

Diccionario and Arte of the Othomi (Otomí) Language: L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina, 1767

by Erik Boot

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Introduction

The Otomí language is part of the Otopamean language family (Chichimeca Jonaz, Mazahua, Otomí, Pame, Ocuilteco, Matlatzinca), which belongs to the Otomangean language stock or group (consisting of the Amuzgoan, Chinantecan, Mixtecan, Otopamean, Popolocan, Tlapanecan, and Zapotecan language families). The Otomí (*ñhañhú* [Valle de Mezquital] or *ñhañhó* [south of Querétaro]) language today is spoken by close to 300,000 people (some 5 to 6 percent is monolingual), most of which live in the Mexican states of Hidalgo (Valle de Mezquital), Mexico, Puebla, Querétaro, Tlaxcala, and Veracruz.

My interest in the Otomí culture and language stems from short periods of circa one and two months (January-February 1986, July 1986) when I stayed in Querétaro to prepare for a fieldwork period in Yucatán. On several occasions I joined Lydia Van de Fliert and Severiano Andrés de Jesús of the Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios, Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, for research trips to the villages of Santiago Mexquititlán and San Ildefonso Tultepec.

While I specialized in Maya studies, I always kept an eye open for research and publications on Otomí culture and languages. It was in 1989 that I found an original copy of L(icenciado). D(on). Luis de Neve y Molina's "Reglas de Orthographia, Diccionario, y Arte del Idioma Othomi", published in Mexico in 1767. The library institution that housed this book allowed me to make a high quality xerox copy. The xerox copy became part of my library and collection of writings on the Otomí, and in all honesty, it became simply that, until recently.

A short time ago I relocated the xerox copy and decided to make a scan for web publication so more than just those that possess an original volume in their library can study the contents of the work by L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina.

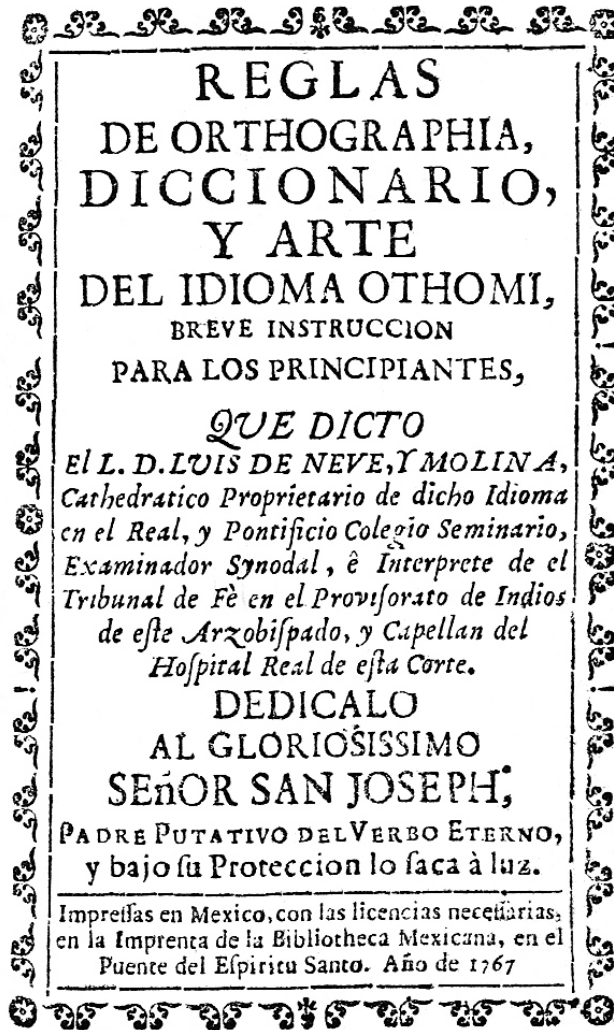
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2005

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URL: http://www.famsi.org/research/boot/neve_y_molina_1767/Neve-y-Molina-1767_Introduction.pdf

1 Title Page of the Diccionario



REGLAS
DE ORTHOGRAPHIA,
DICCIONARIO,
Y ARTE
DEL IDIOMA OTHOMI,
breve instruccion
para los principiantes,
QUE DICTO
El L. D. LUIS DE NEVE, Y MOLINA,
Cathedratico Proprietario de dicho Idioma
en el Real, y Pontificio Colegio Seminario,
Examinador Synodal, e Interprete de el
Tribunal de Fe en el Provisorato de Indios

de este Arzobispado, y Capellan del
Hospital Real de esta Corte.

