre-Columbian origin that were used by friars and local artists to describe the most important concepts and elements of the Christian religion.

The next paper in the volume is by Bruce Love and is titled *Chilam Balam 'prophecies' and the Spanish invasion and occupation of Yucatan*. The author discusses the famous passages from the Books of Chilam Balam, attributed to five *ah kin*, the ritual specialists and diviners who interpreted the words of the gods in sixteenth-century Yucatan. The study reveals that the *ah kin* were contemporary cohorts from neighboring polities in the western and northern peninsula and that they urged their old enemy, the Itza Maya, to accept the new religion and people from the east. The paper re-examines the Spanish invasion and occupation of Yucatan and finds that in the years prior to the inquisition trials by Diego de Landa there was incentive for the Maya to collaborate with the Spaniards and the Franciscan missionaries.

Igor Vinogradov's paper *Linguistic archaeology in the Poqomchi'-speaking area: tracing language contacts before and after the conquest* focuses on language contacts in the Maya area by analyzing early colonial manuscripts written in Poqomchi'. These written documents can be used in reconstructing the social context of the speakers. For example, similarities in the grammatical development during the colonial period can be observed between Poqomchi' and Q'eqchi'. Interestingly, however, Poqomchi' maintains the tendency to borrow linguistic structures rather than individual lexemes, which may be due to the deliberate efforts of the speakers to preserve their linguistic identity.

In the next paper, *New World words and things in the Old World: How the Americas conquered the world*, Harri Kettunen examines the linguistic and biological effects of the *Columbian exchange* by analyzing the history of lexical borrowings from Indigenous languages of the Americas around the world, as well as the history of New World items in the Old World. Whereas the Columbian exchange brought numerous plants and animals, as well as technology and diseases, to the New World, the flow of New World items to the rest of the world was much more restricted, involving primarily cultivated plants. However, the author points out that if we consider the Columbian exchange to be an *ongoing* process, there are numerous species of flora and fauna that are continually spreading to new areas, mainly with the intentional or unintentional help of humans. Furthermore, Kettunen points out that understanding the origins of the species and cultigens, the history of their global dispersal, and the Indigenous methods that foster diversity, provides us with better tools to understand the interconnectedness of culture and biodiversity. In addition, unlike the 'items' themselves, the cultural knowledge and diversity of New World plants and foodstuffs did not always travel along with the products, leading, at times, to unwanted consequences, as in the case of malnutrition or famines caused by maize in Africa and potatoes in Ireland. Besides these, the study discusses loanwords that originate in Indigenous American languages and reveals interesting generational patterns in their usage outside the area of the origin of the terms: some terms that were common a few decades ago have all but disappeared today, while others have started a new life in popular culture.

The volume closes with an article by Lorraine A. Williams-Beck titled *The peninsular Maya's unfinished spiritual conquest*. The author continues with the topic of indigenous responses to the ideological and religious changes brought to the Yucatan Peninsula by the conquest. Williams-Beck concentrates on the subject of religious fusion and syncretism as well as the continuity of pre-Columbian elements in colonial art, architecture, and beliefs in the Yucatan Peninsula, focusing on the municipal seat church and convent complex in one autonomous political jurisdiction near the Spanish viceregal administrative seat in Mérida, and other indigenous community churches under this and Tizimin's Missions ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the northeastern peninsular Maya hinterlands. The study suggests a more autonomously derived divine substrate to characterize Maya religious practice – rather than a Roman Catholic and Maya syncretism or Catholic synthesis of autonomous philosophy – and point to an unfinished religious conquest in the area.



# LINGUISTIC ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE POQOMCHI'- SPEAKING AREA: TRACING LANGUAGE CONTACTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE CONQUEST

IGOR VINOGRADOV

*Russian State University for the Humanities, Russia. E-mail: happyjojik@yandex.ru*

## Abstract

Written documents in Amerindian languages stemming from the colonial period provide valuable information for historical linguistics, as they present unique empirical attestations of linguistic phenomena that no longer exist in modern languages. This data can also be used in linguistic archaeology to reconstruct the social contexts in which the speakers of ancient languages lived. This paper discusses language contacts in the Maya area by analysing early colonial manuscripts in the Poqomchi' language. Poqomchi' speakers were in close contact with speakers of Western Ch'olan Mayan languages before the Spanish Conquest. The direction of contacts changed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century under the influence of Dominican missionaries. Several similarities in the grammatical development during the colonial period may be observed between Poqomchi' and Q'eqchi', a neighbouring K'iche'an language. However, Poqomchi' maintains the tendency to borrow linguistic structures rather than individual lexemes, which may be due to the deliberate efforts on the part of the speakers to preserve their ethnic identity.

**Keywords:** poqomchi', language contact, historical linguistics, linguistic archaeology, Mayan languages

## Resumen

Los documentos escritos en lenguas amerindias que provienen del período colonial proporcionan información importante para la lingüística histórica, ya que presentan muestras empíricas únicas de fenómenos lingüísticos que ya no existen en lenguas modernas. También pueden ser útiles en la arqueología lingüística para reconstruir el contexto social en que vivían los hablantes de lenguas antiguas. Este artículo analiza contactos sociolingüísticos en el área maya con base en un estudio de manuscritos coloniales en el idioma poqomchi'. La gente del habla poqomchi' mantenía contactos estrechos con los hablantes de lenguas mayas ch'olanas occidentales antes de la conquista. La dirección de contactos cambió en el siglo XVI bajo la influencia de la misión dominica. Se observan varias similitudes en el desarrollo gramatical del poqomchi' y el q'eqchi', una lengua k'iche'ana vecina, durante el período colonial. Sin embargo, poqomchi' mantiene la tendencia de tomar prestadas estructuras lingüísticas en lugar de lexemas individuales, lo que puede deberse a esfuerzos deliberados de los hablantes para preservar su identidad étnica.

**Palabras clave:** Poqomchi', contacto lingüístico, lingüística histórica, arqueología lingüística, idiomas mayas

## INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Conquest accounted for the emergence of written traditions in different Mayan languages based on Latin script. Written documents from the colonial period provide valuable information for Mayan historical linguistics, as they present unique empirical attestations of linguistic phenomena that no longer exist in modern languages. These texts and the phenomena that they present can also serve as important tools in linguistic archaeology, a subdiscipline that reconstructs the social context in which speakers of ancient languages lived, including “their geographical location, chronology, social and linguistic links with other groups, social stratification, material culture, and ideology” (Southworth 2005: 2); see also Ehret (2012).

