PUBLICACIÓN DEL INSTITUTO DE INVESTIGACIONES HISTÓRICAS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO, DESTINADA A SACAR A LUZ FUENTES DOCUMENTALES DE TODO INDOLE, CÓDIGOS Y TEXTOS INDÍGENAS DE IMPORTANCIA HISTÓRICA, Etnográfica, Lingüística o genéricamente cultural, en relación con los distintos pueblos nahuas, en los periodos prehispánico, colonial y de México independiente. Asimismo incluye en sus varios volúmenes trabajos de investigación monográfica, notas breves sobre historia, etnología, sociología, economía, etcétera, de los pueblos nahuas; bibliografías y reseñas de libros de interés en este campo.

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The generally accepted interpretation of the name for the eleventh month, Ochpaniztli, is 'sweeping of the road'.

Siméon (1885, p. 314) writes about Ochpaniztli, "Ile mois de l'année (Clav). Tous les nobles et plébéiens balayaient alors les temples, les chemins; de là l'expression ochpaniztli, balayage des chemins... RR. otli, tlachpana".

Seler (1927, p. 171) translates ochpaniztli by "das 'Wegfegen'". Lehmann (1974, p. 162, 485) translates it "den Weg fegen".

Garibay in various places translates the word "barrimiento de caminos", and in the Glosario to his edition of Durán, Historia de las indias de Nueva España (1967, t. p. 312) he cites Durán's explanation of ochpaniztli, "Día de barrer" and then adds. "Es deficiente la versión: significa el vocablo 'barrimiento de los caminos'. Ichpana-ohtli."

Finally, Anderson and Dibble in their translation of the Florentine Codex (Book 2, p. 110) render Ochpaniztli by "The Sweeping of the Way". In support, I suppose, of this translation, they cite Garibay and Seler.

The interpretation is based on the assumption that the word ochpaniztli is a compound of the words for 'road' and for 'sweeping'. I wish to demonstrate that this assumption is without basis and that the traditional interpretation of Ochpaniztli is unsupported and cannot be maintained.

In order to make the arguments entering into the demonstration clear, I shall have to begin by discussing one aspect of Classical Nahuatl.

1 The preparation of this paper was supported by a fellowship from the University of Copenhagen. I wish to thank Arild Hvidtfeldt for helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.
Nahuatl words can be divided into syllables and the many syllables found in the language can be classified for example according to whether they begin with a consonant or a vowel, and according to whether they end in a consonant or a vowel.

In this connection the terms consonants and vowels are not used in the sense of the actual written letters, but rather referring to the phonemes which the letters represent. Thus two letters may very well represent one phoneme; that is in fact the case with tl for [tl], ch for [kχ], cu for [kw], uh for [w] tz for [dz], etc. 

This variation is by no means new. Carochi wrote in 1645 (p. 401), “Otra letra tienen parecida en la pronunciación a la z. y a la c. pero de más fuerte pronunciación, corresponde a la letra hebrea llamada Tsade; escriúese en esta lengua con t. y z. como Nitzúzi, yo le llamo: pero es una sola letra, aunque se escriuе con dos.” [Emphasis added.]

An attempt at classifying the syllables according to their configuration of consonant phonemes and vowel phonemes will lead to only four different types of syllables, namely CVC (C here stands for consonant phoneme and V for vowel phoneme), CV, VC, and V. In other words, no Nahuatl word can be found which begins or ends in two consonants and in no Nahuatl word will there be three consonants in a sequence. Two consonants in a cluster will — given the cited types of syllables — belong to two different syllables, thus the word itlahuactli “island, dry land” is made up of three syllables, CVC-CVC-CV. The first two of the type CVC and the last of the type CV, tlahuac-ctli. If one uses a phonemic transcription with just one symbol for each phoneme in order to interpret the orthography, the configuration of the syllables will be more easily recognizable, thus kalwakli, kal-wak-li (CVC-CVC-CV).

