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Research interests

My research in the field of Religious Studies centres on the Andean region in South America, above all the time of the Spanish conquest and colonial era. As the Spanish decided very soon after the conquest that it would be best to catechise the indigenous peoples in their own languages, there is a large corpus of linguistic and textual data, mostly produced by Christian priests, but also some by indigenous authors.

Topics I am particularly interested in are, for example, the transmission of Christian concepts into Amerindian languages and the reception by the indigenous population. Apart from a knowledge of the Amerindian languages (I focus on Quechua), it is necessary to analyse data from a range of disciplines, e.g. linguistics, ethnohistory and religious studies.

Questions I address in my work centre on the mutual influences and fusions of European and Andean beliefs and practices in a colonial setting. Thereby I hope to contribute to a better understanding of the processes of colonialisation, the interactions between colonisers and colonised, the problematics of studying the origin of 'mixed' beliefs and practices, and the influence such 'hybrid' developments have had on contemporary religion.

Current projects

Personal project: *The power of the word: Christianising the Indian in colonial and early post-colonial Peru* - Based on a collection of anonymous and mainly undated manuscripts held in the British Library it will be examined under which cultural and political circumstances Quechua language and discourse was used to convert the indigenous population to Christianity.

Collaborative project (with colleagues from the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Mexico and Brazil) (planning stage): *Confessionaries: Questions as answers about the colonial Church and indigenous people* - Interdisciplinary comparative study of Iberian and colonial confessionaries from the 15th to the 18th century about language, identity and the other.

Recent Publications on the Translation of Christianity in Latin America

Monograph:

Entrelazando dos mundos: Experimentos y experiencias con el quechua de la cristianización en el Perú colonial. Quito: Abya-Yala 2013.

This study examines the Quechua language of Christianisation which was created by the Catholic Church in 16th century Peru. My analysis shows that what had been developed with the objective of unifying Christian Quechua reflects individual methods and varied results rather than a consistent strategy, and thereby contributed to the creation of an ambiguous language of Christianisation.

In a second step I analyse how Quechua words and discourses were elaborated by indigenous authors at the beginning of the 17th century. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala and the authors of the Huarochirí texts document their experience with this vocabulary: they integrated it into their own discourse which can be shown to be intentionally multi-interpretable (sermons, prayers and a testimony). In this way and by using discursive traditions from Europe and from the Andes, they created a new genre of indigenous verbal art in the colonial context.



Article:

Don Cristóbal, Llocllayhuancupa and the Virgin: The battle of words in a colonial Quechua conversion narrative. In: *Critical Reflections on Indigenous Religions*. James L. Cox (ed.), pp. 105-122. (Vitality of Indigenous Religions), Farnham: Ashgate 2013.

The paper contributes to the study of how Andean religion was transformed in the colonial context of the early seventeenth century, exposed to expansive efforts of the Christian Church. The events described in an Amerindian-language manuscript, the Huarochirí Traditions – a vision and a dream experienced by a Christianised indigenous man – are an example of how both traditions, the Andean and the Christian religion, could contribute to form a new belief-system, by the re-shaping of both according to the individual and social needs of the time. The narration ([re-]construction?) of the testimonial episodes throws light on the birth and also anticipates the continuity of Andean religion as we know it and people practice it today: native (often ancient) signs and their meanings versus Christian ones have not become mutually excluded, but they have converged and blended together so that several interpretations are now

valid. Coincidences between Europe and the Andes with respect to certain concepts have certainly contributed to this.



Article:

Muchay – worshipping God and the *huacas*: The complex usage of a Quechua word in the colonial Andes. In: *Translation Right or Wrong*, Susana Bayó Belenguier, Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin (eds.), pp. 173-190. Dublin: Four Courts Press 2013.

In a colonial context, language as well as the relationship of the representatives of the colonial power with the indigenous subjects are important elements which influence translation. In this paper I examine the word *muchay* of the Peruvian Quechua language. The word may best be rendered as 'to worship', but the Christian colonial interpretation of Andean deities was a negative one and the authors thus necessarily interpreted the verbs applied to Andean practices as such, i.e. the basic meaning of *muchay* became 'to revere idols'. My analysis shows that in this case the translation which seemed to have been 'right' for the author/translator because of a certain conceptual convergence, in a way turned out to be the 'wrong' choice: it allowed the addressees/recipients not only to understand the Christian meaning of the term and its concept, but it also enabled them to connect the new belief forms and practices to their own ones and thus make sense within their own system of this 'interference' the Christians brought.



Article:

Pachamama and the Virgin revisited: Coincidences and convergences. In: *Saints and Cultural Trans-/Mission*. Michael Marten & Katja Neumann (eds.), pp. 159-200. (Collectanea Instituti Anthropos 45). Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag 2013.

This article examines the Virgin's and Pachamama's representations by studying evidence from Spain and the Andes in order to approach the question if a combination of Andean and European traits might have caused a 'blend' or 'fusion'. European and Andean intellectual-theological and folk-popular conceptions show that pre-existing coincidences could be projected onto each other and often lead to convergence. The outcome is a religious tradition and practice influenced by the indigenous population as well as Christian priests. It developed in a cultural space and climate in which both approaches could blend into each other and thus converge.



Article:

The *corregidor* as dragon and the *encomendero* as lion: symbolic language to depict antisocial behavior in Guaman Poma's Andean colonial world. In: *Language Typology and Universals* (STUF – Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung), Special Issue: *A Colonized World Revisited: Linguistic Perspectives from Unpublished Colonial and Postcolonial Documents* (Astrid Alexander-Bakkerus and Otto Zwartjes, eds.), vol. 67, no. 2: 149-173. Berlin 2014.