Given the strong interest towards ancient Maya civilisation, Mayan historical linguistics has been actively used in socio-cultural reconstructions since Kaufman’s (1976) classic paper which was followed by a wide range of further publications, including Campbell (1998), Zavala Maldonado (2002), Wichmann and Brown (2003), Law (2014) and Kaufman (2017), among many others. As pointed out by Southworth (2005: 2), linguistic archaeology uses two main sources of information: ancient texts and linguistic reconstructions. Until now, most work in Mayan linguistic archaeology has been conducted on the basis of reconstructions, leaving aside the analysis of written artefacts. Descriptive work on Mayan languages has considerably expanded in terms of scope, volume and quality over the last few decades (Zavala Maldonado 2010: 168-169), thus making a considerable amount of language data available for comparative linguistic scholarship. By contrast, textual data from the colonial period are only available for a relatively small number of languages. An in-depth study of colonial manuscripts requires meticulous and time-consuming paleographic analysis. Furthermore, most originals of the writings in Mayan languages that stem from the colonial period are stored in different archives and library collections, mostly located in the US. These materials are currently becoming accessible for a wider linguistic scholarship thanks to the digitisation projects initiated over the last decade.

This paper deals with the surviving written materials in the Poqomchi’ language from the colonial epoch. On the basis of linguistic data obtained from colonial texts and dialectal studies of the modern language, this paper makes inferences about the Poqomchi’ people’s social contacts that they maintained with other ethnic groups before and after the Spanish Conquest. The tangible objective of this work is to explore the historical place of Poqomchi’ within other Maya ethnicities through linguistic evidence.

After providing a general overview of the Poqomchi’ language, this paper presents the materials that were used in this study. Subsequently, this paper argues that two main directions of contacts can be traced for the Poqomchi’. In the pre-colonial period, regular contact was maintained with inhabitants of the Maya Lowland area, and namely with speakers of Western Ch’olan languages. After the Conquest, the direction of the contacts changed, and Poqomchi’ speakers found themselves in a close cultural relationship with Q’eqchi’ speakers, which has lasted until the present day. Active contacts between Poqomchi’ and Q’eqchi’ were probably initiated and impacted by the religious activities of Dominican missionaries in the area of Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. Finally, this paper discusses the particular character of contact-induced linguistic traits observed in Poqomchi’ throughout this time. Poqomchi’ maintains a strong tendency to borrow linguistic structures rather than individual lexemes, which may be due to the deliberate efforts of the speakers to preserve their ethnic identity.

## The Poqomchi' language

Poqomchi' belongs to the K'iche'an subgroup of the Mayan language family. It is spoken by more than 70,000 inhabitants in central Guatemala in the departments of Alta Verapaz, Baja Verapaz and El Quiché (Richards 2003: 72). This language remains understudied as opposed to many other modern languages of the Mayan family. This is despite a long history of linguistic interest towards Poqomchi', from Spanish missionaries to modern professional linguists and trained native speakers; see Vinogradov (2019a).

Poqomchi' is closely related to the Poqomam language to such an extent that some linguists even suggest that they are two dialects of the same language or that they were previously two dialects at the time of the Spanish Conquest (Campbell 1977: 33). Other researchers estimate that the split between Poqomchi' and Poqomam occurred about eight or ten centuries ago (Robles 1962: 7; Kaufman 1976: 103). The common ancestral language of Poqomchi' and Poqomam is traditionally labeled Poqom. Poqom split off from the K'iche'an stock relatively early, around 600 B.C. (Kaufman 1976: 108), and since then has developed separately.

The settlement of the Poqomchi' people did not coincide with the same geographical area during their history and was subjected to several migration flows. Originating as part of the proto-Maya population in the Guatemalan highlands, and more specifically either in the Cuchumatán mountains (Kaufman 1976: 106) or the Uspantán valley (Kaufman 2017: 71), Poqom speakers migrated to the east. Mora-Marín (2005: 63) has reported the presence of Poqom in Kaminaljuyú around 200 B.C. According to van Akkeren (2008: 7-9), the Poqom people were expelled from Baja Verapaz northwards by K'iche'-speaking groups around the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Much later, Poqomchi' speakers found themselves in the lowland territory in the region of Acalá to the north from San Cristóbal Verapaz, one of the main towns where Poqomchi' is spoken presently. The indigenous document known as "Título del barrio de Santa Ana" was originally written in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and relates the migration of the Poqomchi' people from the Acalá region to San Cristóbal Verapaz; see Stoll (1906). In addition to these migration flows that are documented or reconstructed based on linguistic and/or archaeological data, one may assume that there were more resettlements that did not leave traces. The term "Poqomchi'-speaking area" thus refers to different geographical areas in different periods. It does not necessarily correspond to the relatively compact zone around the towns of San Cristóbal Verapaz, Tactic and Tamahú, where this language is spoken nowadays.

## Materials for the study

During the colonial period (from the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), Dominican missionaries wrote several documents in Poqomchi'. Pursuing their mission to convert the native inhabitants, they propagated literacy in the Latin alphabet in Alta Verapaz, precisely where Poqomchi' was spoken at the time of the Spanish Conquest and thereafter. Some of these documents were only mentioned in historical chronicles of that period or in other contemporaneous writings, but were never found later and probably got lost, but some others still exist. The language used in these manuscripts has not yet received linguistic attention.

The majority of surviving documents written in Poqomchi' are monolingual texts of sermons. Although Ximénez (1930 [1700]: 267-268) reports that missionaries wrote Poqomchi' dictionaries and grammars, most of these have been lost. The remaining descriptive materials only include two separate leaves of a grammar book currently stored in Princeton University

Library (Garrett-Gates Mesoamerican Manuscripts, item 231) and approximately 10% of a dictionary that is currently located at the University of Pennsylvania Library (Berendt-Brinton Linguistic Collection, item 61). The grammar is too fragmentary to provide enough information on the structure of the language. The dictionary is also incomplete, but still contains 145 pages (Acuña 1979: 247) that provide a lot of valuable bilingual Poqomchi'-Spanish or Poqomchi'-Latin examples. The author of this dictionary was Dionisio de Zúñiga (died in 1636), although it could have been based, at least partly, on earlier dictionaries compiled by his predecessor and mentor, Francisco de Viana (died in 1608).

This scarce quantity of available descriptive materials drastically differentiates Poqomchi' from colonial Yucatec Maya, which has a dictionary dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and two 17<sup>th</sup>-century grammars (Lehmann 2017: 176), as well as from colonial K'iche', which has an even wider set of missionary linguistic materials; see Sachse (2015). Undertaking research on colonial Poqomchi' is, therefore, an ambitious challenge in terms of studying a virtually undescribed language that is no longer spoken.

The earliest Poqomchi' texts that have survived until now are three collections of sermons. These are now located in Princeton University Library (Garrett-Gates Mesoamerican Manuscripts, items 232, 234 and 235). These texts are monolingual, with some titles and brief insertions in Latin and, in few cases, some writer's comments in Spanish at the end of sections. There is also a brief native legal document – "Título del barrio de Santa Ana" (Garrett-Gates Mesoamerican Manuscripts, item 242). A later copy of this dates the original as being as early as 1565, but the original document was lost. This text was published by Sapper (1906) and analyzed in Stoll (1906).

With respect to the modern Poqomchi' language, there is a useful description of morphology and phonology (Mó Isém 2006), an extensive dictionary (Dobbels 2003), and two short collections of translated and analysed texts (Mayers 1958; Vinogradov 2016). Also, the volume compiled by Malchic Nicolás *et al.* (2000) presents a contrastive study of dialectal variation in Poqomchi' and Poqomam. At present, there is no typologically adequate reference grammar for Poqomchi'.