DEDICALO
AL GLORIOSISSIMO
SEÑOR SAN JOSEPH;
Padre Putativo del Verbo Eterno,
y bajo su Proteccion lo saca à luz.

Impressas en Mexico, con las licencias necessarias,
en la Imprenta de la Bibliotheca Mexicana, en el
Puente del Espiritu Santo. Año de 1767.

2 Table of Contents of the Diccionario

The work by L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina lacks a table of contents. To provide a student a quick entry into the contents of this work a table of contents follows below. The title page is considered to be without numeration, as is the back of the title page; pages i (Roman numeral “one”) to xxii (Roman numeral “twenty two”), as numbered here, do not carry any page numeration in the original.

REGLAS
DE ORTHOGRAPHIA,
DICCIONARIO,
Y ARTE
DEL IDIOMA OTHOMI,
breve instruccion
para los principiantes,
QUE DICTO
EI L. D. LUIS DE NEVE, Y MOLINA,
&c. [title page]

AL PRIMER MINISTRO
DE LA TRINIDAD SANTISSIMA,
SAPIENTISSIMO PARRACHO,
ESTIMATIVO PADRE DE CHRISTO,
Y CASTISSIMO ESPOSO DE
MARIA SANTISSIMA
SEÑOR SAN JOSEPH. [i]

PARECER
Del Br. D. Carlos Ruiz Morales, Ca-
thedratico de Lengua Othomí de la Real
Universidad de Mexico. [vi]

PARECER

Del Padre Joseph Lucas de Anaya, de la
Compañía de Jesus, Profeño de quatro voto, [ix]

Licencia del Superior Gobierno. [xi]

Licencia del Sr. Arzobispo. [xi]

Un amartelado Amigo del Author, ha-
viendo amistosamente reconocido la Obra,
en elogio de ella le subministra repenti-
namente las siguientes [xii]

Un amartelado Discipulo del Author en
nombre de sus Compañeros le ofrece la
siguiente [xiv]

De un aficionado al Author, Soneto acros-
tico semi-paranomastico. [xv]

Prologo. [xvi-xxii]

PRIMERA PARTE,
Que trata de las Reglas de
Orthographia. 1

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[Erratas entre p. 12 y p. 13]

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3 *Historical Importance of the Work by Neve y Molina*

The influential and often cited work of L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina has been published four times (Wright Carr, personal communication August 20, 2005):

- 1767 *Reglas de orthographia, diccionario y arte del idioma othomí, breve instrucción para los principiantes, &c.* México: Imprenta de la Bibliotheca Mexicana.
- 1841 *Grammatica della lingua otomi, secondo la traccia del licenciato L. de Neve y Molina, col vocabulario spagnuolo-otomí spiegato in italiano.* Conte Enea Silvio Vincenzo Piccolomini, traductor. Roma: Tipografia di Propaganda Fide.
- 1863 *Reglas de ortografía, diccionario y arte del idioma othomí, &c.* Segunda edición. México: Tipografía de Mariano Villanueva.
- 1975 *Reglas de ortografía, diccionario y arte del idioma otomí.* Facsímil de la edición de 1767. Mario Colín, editor. México: Biblioteca Enciclopédica del Estado de México/Editorial Libros de México.

The rarity of the original volume of 1767 is expressed through a price listing of \$850 at the website of the William Reese Company (website visited in August 2005) (URL: <http://www.reese.com/cat225/225e.htm>).

