



The Lienzo of Petlacala: A Pictorial Document from Guerrero, Mexico

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The Lienzo of Petlacala
A Pictorial Document
From Guerrero, Mexico

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and

FERNANDO HORCASITAS

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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In tlacuilo, tlilli, tlapalli, tlilatl, ialuil, toltecatl tlachichihuahqui, tlatecullaliani, tlateculaniani, tlatlilani, tlilpatlac, tlapaltecini tlapallaliani.

In qualli tlacuilo: mimati iolteutl, tlaiolteuiani, moiolnonotzani, tlatlapalpoani, tlatlapalaquiani, tlaceoallotiani, tlacxitiani, t̄laxaiacatiani, tlatzontiani: tlacuiloa, tlatlapalaquia, tlaceoalotia, suchitlacuiloa, tlasuchiicuiloa, toltecati.

The scribe: writings, ink are his special skills. He is a craftsman, an artist, a user of charcoal, a drawer with charcoal; a painter who dissolves colors, grinds pigments, uses colors.

The good scribe is honest, circumspect, far-sighted, pensive; a judge of colors, an applier of the colors, who makes shadows, forms feet, face, hair. He paints, applies colors, draws gardens, paints flowers, creates works of art.

Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, Book X, page 28.

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PREFACE

In recent years a number of documents have been published from the State of Guerrero, Mexico dealing with the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries of Spanish colonial rule in that region. These include the *Codex Azoyú* (Toscano 1943), the *Lienzos de Chiepetlán* (Galarza 1972), and the *Lienzo de Totomixtlahuaca* (Condumex 1974). They have been welcomed as contributions to the sparse literature on the southeastern part of the State of Guerrero, one of the least studied and most enigmatic regions in the Americas. Now we add to this small but important collection of colonial manuscripts a new document entitled the *Lienzo of Petlacala*.* Besides dealing with the usual subjects of similar Mesoamerican documents, such as migration and land boundaries, the *Lienzo of Petlacala* has additional contemporary aspects heretofore unknown in Mexico and Central America. These, we hope, will lend new interpretations to the function of indigenous pictorial documents from Mesoamerica.

The *Lienzo of Petlacala* was discovered when, in the spring of 1972, I was obliged to spend several days in the market town of Tlapa, Guerrero, waiting for flying conditions to improve before going into the Tlapanec Indian community of Tlacoapa, where I was conducting ethnographic research. While in Tlapa, I heard of the existence of a very old painting, glossed in Nahuatl and depicting the history of the community of Petlacala, Guerrero. My source of information referred to the document as a "codex." Being familiar with Barlow's report (1949) on ancient documents from nearby Chiepetlán and other valuable early colonial documents from Tlapa such as the *Codex Azoyú* and the *Lienzo de Tlapa* (Toscano 1943), I became excited over the prospect of uncovering yet another document from the area and therefore lost no time making arrangements to visit Petlacala.

I had been told that the document was in the possession of a local painter who was busy making another copy. Luckily, I located the artist, Agustín López Recéndez, and found him most helpful. The document, he told me, was not in his hands but in the possession of a village elder. A child dispatched to bring the document to the artist's home, arrived five minutes later and unrolled the painting before me. My initial response was one of disappointment, for what I saw was not an ancient document but a copy which appeared to be 20 or 30 years old. When questioned about this, the artist stated that it was indeed a copy made in 1953, and that the original

* The word *lienzo* is translated as cotton or linen cloth or canvas. Among ethnohistorians, however, it is used to refer to a single sheet of cloth decorated or inscribed in Indian pictorial fashion.

was in shreds and currently in the possession of the *comisario* (village commissioner) of Petlacala, who, unfortunately was out of town at that time. Since no one else could show me the earlier document, I measured, photographed, and carefully examined the copy. I returned that evening to Tlapa and because of lack of time and finances, I was unable to return to Petlacala during that field session.

Three years passed without devoting attention or time to the *Lienzo of Petlacala*. Finally, in the spring of 1975, prints of the document were made and sent to Fernando Horcasitas, of the Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas of the National University of Mexico, for his examination and appraisal. This publication is the result of his and my subsequent collaboration.

More information was needed from the area of Petlacala and we decided that the earlier document must be located and examined before any definitive judgments could be rendered. In June 1976, I returned to Petlacala and was able to locate the older document without any trouble. It was in the possession of the local *huehue* (shaman). This document, though in a state of severe decomposition, further added to the value of the copy located in 1972.

Finally, in the spring of 1979, I returned again to Petlacala and observed first hand the use of this document in ceremonial context.

* * * *

Several people helped us in this project and we wish to acknowledge their assistance. First, we thank Mandy Parsons who skillfully aided in the discovery and photography of the 1953 document located in 1972. She was also helpful in collection of data related to its ceremonial use.

We also thank Petlacala's artist, Agustín López Recéndez, first for having the forethought to preserve the town's ancient history for future generations, and second for assisting us in the unraveling of a portion of that history. We also extend thanks to many other residents of Petlacala for their cooperation during our visits to their community.

Clear understanding of a document as complex as the *Lienzo of Petlacala* is not achieved without consultations with other scholars who have also labored with the problems of the anthropology of Mesoamerica. To Joaquín Galarza of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, among others, we owe a large debt of gratitude. He provided us with ideas which we needed to place our study into its proper perspective vis à vis other ethnohistorical materials from the Tlapa region. We are also indebted to him for valuable suggestions concerning the pictography, particularly the prehispanic glyphs located on the outer border.

We would like to express our gratitude to Andrés Candelaria, Arturo Massuttier and Keith Adams for the excellent maps and diagrams they drew for this publication.

Finally, we wish to thank those who have provided financial support over the past few years. Research in 1972, the year the Lienzo surfaced, was supported by grants from the National Geographic Society and the

National Science Foundation. Research during 1978–1979 was sponsored by a fellowship from the Fulbright-Hayes program and a grant from the American Philosophical Society.

* * * *

Special mention must be made of my co-author Fernando Horcasitas who died on 28 September 1980 after a long illness. Born in Los Angeles, California, in 1928, he moved to Mexico in his teens, where he studied at the National University, the National School of Anthropology (Mexico City), and the University of the Americas, where he received a master's degree in anthropology (*cum laude*) in 1953. He taught anthropology at the University of the Americas and later was ethnologist at the Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas of the National University of Mexico. Among his most important books are: *De Porfirio Díaz a Zapata: Memoria náhuatl de Milpa Alta* (UNAM, 1968); *El teatro náhuatl* (UNAM, 1974); and *Los cuentos en náhuatl de doña Luz Jiménez* (UNAM, 1979). With Doris Heyden he translated and edited fray Diego Durán's *The Aztecs: the History of the Indies of New Spain* (Orion Press, 1964), and *Book of the Gods and Rites of the Ancient Calendar* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1971). From 1952 until the time of his death he was editor of *Tlalocan*.

Those of us who were his friends, colleagues, and students will always cherish his generosity, intelligence, and wonderful sense of humor. We will miss Fernando Horcasitas but indeed we were all made richer by the time he was with us.

Fall, 1980

Marion Oettinger, Jr.
University of North Carolina

I. INTRODUCTION

SETTING

The general area in which the *Lienzo of Petlacala* was found is the southeastern portion of the State of Guerrero not far from the Oaxaca/Guerrero border (See Map 1). Tlapa, a mestizo market town, serves as the core for the region's political and economic activity. The region is located in the Sierra Madre del Sur with altitudes climbing from 1,000 meters to over 3,000 meters above sea level in some places. Such great verticality produces a wide range of ecological variation and climate. Due primarily to deforestation and years of unabated soil erosion, however, the region is semi-arid and barren in appearance and is somewhat depressing when compared to other areas in Mexico where lush foliage is more abundant.

A mountainous setting is also one of the principal factors for the area's relatively high degree of isolation. Tlapa, for example, was linked to the outside world by a dirt road just 17 years ago, in 1965. Today, the Tlapa bound bus which starts in Chilpancingo, Guerrero's capital city, takes six hours in good weather. During the rainy season (May to October) the trip is longer if the condition of the road permits travel at all. Regardless of the weather, the Chilpancingo-Tlapa road, with its eternity of curves and unexpected surprises, is a thrill recommended only for those with a strong stomach and even stronger nerves.

Throughout this mountainous region there are several hundred small peasant communities, the inhabitants of which are primarily Indians whose ancestors arrived in the region centuries ago. To the north and west of Tlapa most of the population speak Nahuatl; Petlacala belongs to this group. To the south and extending to an area just above the Costa Chica are located Tlapanec speakers, descendants of people who once inhabited Tlapa, their prehispanic capital. Mixtec speakers are generally located to the south and east of Tlapa and extend into the highlands of Oaxaca. As is evident, the area around Tlapa is linguistically heterogeneous and this can best be seen at Sunday markets and especially during saints' day festivals when one frequently hears four or five languages being spoken.

Unfortunately, very few ethnographic studies have been conducted in the area. Danièle Dehouve has recently published a monograph on the Nahuatl speaking community of Xalpatlahuac (1976a) which provides valuable historical, political, religious, and economic data on the region. *The Voice of the Neighbors* (Oettinger 1974), is the only thorough ethnographic description of the Tlapanecs who inhabit the area. To our knowledge, no



MAP 1

good ethnographic account exists of the Mixtec speaking portion of the area but remarks on this group can be found in Maurilio Muñoz's broad overview of the entire region (1963).

Also unfortunate is the dearth of archaeological data from the region. Texmelincan, an archaeological site located to the southwest of Tlapa, was investigated by Noguera (1933) but yielded only preliminary data, most of which was not published. The only other archaeological report from the area is that concerning the extensive debate surrounding the discovery of a Teotihuacan-type mask encrusted with jade and turquoise from the Tlapanec community of Malinaltepec (Castillo Ledón 1922). In spite of this archaeological void numerous reports of prehispanic ruins and the abundance of surface archaeological materials suggest that the area's importance is of considerable antiquity.

HISTORY OF THE TLAPA REGION

The history of the area is poorly known up to the rule of the Aztec sovereign Ahuitzotl (1486-1502) who conquered the province of Tlapa in the early part of his reign (*Codex Mendoza* 1925). A number of small states—

Mixtec, Tlapanec and Nahuatl—flourished and were still flourishing at the moment of the Spanish conquest. Some paid tribute to the Aztec capital; others were independent or semi-independent. The publication of this document attempts to clarify a part of this period in prehispanic history.

According to *The Extent of the Empire of the Culhua Mexica* (Barlow 1949), in 1519 the province of Tlapa contained 18 tributary towns; Acuitlapa, Chiepetlán, Malinaltepec, Tetenanco, Tlapa, Totomixtlahuaca, Ychcateopa, Acocozpa, Ahuacatla, Amaxac, Huitzannola, Ocoapan, Xocotla, Yualan, Ayutla, Cintla, Copalitech, and Tototepec. Petlacala is not included in this list of tributaries but we may assume, due to its geographic position, that it was a component part of the Empire, subject directly to the town of Tlapa. Its absence from the tribute lists may be due to its minor role in the economic structure of the province.