## CONTACTS WITH CH'OLAN LANGUAGES

This section surveys several contact-induced grammatical phenomena that are observed in colonial Poqomchi' and that are likely attributed to influences from Ch'olan Mayan languages (Ch'ol, Chontal of Tabasco, Chontal of Acalán, Ch'olti' and Ch'orti').<sup>1</sup> As the influence that these contacts exerted on Poqomchi' grammar are observable in the early colonial texts, it can be reasonably assumed that they occurred not later than the Postclassic period.

### Aspect-based split ergativity

The ergative split is a well-known structural feature of Poqomchi' that was acquired due to contact with the Ch'olan languages of Lowland Maya territories (Law 2014: 130). While all other K'iche'an languages consistently follow the ergative-absolutive pattern of alignment,

<sup>1</sup> Ch'ol, Chontal of Tabasco and Chontal of Acalán belong to the Western branch of the subgroup, while Ch'olti' and Ch'orti' belong to the Eastern one. Chontal of Acalán and Ch'olti' are extinct.

Poqomchi' and Poqomam combine two different types of alignment: ergative-absolutive and nominative-accusative (Law 2014: 50-51). That is to say, these languages mark the only argument of intransitive verbs differently, depending on verbal aspect. In the incomplete and complete aspects, the alignment is ergative-absolutive, meaning that the arguments of intransitive predicates are grouped together with direct objects of transitive predicates. A split occurs in the progressive and potential aspects, because the arguments of intransitive predicates are grouped together with the subjects of transitive predicates, as would be expected in nominative-accusative languages. This contrast is illustrated in (1) and (2).<sup>2</sup>

## (1) Poqomchi'

- a) x-**at**-kim-ik /COM-**2B**-die-ss/ 'you died'
- b) x-**at**-qa-pahq-aaj /COM-**2B**-1PL.A-ask-TR/ 'we asked you'
- c) x-**oj**-**a**-pahq-aaj /COM-1PL.B-**2A**-ask-TR/ 'you asked us'

## (2) Poqomchi'

- a) k'ahchi' **a**-kim-iik /PROG **2A**-die-NMLZ/ 'you are dying'
- b) k'ahchi'k=ooj **a**-pahq-aam /PROG=1PL.B **2A**-ask-NMLZ/ 'you are asking us'
- c) k'ahchi'k=**aat** qa-pahq-aam /PROG=**2B** 1PL.A-ask-NMLZ/ 'we are asking you'

Three predicates in the complete aspect are exemplified in (1). The only argument of the intransitive predicate in (1a) is cross-referenced by the same personal prefix of Set B *at-*, as the direct object of the transitive predicate in (1b). By contrast, the second person of the subject in (1c) is cross-referenced by the prefix of another paradigm, so-called Set A: *a-*. This conforms to the ergative-absolutive strategy of personal marking.

Examples from (2) illustrate the use of the same verbs in the progressive aspect that is indicated by the auxiliary predicate *k'ahchi'*. Here, the strategy of personal marking is the opposite. The only argument of the intransitive predicate in (2a) is cross-referenced by the Set A prefix, as well as the subject of the transitive predicate in (2b). Set B is restricted to direct objects of transitive predicates, as shown in (2c). This situation is typical of nominative-accusative alignment.

A similar split, although with deviations concerning particular aspects and other factors like negative polarity that trigger a split, is observed in two modern Ch'olan languages: Ch'ol and Chontal of Tabasco. Below are two examples from Ch'ol.<sup>3</sup>

## (3) Ch'ol

- a) tyi wäy-iy=**oñ** /COM sleep-PFV=1B/ 'I slept' (Coon 2010: 208)
- b) tyi a-mek'-ey=**oñ** /COM 2A-hug-PFV=1B/ 'you hugged me' (Coon 2010: 208)
- c) tyi **k**-mek'-ey=**ety** /COM 1A-hug-PFV=2B/ 'I hugged you' (Coon 2010: 218)

## (4) Ch'ol

- a) choñkol **a**-wäy-el /PROG 2A-sleep-NMLZ/ 'you are sleeping' (Coon 2010: 209)
- b) choñkol **a**-mek'=oñ /PROG 2A-hug=1B/ 'you are hugging me' (Coon 2010: 209)
- c) choñkol k-mek'=ety /PROG 1A-hug=2B/ 'I am hugging you'

<sup>2</sup> If no source is indicated for an example, this means that it comes from the field notes of the author.

<sup>3</sup> Here and below, for reasons of consistency, I unify the glosses provided in the respective sources. If a given source only offers Spanish translation, the English version is mine.

Examples from (3) show that the marking of the only argument of an intransitive verb coincides with the marking of the direct object of a transitive verb in the completive aspect; see the enclitic =oñ on the verb in (3a) and (3b). In the progressive aspect, the only argument of an intransitive verb is grouped together with the subject of a transitive verb; see the prefix *a-* in (4a) and (4b). Examples (3) and (4) are parallel to examples (1) and (2) shown above and demonstrate that Ch'ol and Poqomchi' display the same type of split in the alignment system triggered by verbal aspect. As highlighted by Law (2014: 134), Poqomchi' uses exactly the same structure with a nominalized verb form in the progressive aspect, as is found in Ch'ol; compare (2a) and (4a). Poqomchi' uses the nominalizing suffix *-iik* for intransitive verbs in (2a) that functionally corresponds to the suffix *-el* in Ch'ol (4a).

The same pattern of morphosyntactic alignment in Poqomchi' is attested in the earliest colonial sources so that there is no doubt that this is a relatively early borrowing, which occurred no later than in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but probably earlier. Examples in (5) illustrate two different types of alignment.<sup>4</sup>

(5) Colonial Poqomchi'

- a) *tarik quin camanic*  
tarik kinkamanik

tarik k-**in**-kam-an-ik

by.day INC-**1SG.B**-work-AP-SS

'I work during the day.' (Zúñiga's dictionary, folio 482 verso)<sup>5</sup>

- b) *xa in hun culic nanu camanic*

xa hin junk'uliik na nukamaniik

xa hin junk'uliik na **nu**-kam-an-iik

very 1SG only PROG **1SG.A**-work-AP-NMLZ

'Only I am working.' (Zúñiga's dictionary, folio 503 verso)

In (5a), the intransitive verb form in the incompletive aspect takes the first-person prefix *in-* of Set B. In the progressive aspect, as shown in (5b), the other paradigm of personal prefixes is used, and the first-person singular is marked by the morpheme *nu-* of Set A.

### Agentivity-based intransitive split

The agentivity-based intransitive split is another Ch'olan structural feature that is observed in Poqomchi' and differs this language from the rest of the K'iche'an subgroup (Zavala Maldonado 2010: 163-164). Intransitive verbs are grammatically divided into two groups, according to the semantic role of their argument. The verbs with agent-like arguments, or so-called agentive verbs, do not appear in canonical intransitive predications, but require an auxiliary semantically bleached verb *b'an* 'to do' (6).