The importance and the reality of these limitations on Classical Nahuatl syllable structure can be observed in several places in the morphology of the language:

An object in the third person singular is represented by a prefix attached to the verb. In addition it may be represented by some noun or pronoun, which is not affixed to the verb, however, this is not obligatory. The mentioned prefix occurs in two different shapes

2 The symbols which are used in the phonemic transcription and which are not identical with those found in the traditional orthography are the following: [k] for τl, [kχ] for ch, [k] for tl, [kV] for cu or qu, [kχ] for x, or c, [w] for o, u, hu, or uh, [yl] for i, j, or y, (?) for “saltillo”, and [?] after a vowel indicating that it is long.

or variants, k and ki. Carochi (p. 412) says about the distribution of the two variants, “...en terceras personas de singular y plural [as subjects]; y en la segunda del plural la c. se buele en qui, quando el verbo empecé por consonante, por que la c. no se pudiera sin mucha dificultad pronunciar como se verá en los ejemplos, y para ellos sirua el verbo mitcita, matar, o aporreare...

| NICTCIITA | [niχmiktia] | yo le mato |
| TICTCIITA | [tiχmiktia] | tú le matas |
| QUICMICTA | [kiχmiktia] | aquel le mata |
| TICTCIITA? | [tiχmiktia?] | nosotros le matamos |
| ANQUICMICTA | [aniχmiktia?] | vosotros le matays |
| QUICMICTA? | [kiχmiktia?] | aquellos le matan |

Mal se puede pronunciar cmictia, o ancmictia; y por esto la c. se buele en qui, en las personas dichas.”

He states the choice of variant partly in terms of person and number of the subject and then offers an explanation referring to ease or difficulty of pronunciation. However, it is not the structure of human speech organs that are at the root of the pronouncing difficulties adduced by Carochi; KCV is a common beginning of words in several Mayan languages. In Mam for example we find kób ‘a measure’, k’bi: ‘their name’, knet ‘is found’, but also other clusters of two or more consonants in initial position are frequent and seem perfectly natural to the speakers, e.g. thi ‘he hears it’, nō:nab ‘my marimba’, těbaksel ‘steam’, tiščab ‘her ring’.

It is a common observation that people find combinations of sounds which do not occur in their native language difficult to pronounce and strangely unnatural.

Thus the pronouncing difficulties which miktia and anmiktia are said to present are due precisely to limitations on the types of syllables allowed in Classical Nahuatl.

At least two interpretations of the k–ki alternation are possible: 1) The basic form is k, whenever the occurrence of this k gives rise to a cluster of two consonants in one syllable, then an i is inserted after the k, kmiktia (kmik-ti-a) → kmiktia, anmiktia? (an–mikt-i-a? or ank-mik-ti-a?) → an–ki-mik-ti-a? 2) Another interpretation would be that ki is the basic form and that the i is dropped whenever this does not give rise to a cluster of two consonants in one syllable,
nikimiktia → nik-miktia
 tikimiktia → tik-mik-ti-a
 kimiktia
 (kmiktia)
tikimiktia? → tik-mik-ti-a?
 ankimiktia?
 (ankmiktia?)

Whichever variant is considered basic, k or ki, it is the limitations on syllable structure, namely the fact that no syllable of the shape CCVC or CVCC occurs or is allowed, which determines when to insert an i according to one interpretation and when to drop the i according to the other interpretation. In other words it is the observed limitations on syllable structure which determine the choice between the two variants, k and ki, expressing ‘third person, singular, object’.

Surely the choice between k and ki has got nothing to do with ‘third person, subject’ or with ‘second person, plural, subject’, but only with the way in which these subjects are marked, whether with CV, with VC, or with an absence of phonemes.

The two variants of the absolutive suffix offer another example of the limitations on syllable structure: k is found after vowels and ki is found after consonants others than l in which environment k is changed by assimilation into li cihuatl [siwak] ‘woman’, oquichitli [oki[š]k] ‘man’, calli [kal] ‘house’. If the variant k were used after consonants we would get a syllable ending in two consonants, *oquichil [oki[š]k]. When looking at the orthography alone one may get the impression that the variant ki in some cases appears after a vowel, viz talli ‘father’, cilli ‘rabbit’, etc. However, this is due to an inadequacy of the traditional orthography in which one consonant, the so-called saltillo, a kind of glottal stop, is not noted. Caroqui puts it this way (p. 404), ‘Y de paso se adueña por regla infalible que estos nombres acabados en li, al qual li precede inmediatamente alguna vocal, tienen saltillo sobre la tal vocal, como montañ [monta[š]], suegro: chiquiáli [či:k*[š]i], lechuca: y aunque se pierda este li en el plural, o en composición este nombre con otras diciones pospuestas, siempre conserva el saltillo la dicha vocal.” In his Arte, Caroqui consistently notes the saltillo by a grave accent on the preceding vowel or in utterance final position by a circumflex on the preceding vowel.

Thus in connection with the suffixation of kik, ‘absolutive’ the saltillo patterns as a consonant phoneme. That this is true in general can be seen in other parts of the morphology.