In 1519 the component tribute of the province of Tlapa consisted of bundles of cotton mantles and women's blouses, small red-striped mantles, large mantles, warrior costumes with shields, strips of gold, bowls of gold dust, vessels for drinking chocolate called *tecomates*, turkey, honey, pots, loads of wax, and personal services. This tribute was annual, semiannual, and quarterly.

According to Gerhard's survey (1972: 321–324) the Aztec garrisons in the province capitulated to the Spaniards at an early date—in 1521 or 1522. Cortés set aside Tlapa and its dependencies for himself, but lost them in 1525 when they were distributed among other individuals as *encomiendas*. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Petlacala probably paid tribute and services to a number of *encomenderos* though it undoubtedly retained its lands as town property.

Since early times the entire area fell within the diocese of Tlaxcala-Puebla. The Augustinian Order established a number of missions prior to 1570 but these were gradually secularized during the eighteenth century. Petlacala was never the seat of an Augustinian monastery, nor has it ever been a separate parish.

In 1746, Villaseñor y Sánchez (1746: 328–340), Royal Cosmographer of New Spain, described the province or *Alcaldía mayor* of Tlapa in the following manner. The capital, Tlapa, was a large town inhabited by 181 Mixtec, 150 Mestizo and Mulatto, and six Spanish (or Creole) families. It was a *República de Indios* with its own native ruler. The parish of Tlapa was still administered by Augustinian friars.

Subject politically to Tlapa were some 110 towns and villages, among them Petlacala. The brief entry on this village is worth translating:

“Leaving this village (Temalazingo) toward the northeast at a distance of three leagues, is that of Petlacala with fifty-six Indian families. . . .” (Villaseñor y Sánchez, 1746: 330) It belonged to the parish of Olinalá, administered by a Tlapanec-speaking secular priest. Petlacala, however, inhabited by approximately 250 natives, was presumably of Nahuatl speech as it is today. No mention is made in 1746 of any Spanish-speaking population.

The products of the province of Tlapa in the middle of the eighteenth century were corn, *chía*, beans, rice, other seeds, fine painted gourds used in trade, fruit, salt, cotton cloth, sugar manufactured in cakes, cochineal and silver, though the mines were not in the area of Petlacala.

During the reign of Charles III (1759–1788) New Spain was divided politically into *intendencias*. Tlapa belonged to the *intendencia* of Puebla from 1787 to 1792 and thereafter to that of Mexico.

With the establishment of the Mexican federal republic in 1824, Tlapa and its subjects became part of the State of Puebla, but in 1847 they were incorporated into the newly created State of Guerrero, to which they have belonged ever since. In 1863 the area was separated ecclesiastically from the diocese of Puebla and today forms part of the bishopric of Chilapa, Guerrero.

The period of the Mexican Revolution of 1910–1920 brought chaos, death, and destruction to the Tlapa region as it did to many other parts of southern Mexico. Although the region held mixed allegiances, according to Dehouve (1976a), the general population of Tlapa opposed the troops of Emiliano Zapata and in 1912 successfully resisted an attack on the town by Zapatista forces. Later, however, the forces of Zapata entered the town and did considerable destruction to municipal and private property. During this period, many of the archives in the villages and towns surrounding Tlapa were burned. Malinaltepec, for example, had its archives burned but fortunately managed to hide some of its ancient land documents in the church where they escaped destruction. The community of Tlacoapa lost practically all of its pre-Revolution documents for the same reason and today anyone wishing to work with the history of that community must endure the frustration of only finding municipal materials going back as far as the early 1920s (Oettinger 1974).

Chilapa, the ecclesiastical center of the region, had its archives burned not once but twice in revolutionary fires, leaving only scant traces of information dealing with events prior to the twentieth century.

The burning of local and regional archives by Zapatista forces in the Tlapa region has probably been one of the greatest impediments to our reconstruction of the early history of that area. Although we are not certain, the community of Petlacala most likely did not remain untouched by the events of those turbulent years. We are thankful, however, that the Lienzo of Petlacala was not among the documents destroyed during the Revolution.

THE COMMUNITY OF PETLACALA

The community of Petlacala (Place of the Mat Houses)* is located approximately 50 kilometers (two hours by bus) west of the town of Tlapa, the municipal capital and about 5 kilometers north of the road which runs

* Thelma Sullivan (personal communication) suggests that the proper translation for 'Petlacala' might be 'Place where the tribute is stored'. In light of the pictography of the central panel, this interpretation is indeed tempting.

between Tlapa and Chilpancingo, the state capital. Its exact location is 98°-4' west of Greenwich. Direct access to Petlacala by motor vehicle is possible only by truck from Tlapa. During the rainy season access to the community is made more difficult by impaired roads and landslides. Politically, Petlacala is a *comisaría* and is headed by a commission of elected officials led by a *comisario*.

Petlacala is characterized by a compact settlement pattern with the plaza representing the core of the community. Around the plaza are located a primary school, local government buildings, several small stores selling such things as candles and cigarettes, and the ruins of an eighteenth-century church. A more recent church stands on a hill high above the plaza in an imposing fashion. Virtually all of the structures in the town are adobe with Spanish tile roofs and *jacales* (thatched huts) are to be found only on the outskirts of the village.

The river which skirts the village is the source of both good and bad for the people of Petlacala. The river has been the source of valuable irrigation water during the dry season for as long as the village has existed. Occasionally, however, it swells to flood proportions and overflows its banks bringing tremendous damage to dwellings and crops.

Like many villages in this region of Mexico, Petlacala's lands are communal with title vested in the name of the community rather than in individuals. Consequently, land can be neither bought nor sold and laws of use are determined by tradition. Petlacala's approximately 2,695 hectares of land presently border the communal lands of Chiepetepec, Axoxuca, Coachimalco, and Zacapexco. Maintenance of these communal land boundaries is a constant preoccupation of the people of Petlacala and recent years have been marked by numerous land litigations at both state and federal levels.

The great majority of Petlacala's inhabitants are farmers who grow corn, beans, and squash as staple crops. They produce very little surplus and therefore, have little to export. Any small surplus is usually taken to Tlapa, the nearest market town, where it is sold or exchanged for such items as salt, machine-made cloth or other products not made by the people of Petlacala.

Petlacala's 1,000 inhabitants speak the Nahuatl language and refer to themselves as *mexicanos*, set apart from neighboring communities of *mixtecos* and *tlapanecos*. Although Nahuatl is the first language of the home, Spanish is gaining in importance and prestige and many people (especially the younger members of the community) are bilingual.

At first glance, Petlacalans appear to be more mestizo in culture than Indian. Nominally, all Petlacalans are Catholic and they celebrate various Christian feast days, especially that of San Pedro, their patron saint (29 June). However, closer examination will reveal that the spiritual and cultural life of the community are greatly influenced by traditional, Indian forces. The Indian language is still used by the majority of the people to conduct their daily lives; traditional farming patterns are still observed, and

prehispanic deities, particularly Tlaloc (the rain god), whose feast day is 25 April, are highly revered and respected. In fact, some families maintain domestic altars graced by the presence of both pagan and Christian images. Some Petlacalans feel that the traditional gods have been good to them in the past and deem it unwise to risk their anger by discarding these images in favor of Christian saints. Instead, they keep both, often side by side. The absence of a resident Catholic priest allows for the continuation of this practice.

In contrast to many other Nahuatl speaking groups who are ignorant of the Aztec nation and its position in history, Petlacalans are proud of their heritage and realize that they speak the language of the once powerful Aztecs. Unlike many Mesoamerican indigenous groups, some effort is made to retain their indigenous culture.

THE ARTIST/COPYIST

If any one person could be considered central to the unraveling of the Lienzo's history, it is Agustín López Recéndez, the local artist who had the forethought and artistic skill to make the 1953 copy from the badly damaged original.

Born in 1930 in Nahuatl-speaking Chiepetepec, a town located several kilometers to the west of Petlacala, sharing its western border of communal lands, Agustín's artistic skills began to show early in his life. As a young boy he painted with whatever materials he could find and sketched pictures of people, buildings, and local flora. Later, his unusual abilities caught the eye of the Catholic priest in the area who asked that he make a copy of the original document which was used to legitimize the title of the community's lands. Agustín happily agreed and made the facsimile copy which we are using as the core of this study. He subsequently made an additional copy which he sold to a merchant in Acapulco.

Encouraged by the same priest, Agustín went to Acapulco in 1955 and took art classes in the local school of fine arts. During his two years there he learned color and art theory from Guillermo Morroyo, a local art instructor. Agustín found the hectic pace in Acapulco difficult. Short on money, exhausted, his nerves frayed, he left Acapulco and returned to Petlacala in the early 1960s.

Agustín, a complex man who often speaks of things not normally recorded in peasant villages, waxes eloquent for hours about the importance of doing what one's soul dictates, and of contributing to the world those talents made possible through God's generosity—in his case artistic ability. He also feels very strongly about the need to preserve the history and culture of the community and strongly imparts these notions to the younger generation of the village.

Today Agustín buys what materials he can afford, paints and occasionally sells his work in Mexico City and Acapulco. Several years ago he was commissioned to design and paint a seal for the town of Tlapa and the

results of the endeavor can be seen emblazoned on walls of the city hall and on the side of the town's two Volkswagens. When the wife of President López Portillo visited Tlapa, where her parents resided for some years, Agustín was so moved by the occasion that he painted her portrait and delivered it to her in Mexico City.

When asked about his work on the Petlacala Lienzo, Agustín insists that he took great pains to see that the copy was true to the original. His knowledge of other codices and early colonial documents from Mesoamerica is scant. Apparently his only acquaintance with similar documents was a brief glance at the *Lienzos of Chiepetlán*, sixteenth-century documents from a neighboring village published by Galarza (1972).

We owe a great deal to this free-hearted man. He was always anxious to assist in the interpretation of the text as well as the iconography. While we sometimes disagreed with his ideas, they assisted us in unraveling the meaning of the Petlacala piece.

MATERIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1953 DOCUMENT

The 1953 *Lienzo of Petlacala* is a rectangular shaped document 78 centimeters wide by 99 centimeters long (See Figure 1). Considering the rough treatment it has been subject to over the past 25 years, the Lienzo is in remarkably good condition. This pictorial manuscript is made of commercially manufactured cotton canvas covered with brightly colored oil paints.

For purposes of description, the present document can be divided into three basic sections: the outer border (I), the inner border (II), and the central panel (III).

The outer border is a grayish colored section, 15 centimeters wide, on which is written a sequential narration in the Nahuatl language. The story (present in three variants) starts at the bottom left of the document and moves clockwise, the first variant ending mid-way at the top (about one o'clock). The second variant begins and continues to the bottom of the document (about 5 o'clock) where the third variant starts. This last section ends where it joins the beginning of the 1st variant. The whole narration is divided into 57 short paragraphs or squares which are separated from each other by lines which run perpendicular to the edge of the document.