<sup>4</sup> For colonial sources, the original sentence is given in both missionary orthography and the normalised version according to modern orthographic standards.

<sup>5</sup> Here and below, "Zúñiga's dictionary" refers to Manuscript 61 from Berendt-Brinton Linguistic Collection at the University of Pennsylvania Library. "Zúñiga's sermons" refers to Item 232 from Garrett-Gates Mesoamerican Manuscripts at the Princeton University Library.

## (6) Poqomchi'

x-i-**b'an** ri-muhx  
 COM-3SG.A-**do** 3SG.A-swim  
 'S/he swam.' (Zavala Maldonado 2010: 164)

The verb *muhx* 'to swim' is agentive, as its lexical meaning supposes that the participant acts voluntarily and exercises control over the situation. The transitive construction in (6) can be translated literally as "S/he did her/his swimming". By contrast, the verb *kim* 'to die' is non-agentive, as it takes a patient-like argument. This verb allows a canonical intransitive predication (7).

## (7) Poqomchi'

k'isiin ma' x-in-kim-ik  
 a.bit NEG COM-1SG.B-die-ss  
 'I almost died.' (Dobbels 2003: 337)

The agentivity-based intransitive split is also typical of Ch'olan languages, and, in particular, of Ch'ol (Coon 2012). A canonical intransitive verbal predication is illustrated in (8).

## (8) Ch'ol

tyi majl-iy=oñ  
 COM go-PFV=1B  
 'I went' (Coon 2012: 243)

Movement verbs like *majl* 'to go' belong to the group of non-agentive verbs in Ch'ol. Constructions like (8) are impossible with verbs that take agent-like arguments. Agentive verbs require the auxiliary transitive verb *cha'l* 'to do' and serve as its direct objects in a nominalised form, like in (9a). Agentive verbs are unable to form a predicate without the auxiliary verb, as shown in (9b).

## (9) Ch'ol

- a) tyi k-**cha'l**-e ñuxej-el  
 COM 1A-**do**-PFV swim-NMLZ  
 'I swam' (Gutiérrez Sánchez 2004: 52)
- b) \* tyi ñuxej-iy=oñ  
 COM swim-PFV=1B  
 Intended reading: 'I swam' (Gutiérrez Sánchez 2004: 52)

Example (9b) where the verb *ñuxej* 'to swim' directly takes the aspect and person markers is ungrammatical

Agentivity-based intransitive split is also attested in colonial Poqomchi'; compare the same use of the auxiliary verb *b'an* 'to do' in (6) and (10).

## (10) Colonial Poqomchi'

*nruban chic rilec*  
 nrub'an chik rileq'  
 n-ru-**b'an** chik r-ileq'

INC-3A-**do** already 3A-steal

Tentative translation: ‘S/he steals already.’ (Zúñiga’s sermons, folio 48 recto)

The grammatical distinction between agentive and non-agentive verbs seems to be commonly borrowed within the Maya area. Danziger (1996) describes a similar phenomenon in Mopan, a Mayan language of the Yucatekan branch. Zavala Maldonado (2010: 164) also mentions several other languages that are spoken in the Lowland area or nearby and that display some elements of agentivity-based intransitive split.

### The proclitic *a* of immediate past

Colonial Poqomchi’ manuscripts attest several other grammatical traits that can be attributed to the Ch’olan influence as well, but that did not survive in the modern language. The verbal proclitic *a* is one of these features. This morpheme accompanied verb forms in the completive aspect denoting past events. The proclitic *a* apparently triggered the meaning of immediacy or actuality of a past event for the current situation at the moment of utterance (11).

#### (11) Colonial Poqomchi’

*he axcacor canoc*

je’ a xqaq’or kahnoq

je’ **a** x-qa-q’or kahnoq

so **IMM** COM-1PL.A-say DIR

Tentative translation: ‘This is what we just said.’ (Zúñiga’s sermons, folio 194 recto)

The same proclitic exists in the modern Chontal language. Unlike in colonial Poqomchi’, this morpheme can be attached to both completive (12a) and incompletive verb forms in Chontal, as well as to future periphrastic constructions (12b), thus conveying the immediacy or current relevance of a situation independently from its temporal characteristics (Vinogradov 2018).

#### (12) Chontal of Tabasco

a) **a** t’äb-i tan te’

**IMM** climb-COM PREP tree

‘S/he climbed on the tree.’

b) **a** kä=x-e k=uch’-en=la buk’a

**IMM** 1A=go-INC 1A=drink-INC=INCL pozole

‘We are going to drink pozole (a traditional beverage).’

As the proclitic *a* was incompatible with future time reference in colonial Poqomchi’, its semantic scope was narrower in Poqomchi’ than in Chontal. This fact supports the hypothesis that it was borrowed from Chontal into Poqomchi’ and not vice versa. Importantly, the same proclitic is attested in Chontal of Acalán (Smailus 1975: 126), a Western Ch’olan language that is now extinct (13).

#### (13) Chontal of Acalán

*upenel chalpel acathanihi*

u-penel chalpel **a** ca-than-i=hi



3A-son ChanpelIMM 1A-speak-COM=DEM

'the son of Chanpel, whom I have already mentioned' (Sanz González 2003: 122; Smailus 1975: 28)

Law *et al.* (2006: 425) consider the grammatical morpheme *a* in Chontal of Acalán as "a temporal deictic which brings the completed action into the temporal here-and-now of the present, resulting in the present perfect". Sanz González (2003: 129) argues that this particle was virtually the equivalent of the Spanish adverb *ya* 'already'. Examples (11) and (13) are notably similar with respect to their extralinguistic context. In both cases, the proclitic *a* modifies the verb of speaking, and thus relates the narrated event to the mere event of narration.

### Nominalized verb forms with the suffix *-el*

Missionary writings in Poqomchi' also include the suffix *-el*. This suffix only attaches to intransitive verb stems and forms participle-like word forms. These word forms serve as non-verbal predicates in contexts that suggest some kind of future and probably also assertive or persuasive modal reading (14).

#### (14) Colonial Poqomchi'

a) [*ayohoc ahmac lah vinac chi vach*] *rujusticia dios chalel china*

rujusticia dios chalel chi naah

ru-justicia dioschal-el chi naah

3SG.A-justiceGodcome-PTCP PREP head

Tentative translation: '[Sinners will be frightened in front of] the justice of God that will come upon them.' (Zúñiga's sermons, folio 173 verso)

b) *pan EaE ma chupel chi hunelic* [*ayococ amuEoE cho vnchel ahmaElah vinac*]

pan q'aaq' ma' chup-el chi juneliik

pan q'aaq' ma'chu<h>p-el chi juneliik

PREP fire NEGput.out<PASS>-PTCP PREP eternity

Tentative translation: 'In the fire [that] will never go out [all sinners will be hurt and buried].' (Zúñiga's sermons, folio 178 verso)

More semantic research on this suffix is needed to determine its exact meaning. This suffix has no cognates in the modern language. Nevertheless, several Ch'olan Mayan languages have similar suffixes, both morphologically and semantically. For example, Ch'ol has a nominalising suffix *-el* for intransitive verbs already illustrated in (4a) and (9a) above. Smailus (1975: 140) identifies the same suffix for intransitive verbs in Chontal of Acalán and describes its semantics in terms of the present tense. Ch'olti' also had similar intransitive constructions with deverbalised intransitive forms ending in *-el* that conveyed future reading (Robertson *et al.* 2010: 173); see (15).