In the centuries before and after the original year of publication of the work by L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina a host of grammars and vocabularies of the Otomí language was produced, many of which are now lost or only known through a unique or rare surviving handwritten or photographic copy. Among the important studies on the Otomí language that preceded his study are the *arte breve* and the impressive *vocabulario trilingüe* (Español-Náhuatl-Otomí) by Alonso Urbano (ca. 1605) and an *arte* by Pedro de Cárceres (ca. 1550-1600). Among the important studies that succeeded his work is the *Luces del otomí*, composed by a padre of the Compañía de Jesús. The manuscript dates from the eighteenth century and was published in 1893:

Buelna, Eustaquio (editor)

- 1893 *Luces del otomí o gramática del idioma que hablan los indios otomíes en la República Mexicana, compuesta por un padre de la Compañía de Jesús.* México: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal.

Cárceres, Pedro de

- 1907 [ca. 1550-1600] *Arte de la lengua othomí.* Edited by Nicolas León. In *Boletín del Instituto Bibliográfico Mexicano*, No. 6: 39-155.

Urbano, Alonso

1990 [ca. 1605] *Arte breve de la lengua otomí y vocabulario trilingüe español-náhuatl-otomí*. Edición de René Acuña. México, DF: Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. (Photographic reproduction of a 19th century 90 page copy of the 1605 *arte/grammar* is part of the Ayer Collection at the Newberry Library, call number Ayer MS 1652)

Neve y Molina's 1767 work can also be found incorporated into other works, but without proper reference to the original source. As Wright Carr informs (personal communication, August 20, 2005):

En 1863 M. Turnier publicó traducciones francesas de partes extensas de esta obra (sin citar la fuente original), con traducciones de fragmentos de otras obras: el *Mithridates, oder allgemeine Sprachkunde*, de Johann Christoph Adelung (1806-1817) y *De lingua othomitorum*, de Manuel Crisóstomo Náxera (1835). En 1891 Luis Escandón publicó la "parte tercera" de esta obra, que trata sobre la gramática (sin citar el autor ni el título), como apéndice a su *Ensayo histórico-geográfico estadístico del distrito de Itzmiquilpan*.