The inner border, also 15 centimeters wide, is beige in color and is a mixture of geographical representations and Nahuatl script. As with the outer border, the inner is divided into squares, separated from each other by lines. Organization of the inner border is in accordance with the directions of the compass—north is at the top, east is to the right, south is at the bottom, and west is on the left—each standing for a direction of the lands of the community of Petlacala.

The central panel is by far the most spectacular section of the document, and is clearly the focal point of the piece. Its dimensions are 53 centimeters × 68 centimeters. It has a background of a brownish color on which are painted human and non-human designs. Most prominent in the panel is the figure of a male (1) 48 centimeters tall, dressed in a dark blue cape, knee-length breeches and stockings, black buckled slippers, and a white

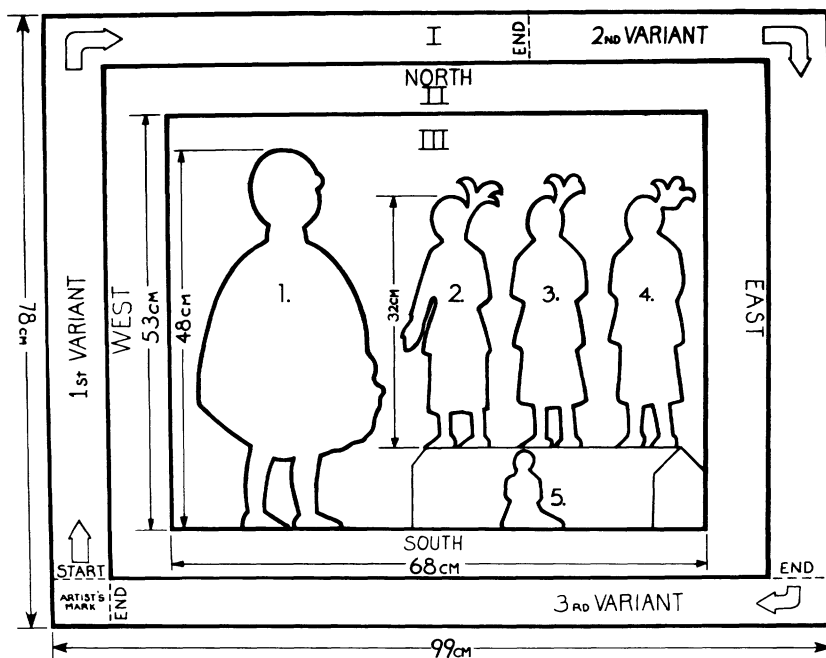


FIG. 1

wig. At the foot of this dominant figure rests a crown with a Christian cross on top. The right hand of this individual touches his chest while his left hand rests on his sword.

Three male figures (2, 3, 4) stand on top of a one-storied structure at the bottom right corner of the central panel facing figure 1. They are approximately 32 centimeters tall and are dressed in pink skirts, light blue scarves, dark blue shirts, plumed headdresses and sandals. Figures 3 and 4 stand with their hands crossed on their chests in a respectful pose. Figure 2, slightly larger than the other two figures, has his left hand on his chest while his right hand is loosely extended downward with palm facing outward as if addressing someone.

In front of the one-storied structure kneels a fifth figure, apparently a female, dressed in a pink skirt and blue shoulder wrap. Figure 5, who faces the viewer, has her hands and arms crossed on her chest in a position of reverence.

The final important component of the central panel is a building apparently of one story, with a gray stuccoed facade and arched doorway. The side of this structure is open and appears to be a series of partitioned shelves with a variety of objects resting in them.

THE EARLIER DOCUMENT

The document from which the 1953 or present copy was made was discovered in August 1976. At that time it was in the possession of Petlacala's head shaman and was carefully guarded on his household altar with family

memorabilia and religious images of varying shapes and sizes. It was wrapped in soiled cotton cloth and stored in a *tenate* (woven palm basket)† with two stone religious figurines, one apparently of pre-Columbian origin and one made within the past twenty years. As mentioned before, non-Christian idols are not unusual in Petlacala and their variety in size and shape is seemingly infinite. An idol's age has no particular influence on its value and effectiveness and we discovered that Petlacalans replace old, damaged pagan figurines with newly purchased tourist idols from towns such as Iguala and Taxco just as they would replace a tattered and decaying saint's image with a new one. Furthermore, evidence suggests that merchants in Tlapa sell recently manufactured idols to Indians who use them in contemporary religious rituals.

The dimensions of this earlier document are 77 × 90 centimeters, somewhat smaller than the 1953 copy. Materials used in this painting appear to be similar to those used in the 1953 copy. The canvas is made of tightly woven cotton cloth, considerably finer in quality than that of the more recent lienzo.

The overall condition of this document is extremely poor with most sections erased beyond recognition. Suffering the most damage was the outer border, the contents of which are almost completely beyond identification. Much of the inner border and the central panel are intact, at least enough to demonstrate that the 1953 copy was a real attempt to duplicate the original.

The older document's poor condition occurred when, in the early 1950s, a section was accidentally burned after a candle fell onto it from the unsteady hands of an intoxicated villager. Since the document is used in religious ritual which is always marked by heavy drinking, the likelihood of such unfortunate accidents is great. The 1950s' accident may have been a blessing in disguise since it prompted the manufacture of the 1953 copy.

After the copy had been made, the earlier lienzo was again burned, this time severely. Most of the outer border was destroyed. The catastrophe which caused the most serious damage to this ancient record, however, was the summer flood of 1975. On 6 August of that year, a series of torrential rains caused the local river to overflow its banks and flood a rather substantial portion of the community. Because the house of the shaman was located next to the river at that time, it was completely destroyed and its contents washed downstream where most were never recovered. Fortunately the basket holding the sacred documents and idols of the community was deposited only a short distance downstream from the site of the shaman's house. Although the mud and water damage was great, the document was not lost and remains as an example against which we can

† Apparently this *tenate* is functionally the same as the *caja real* (royal coffer) used in other parts of Mesoamerica to store special objects. Oakes (1969: 66) reports that among one group of Mam Indians of Highland Guatemala, a *caja real* contained such sacred items as "old deeds and other papers and a long roll of skin with colored figures on it."



PLATE 2

measure the later copy. The people of Petlacala say that its preservation was a miracle. Today, the charred fragments of this older document are seldom brought out of the cloth bag. They are, however, always taken to the important rituals and rest in the palm basket alongside the 1953 copy now being used in their place (See Plate 2).

Since the authenticity of the 1953 copy depended to some extent on its similarity to the earlier document, a comparison was made by the authors of this monograph. In spite of its extremely poor condition, one can quickly identify in this earlier document the same personages shown in the 1953 version. Their attire is identical and their spatial arrangement in the rest of the pictorial environment is the same.

The comparison of the texts proved to be considerably more difficult. Though the outer border was in too poor a condition to offer a basis for comparison with the 1953 copy, a few sections of the inner border were examined with a magnifying glass and a paleography was made.

The following texts are a sample of the two versions. They correspond to Site XVII in the text of the inner border. Dots indicate that letters or words are illegible.

<u>Burned Fragment</u>	<u>1953 Copy</u>
th lan chiauitl	Tulintlan chahuatl
ome momoztle ce	ome momoztle ce
tenanco ce petlaca	tenanco ce petlacala
la motla yzt	otiomotlaixtenque oti
tlecoque oticanque	tlecoque oticanque
tlatentle oti	tlatentle otipanqui
zque	zque

The comparison shows that the variations are slight, the most important being the term *chahuatl* in the more recent version, spelled *chiauitl* in the burned document. The pronunciation of the word by the average modern reader would conform to either spelling.

The other fragments which were examined confirm our opinion that the modern artist was faithful to the older text.

The handwriting preserved on the mutilated portions does not seem to be very old; certainly it is not contemporaneous to the epoch of the scene depicted in the central panel. Our earlier burned document, therefore, is probably another copy in the series, made perhaps in the nineteenth century.

In summary, the 1953 copy is relatively well-preserved, and appears to be an accurate facsimile of the earlier version. We have enough materials to place this document in a general "school of art," and identify its period of manufacture by way of comparison with other documents from southern Mexico, for example, the *Mapa de Chalchihuapan* (Castro Morales 1969) from the State of Puebla. The Lienzo is a document which is an integral part of contemporary Petlacala life and ritual, and this provides us with a contextual frame in which to work. Analysis of this document involved essentially five phases: discovery, photo recording and description, paleography, translation, and interpretation.

In chapter II the outer border, describing the migration of this people to the present site of Petlacala is discussed. Following an introduction and discussion of the historical setting for this migration, the entire Nahuatl text is presented and an English translation appended.

The inner border dealing with the communal land boundaries of Petlacala is described in chapter III. Each site of demarcation is presented in both Nahuatl and English, and, where necessary, pictographic representations are explained.

The central panel is described and analyzed in chapter IV. Following a discussion of the five personages present in the central panel, the tribute house and the supporting prehispanic glyphs of the outer border are analyzed.

The next chapter discusses the various functions of the *Lienzo of Petlacala* in contemporary Petlacalan society.

II. THE OUTER BORDER: THE MIGRATION

As already noted the Lienzo is divided into three sections: the outer border, the inner border, and the central panel. The outer border, dealing exclusively with a historical migration, has three variant texts (See Plate 3). There are also some Aztec glyphs, clearly in a pre-European style. These are in no way connected with the story of the migration. Since they apparently deal with tribute paid by Petlacala, they will be discussed in the chapter on the central panel.

NATIVE WRITING AND THE OUTER BORDER

Mesoamerica was the land of written books, a distinction shared by no other part of the pre-Columbian New World. One of the culture complexes of Mesoamerica was a preoccupation for recording time, historical events, fiscal accounts such as tribute lists, and the justification and legitimization of conquest and power through glyphic texts in books. The *Lienzo of Petlacala* has to some extent all these functions. The historical chronicles, sometimes known to us only through accounts recorded in the Latin alphabet after the Spanish conquest, go back for the Central plateau to events around the ninth century after Christ. Chronicles in the Mixtec and Maya areas, however, refer to earlier periods.

In large areas of Mesoamerica, however, our knowledge of history before the coming of the Europeans is sparse. One of these is the State of Guerrero. Its archaeology, ethnography and ancient history are still to be written and at present it remains one of the least known regions in the Western Hemisphere. Within the area, though, flourished high cultures, large towns, fine arts, and the recording of data in painted books.

The outer border of this lienzo, though brief, fills in one of the gaps in the indigenous history of Guerrero. Although the events are not registered in the pre-Columbian system of writing, they are redacted in an aboriginal language—Nahuatl. A hypothetical original document, in native writing, dating back to the times of the first European contacts, possibly bore the dates of the migration and the place names of the stops en route.