#### (15) Ch'olti'

*ma ka a kuxpahel xa tuyanil chamen*

ma ka a kux-pah-el xa tuyanil cham-en

NEGQ FUT live-PASS-NMLZ again all die-PTCP

'Must not all the dead live again?' (Robertson *et al.* 2010: 173)

A hypothesis is that Poqomchi' borrowed this suffix from their Ch'olan neighbors and then lost it during the colonial period seems the most plausible; however, further studies are needed to corroborate this.

### Preliminary conclusions on Ch'olan influence

There are no doubts that the Poqom people were in contact with speakers of Ch'olan Mayan languages over a considerable period in the post-classic epoch. The grammatical contact-induced features presented above reflect the linguistic result of this social interaction. The Ch'olan influence also affected the grammar of Poqom on a phonological level. For instance, the Poqomam language and two dialects of Poqomchi' innovated the labial phoneme /p'/, which is absent in other K'iche'an languages (Law 2014: 42).

The interaction between Ch'olan and Poqom populations is also supported by philological arguments. The "Title of Santa Ana", a Poqomchi' land title originally from 1565, relates a history of migration of a group of Poqomchi' speakers from northern Lowland territories to the place now known as San Cristóbal Verapaz, one of the main centres of the Poqomchi'-speaking region during the colonial period and currently. This document explicitly mentions such places like Yaxcabnal, Aquil, San Marcos and Chamá, located to the north from San Cristóbal Verapaz (Sapper 1906: 375-376). These areas were inhabited by different Ch'olan populations at the time of Spanish Conquest; see Becquey (2012) for more details.

Although historically, both the Western and Eastern Ch'olan people could have been neighbours of the Poqomchi', as only scant epigraphic evidence has survived from that region (Lacadena and Wichmann 2002: 307), a more concrete hypothesis can be made based on the analysis of contact-induced changes in the Poqomchi' language. It would predict that Poqomchi' was in contact with Western Ch'olan populations and not (or, at least, not to the same extent) with Eastern Ch'olan. It is argued below that Poqomchi' has more linguistic traits that are typical of Ch'ol and Chontal (Western Ch'olan) and that are not so typical of Ch'olti' and Ch'orti' (Eastern Ch'olan).

While it is true that the majority of contact linguistic phenomena that were identified in Poqomchi' throughout this section are observed in the languages of both Western and Eastern branch, as well as in other languages of the Lowlands and neighbouring areas, some grammatical traits have limited distribution that can suggest the exact path for sociolinguistic contacts. The most important feature in this respect is the proclitic *a*, which is typical of Chontal. A homonymous morpheme is attested in Ch'olti', but with a distinct meaning. Law *et al.* (2006: 425) label it "habitulative" and describe its meaning as a generic present (16).

#### (16) Ch'olti'

*a k'expa ne pa' ti chohbya baktal*

**a** k'ex-pa ne pa' ti chohb-ya baktal

**GEN** change-PASS **DEF** bread **PREP** love-ATTR flesh

'The bread changes into the beloved flesh.' (Robertson *et al.* 2010: 172)

The proclitic *a* in Poqomchi' and Chontal can hardly be described in terms of the generic present tense and does not occur in contexts like (16).

Other grammatical traits do not argue so decisively in favour of Western Ch'olan contacts, providing only slight arguments in support of this hypothesis. For instance, both types of

alignment splits are more prominent in Ch'ol and Chontal than in Ch'olti' and Ch'orti'. Ergative split occurs in the incompletive and progressive aspects in Ch'ol and only in the progressive aspect in Ch'olti' (Law *et al.* 2006: 423). Ch'orti' does not display this kind of split at all, although the alignment system of this language is peculiar in other respects.

It should be stated that Dionisio de Zúñiga provided some etymological information in his Poqomchi' dictionary, and, in particular, suggested that some entries came from Ch'olti'. Theoretically, this can be seen as an additional argument in favour of considering Ch'olti' as a contact language, rather than Chontal or Ch'ol. However, three observations should be made.

First of all, Zúñiga identified few lexical borrowings. Feldman (2000: 20) provides a list of only nine entries in a later copy of this dictionary that supposedly came from Ch'olti'. Given the strong grammatical influence, one would expect to find many more lexical items of Ch'olti' origin in colonial Poqomchi'. From these nine entries, two are toponyms, several others are related to the word *chol*, and the rest denote types of trees or wood materials that are typical of the Lowland area. For example, Zúñiga explains the word *bab* or *babte* 'oar' in the following manner:<sup>6</sup> "Ilaman al remo, y pienso es tomado del cholti, dizenlo alla en tucurub y tamahun" (Zúñiga's dictionary, folio 26 verso).<sup>7</sup> In addition, Zúñiga did not say anything about other Ch'olan languages, possibly because he only had some knowledge of Ch'olti', which was the dominant language to the North from where Poqomchi' lived at the time of the Conquest. Given these considerations, also arguing from the perspective of lexical innovations, Ch'olti' seems to be a distant peripheral source language for some sporadic borrowings, rather than a language that was in immediate contact to Poqomchi' during several centuries.

## CONTACTS TO Q'EQCHI'

Contacts between Poqomchi' and Ch'olan populations were interrupted by the Conquest. Dominican mission was officially installed in the department of Alta Verapaz by grounding the Convent of Cobán in 1551. The contiguous area, where Poqomchi' and Q'eqchi' were spoken, promptly became evangelised. From this region, Dominican missionaries went to the north to propagate their religion amongst Lowland Ch'olan people, such as Lacandon Ch'ols, Manchés and Acalás, despite their reluctance towards any attempts of Catholic invasion.

This religious issue reflected on social, political and also linguistic settings. Lowland languages were subjected to marginalisation together with their speakers. After the Conquest, Poqomchi' did not acquire new features from Lowland languages, but instead, shared a lot of similarities in language development with Q'eqchi', as will be shown in this section. Indeed, to this day Poqomchi' and Q'eqchi' speakers maintain close contacts, actively interacting in commercial and cultural spheres.

Poqomchi' and Q'eqchi' share the sound shift from /tz/ to /s/; see Campbell (1973). This was in progress during the colonial period, as Zúñiga's dictionary attests some lexical items in both variants, with /tz/ and /s/ phoneme: *azbez/atzbez* 'older brother', *zelah/tzelah* 'to laugh',

<sup>6</sup> Note that the Ch'olan word *te* 'tree, wood' is equivalent to the Poqomchi' *chee* '.