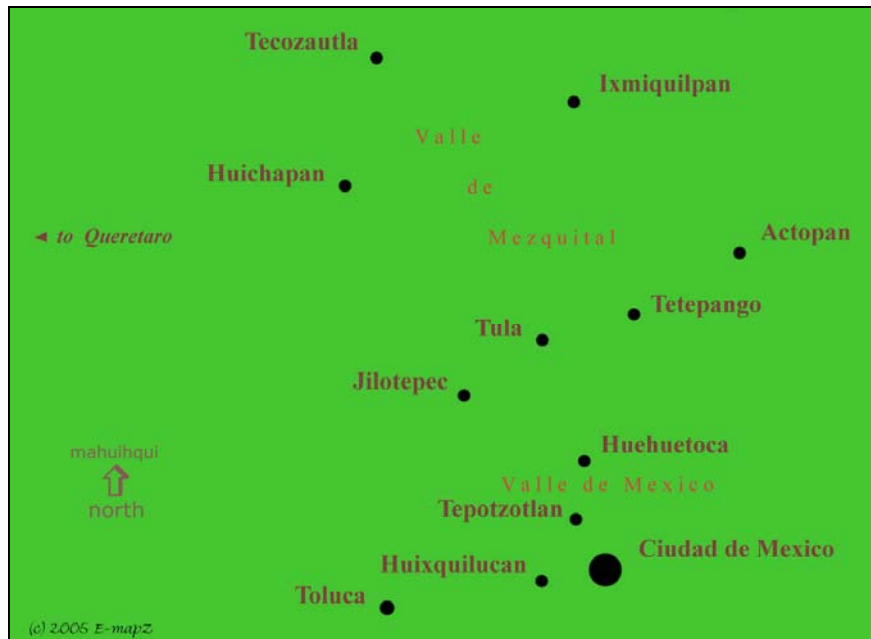
4 The Grammar of Nebriga

In his "Primera Parte", on page 11, L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina refers to the grammar as published by Nebriga (*sic*). Here Neve y Molina refers to the work by Elio Antonio (de) Nebrija/Nebrixa (1441-1522, or 1444-1522) entitled *Introductiones latinae* and published in 1481. The Spanish translation of this work, which was published in the year 1773 in the capital city of Madrid, can be found online at URL <http://www.digbib.uio.no/roman/divromspr/nebrija.pdf> at the website of the library of the University of Oslo, Norway. The original Latin version of this work can be found as part of the Fondo Antiguo of rare books at the website of the University of Sevilla, Spain, at URL <http://www.fondoantiguo.us.es/obras/155/index.html>.

5 Where Did the Work Originate?

L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina is identified as a "Cathedratico Proprietario de dicho idioma", but at no place in his work does he refer to his sources on the Otomí language. He may have obtained his education at the Real Universidad de México (founded in 1551), as from this university stems the "parecer" ("opinion") written by Br. D. Carlos Ruiz Morales. The reason why he wrote this work is made clear on page ii: "el fin es con este facil methodo instruir Ministros en el Idioma Othomí". In his prologue, on page xxi, Neve y Molina writes that his book is "el primer Arte de esta Idioma, que se dá à la Imprenta".

Is there any indication where he did his research or which language (re)sources he had available? Indigenous place names that appear in the dictionary or in the grammar may provide such an indication. Neve y Molina mentions the following places and cities in his dictionary (in the spelling as employed therein): Actopam (lugar), Gueguetoca (lugar), Huychapán (lugar), Huyzquiluca (lugar), Ixtlahuaca (lugar), Ixmiquilpan (lugar), Jilotepec (lugar; also *arte*, p. 104, Xilotepec), Metepec (lugar), Mexico (ciudad), Puebla (ciudad), Queretaro, Tecosautla (lugar; also *arte*, p. 104, Tecozautla), Tepetitlan (lugar), Tepozotlan (lugar), Tetepango (lugar), Toluca (lugar), Tula (lugar), Zacatecas (ciudad), and Zimapan (lugar). If the large(r) and important centers (of that time), such as Mexico, Puebla, Querétaro, Toluca, and Zacatecas are not taken into account, the remaining places can be found in an area in the southwest and south of the present-day state of Hidalgo (e.g. Actopan, Huichapan, Ixmiquilpan, Zimapan) and the northern part of the state of Mexico (e.g. Huehuetoca, Jilotepec, Tepotzotlan).



Map of the area in which most of the places (in modern spelling) are located as mentioned by L. D. Luis de Neve y Molina (location of places only approximate)(map by the author)

The variant of the Otomí language recorded in this book probably originates from this area. In his dictionary, on page 56, Neve y Molina refers to the “Idioma Othomí” as *Na nhiânhiû*, an indication that the variant of the Valle de Mezquital (referred to in the present-day as *ñhañhú* or *ñähñu*) is recorded. A comparison of the different variants of the Otomí language has to confirm this suggestion.

6 Otomí History, Culture, and Language: Online Resources and Publications

This is only a selection of resources and publications that can be found on the web, written on different aspects of Otomí history, culture, and language (all URLs have been checked in September 2005, but may be inactive at any later point in time):



Left: Page 38 from the Codex de Huichapan (image by Marco Antonio Pacheco/Raíces/Arqueología mexicana), Right: Part of the Painted Mural at the Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel in Ixmiquilpan (image by Marco Antonio Pacheco/Raíces/Arqueología mexicana)

Adelung, Johann Christoph

1816 *Mithridates, oder allgemeine Sprachenkunde mit dem Vater Unser als Sprachprobe in beynahe funfhundert Sprachen und Mundarten*. Dritter Theil, Dritte Abtheilung. Berlin: In der Vossischen Buchhandlung.

URL: http://www.ens-lsh.fr/labo/ctlf/ct_fiche.asp?num35

(on this opening page click the line **Gallica (vol 3.3)**; on the linked page click within the left side column on Otomi, which starts on page 113)

Archive of Indigenous Languages of Latin America (AILLA)

2005 *MesoAmerican Languages*.