The story told in this document is that of a leader named Popochtecatl who, vexed by the demands of the ruling groups in Mexico Tenochtitlan, departed from the Valley of Mexico, taking with him his wife and an unspecified number of followers. The migrants spent almost thirty years in the lake area of the southern part of the valley, not wandering farther than some 50 or 60 kilometers from the Aztec capital (See Map 2). Much of this early stage of the migration must have been accomplished by water. No details are given regarding their manner of survival, but there is a

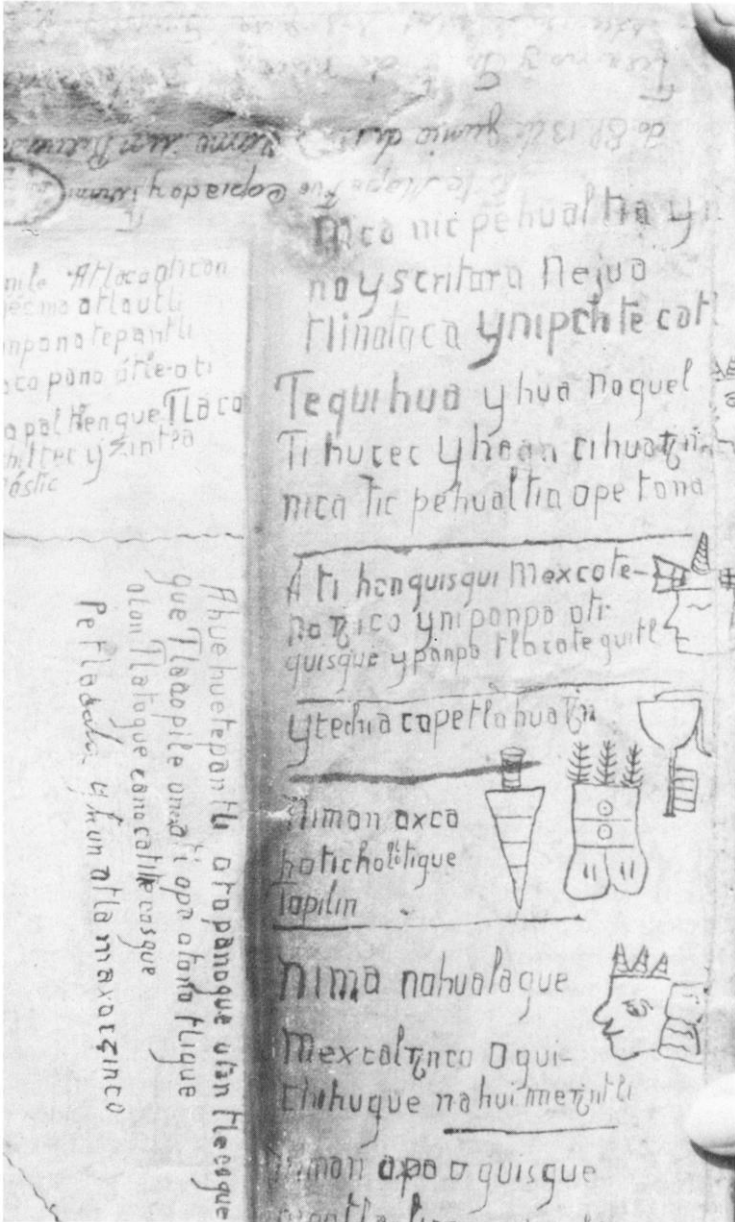
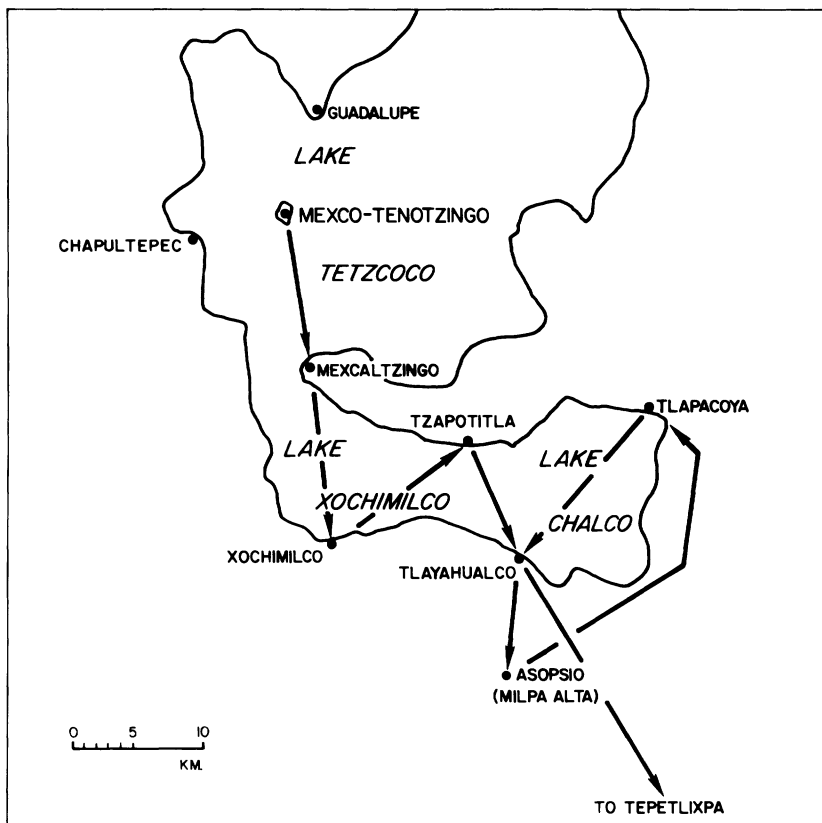


PLATE 3

vague reference to a conflict with enemies. Eventually the migrants left the valley toward the southeast, and went into the hot country lying today in the eastern part of the State of Morelos, where they spent over twenty years. Suddenly their wanderings, for unexplained reasons, led them far to the west, to Pilcaya in what is now Guerrero. After this, they directed

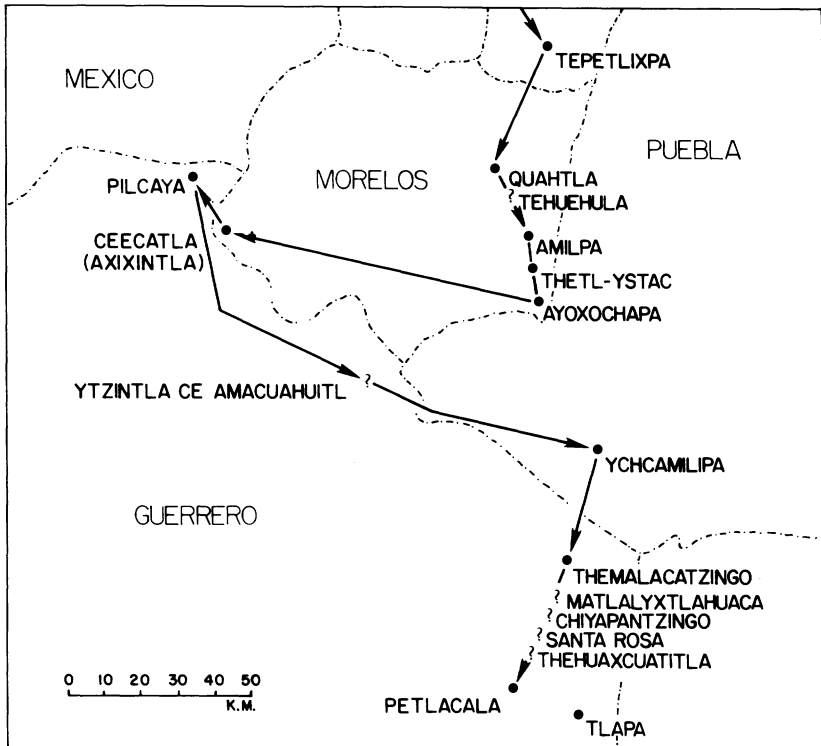


MAP 2

their steps to the southeast and following a number of pauses, founded Petlacala where it is today (See Map 3).

The route, extremely devious, covered at least 800 kilometers, and according to the text of one of the variants the journey took some 64 years. It seems unlikely that Popochtcatl or any of the original adult members lived to see the end of the migration, but it is implicit that the account was remembered and transmitted through succeeding generations.

The story is told in pithy sentences and is limited almost totally to the recording of the names of the stopovers and the time spent in each place. It is likely, however, that the terse Nahuatl sentences preserved in the document are but a skeleton of what was once a full-fledged epic. The heroic wanderings and tribulations of Mesoamerican nations or tribes seeking their own promised land formed an important part of the oral and written literature of many native groups. To cite but a few classic examples, fragments of highly poetic migration epics have survived in writing for the Aztecs, as told, among others, by Durán and Alvarado Tezozomoc; for the Tlaxcalans, as narrated by Muñoz Camargo; for the Quiché, in the latter part of the *Popol Vuh*; for the Tarascans in the *Relación de Michoacán*. A



MAP 3

glimmer of what was perhaps the original and more human element in the story of Petlacala may be found in Episode XXIV in which the wretched state of the pilgrims is underscored—going round and round, wandering about like beggars, in dire need, with their feet sorely bruised. Predictably this dramatic climax of suffering and longing for a home is placed in the Nahuatl text only a month and a half before their arrival in the promised land, Petlacala.

TEMPORAL PLACEMENT

The date of the migration is not easy to determine, for the document does not contain a single date, either in the ancient indigenous computation or in the Christian calendar. A number of factors, however, aid us in setting an approximate one. First, we are told that the wanderers departed from Mexco Tenotzinco (Mexico Tenochtitlan) and the usually accepted date for the founding of this city is 1325. Consequently we are dealing with a period which does not lie outside of the last two centuries of native rule in Mexico (1325–1521).

Second, we are fortunate, for the sake of comparison, in having at our disposal historical materials from no less than five towns in the area of

Petlacala: Chiepetlán, Tzaqualtipan, Tenanco, Ocotequila, and Xalatzala. All have the following traits in common: (a) the five towns are situated less than 30 kilometers from Petlacala; (b) all are written in Nahuatl; (c) the documents pertaining to two of them (Ocotequila and Xalatzala) are written in Nahuatl stylistically similar, if not identical, to that of the Petlacala document; (d) the migrations which led to the founding of the five towns began in the Highlands, four in the Valley of Mexico and one in the Valley of Toluca; (e) all of the histories refer to a relatively short period, the second half of the fifteenth century and the first twenty years of the sixteenth.

It will be useful, for the sake of a comparison, to present a synopsis of the history of each of the five settlements.