<sup>7</sup> "They say this for oar. I think it comes from Ch'olti', since they use this word there in Tucurú and Tamahú." – my translation.

*zalah/tzalah* ‘rock’, among others. It is explicitly stated that some speakers pronounced these words with [tz] and others with [s]. The same change is found in Q’eqchi’: *tzum* ‘companion’ was converted into *sum*, *tzuc* ‘gnat’ into *suq*, *tzununk* ‘to smell’ into *sunuunk*, and so on. This phonological change was accompanied by several grammatical changes that will be discussed as follows.

### Semantic change from the progressive aspect into the future

Both Poqomchi’ and Q’eqchi’ display the same pattern of semantic transition that happened to the ancient grammatical marker of the progressive aspect: *na* or *naak* in Poqomchi’ and *ta* or *tak* in Q’eqchi’. Although these morphemes are not related etymologically, they both denoted progressive situations in the colonial period and they both began to convey future reading in the modern languages. Below, this process is exemplified in Poqomchi’ (17, 18).

(17) Colonial Poqomchi’

*nanuchutam nuquim*

na nuchutaam nuk’im

**na** nu-chut-aam nu-k’im

**PROG** 1SG.A-tie-NMLZ 1SG.A-straw

‘I am bunching my straw.’ (Zúñiga’s dictionary, folio 28 verso)

(18) Poqomchi’

xa\_re’ chik i keem **na** a-b’an-am r-ajlaal i q’ijj

only already DEF weavingFUT 2A-do-NMLZ 3SG.A-all DEF day

‘Now you will only weave all the day.’ (Vinogradov 2016: 184)

In (17), the morpheme *na* conveys the progressive reading. This sentence is derived from Zúñiga’s dictionary and is accompanied by Spanish translation with the gerundial progressive periphrasis *estar manojeando* that acknowledges the progressive interpretation. By contrast, example (18) only allows a future reading in this particular narrative context.

A similar semantic change happened in the history of Q’eqchi’ (Freeze 1980: 115-116; Vinogradov 2017: 212-213). The morpheme *ta* conveyed an action in progress during the colonial period (19) but changed its meaning into the future over time (20).

(19) Colonial Q’eqchi’

*cah hũ caib y catin auech tacatziba*

ka’aj jun ka’ib’ i qaatin awech taqatz’iib’a

ka’aj jun ka’ib’ i q-aatin aw-ech **ta**-qa-tz’iib’-a

just one two DEF 1PL.A-word 2SG.A-DAT **PROG**-1PL.A-write-ss

‘Just [these] few words we write to you.’ (Freeze 1980: 122, #28)

(20) Q’eqchi’

**ta**-a-b’anu chi jo’ka’-in

FUT-2SG.A-do PREP like-1SG

‘You will do it like me.’ (Vinogradov 2017: 213)

Sentence (19) is taken from a petition dating back to 1619. This sentence appears at the end of the document and would hardly make any sense, if one assumes that the marker *ta* denoted future events in colonial Q'eqchi'. Sentence (20), by contrast, is taken from a conversation; a mother shows her daughter how to clean the house.

This change from the progressive aspect into the future does not seem to be very exotic typologically; compare the construction *to be going to* in English, which includes an auxiliary verb in the progressive form. However, this change does not occur universally to consider this similarity between Poqomchi' and Q'eqchi' as a mere coincidence. The fact that other K'iche'an Mayan languages do not share this semantic change cannot be ignored.

### Spread of the prospective construction

Another contact phenomenon is the spread of the specific prospective construction attested in Q'eqchi' and probably calqued into Poqomchi'; see Vinogradov (2019b). This construction consists of a nominalised intransitive verb form as the main non-verbal predicate and an argument cross-referenced by the dative pronoun (21).

#### (21) Colonial Q'eqchi'

*com vech chi ru ch y dios*

kam wech chi ruch i Dios

**kam** w-ech chi r-uch i Dios

**die.NMLZ** 1SG.A-DAT PREP 3SG.A-front DEF God

'I am about to die before God.' (Burkitt 1905: 275, #30)

This construction differs from what is canonically observed in Mayan languages, because the argument is expressed by a dative pronoun and not by an absolutive personal marker directly attached to the verb form. This construction is used to describe events that are about to happen or that fulfil all the necessary conditions for it to happen.

Modern Q'eqchi' retains this construction (22).

#### (22) Q'eqchi'

**xik** w-e chi wa'-ak

**go.NMLZ** 1SG.A-DAT PREP eat-NMLZ

'I am going to eat.'

A very similar structure conveying the same meaning is observed in Poqomchi' (23).

#### (23) Poqomchi'

**el-ik** r-eh i ch'ooch

**leave-NMLZ** 3SG.A-DAT DEF mouse

'The mouse is about to escape.' (Vinogradov 2019b: 265)

As well as in the Q'eqchi' examples above, there is no specific morphological marker of the prospective aspect in (23). Instead, the respective meaning is conveyed by the whole construction. As this phenomenon is restricted to Q'eqchi' and Poqomchi' within the K'iche'an subgroup, one may reasonably suspect this is the result of language contact.

### Development of copulative conjunctions

Contact-induced changes also affect syntactic structure. Both Q'eqchi' and Poqomchi' developed new copulative conjunctions during the colonial period: *ut* in Q'eqchi' and *eh* in Poqomchi'. Both lexemes indicate coordination of two clauses and can be translated like 'and' into English. Although these new conjunctions appeared under influence from Spanish, the development processes were likely very similar in both languages and could affect each other. At the beginning of the colonial period, Q'eqchi' and Poqomchi' used so called second-position clitics to coordinate clauses. In Poqomchi' this clitic was *ajik* (24).

#### (24) Colonial Poqomchi'

*yunac ahic yo'olcoh chipam Eae chi hunelic*

yu'nak *ajik* yoq'olkooj chi pam q'aaq' chi juneliik

yu'nak **ajik**yoq'-olk=ooj chi pam q'aaq' chi juneliik  
 now **and**caught-PRED=1PL PREP inside fire PREP eternity

Tentative translation: 'And now, we are caught in the fire forever.' (Zúñiga's sermons, folio 195 verso)

The clitic *ajik* attached to the first constituent of a clause, irrespective of its part of speech or syntactic function. In (24) it is attached to the fronted adverb. This clitic indicated the coordination relation between the clause in question and the preceding one.

Over time, this clitic lost its copulative function and changed it into an emphatic marker; see Dobbels (2003: 11), for instance. The new copulative conjunction *eh* was borrowed from colonial Spanish. Its lineal order also followed the Spanish template; like in Spanish, it occupies the first place in a clause (25).

#### (25) Poqomchi'

**eh** x-yo'-j-ik b'ila' wo' hoq

**and** COM-scare-PASS-SS REP again

'And [she] got scared again, it is said.' (Vinogradov 2016: 185)

This scenario of development in Q'eqchi' is very similar, with the exception of the last step. Q'eqchi' did not borrow a new lexeme from Spanish, but rearranged the old word. The second-position clitic *ut* 'and' did not lose its function, but only changed its place in a clause in the transition from the colonial stage to the modern stage; compare (26) and (27).