One of the rules governing the formation of the perfect tense states that the final vowel of the present tense is dropped unless it is preceded by two consonants, in which case the suffix k is added, e.g. tek ‘cut’, perf tek; itki ‘carry’ perf itki-k. The rule is clearly connected with the specific Nahua limitations on syllable structure; if the final i of itki were dropped the word (and the syllable) would end in two consonants, itk. Examples offer themselves which show that glottal stop also here functions as a consonant. I can do no better than quote Caroqui (p. 431). He says “...toman c. en el preterito los verbos, que despues de su penultima syllaba, o en ella tienen dos consonantes, como ita, ver;” and later he goes on about glottal stop “También toman c. los verbos, que en la penultima syllaba tienen saltillo, como áhua [a’wa] reñir, onicahuac [onikwa-wak]: Páti [pa’ti], sanar; neutro onipàtic [onipa’tik]. Pero páti [pa’ti], sin saltillo, que significa deshazerse como sal, nieve, &c. sigue la regla general, ópáti [o’pa’ti], se ha deshecho; chicha [či’i’ka], escupir, onichichac [onipí’i’ka]”.

In the preceding sections I have advanced the claim that only four types of syllables are found in Classical Nahua; this claim is supported by empirical evidence, and its limiting effects have been demonstrated by two examples from the morphology (k=ki ‘third person, singular, object’ and k=ki ‘absolutive’). The latter example gave rise to a second claim, namely that glottal stop is and functions as a consonant in Classical Nahua; this new claim was again supported by an example from the verbal morphology, namely the formation of the ‘perfect’.

We are now equipped to take a second look at the traditional interpretation of ochpaniztlí.

Initially I cited five different sources in which ochpaniztlí is taken to mean ‘sweeping of the roads’. Of these five only Siméon and Garibay are explicit as to how we must analyze the word in order to give it this meaning. I must presume that the authors of the three remaining sources have analyzed the word in the same way. Siméon gives his analysis by quoting the two words or roots which enter into the compound, “RR oti, lachpaniztli”. As users of the dictionary we are expected to know that before the two can be “put together” the absolutive suffix, lli, is removed from the first word and the prefix indicating ‘indefinite object’, tla, is removed from the second word: o-chpaniztlí.

Elsewhere in the dictionary we find that the word oti means
'road, way' and that the verb *tlachpana* (from which *tlachpaniztli* is a regularly formed abstract noun) means 'sweep, clean'. Thus the result appears to be a regularly formed abstract noun meaning 'sweeping' with an object, 'road', prefixed to it, and that is a perfectly acceptable construction in Classical Nahuatl.

Garibay's analysis is slightly different from Siméon's. He agrees with Siméon in that *ochpaniztli* is composed of two words, and that they are the noun meaning 'road' and some form of the verb meaning 'sweep'. However, he quotes the two words differently, *otlī* and *ichpana*. The *h* in *otlī* represents what I have called saltillo or glottal stop and written ʔ. He further assumes that we know that the absolute suffix drop and that the *i* of *ichpana* disappears when the two words are joined.

The result, *ochpaniztli* [ʔoʔpaništli], does not conform to the syllable patterns characteristic of Classical Nahuatl. The word contains a cluster of three consonants, -ʔp-, and if we divide it into syllables we get either VCC-CVC-VCC-CV [ʔoʔ-pa-niš-li] or VC-CCV-CVC-CV [ʔoʔ-pa-niš-li]. Neither VCC nor CCV is a possible syllable in Classical Nahuatl.

Thus, if there is a glottal stop in the word for 'road', then the analysis of *ochpaniztli* into [ʔoʔ-pa-niš-li] with the meaning 'road-sweeping' is improbable because it assumes the existence of a cluster of three consonants.

Since glottal stops are not usually noted in the traditional orthography, their presence can not always be conclusively established. However, there is a number of reasons for considering the glottal stop in the word for 'road' to be established beyond doubt:

a) Carocho consistently notes it with a glottal stop after the *o*, *otli* (p. 419, 455, 482, and 485).

b) It has already been mentioned that the variant, *ki*, of the absolute occurs only immediately following a consonant as opposed to *k* which is found only after vowels, so there must be some consonant between *o* and *ki*, and saltillo or glottal stop is the only consonant which is systematically not represented in the traditional orthography.

c) The word for 'road' is attested in a number of modern Nahuatl dialects, and everywhere with a consonant after the *o*, *Milpa Alta, D.F., optli* (Whorf 1946, p. 377); *Sierra de Zacapoaxtla, Puebla, otlī* (Key/Key 1953, p. 180); *Tetelcingo, Morelos, otlī* (pl. ojmec)

(Brewer/Brewer 1962, p. 169); for Pipil of El Salvador Schultz-Jena (p. 355) gives ūxtī. Thus the glottal stop of *otlī* [ʔoʔki] seems to be established and Siméon's and Garibay's analysis of *ochpaniztli* thereby shown to be in disagreement with one aspect of the structure of Classical Nahuatl.