Chiepetlán. The pre-Columbian history of this city-state has been studied by Galarza in his monumental *Lienzos de Chiepetlán* (1972). According to Galarza's reconstruction of the historical *Lienzo II*, the original founders first lived in a place called Moyotlalia, near Mexico Tenochtitlan. Moyotlalia had been founded by their ancestors, the Chichimecs. The population grew too large, however; too many children were born and there was a famine. So, carrying their bows and arrows, the pilgrims departed in a southerly direction under the leadership of the chieftain Michitzin. They stopped at a number of places and toward the end of the journey entered the Tlapanec zone, where the local rulers allowed them to settle. No precise dates are mentioned and the time spent on the migration was at least 13 years.

Joseph Mariano Hurtado de Mendoza, parish priest of Chiepetlán in 1777, wrote a detailed account of the town (published in Galarza 1972: 233-248) which presents a different version of the migration. Based on an old Indian manuscript, Hurtado de Mendoza tells the following story: The founders of Chiepetlán set out from Xochimilco near Tenochtitlan. They were 45 persons, led by four captains. "They departed from Xochimilco to come settle here, according to the manuscript, because they had to flee from the harassment they suffered due to the hostilities among the cities of Mexico, Cholula and Tlaxcala" (Hurtado de Mendoza 1972: 245). The town was founded in 1490.

Tzaqualtipan. According to Hurtado de Mendoza (1972: 246) the people of Tzacualtipan originally came from Tetzco in the Valley of Mexico. The group, troubled by famines and wars waged by Mexico and its ally Tetzco against Tlaxcala, set out under a leader known as Theocaltzintehuitli and came to rest in Tzaqualtipan in 1474.

Tenanco. The same chronicler of Chiepetlán records that the original settlers of Tenanco came from the city of Mexico. They fled due to "the famine suffered because of the war between that state and its neighbors" (Hurtado de Mendoza 1972: 245). The leader, Coatlzin (*sic*) gathered 30 serfs and 15 companions and set out toward the south. The 15 companions, for reasons which are not clear, took another route and eventually founded a town in Oaxaca. The duration of the migration is not specified. Tenanco was founded in 1500.

Ocotequila. The first of two eighteenth-century copies of older Nahuatl

documents published by Dehouve (1976b: 138–146) describes the departure from Xochimilco of a group of migrants under the leadership of Ocotequiltentli and Ocoxaltentli. No date is given. In the 1755 Spanish translation the name “Montezuma” appears, though it is not clear whether the reference is to Moctezuma Ilhuicamina (1440–1469) or Moctezuma Xocoyotzin (1502–1520). Since the name Ilhuicamina is mentioned in the first rather muddled sentences, the text may indicate an event which occurred toward the middle of the fifteenth century. No reason is given for the departure. Along the route the wanderers presented gifts of slaves, deer, birds and turkeys to the native rulers and in turn were allowed to sow fields of chile and tomatoes. At the end of the story, which is told largely in dialogue form, the immigrants were measured out land in their new habitat—Oco-tequila.

Xalatzala. The second document published by Dehouve (1976b: 146–152) is in Nahuatl and is accompanied by a Spanish translation which is dated 1799. The story is that of a group of people from Mexico and Xochimilco who were in Toluca when they received news that war was raging in the Valley of Mexico and that the famine was such that people were eating their own children. This happened during the reign of the Emperor Moctezuma, but again we are left in doubt as to which of the two Moctezumas is meant. The Mexica and Xochimilca came to an agreement: “Let us go to Tlapa. Let us go see if it is a good place.” Their leader was Itecamolotzin. A series of stopovers are mentioned en route and eventually, having presented gifts to a benefactress, they were given land. Again the story is told largely in dialogue form, and a few Spanish names are used. The wife of Itecamolotzin is called Simona, the benefactress of the emigrants is doña Anna Cortés.

It is possible that the Xalatzala migration started in 1520–1521 at the death of Moctezuma II and the siege of Mexico Tenochtitlan by Cortés, a time of war, famine, and the decimating smallpox epidemic. Dehouve (1976b: 153) calculates the journey to have lasted 18 years. If the refugees left Toluca in 1521 they would have arrived in Xalatzala in 1539, during the reign of Viceroy Mendoza (1535–1550). Several inconsistencies, though, leave the dating of the migration unsolved and suggest a re-casting of an account of events which took place in earlier times.

In order to set a date for the migrations to Petlacala, we have at our disposal (1) the meager evidence within the text itself and (2) the history of the founding of the other five towns. These are similar in content and form to the Petlacala account and suggest a cluster of histories written under the same circumstances to preserve the story of the origins of the groups and legitimize the rights of the communities to their lands.

James Lockhart (personal communication, 1976) suggests that the similarities of these accounts may be due to the possibility that they represent one migration of Nahuatl people who broke up into smaller groups to establish individual communities once they reached the Tlapa region. Hence, they are in essence the same history of one migration told and

modified to meet the desires of each community. According to the view of the present writers there exist three possible epochs for the departure of the emigrants from the Valley of Mexico.

1. 1428–1440. Few periods have been more unstable in the history of the Mexican Highlands than the time of the reign of Itzcoatl (1428–1440). In 1427, after the death of the aged Tezozomoc, ruler of Azcapotzalco, his empire collapsed and Mexico Tenochtitlan and its allies Tetzco and Tlacopan became supreme. Tributary states which had belonged to Azcapotzalco were incorporated under pressure and new conquests were achieved toward the south, especially in the Xochimilco area. A new order was set up for the Valley of Mexico, a readjustment of age-old economic and political patterns. If the emigrants departed from Mexico around 1430 the founding of Petlacala would have occurred around 1494.

2. 1450–1455. As is described in the chronicles, the reign of Moctezuma I or Ilhuicamina (1440–1469) was the period of the consolidation of the Aztec Empire. Numerous wars of conquest were launched in what are now the Federal District and the states Mexico, Morelos, Guerrero, Puebla, Hidalgo, Veracruz, and Oaxaca. Furthermore, the period between 1450 and 1455 is remembered as the time of the great drought. For several years there was no rain; springs and streams dried up; the earth burned and cracked; vegetation withered and when supplies had been exhausted, a mass exodus toward the greener parts of the country half depopulated the Aztec capital. Popocatecatl and his followers could have been among those affected by socioeconomic changes and the drought, setting out on their pilgrimage around 1453 and reaching Petlacala around 1517. Part of their journey would, of course, have led them through territory already occupied by the Aztecs.

3. 1520–1535. This early period in colonial history, up to the establishment of the viceroyalty, was characterized by wars, epidemics, considerable movement to the native population, Spanish expeditions of conquest in several directions, Indian slavery, and political chaos.

If, as the Petlacala document states, the migration lasted 64 years, the founding of the new town would have taken place between 1584 and 1599. This epoch is almost completely inadmissible for the founding of Petlacala. By the middle of the sixteenth century the native peoples of Mesoamerica formed a great mosaic of stable settlements under king, viceroy, local Spanish military and civil officials, encomenderos, native governors and secular and regular clergy. It is difficult to imagine a sizable group of natives on a migration, settling temporarily in a series of well established towns dominated by Spanish and Indian authorities. The famous *relaciones* of the reign of Philip II make this situation clear. As a possible solution to the problem, this epoch is mentioned only as a remote possibility.

In conclusion, since any specific date would be highly arbitrary, the authors believe that Petlacala was founded somewhere between 1490 and the second decade of the sixteenth century. This period is not seriously at variance with the supposed dates of the settling, at the end of similar

migrations, of three neighboring communities: Tzaqualtipan (1474), Chiepetlán (1490) and Tenanco (1500).

THE MIGRATION TEXT

The story of the Petlacala migration is written in the outer border of the Lienzo and is divided into 57 squares separated by black lines, plus an appendix composed in 1953. In this text the same story is told in three variants.

The reason for the presence of the three versions may perhaps be that the outer border was the most deteriorated portion of the document in 1953 when the present copy was made.

The copyist had to work with the half-burned fragments of what may have been a longer text. In order to fill the vacant space, he repeated the text, piecing together almost illegible sentences, guessing at what the original letters had spelled out.

On the other hand, it may have been that these variants represent three accounts of the same event as related to a scribe by three different people. To assure historical accuracy, all accounts, in this case three, were recorded.

In our paleography we will refer to the three versions as the First, Second and Third Variants, containing respectively squares 1 to 24, 25 to 45, and 46 to 57.

The paleography and English translation are organized in the following way. The entire historical section is divided into "Episodes" marked from 1 to 25 in Roman numerals. Each Episode contains one or more variants dealing with the same event. Some events, however, do not appear in all three variants (see, for example, Episode II). On the other hand, other events occur twice or thrice in the same Variant and are included under the same Episode (see, for instance, Episode I). After identifying the variant by the words 'first', 'second' or 'third', the number of the square in which the text is found appears in parentheses.

Paleography

NAHUATL TEXT

Episode I

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First Variant (1). | Nica nicpehualtia yn noyscritora Nejuatli notoca yn ipchtecatl Tequihua yhua noquel Tihucec yhoan cihautzin nica ticpehualtia ope tona |
| Second Variant (48). | Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlatico mexcotenotzinco ompa oticchuque ome xihuitl nocuel cihuito cihuatzin nica ticpehualtia opetona |
| Third Variant (53). | Nica nictlaliya y moyscritora nejuatli notoca nipopchtecatl yhua nocuel tihuice yhuan nosihuatzin nica ticpehualtia opetona otihualquisque mexcotenotzinco |

Episode II

- First Variant (2). Atihonquisqui Mexcotenotzinco yn ipanpa
otiquisque ypanapa tlacatequitl ytech
iacapetlahuatzin
- Third Variant (46). Ytech iacocapetlahuatzin
- Third Variant (49). Otihalquisque mexcotenotzinco ympampa
otiquisque ompan tlacatequitl yncuac
otecuyatlateposylama otechicocapetlahuatzin

Episode III

- First Variant (3). Niman axca otichololtique topilin
- Second Variant (25). Niman axca oticchololtique topilin
- Third Variant (50). Niman axca oticchololtique topilin
- Third Variant (54). Niman axca oticchololtique topilin

Episode IV

- First Variant (4). Niman ohualaque Mexcaltzinco Oquichihuque
nahui metzintli
- Second Variant (26). Niman ohualaque mexcaltzinco Oquichihuque
nahui metztli
- Third Variant (51). Niman ohualaque mexcaltzinco oquichiuque nahui
metztli

Episode V

- First Variant (5). Niman opa oquisque omotlalico xochimilco ompa
oquichihuque matlactli xihuitli yhua ome xihuitl
- Second Variant (27). Niman axca oquisque omotlalico xochimilco ompa
oquichiuque matlactli xihuitl yhuan ome metztli
- Third Variant (47). Niman axca ompa oquisque omotlalico xochimilco
ompa oquichiuque matlacli hun ome

Episode VI

- First Variant (6). Nima onpa oquisque omotlalico santigo tzapotitla
quichihuque chicome metztli
- Second Variant (28). Niman ompa oquisque omotlalico santigo
tzapotitla oquichiuque chicome metztli