With his *Primer nueva coronica y buen gobierno* Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (ca. 1535–post 1616), the best known Andean early-17th century author of indigenous descent, created a comprehensive and complex work about the indigenous past and the colonial present of his time. Colonial language data and information in an Amerindian language, interpreted from within the writer's framework as well as parting from Andean and European traditions, can be used to better understand the author's objectives for employing a certain text genre and language. This paper gives a sociolinguistic and ethno-historical analysis of Guaman Poma's work. Guaman Poma uses animal imagery of wild beasts in order to portray colonial society. Certain functionaries are likened to animals which threaten the indigenous people. The critical author presents these menaces in two sections of his work: in a critique of the administration which contains an illustration that links wild animals and functionaries directly and explicitly, and through prayers seeking protection from these same threats. Making use of symbolic language, textual and visual imagery, Guaman Poma associates uncivilised elements of nature with the barbaric behaviour of the authorities. Nature and culture have always been closely linked in the Andes, and Guaman Poma makes extensive traditional and at the same time innovative use of this connection. I argue that in doing so he creates a new colonial indigenous discourse and uses subversion in the repressive context of the time to call the attention of the reader to the social problems created by colonial rule, thereby making an innovative use of both his native language and Spanish traditions.



Edited volume:

La transmisión de conceptos cristianos a las lenguas amerindias: Estudios sobre textos y contextos de los siglos XVI y XVII. (Collectanea Instituti Anthropos 48). Sankt Augustin: Anthropos Institut. Forthcoming in 2015.

The contributions of this book focus on the intercultural linguistic strategies and methods which the colonial missionaries used in Latin America. Their objective was to efficiently translate the Christian concepts into Amerindian texts and native contexts so that the indigenous population could understand the new religion better and would abandon its own. In order to achieve this, the missionary linguists learned the native languages, and the result was the creation of linguistic works (dictionaries and grammars) as well as texts for religious instruction (catechisms, sermons, etc.). In their enterprise the missionaries employed lexicographic and translation theories as well as consulting Amerindian and European text genres.

Within a broad range of disciplines (such as history, sociolinguistics and anthropology) the contributions of this book present a comparative view across Latin America and study Nahuatl, Tarascan, Maya, Quechua, Tupí, Guaraní and Chiquitano. Through their translation analyses the authors arrive at a wide spectrum of results in terms of the missionaries' methods: they used loans and word-for-word translations, but above all the colonial linguists (re-)created new terms and expressions in the foreign language, often based on what they supposed to be native grammatical and semantic concepts. The articles show that the indigenous recipients often seem to have been confused rather than converted, and that Christianity was integrated into the native cultures, often by 'nativising' European religion.

Contributors: Charles García, Otto Zwartjes, Ramón Arzápalo, Frauke Sachse, Nora Jiménez, Cristina Monzón, Angelika Danielewski, Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz, Elke Ruhnau, Jean-Philippe Husson, Graciela Chamorro, Cândida Barros, Ruth Monserrat, Sieglinde Falkinger.



Monograph:

Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz: *El "Tratado de los errores" de Francisco de Ávila en comparación con el manuscrito quechua de Huarochirí. Estudio analítico y transcripción comparativa.* (CAS Occasional Publications No. 34). St. Andrews: St. Andrews University. Forthcoming in 2015.

This study examines the relation between two manuscripts from Huarochirí, Peru, written at the beginning of the 17th century. The cleric and extirpator of idolatries Francisco de Ávila is the author of a Spanish treatise, the *Tratado y relacion de los errores, falsos dioses, y otras supersticiones, y ritos diabolicos en que viuian antiguamente los yndios de las prouincias de Huaracheri, Mama, y Chaclla ...*, whilst the Quechua texts were created by anonymous indigenous authors.* Both describe aspects of Andean religion through myths and rituals. This book centres on the first seven chapters which both manuscripts share and wants to reanimate the long-standing debate about their interconnection and mutual influence. It begins with a brief examination of the manuscript volume held in the Spanish National Library which includes both texts. In the second part I argue that both texts were written on the basis of a now lost 'text X'. Finally I analyse how both tell the same myths, but give the reader completely different messages: in terms of the author's diction and comments the Spanish text reflects the Christian cleric's point of view that discusses and refutes the indigenous faith, whereas the Quechua texts present Andean traditions which are in terms of content and style based on ancient and colonial knowledge. The book includes an analytical transcription of both documents (to chapters 7) which illustrates and comments the differences and similarities of both texts.

* There are several good translations of the Quechua text (e.g., in English, *The Huarochirí Manuscript. A Testament of Ancient and Colonial Andean Religion* [ca. 1608]. Translation from the Quechua by Frank Salomon and George L. Urioste. Annotations and introductory essay by Frank Salomon. Transcription by George L. Urioste. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991.) as well as many studies on language and content (e.g. Sabine Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz: *Die Stimmen von Huarochirí: Indianische Quechua-Überlieferungen aus der Kolonialzeit zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit – eine Analyse ihres Diskurses*. [The Voices of Huarochirí: Indigenous Quechua Traditions from the Colonial Period between Orality and Literacy – A Discourse Analysis.] (Bonner Amerikanistische Studien / Estudios Americanistas de Bonn / Bonn Americanist Studies BAS 39.) CD-ROM, Aachen: Shaker Verlag 2003. Also: <http://hss.ulb.uni-bonn.de/2003/0253/0253.htm>. Paperback edition 2007.

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