Another analysis of *ochpaniztli* based upon the same interpretation, namely 'sweeping of roads', has been suggested. In an unpublished grammatical sketch of Classical Nahuatl, Eike Hinz (p. 5) discusses the various forms of the nouns and where these forms are used (possessive, absolute, and compositive). One of his examples is the word for 'road', and one of the variants of this word is given as *oč*. In other words, according to his analysis, *ochpaniztli* is made up of a form of the word 'road', *oč*, and a form of the word 'sweep', *pana*. While this analysis is perfectly possible in the sense that it does not violate any of the rules observed to be at work in Classical Nahuatl, it is still not very plausible for a number of reasons:

a) In other compounds the word for 'road' appears in various shapes, but not as *oč*, "otencu [ʔoʔ-tenku] cerca del camino" (Mol. 78r); "oquetza [ʔoʔ-kezə] hazer camino" (Mol. 77r); "oittitit [ʔoʔ-ititi] mostrar el camino a otro" (Mol. 76r); "ouipoloa [ʔoʔ-wi-po-loa]... perdre son chemin" (Sim. 326); "ołatoca [ʔoʔa-toka] caminar" (Mol. 78r).

b) The assumption that the word for 'road' has several variants of which two are *oʔ* and *oč* implies an alternation between glottal stop and ʔ, an alternation which is not observed elsewhere in the language although glottal stop participates in other alternations. There are examples of glottal stop alternating with ʔ, e.g. [we:weʔ] 'old man' - [we:wet-kəʔ] 'old man', and [kaʔ] 'he is' - [ka-kəʔ] 'he was'; and it may be maintained that the perfect offers examples of an alternation between glottal stop and ʔ, [lakəʔ] 'he eats', [lakə-aʔ] 'he has eaten' - [lakapa] 'he washes', [lakapa-kaʔ] 'he has washed'.

c) As for the second member of the assumed compound, no simple form, *pa, pani or pana*, meaning 'sweep' or 'clean' exists. Thus both [ʔoč] and [pani(ʔ)] seem to be unique to [ʔoʔpaništli], and I can find no arguments in support of the analysis.

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3 In most modern dialects we find a velar or laryngeal fricative (in the orthographies written ʔ or X) corresponding to the saltillo of Classical Nahuatl.
What is then ochpaniztli? And what does it mean? Ochpaniztli is a simple abstract noun meaning 'sweeping' or 'cleaning'.

In order to understand that, we have to look at a restricted group of verbs that begin with a vowel and two consonants, VCV. In some of these verbs the initial vowel is dropped when preceded by another vowel; examples of this type are ilpia 'tie' and izcalli 'wake up'. When the verb for 'tie' is preceded by ila 'indefinite, inanimate object', we get tla-ilpia [xalpia] 'he ties something', and when it is preceded by the prefix mo indicating 'third person, reflexive', we get mo-ilpia. When the verb is preceded by the prefix ki-k 'third person, singular, object', we get [kilpia], here we have no way of determining whether it is the i of the verb that has dropped, [ki-ilpia], or whether it is the short variant of the prefix which has been chosen, [k-ilpia].

The verb for 'sweep' is mostly found with tla 'indefinite, inanimate object', tlachpana [ka-pana], and that form gives no clue as to the quality of the vowel which has dropped after the tla, but the form shows that there must have been some vowel, otherwise the verb would begin with two consonants *echpana [e-pana] and that we know disagrees with the rules of Nahua1t syllable structure.

My hypothesis is that the first vowel of the verb 'sweep, clean' is o, and that the name of the eleventh month is a simple, uncompounded abstract noun formed from precisely this verb.