Episode VII

- First Variant (7). Nima onpa oquisque omotlalico Tlalyahualco opa
oquichihuque chichnahui metztli
- Second Variant (29). Nima ompa oquisque omotlalico tlalyahualco
ompa oquichiuque chichnahui metztli
- Third Variant (52). Niman ompa oquisque omotlalico tlalyahualco
ompa oquichiuque chinahui metztli

Episode VIII

- First Variant (8). Niman onpa oquisque omotlalico totlalsonatzin asopsio oquichihuque caxtoli xihuitl ypan ome metztl

Episode IX

- First Variant (9). Niman onpa oquisque tlapacoya opa oquichihuque yelli metztl
- Second Variant (30). Nima man ompa oquisque omotllico tlapacoya ompa oquichiuque chicuei xihuitl

Episode X

- First Variant (10). Nima ompa oque + omotlalico Tlalyahualco omoquichihuque yelli metztl
- Second Variant (31). Nima man oquiquisque otimotlalico tlalyahualco ompa oticchiuque yeyi metztl

Episode XI

- First Variant (11). Nima onpa oquique omotlalico Tepetlixpa ompa oquichihuque chicueyi xihuitl
- Second Variant (32). Niman ompa otiquisque otimotlalico thepetlixpa ompa oticchiuque chicuei xihuitl

Episode XII

- First Variant (12). Nima ompa oquisque quauhtla ompa oquichiuque matlactli hua ome xihuitl

Episode XIII

- Second Variant (33). Niman ompa ompa otiquisque otimotlalico tehuehula ompa oticchiuque matli ihuome xihitl

Episode XIV

- First Variant (13). Nima ompa toquisque otimotlalico amilpa ompa oticchiuque ce xihuitl yhuan tlaco
- Second Variant (34). Niman ompa otiquisque otimotlalico amilpa ompa oticchiuque se xihuitl yhuan tlaco

Episode XV

- First Variant (14). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico Thetl-ystac
ompa oticchiuque yelli xihuitl
- Second Variant (35). Niman ompa otiquisque otimotllico thetlystac ompa
oticchiuque yeyi metztli
- Third Variant (55). Nima onpa otiquisque otimotlalico thetlystac ompa
oticchiuque ye met xihuitl

Episode XVI

- First Variant (15). Niman ompa otiquisque otimotlalico ayoxochapa
ompa oticchiuque ce metztli
- Second Variant (36). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico ayoxochapa
ompa oticchiuque se metztli

Episode XVII

- First Variant (16). Nima onpa otique otimotlalico CeeCatla ompa
oticchiuque chicuei xihuitl
- Second Variant (37). Niman ompa otiquisque otimotlalico CeeCeetla
ompa oticchiuque chicuei xihuitl
- Third Variant (56). Nima ompa oquispque o omotlalico CeeCeetla
onpa yquichiuque cincome xihuitl

Episode XVIII

- First Variant (17). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico pilcaya
otichiuque ome metzintli ompa oquipiloque tlatatl
- Second Variant (38). Nima onpa onpa otiquisque otimotlalico pilcaya
ompa oticchiuque ome metztli ompa oticpiloque
tlatatl
- Third Variant (57). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico pilcaya

Episode XIX

- First Variant (18). Nima ompa tiquisque otimotlalico ytzintla ce
amacuahuitl ompa oquichihuque ce metzintli
- Second Variant (39). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico ytzintla amatl
cuahuitl ompa oquichique se metztli

Episode XX

- First Variant (19). Niman ompa otiquisque otimotlalico ychcamilipa
ompa oticchiuque mili otontocaque ompa
oticchiuhque chinahui . . . metztli
- Second Variant (40). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico yichimilipa
onpa oticchica mili otitocaque ompa oquichiuque
chinahui xihuitl

Episode XXI

- First Variant (20). Nima ompa ompa otiquisque otimotlalico
themalacatzingo ompa ompa oticchiuque se xihuitl
ompa otechitaco pilhua titesaca miteCmitl
- Second Variant (41). Nima ompa otimotlalico themalacatzico ompa
oquichiuque se xihuitl ompa otechitaco pilhua
titesaca meteCimitl

Episode XXII

- First Variant (21). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico
matlalyxtlahuaca yecahomatoc ompa oticchiuque
yeyi metztli
- Second Variant (42). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico matlali
yxiltlahaca

Episode XXIII

- First Variant (22). Nima ompa ompa otiquisque otimotlalico
chiyapantzinco san otipan otipanoque otimotlalico
totlasonantzin sata Rosa teposqotitla ompa
oticchiuque yeyi metztli
- Second Variant (43). Nima onpa otiquisque otimotlalico chiyapantzi san
otipanoque que otimotlalico totlalsonantzi Santa
Rosa thepacoyoco ompa oticchiuque yeyiz metztli

Episode XXIV

- First Variant (23). Nima ompa tiquisque otimotlalico omomalachoque
oycnotlamatque yayxclitaliqui nenemi
- Second Variant (44). Nima ompa otiquisque otinosehuico yaopilco
otialchoque ycnotlamatque ychitlalequinenemi

Episode XXV

- First Variant (24). Nima ompa otimotlalico chichitepetl
thehuaxcuatitla ompa oquichiuque ce metztli hun
tlaco
- Second Variant (45). Nima ompa otiquisque otimotlalico chichitepetl
thehuaxcuatila ompa oticchiuque se metztli hun
tlaco

Appendix

- Third Variant. Este mapa fue copiado y firmado el 13 de junio de
1953 como un recuerdo tierno y grato de r
..... (por un Guadalupe
..... el señor Agustin Remijio) Agustin
Lopez

TRANSLATION

Episode I

- First Variant (1). Here I begin my written account. I, my name is Ipchtecatl Tequihua¹ and again we came and my wife. Here we begin the exile.²
- Second Variant (48). Then we set out. We came to rest in Mexcotenotzinco.³ We stayed there two years. Again we came. Wife. Here we begin our exile.
- Third Variant (53). Here I set down my written account. I, my name is Popochtecatl and again we came. And my wife. Here we begin the exile. We set out from Mexcotenotzinco.

Episode II

- First Variant (2). We set out from Mexcotenotzinco. The reason we departed. We departed because of the human labor¹ with Iacapetlahuatzin.²
- Third Variant (46). With Iacocapetlahuatzin.
- Third Variant (49). We set out from Mexcotenotzinco. We departed because of the human labor when³ with Iocapetlahuatzin.

¹ The name *Ipchtecatl* is given in more plausible form in the Third Variant: *Popochtecatl* (Lord of Incense). This personage does not appear in García Granados' exhaustive work *Diccionario biográfico de historia antigua de Méjico*.

No further information is provided regarding the leader of the migration but it may be suspected that the text in Episodes I and II, which has survived in a disorganized and contradictory form, was once a more complete and intelligible account. After the first two episodes, the three variants become more consistent, though not entirely so.

Tequihua does not seem to be a proper name but a title. Siméon translates *tequihua* as "valiant warrior." The *tequiuacacalli* was the council chamber of the Aztec captains (Siméon 1885: 460).

² Though Agustín López Recéndez, the copyist and artist in modern Petlacala, translated *ope tona* as "the sun shone," it seems more likely that the term is derived from the verb in Molina *petoni*: *desencajarse, salirse alguna cosa* "to be displaced, to get out or leave."

³ The place name *Mexcotenotzinco* can refer only to the Aztec Metropolis Mexico-Tenochtitlan (México-Next-to-the-Prickly-Pear-Cactus) if we are to judge by the geography of the migration. The form *Mexco* or "Mesh-ko" for Mexico City is still in use among Nahuatl speakers of the Valley of Toluca. *Tenotzinco* may have been *Tenochtzinco*, the *ch* having been lost on coming into contact with the *tz*. It is possible that the Petlacala document has preserved in these lines an ancient or local form of the name of the Mexican capital.

¹ The term *tlacatequitl* is derived literally from *tlacatl* "man, human, personal" and *tequitl* means, according to Molina, *tributo, obra de trabajo* "tribute, work" both terms largely synonymous under the ancient economic system. *Tlacatequitl*, therefore, can be translated as "tribute," "work," "personal services," "labor-tribute," "payment in work" and is a term involving all these concepts.

² The informant in Petlacala thought *iacapetlahuatzin* to be the name of one of the Aztec oppressors of the group. However, in all three muddled versions of the name *iaca* or *iacoca* precedes *petlahuatzin*. Since *iaca* or *yaca* is a prefix used to indicate a leader or guide, it may refer to a guide who accompanied the group on their departure.

³ The term *otecuyatlapeposylama* has not been translated by the present writers. One recognizable element, *tepoz* "metal," is present.

Episode III

- First Variant (3). Then at that time we made the agents of the police¹ take flight.
- Second Variant (25). Then at that time we made the agents of the police take flight.
- Third Variant (50). Then at that time we made the agents of the police take flight.
- Third Variant (54). Then at that time we made the agents of the police take flight.

Episode IV

- First Variant (4). Then they¹ came to Mexcaltzinco.² They stayed³ four months.
- Second Variant (26). Then they came to Mexcaltzinco. They stayed four months.
- Third Variant (51). Then they came to Mexcaltzinco. They stayed there four months.

Episode V

- First Variant (5). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Xochimilco.¹ They stayed there 12 years.²

¹ According to Molina *topile* means *alguacil*, a constable or police officer. The term *topil* is used today in Mexico to designate minor local officials in the rural areas, though the artist-copyist in Petlacala interpreted it as "spy." The writer of the document seems to indicate a confrontation with agents or authorities of an unspecified community who tried to interfere with the departure.

¹ Throughout the text of the document we are going to encounter alternating prefixes for the verbs, sometimes "they," sometimes "we." These inconsistencies may be due to the re-copying of the text through successive generations. If, as can be surmised, the story was once told as a tribal or local epic, the form "we" probably predominated.

² *Mexcaltzinco* can be identified with the modern suburb of Mexico City San Marcos Mexcaltzinco (also spelled Mexicalcingo, Mexicatzinco, Mexicacingo in the chronicles) on the road to Xochimilco. Mexcaltzinco, together with Xochimilco, had been conquered by the Aztecs in the reign of Itzcoatl (1428–1440). The migration of Popochtcatl and his followers, therefore, had to pass through territory dominated by the Aztecs.

³ "They stayed" is rendered *oquichihuque*, literally "they made." This is reminiscent of the Spanish form *hicieron* (they made) in reference to the duration of time. In the Classical Nahuatl dictionary of Molina, though, "to stay" or "to remain a certain time" is *huecahua*. This suggests that the language of the text of the Petlacala document is in some cases distant from the prehispanic forms. The redaction, here as in other places, seems to indicate the influence, in colonial times, of the Spanish language.