#### (26) Colonial Q'eqchi'

*taut rabi le pe*

ta ut rab'i le padre

ta **ut** r-ab'i le padre

PROG **and**3SG.A-listen DEF Father

'And the Father is listening to them.' (Freeze 1980: 120, #20)

#### (27) Q'eqchi'

**ut** a'anli nak-e'x-b'anu li yuwa'-b'ej ut na'-b'ej

**and** DEMthat INC-3PL.A-do DEF father-INDP and mother-INDP

'And this is what the father and mother do.'

In (26), the word *ut* is a clitic that attaches to the aspect marker *ta*. By contrast, in (27), the word *ut* is a conjunction that opens the sentence. Therefore, one can observe the same phenomenon of lineal position change that was seen in Poqomchi' a few lines above.

### IN PLACE OF A CONCLUSION: SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF POQOMCHI' LANGUAGE CONTACTS

The majority of the contact phenomena identified in Poqomchi' in previous sections can be classified as structural borrowings. That is to say, although there are some evident exceptions, Poqomchi' does not tend to borrow specific morphemes or lexemes, but rather replicates language structures. In linguistics, such borrowings are known as "pattern borrowings", that is a replication of "the organization, distribution and mapping of grammatical or semantic meaning" of the source language (Sakel 2007: 15). Pattern borrowings are opposed to matter borrowings, the latter referring to where morphological material and its phonological shape (i.e., the linguistic form itself) from the source language is replicated in the target language.

The splits, syntactic structures, and constructions that Poqomchi' borrowed from Ch'olan languages and Q'eqchi' are, in fact, pattern-loans. Explaining the emergence of the split ergative system in Poqom, Law (2014: 134) points out that "speakers of Poqom intuited the likely path of the development of the split pattern in the language that served as the model [...], and then they applied the same process of grammaticalization to a morpheme in Poqom that they identified as a functional (not formal) equivalent". Note that Poqom uses a nominalising suffix *-ik*, which is not a cognate of the Ch'olan suffix *-VI*, but which has a parallel function. At the same time, matter-loans are minimal in Poqomchi'.

In this respect, it is interesting to compare Poqomchi' with Q'eqchi', a neighbouring language that also had close contacts to the Lowland area in the pre-Columbian period. Q'eqchi' does not display as many pattern-loans as Poqomchi' or, at least, they are not as prominent. However, Wichmann and Brown (2003: 65-69) and Wichmann and Hull (2009) identified a great number of lexical borrowings in Q'eqchi' that came from Ch'olan languages. Those lexical items include, for example, the words: *maatan* 'gift', *ch'ool* 'heart', *k'anjel* 'to work' and *eeb* 'ladder', among many others. In Poqomchi', the corresponding lexemes are of K'iche'an origin.

Therefore, Q'eqchi' differs from Poqomchi' in two important aspects. Firstly, it borrows lexemes to a far greater extent than morphosyntactic structures and patterns. And secondly, according to the data provided in Wichmann and Brown (2003: 69), Q'eqchi' loaned a great deal of vocabulary from Ch'olti', that is to say from an Eastern Ch'olan language, and not from Western Ch'olan languages. These two facts correspond well with what is known about sociolinguistic factors and conditions of language change.

Historical linguistics can sometimes reconstruct the social and cultural interrelations between speakers of extinct languages or ancient language varieties. This goes beyond reconstructing the mere fact of contacts between these groups. This wider reconstruction can be inferred from the particular type of linguistic contact reflected in what was borrowed and how the process of borrowing looked. By borrowing vocabulary, a typical situation is where one language culturally dominates the other (Sakel 2007: 24). Before the Conquest, Ch'olan people culturally dominated the inhabitants of the Maya Highlands, and consequently, Ch'olti' had more prestige than Q'eqchi'. Therefore, it is entirely plausible that there were situations where Q'eqchi' speakers would use certain Ch'olti' words in their speech to gain more prestige.

The case of Poqomchi' is less expected. A great number of pattern-loans indicates a high degree of bilingualism among Poqomchi' speakers. A very good command of a foreign language was needed to understand its structure and map it onto their mother language (Sakel 2007: 25). At the same time, a small number of matter-loans means that the speakers made deliberate efforts to preserve their language. They managed to avoid direct lexical borrowings, but some unperceived structural changes were inevitable.

#### Abbreviations

1 – first person, 2 – second person, 3 – third person, A – set A, AP – antipassive, ATTR – attributive, B – set B, COM – completive, DAT – dative, DEF – definite article, DEM – demonstrative pronoun, DIR – directional, FUT – future, GEN – generic present, IMM – immediate, INC – incomplete, INCL – inclusive, IND – indefinite possessor, NEG – negation, NMLZ – nominalization, PASS – passive, PFV – perfective, PL – plural, PRED – predicative, PREP – preposition, PROG – progressive, PTCP – participle, Q – interrogative, REP – reportative, SG – singular, SS – status suffix, TR – transitive.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A great part of this study was carried out during my research stay at the University of Bonn in 2018–2019, generously supported by a postdoctoral fellowship from The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. I am also thankful to Frauke Sachse for her support and advice during that time. This study would not have been possible without the help and collaboration of my Poqomchi'-speaking friends and colleagues. I am deeply thankful to all of them. I am also grateful to Harri Kettunen and the editors of this volume for their remarks on the first version of this paper.

### REFERENCES

ACUÑA, RENÉ

1979 Dos diccionarios de la lengua pocom: una discusión crítica. *Estudios de Cultura Maya* 12: 241-256.

BECQUEY, CEDRIC

2012 *Quelles frontières pour les populations cholanes? (Ateliers d'Anthropologie 37)*. Available: <https://journals.openedition.org/ateliers/9181>. Date of use: January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

BURKITT, ROBERT

1905 A Kekchí Will of the Sixteenth Century. *American Anthropologist* 7(2): 271-294.

CAMPBELL, LYLE

1973 The Philological Documentation of a Variable Rule in the History of Pokom and Kekchi. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 39(3): 133-134.

1977 *Quichean Linguistic Prehistory*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

1998 Linguistic Contributions to Guatemalan Prehistory. *The Life of Language: Papers in Linguistics in Honor of William Bright*, edited by Jane H. Hill, P. J. Mistry and Lyle Campbell, pp. 183-192. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.



COON, JESSICA

2010 Rethinking Split Ergativity in Chol. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 76(2): 207-253.

2012 Split Ergativity and Transitivity in Chol. *Lingua* 122: 241-256.

DANZIGER, EVE

1996 Split Intransitivity and Active-Inactive Patterning in Mopan Maya. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 62(4): 379-414.

DOBBELS, MARCEL

2003 *Diccionario Poqomchi' – Castellano*. Guatemala City: PROASE.