Crucial to this hypothesis is that the first vowel of the verb 'sweep, clean' is in fact o and not some other vowel. Arguments in favor of an o are:

a) The o regularly appears when the verb is constructed with the prefix for 'third person, object', k-ki, and with various incorporated nominal objects, njeochpana [nkojpana] 'I sweep it' (A/D Book 11, p. 267), tecacalochpana [tekakalojpana] 'he sweeps the houses for people' (A/D Book 4, p. 43) analyzed into [te-] 'indefinite, animate object' [ka-kal-] 'houses', and [o-pana] 'sweep' * calciuchochpana kalk'jkojpana] 'deshollinar' (Mol. 11v) analyzed into [kal-] 'house', [k'k]-) 'soot', and [o-pana] 'clean'; xiuchochpana 'des-eruuaru' (Mol. 159v) analyzed into xiw- 'weed' and [o-pana] 'clean'; tecacalochpanoni [tekalacojpanoni] 'barredero de hornos' (Mol. 112v) analyzed into [tekal-] 'oven' and [o-panoni] 'one who sweeps or cleans'; and nopizacochpana [nopi-kojpana] 'I sweep or clean the narrow road' (A/D Book 11, p. 267) analyzed into [n-] 'first person, subject', [o?-] 'road', [pi-gak] 'narrow', and [o-pana] 'sweep or clean'. These examples also serve to show that the basic meaning of ochpana is more generally 'clean' or 'clear of' rather than specifically 'sweep'.

b) One word for 'broom' in Classical Nahua1t begins in o, ochpanoaztli [o-panwasli] (A/D Book 2, p. 158; Book 4, p. 3; Sim. p. 314.)

c) In various modern dialects the verb 'sweep' has an initial o, in Sierra de Zacapoaxtla 'cohchapan, lo barre (de barrer)' (Key/Key p. 145), 'ki-ojpana 'he sweeps it' (Robinson, p. 164), and in Matlapa, San Luis Potosi 'nkojojpankin 'I swept it' (Croft, p. 33).

The most serious objection that can be defeated against this simple explanation of the name ochpaniztli is that abstract nouns in -(l)iztli which are formed from transitive verbs must have an explicit object, either an actual noun or tla 'indefinite, inanimate object' or te 'indefinite, animate object' prefixed to it. So if an abstract noun were formed from ochpana, one would rather expect something like tlachpaniztli or tlachpanaliztli (Car. p. 450) 'the sweeping of something', and such an abstract noun in fact occurs, tlachpanaliztli 'el acto de barrer' (e.g. Mol. 117v; A/D Book 2, p. 186; Book 4, p. 63).

So ochpaniztli cannot be formed from the transitive verb meaning 'sweep, clean, ochpana'; it must be formed from the corresponding intransitive verb. Normally intransitive verbs have a form different from that of the corresponding transitive verbs,

| poloa  | transitive | 'lose' |
| poliwi | intransitive | 'get lost' |
| kotona | transitive | 'break, cut' |
| kotoni | intransitive | 'break' |
| épi:nia | transitive | 'drop' |
| épi:ni | intransitive | 'drip' |

However, inchoative verbs ending in -wa and a few other verbs retain the same form whether they are used transitively or intransitively, e.g.,

| éka:wa | transitive | 'strengthen' |
| éka:wa | intransitive | 'become strong' |
Molina and Siméon cite our verb for ‘sweep’ only as being used transitively with [k-] 'indefinite, inanimate object', itachpana ‘bar-
ner’. But the two dictionaries are by no means exhaustive; we have already seen that ochpana also occurs with the prefix k-ki indicating ‘definite, third person, object’; and occasional intransitive uses of ochpana are found in the literature, e.g. xochpana [sočpana] ‘sweep’ (A/D Book 6, p. 33). It thus appears that ochpana belongs to the small group of verbs which unchanged are used both transitively and intransitively.

According to this analysis the name of the eleventh month is an abstract noun regularly derived from the verb ochpana, which is used both transitively and intransitively, and it means nothing but ‘the act of) cleaning or sweeping’.

A few problems still remain however. First of all there is a word ochpanli ‘camino ancho y real’ (Mol. 75r). But what is a wide road if not a place cleared of weeds and swept and kept clean. The more common narrow road or trail appears and stays naturally where people walk much, but the wider road must be somehow artificially kept wide through a conscious effort. Ochpanli is just another noun derived from the intransitively used ochpana, and only secondarily does it mean ‘road’, while the primary meaning is ‘something which is swept and kept clean or clear’.

Secondly, where did Garibay get the form ichpana? Garibay may have seen the form in Siméon’s dictionary. Siméon (p. 53) unexplicably analyzes calcuichochpana into RR calcuichhti, ichpana. He may also have known the verb to have an initial i in certain modern Nahuatl dialects. In Cuatlamayán, Ciudad Santís, San Luis Potosí, the following forms are found šikişpāna ‘bárrelo’ and lēpōyā:wik ‘escoba’ (Kaufman, p. 112). The i here no doubt represents a reanalysis on the part of the speakers: ki-očpa:na is realized kişpa:na, the form is reinterpretated, whereby the i becomes part of the verb, k-işpa:na.
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