¹ If we assume that the migration of Popochtcatl and his people occurred around the middle of the fifteenth century, and that their escape from the Aztec capital had taken place under unfriendly circumstances, it is not easy to explain their 12 year stay in Xochimilco, which had become a subject of Mexico Tenochtitlan before 1440. Perhaps, as in the migrations described in the documents published by Galarza and Dehouve, gifts were delivered to the local authorities. Perhaps their presence was tolerated because they hunted, fished or rendered tribute in other ways.

^{2,3,4} The number 12 is expressed as *matlactli xihuitli yhua ome xihuitl*, literally, "ten years and two years." The Classical form is *matlactlome*. For a number of reasons the Nahuatl numerical

- Second Variant (27). Then at that time they set out. They came to rest in Xochimilco. They stayed there ten years and two months.³
- Third Variant (47). Then at that time they set out from there. They came to rest in Xochimilco. They stayed there ten and two.⁴

Episode VI

- First Variant (6). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Santiago Tzapotitla.¹ They stayed there seven months.
- Second Variant (28). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Santiago Tzapotitla. They stayed there seven months.

Episode VII

- First Variant (7). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Tlalyahualco.¹ They stayed there nine months.
- Second Variant (29). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Tlalyahualco. They stayed there nine months.
- Third Variant (52). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Tlalyahualco. They stayed there nine months.

system deteriorated considerably after the Spanish conquest. Today it is rare to find a Nahuatl speaker who can count correctly beyond the number ten in his own language, since he usually substitutes higher numbers in Spanish. The form "ten year and two years" shows an unfamiliarity with the ancient numerical system and again seems to indicate that the text was composed (or re-cast) at a relatively advanced date in the colonial period.

¹ *Tzapotitla* was a settlement on the northern shore of Lake Chalco and in Aztec tribute lists was included in the province of Petlacalco (Barlow 1949: 131). It lay in the *chinampa* area of garden agriculture and the area undoubtedly was teeming at the time with flora and fauna: ducks and other birds, fish, newts, insects, frogs, shrimp, and several important edible aquatic plants. It is possible that the refugees lived off hunting, fishing, and food gathering and perhaps hired themselves out to work in the gardens of the natives.

Today the village is known as Santiago Zapotitlán, and until a generation ago the inhabitants lived largely from the fruits of the lake and its fertile shores, as their neighbors Xochimilco, Mizquic, Tetelco, and Tulyehualco do to some extent at the present time. Nahuatl is still spoken in the village.

The name "Santiago" in reference to a prehispanic site is not incongruous. Two Christian toponymics occur later in the Petlacala chronicle: "Asopsio" and "Santa Rosa." The writers of the text simply referred to the towns through which their ancestors had passed by the names known to them many generations later. A parallel situation would be that of a modern historian who speaks of "the Roman conquest of France," the latter name unknown to Roman ears.

¹ Though a town known as Tlalyahualco exists in the State of Guerrero, south of Taxco, all evidence indicates that the text refers to Santiago Tulyehualco, a few kilometers southeast of Xochimilco. It was a town of considerable importance in pre-Cortesian times and appears in the ancient chronicles and maps as Tolyahualco "Circle of Bulrushes." One source describes events that took place there in the year 1209 (Chimalpahin 1958: 47). On recopying the Lienzo the prefix *Tol-* could easily have been transformed into *Tlal-*.

Episode VIII

- First Variant (8). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Totlalsonatzin Asopsio.¹ They stayed 15 years and two months.

Episode IX

- First Variant (9). Then they set out from there. Tlapacoya.¹ They stayed there three months.
- Second Variant (30). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Tlapacoya. They stayed there eight years.

Episode X

- First Variant (10). Then they set out from there. They came to rest in Tlalyahualco.¹ They stayed three months.
- Second Variant (31). Then they set out from there. We² came to rest in Tlalyahualco. We stayed there three months.

¹ *Totlalsonatzin* is more properly spelled *Totlazonantzín*, "Our Beloved Mother," often prefixed to the name of the Virgin Mary and other female saints. *Asopsio* is a Nahuatl form of the Spanish word *Asunción* or "Assumption." This name was usually applied in colonial times to the town of Milpa Alta, today a Nahuatl speaking community in the southernmost part of the Federal District. In reference to *La Milpa* (as it was also called) one sixteenth-century writer mentions "*la Assumpción de Nuestra Señora*" (*Relación particular* 1941: 9). One Nahuatl text refers to the town as "*dotlasonnatzin asosio*," "Our Beloved Mother of the Assumption," a title strikingly similar to the one used in the Lienzo (McAfee and Barlow 1952: 130).

Milpa Alta is situated high above the Mexican capital in the Ajusco sierra separating the Valley of Mexico from the State of Morelos to the south. Today it still lies at the edge of extensive woods of pines and cedars that cover the mountain range but in the fifteenth century it must have been an almost impenetrable and vast hiding place. The rather sudden departure of the group from the lowland area into the lofty, cold forest, and a stay of 15 years there, suggest a flight perhaps caused by some conflict with the lake dwellers. Furthermore, the change of environment must have been violent for the migrants. Incidentally, the episode appears only in one of the variants.

It should be noted at this point that when the historical section of the Lienzo states "We came to settle at . . ." it is not to be implied that the wanderers built their camp in the town whose name is recorded. Many of the ancient city-states, aside from not being organized in compact form, had abundant communal woodlands and waters and the settlers may have been assigned a specific locality a long distance from the civil and ceremonial center.

¹ *Tlapacoya* or *Tlapacoyan* is today a town situated some 20 kilometers to the east of the main square of Mexico City on the Puebla highway. The text does not explain this precipitous change in the route, which had led in a southern direction, and it is possible that the group now found itself in the domains of the Kingdom of Tetzcoco. In any case, the migrants remained there only three months according to the first variant.

Since *Tlapacoya*, "The Washing Place," is a relatively common place-name in Mexico, it is also possible that another *Tlapacoya*, in the area of Milpa Alta, today erased from the map, may be intended.

¹ The emigrants return for a brief stay in *Tlalyahualco* or *Tulyehualco* before their definitive and final departure from the Valley of Mexico.

² After the departure from the Aztec capital the scribe has cast his verbs in the third person plural. At this point, however, he reverts to the "we" of the first three episodes.

Episode XI

- First Variant (11). Then they¹ set out from there. They came to rest Tepetlixpa.² They stayed there eight years.
- Second Variant (32). Then we³ set out from there. We came to rest in Thepetlixpa. We stayed there eight years.

Episode XII

- First Variant (12). Then they departed from there. Quauhtla.¹ They stayed there 12 years.

Episode XIII

- Second Variant (33). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Tehuehula.¹ We stayed there 12 years.

Episode XIV

- First Variant (13). Then we departed from there. We came to rest in Amilpa.¹ We stayed there one year and a half.
- Second Variant (34). Then we departed from there. We came to rest in Amilpa. We stayed there one year and a half.

¹ The writer reverts to the "they" form.

² San Martín *Tepetlixpa*, "The Place Facing the Hills," is located 72 kilometers to the southeast of the Mexican capital in the southernmost part of the State of Mexico, almost at the border of the State of Morelos. The town lies on a slope slightly below the highest and coldest points on the route: Tlalmanalco, Amecameca and Ozumba, all at the foot of Popocatepetl. According to both variants eight years were spent in this place, which was radically different in climate, flora, and fauna from the lake area in which the group had spent about a generation. The migrants must have possessed a remarkable versatility in adapting themselves to varying zones.

³ The author changes briefly to "we," only to substitute this more personal form to "they" in the next episode.

¹ *Quauhtla*, "Place of the Trees" or "Place of the Eagles," is undoubtedly the modern Cuauhtla, Morelos or Cuauhtla Amilpas in the State of Morelos, deep in the hot country. Since the Spanish conquest the area has been important in the production of sugar cane and tropical fruits, though cotton was grown there since pre-Colonial times. The city-state of Cuauhtla was a late acquisition of the Aztec conquerors, the date of its final surrender being placed by different sources as either in the reign of Ahuizotl (1486-1502) or Moctezuma II (1502-1520). Cuauhtla belonged to the Aztec province of Huaxtepec (Barlow 1949: 78-79). See the notes to Episodes XIII and XIV.

¹ The place name *Tehuehula* or *Tohuehula*, badly blurred, appears only in the Second Variant and the present writers have separated it as marking a separate Episode. However, this separation as a unit is dubious since a) no town in the area of Cuauhtla with a name even remotely similar appears in the chronicles or maps, and b) the number of years spent there is identical to the number spent in Cuauhtla. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the names *Quauhtla* and *Tehuehula* refer to the same place.

¹ The name *Amilpa*, as given correctly in the Second Variant, has a variety of connotations in the ancient sources.

Fray Diego Durán, in reference to the rites performed in honor of the goddess Xochiquetzal in Mexico Tenochtitlan mentions the casting of grains of corn in the fourth direction (the south) "which the Indians call Amilpan" (Durán 1967, 1: 155).

Episode XV

- First Variant (14). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Thetl-ystac.¹ We stayed there three years.
- Second Variant (35). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Thetlystac. We stayed there three months.
- Third Variant (55). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Thetlystac. We stayed there years.

Episode XVI

- First Variant (15). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Ayoxochapa.¹ We stayed there one month.
- Second Variant (36). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Ayoxochapa. We stayed there one month.

Episode XVII

- First Variant (16). Then we set out from there.¹ We came to rest in CeeCatla. We stayed there eight years.
- Second Variant (37). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in CeeCeetla. We stayed there eight years.

Molina's *Vocabulario* defines *Amilpampa ehecatl* as *viento meridional* or "south wind."

A colonial Nahuatl text describing a historical event in the same area states that "they departed toward Las Amilpas and the Hot Country" (Chimalpahin 1965: 185).

The same source speaks of a place known as the *xochitlalpan Parayso terrenal/ompa catquil huitztlampamilpampa*: "the land of flowers, the earthly paradise, where are the land of thorns, the moist cultivated field" (Chimalpahin 1958: 84).

The term *Amilpa* or *Amilpas*, nevertheless, had a more specific geographical meaning. This is clarified by Gerhard in *A Guide to the Historical Geography of New Spain*: "Still further down in the hot country were a number of small states (Ahuehuepan, Anenecuilco, Cuauhtlan, Cuahuilixco, Olintepic, Tzompanco, Xochimilcatzinco) known collectively as Amilpanecapan, which perhaps were directly subordinate to the Aztec military governor of Huaxtepec. . . . Beyond Amilpanecapan was a wild region of barren mountains and gullies belonging to Huaxtepec. The people lived dispersed in many small rancherías and spoke the Xochimilca dialect of Nahuatl" (Gerhard 1972: 91).

The place name *Amilpa* in Episode XIV of the *Lienzo of Petlacala* remains to be explained, however. It is not synonymous with *Quauhtla* since it is spoken of as a separate locality in both variants and the stop-over there is a year and a half while that in Cuauhtla is 12 years. A choice of one of the six other towns mentioned by Gerhard would be arbitrary. Perhaps *Amilpa* is simply used to indicate a wide area south of Cuauhtla in which the future founders of Petlacala set up camp, perhaps on different sites.