URL: http://www.ailla.utexas.org/site/ma_lg_tbl.html

Arqueología mexicana

2005 Los otomíes, un pueblo olvidado. *Arqueología mexicana*, Vol. XIII, Núm. 73.

Online version. URL: <http://www.arqueomex.com/S2N3nDOSSIER73.html>

Christensen, Alexander F.

2001 Ethnicity, Caste, and Rulership in Mixquihuala, Mexico. *Reports submitted to FAMSI*. URL: <http://www.famsi.org/reports/00066/index.html>

Códice de Huichapan

n.d. Paléographie: David Charles Wright Carr (2002-4).
URL: <http://www.sup-infor.com/sources/liste-otomi.htm>

Códice de Jilotepec

n.d. Paléographie: David Charles Wright Carr (2002).
URL: <http://www.sup-infor.com/sources/liste-otomi.htm>

Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas
2004-2005 *Lenguas indígenas de México*.

URL: http://cdi.gob.mx/index.php?id_seccion=660

Dow, James D.

1996 *Ritual prestation, intermediate-level social organization, and Sierra Otomí oratory groups*.

URL: http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~dow/personal/papers/meso/Dow_1996_Ritual.pdf

1998 *Locations of Nāhñu (Otomí), Nahuatl, Totonac, Tepehua, and Spanish Speaking People of the Eastern Sierra of Hidalgo, the Northern Sierra de Puebla, and the Southern Huasteca*. URL:

<http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~dow/personal/papers/langmap1/index.html>

2003 *Sierra Otomí Religious Symbolism: Mankind Responding to the Natural World*.

URL:
<http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~dow/personal/papers/meso/03Dow.pdf>

Fernandez, Luistxo, and Marije Manterola

n.d. *Hñähñü: Otomi / Matlatzinka*.

URL: www.geocities.com/Athens/9479/hnahnu.html

García de Mendoza, Diego

n.d. *Traduction d'un manuscrit en otomi et espanol*. Paléographie: David Charles Wright (2000). URL: <http://www.sup-infor.com/sources/liste-otomi.htm>

H. Congreso del Estado de Sinaloa

2000 *Eustaquio Buelna*. URL:
http://www.congresosinaloa.gob.mx/murodehonor2/eustaquio_buelna.htm

Instituto Nacional Indigenista

2002 *Otomíes del Estado de Mexico: Bibliografía*.

URL: http://cdi.gob.mx/ini/monografias/b_otomies.html

Lenguas del Mundo

n.d. *Lenguas Amerindias: Tronco Otomangue, Lengua Otomí*.
URL: <http://www.proel.org/mundo/otomi.htm>

López Reséndiz, Javier, and Angélica María Álvarez Huerta

2004 *Otomíes en otomí*.

URL: http://redescolar.ilce.edu.mx/redescolar/publicaciones/publi_mexico/publiotomiesotomi.htm

Martin de la Puente, Francisco

n.d. *Manuscrit en otomi et espanol*. Paléographie: David Charles Wright (2000).

URL: <http://www.sup-infor.com/sources/liste-otomi.htm>

Rodríguez Villegas, Manuel

2005 Diccionario español-otomí. *Diccionarios en línea AULEX*.

URL: <http://ohui.net/aulex/es-oto/>

Solar Valverde, Laura

n.d. Dinámica cultural del Valle del Mezquital durante el Epiclásico. *Reports submitted to FAMSI*. URL: <http://www.famsi.org/reports/00074es/index.html>

n.d. Epi-Classic Cultural Dynamics in the Mezquital Valley. *Reports submitted to FAMSI*. URL: <http://www.famsi.org/reports/00074/index.html>

Summer Institute of Linguistics

2004 *Otopamean Family*. URL: <http://www.sil.org/mexico/22i-Stocks.htm>

Wright Carr, David Charles

2003a *Los otomíes, la educación y derechos lingüísticos*.