EHRET, CHRISTOPHER

2012 Linguistic Archaeology. *African Archaeological Review* 29(2-3): 109-130.

FELDMAN, LAWRENCE H.

2000 *Pokom Maya and Their Colonial Dictionaries*. (FAMSI Research Report). Available: <http://www.famsi.org/reports/97022/97022Feldman01.pdf>. Date of use: January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

FREEZE, RAY A.

1980 A Petición of 1619 in K'ekchi' (Maya). *Tlalocan* 8: 111-129.

GUTIÉRREZ SÁNCHEZ, PEDRO

2004 *Las clases de verbos intransitivos y el alineamiento agentivo en el chol de Tila, Chiapas*. Unpublished Master's thesis, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Mexico City.

KAUFMAN, TERRENCE

1976 Archaeological and Linguistic Correlations in Mayaland and Associated Areas of Meso-America. *World Archaeology* 8(1): 101-118.

2017 Aspects of the Lexicon of Proto-Mayan and Its Earliest Descendants. *The Mayan Languages*, edited by Judith Aissen, Nora C. England and Roberto Zavala Maldonado, pp. 62-111. London: Routledge.

LACADENA, ALFONSO AND SØREN WICHMANN

2002 The Distribution of Lowland Maya Languages in the Classic Period. *La organización social entre los mayas. Memoria de la Tercera Mesa Redonda de Palenque, Vol. II*, edited by V. Tiesler, R. Cobos and M. Greene Robertson, pp. 275-314. Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia and Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán.

LAW, DANNY

2014 *Language Contact, Inherited Similarity and Social Difference: The Story of Linguistic Interaction in the Maya Lowlands*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

LAW, DANNY, JOHN ROBERTSON AND STEPHEN HOUSTON

2006 Split Ergativity in the History of the Ch'olan Branch of the Mayan Language Family. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 72(4): 415-450.

LEHMANN, CHRISTIAN

2017 Grammaticalization of Tense/Aspect/Mood Marking in Yucatec Maya. In *Unity and Diversity in Grammaticalization Scenarios*, edited by Walter Bisang and Andrej Malchukov, pp. 173-237. Berlin: Language Science Press.

MALCHIC NICOLÁS, MANUEL BERNARDO, ROMELIA MÓ ISÉM AND AUGUSTO TUL RAX

2000 *Variación dialectal en Poqom*. Guatemala City: Cholsamaj.

MAYERS, MARVIN K.

1958 *Pocomchi Texts, with Grammatical Notes*. Norman: Summer Institute of Linguistics.

## MÓ ISÉM, ROMELIA

2006 *Fonología y morfología del Poqomchi' occidental*. Unpublished Bachelor's thesis, Departamento de letras y filosofía, Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala. [HTML Title]. Available: <http://recursosbiblio.url.edu.gt/publilppm/2014/Tesis/2006/05/02/Mo-Romelia.pdf>. Date of use: January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

## MORA-MARÍN, DAVID

2005 Kaminaljuyú Stela 10: Script Classification and Linguistic Affiliation. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 16(1): 63-87.

## RICHARDS, MICHAEL

2003 *Atlas lingüístico de Guatemala*. Guatemala City: Serviprensa.

## ROBERTSON, JOHN S., DANNY LAW AND ROBBIE A. HAERTEL

2010 *Colonial Ch'olti': the Seventeenth-Century Morán Manuscript*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

## ROBLES, CARLOS

1962 The Relation between the Pocomam Pocomchi Languages. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 28(1): 6-8.

## SACHSE, FRAUKE

2015 Und Gott sprach K'iche': Ein Überblick über Quellen und Forschungsansätze zur sprachlichen Mission im Hochland von Guatemala. *Mesoamerikanistik: Archäologie, Ethnohistorie, Ethnographie und Linguistik*, edited by Lars Frühsorge, Meike Böge, Christian Brückner, Miriam Heun, Jenny Lebuhn-Chetri and Dirk Tiemann, pp. 432-467. Aachen: Shaker.

## SAKEL, JEANETTE

2007 Types of Loan: Matter and Pattern. *Grammatical Borrowing in Cross-Linguistic Perspective*, edited by Yaron Matras and Jeanette Sakel, pp. 15-29. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

## SANZ GONZÁLEZ, MARIANO

2003 El preclítico a- en "Los Papeles de Paxbolón". *Revista Española de Antropología Americana* 33: 121-132.

## SAPPER, KARL

1906 Título del barrio de Santa Ana, agosto 14 de 1565. *Internationaler Amerikanisten-Kongress, vierzehnte Tagung, Stuttgart 1904: Zweite Hälfte*, pp. 374-381. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

## SMAILUS, ORTWIN

1975 *El Maya-Chontal de Acalan: análisis lingüístico de un documento de los años 1610-1612*. Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

## SOUTHWORTH, FRANKLIN C.

2005 *Linguistic Archaeology of South Asia*. London: Routledge.

## STOLL, OTTO

1906 Título del barrio de Santa Ana, agosto 14 de 1565. *Internationaler Amerikanisten-Kongress, vierzehnte Tagung, Stuttgart 1904: Zweite Hälfte*, pp. 383-397. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

## VAN AKKEREN, RUUD

2008 *Historia y cosmovisión de la franja del Polochic*. Guatemala City: EDE Consulting & Solidaridad.

## VINOGRADOV, IGOR

2016 El tesoro no recibido por miedo: dos cuentos mayas Poqomchi'. *Tlalocan* 21: 167-215.

2017 "El Arte de Lengua Cacchí para Bien comun" y los estudios diacrónicos de la gramática q'eqchi'. *Estudios de Cultura Maya* 49: 201-225.

- 2018 Grammatical Periphery of Chontal Maya Verb. *University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics* 46: 266-280.
- 2019a The History of the Poqomchi' Language Description. *Language & History* 62(1): 14-29.
- 2019b The Prospective Construction in Q'eqchi'. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 85(2): 247-269.

WICHMANN, SØREN AND CECIL H. BROWN

- 2003 Contact among Some Mayan Languages: Inferences from Loanwords. *Anthropological Linguistics* 45(1): 57-93.

WICHMANN, SØREN AND KERRY HULL

- 2009 Loanwords in Q'eqchi', a Mayan Language of Guatemala. *Loanwords in the World's Languages: A Comparative Handbook*, edited by Martin Haspelmath and Uri Tadmor, pp. 873-896. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

XIMÉNEZ, FRANCISCO

- 1930[1700] *Historia de la provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala de la orden de predicadores*. Tomo II. Reprinted from original 1700 printing. Guatemala City: Sociedad de Geografía e Historia.

ZAVALA MALDONADO, ROBERTO

- 2002 Calcos sintácticos en algunos complejos verbales mayas y mixe-zoques. *Pueblos y Fronteras* 4: 169-187.
- 2010 El estado de la lingüística en Chiapas y Guatemala. *La antropología en Centroamérica: reflexiones y perspectivas*, edited by Gabriel Ascencio Franco, pp. 149-183. Tuxtla Gutiérrez: Red Centroamericana de Antropología.