URL: http://www.prodigyweb.net.mx/dcwright/oto_edu.htm

2003b *Fonemas otomíes que no existen en el castellano*.

URL: http://www.sup-infor.com/sources/codex_otomi/Fonemas.htm

2004 *Sangre para el Sol: Las pinturas murales del siglo XVI en la parroquia de Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo*.

URL: <http://www.prodigyweb.net.mx/dcwright/sangre.htm>

2005a *Manuscritos otomíes del Virreinato*.

URL: <http://www.prodigyweb.net.mx/dcwright/mss.htm>

2005b Los otomíes en las fuentes. In *Arqueología mexicana*, Vol. XII, Núm. 73, pp.

18-19. URL: <http://www.arqueomex.com/S8N5PALABRAotomi.pdf>

2005c Lengua, cultura e historia de los otomíes. In *Arqueología mexicana*, Vol. XIII, Núm. 73, pp. 26-29. URL:
<http://www.arqueomex.com/S8N5LOSOTOMIESWright.pdf>

For printed (re)sources and publications as well as (early) colonial manuscript titles at for instance Brigham Young University, the Tozzer Libray at Harvard University, or the Edward E. Ayer Manuscript Collection at the Newberry Library, Chicago, one can enter the search option “Otomi” within the search box of the *Bibliografía Mesoamericana* at the FAMSI website (<http://research.famsi.org/mesobib.html>).

Acknowledgment: I thank David Charles Wright Carr for his comments on and additions to a previous version of this introduction. His comments have improved the present version. Any mistakes or imperfections that remain are the sole responsibility of the author.

Addendum

On some of the pages there are large stains through which part of the text is no longer readable (in the present online edition). Based on the original publication parts of the following pages have been transcribed (vowel /ä/ replaces vowel /a/ with a bar on top [as employed in the original orthography]):

Page 77, lines 7-13:

Pulque.	-----	Na zêy
Pulque fuerte.	-----	Na yoguizéy. gâzêy. yozêy.
Pulga.	-----	Na ä.
Punta.	-----	Na tzä.
Punzar.	-----	Zynì.
Puño, ô puñado.	-----	Na mîtî.

Page 78, lines 6-14:

Quedo.	-----	Nqhantè. nqhanatè.
Quejarse enfermo.	-----	Dântzi.
Quemar.	-----	zâti. tyti.
Quemar pegando fue- go.	-----	Tyxti.
Querellarse.	-----	Câtzi.

Quelite.	-----	Na ccanì.
Querer.	-----	Nee.
Queretaro.	-----	Ndâmxêy.

Page 79, lines 7-14:

Rastrojo.	-----	Na boxh -
Rala cosa.	-----	Na nhani.
Rana.	-----	Nagùe. (with ~ on /e/)
Rara vez.	-----	Xãhthy.
Raspar.	-----	Câxtè.
Raton.	-----	Na ngû.
Rata.	-----	Na ng – oy.

Page 80, lines 6-14:

Reirse.	-----	Thede.
Rey.	-----	Na dâgãñânRey.
Relampaguear.	-----	Huêtzi.
Relumbrar.	-----	Yotzi.
Remendar.	-----	Puete. cuahmi (Puete, with elongated /e/ and accent)
Remoler.	-----	Thâtî. dâtti.
Remolino.	-----	Na xedi. (with ~ on /e/)
Renovar.	-----	Hoguì.
Renir.	-----	Tzuy. (elongated /u/ and dot on elongation)

Page 160, lines 5-13:

5. El verbo *pa*, y *ma*, que significan ir, quando estàn en el imperativo, y se les sigue otro verbo, se les pospone la particula *ba* y entonces al verbo siguiente no se le pone particula alguna; v g anda á passear, *ma ba mâya*, en lugar de *gui mâya*. Tambien regularmente convierten en *ba* en *bi*. Mas quando los verbos estàn solos siempre se les antepone la particula *ni*: v.g. ve, ò vete, *nima*.

September 2005. Rijswijk, the Netherlands
The author can be reached at: wukyabnal@hotmail.com