¹ *Thetl-ystac* is the modern Tetliztac, Tetlixac or Telixac, about 150 kilometers southeast of Cuauhtla in the State of Morelos. The name means "White Stone" and apparently it lay within the Aztec tributary province of Huaxtepec.

¹ *Ayoxochapa*, "River of the Squash Flowers," whose name is spelled identically in the Aztec tribute lists, belonged to the province of Huaxtepec (Barlow 1949: 78). The modern town, Axochiapan, is to be found some 20 kilometers south of Tetliztac, on the southwestern border of the State of Puebla.

¹ An unexplained change of route takes place at this point. The emigrants set out in the direction of the northwest, passing what is now the entire state of Morelos plus part of Guerrero. It must have been an extenuating trek, apparently with no stops, covering at least 300 kilometers as the crow flies. The artist-copyist at Petlacala wrote in the name *CeeCatla* or *CeeCeetla* in the text of the *Lienzo* as if he were unsure of the spelling. However, in a personal interview he pronounced the name *Accintla*, which he translated as "The Place of the Cold

Episode XVIII

- First Variant (17). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Pilcaya.¹ We stayed two months. They hanged a man there.²
- Second Variant (38). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Pilcaya. We stayed there two months. We hanged a man there.
- Third Variant (57). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Pilcaya.

Episode XIX

- First Variant (18). Then we set out from there. We came to rest at the foot of an *amate* tree.¹ We stayed there one month.
- Second Variant (39). Then we set out from there. We came to rest at the foot of an *amate* tree. We stayed there one month.

Episode XX

- First Variant (19). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Ychcamilpa.¹ We cultivated a field there.² We sowed. We stayed there nine months.

Water." In the northern part of Guerrero, in the Municipality of Taxco, there is a village shown on maps as Axixintla. It is situated some 20 kilometers south of Pilcaya and is probably the site mentioned in the Petlacala document.

¹ *Pilcaya* is a mountain town in the northern part of Guerrero, close to the border of the State of Mexico. The copyist translated the name as *Lugar en que se cuelga una cosa* or "Place where Something Is Hanged."

² Galarza (1972: Plate 55) shows a native glyph for the toponym Pilcaya. It portrays a three branched tree with a man hanging by his hands from one of the branches. The same author suggests (Personal communication 1977) that the narrative element "We hanged a man there" may have been introduced solely on the basis of the etymology of the place name. This would be a case of a phenomenon commonly known in folklore, especially in etiological tales: the elaboration of a story on the basis of a preexisting name. The town of Pilcaya was probably known as such long before the migrants rested there briefly in the late fifteenth century.

¹ *Ytzintla ce amacuahuítl*, "Under an *amate* tree," can in no way be interpreted as a proper place name and therefore is not to be found on any map.

The *amacuahuítl* (literally: "paper tree") is the *ficus nimphacifolia* or wild fig tree which thrives in the warm parts of southern Mexico. It was used in ancient times as medicine and its bark was a source of paper used for ornaments in ritual (banners, costumes, etc.). Today it is best known for its products, bark paper or *papel de amate*, used for magical purposes, especially among the Otomi of northern Puebla.

The fact that the group camped under a single tree gives us a hint as to its size. Though the *amate* can grow to considerable height and width, it is difficult to imagine more than 20 or 30 people camping under the shade of a tree.

¹ *Ichcamilpa*, "The Place of the Field of Cotton," is a town shown on modern maps as Ixcamilpa de Guerrero, capital of the municipality of the same name in southeastern Puebla state. It is located on the Atoyac river, in the hot country, about 50 kilometers north of Petlacala. Fifty kilometers on the map, of course, can easily mean 200 by narrow twisted mountain paths (or by no paths at all, as may have been the case).

² To have cultivated a field en route is a theme that occurs in several migration epics

Second Variant (40). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Yichimilipa. There we cultivated a field. We sowed. We stayed there nine years.

Episode XXI

First Variant (20). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Themalacatzingo.¹ We stayed there one year. The lords came to see us there.² We carried stone.³
.....⁴

Second Variant (41). Then we came to rest in Themalacatzico. We stayed there one year. The lords came to see us there

Episode XXII

First Variant (21). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Matlalixtlahuaca¹ yecahomatoc.² We stayed there three months.

Second Variant (42). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Matlalixiltlahaca.

Episode XXIII

First Variant (22). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Chiyapantzinco.¹ We only passed through there.

including that of the Aztecs on their way to found Mexico Tenochtitlan. In the Ocotequila pilgrimage the group stops at a certain place to sow tomatoes and chili peppers (Dehouve 1976b: 139).

In the case of the present text, the type of field sown is not indicated. It is possible that a field of cotton is meant and that the Petlacalans took credit for having given Ichcamilpa its name, as seems to be the case in the stop at Pilcaya (see Episode XVIII).

¹ *Themalacatzinco* (today Temalacacingo) is a village situated about 20 kilometers north of Petlacala, near the town of Olinalá, Guerrero. The original Nahuatl form was *Temalacatzinco*. The word is derived from *temalacatl*, the great round stone upon which rites were celebrated in ancient times. Literally the term is composed of *te-* (stone) and *malacatl* (spindle whorl).

² The brief reference to a visit by certain "lords" (i.e. local chieftains) is reminiscent of contacts with local authorities and ambassadors mentioned in the Galarza and Dehouve texts. The "lords" may have granted the migrants permission to rest in a place, to sow corn, or to pass through their territory in exchange for tribute. The short statement may refer to Tlapanec speaking people, then more widely extended in the area, who may have resented the intrusion of the Nahua newcomers.

³ *Titesaca* is apparently derived from the verb *tezaca*, translated by Molina as "to carry stone." We have translated the term as "We carried stone" though the correct form would be *otitezacacque* or *otitezacque*. Perhaps this refers to a form of tribute in work for the native "lords."

⁴ The word *miteCmil* is apparently corrupt and the copyist, unable to read it in the original, wrote a C very similar to the one in the mysterious place name CeeCeetla.

¹ *Matlalixtlahuaca*, "The Place of the Dark Green Field," does not appear on the maps consulted for this study. Perhaps an intensive search carried out in the area between Temalacacingo and Petlacala would reveal the existence of sites, abandoned today, which still bear the names of Matlalixtlahuaca and the places mentioned in Episodes XXIII and XXIV.

² The term *yecahomatoc*, which appears exclusively in the First Variant, could be connected with the root *yeca-* or *eheca-* (air or wind).

¹ *Chiyapantzinco* was not found on the modern map. The artist at Petlacala suggested it might indicate the town of Chilapa, over 60 kilometers to the west of Petlacala but this is not likely.

We came to rest in Totlasonantzin Sata Rosa Teposqotitla.² We stayed there three months. Then we set out from there. We came to rest at Chiyapantzi. We only passed through there. We came to rest in Totlasonantzi Santa Rosa Thepacoyoco.

Episode XXIV

First Variant (23). Then we set out from there. We came to rest. They¹ went round and round. They wandered about in dire need². They walked with their feet sorely bruised.

Second Variant (44). Then we set out from there. We rested in Yaopilco.³ We wandered round and round in dire need. They walked with their feet sorely bruised.

Episode XXV

First Variant (24). Then we came to rest in Chichitepetl Thehuaxcuatitla.¹ They stayed there a month and a half.

Furthermore, the etymology of the two names is different. *Chiyapantzinco* means "The Small Place of the River of *Chia* (a small seed)" while Chilapa is "The River of Chili Peppers".

²Neither the place name *totlasonantzin sata Rosa Teposqotitla*, "Place of Our Beloved Mother Santa Rosa Teposqotitla (Tepozcuauhtitla?)" or *Santa Rosa Thepacoyoco* in the Second Variant were located on the modern map, though the artist stated that there exists a small settlement known as Santa Rosa Tepoztitla near Tlatlauque, on the Chilapa-Tlapa highway. There is also a village called Cuadrilla Tepozcuauhtla about ten kilometers northeast of Chilapa and a number of other settlements in southern Guerrero bear the name of Santa Rosa. At the present time the authors are unable to indicate the precise location of the town mentioned in the Lienzo or the reason for the variant Nahuatl appellations attached to the saint's name.

¹For the last time the author uses the term "they." From here on, until the founding of Petlacala, the more personal "we" will set the tone.

²This passage, regarding the tribulations of the wanderers, is extremely corrupt in both variants. Siméon (1885) translates *icnotlamati* as "s'attristir, s'affligir." The word is connected with *icnotlacatl*, "huérfano, pobre, necesitado" according to Molina. The authors have interpreted *yayxcli* as *icxtil*, "foot." *Tlaliqui nenemi* seems to be a corruption of *tlalitnemi*, "être accablé, affaîssé, vivre dans la peine" according to Siméon. The artist translated the passage freely as *Le dimos vuelta con dos corazones. Presentimos que nuestro camino era mucho a pie*, "We went round and round with two minds about which way to go. We foresaw that the path we were to cover on foot was to be a long one."

³*Yaopilco*, "The Place of the Warlike Nobles" has not been located on the modern map.

¹*Chichitepetl* means "The Dog Hill" and its suffix *-tl* indicates that it is not the name of a town but an uninhabited place. *Thehuaxcuatitla*, or more properly, *Tehuaxcuautitla* means "The Place Next to the Wild Gourd Trees." According to the artist the hill Chichitepetl is only three kilometers from Petlacala. *Thehuaxcuatitla* was not located on the map.

The omission of Petlacala at the end of the long migration is probably intentional. From the outer border or historical section the reader passes immediately into the inner border which states the boundaries of the community. From there he will pass into the central panel where the fullness of the achievement bursts upon him: the Indian rulers, the patron saint, the house where the riches of the town are stored, all presided over by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Fifth.

Second Variant (45). Then we set out from there. We came to rest in Chichitepetl Thehuaxcuatila. We stayed there one month and a half.

Appendix

Third Variant. This map was copied and signed on the 13 of June of 1953 as a tender and loving momento
..... (by a Guadalupe
señor Agustin Remijio.) Agustin Lopez.

III. THE INNER BORDER: BOUNDARIES OF PETLACALA

Having established the origins and route followed by the founders of Petlacala, the narrator now proceeds, in the inner border, to depict the rightful boundaries of the community in relation to those of its six neighbors: Atlamajcingo to the south, and, clock-wise, Aquilpa, Chiepetepec ("Chepe" in the text), Quiauhtepec, Tenango, and Tlapa, to the east. (See Map 4) The spelling of these names varies considerably in the Nahuatl text, and, in the notes, the present authors have accepted the forms generally used in modern maps. In colonial times all of the towns fell within the *alcaldía mayor* or province of Tlapa.

The sections or squares listing boundary sites are 24. Each description is headed by the name of the local site known to the Petlacalans and apparently accepted as the correct boundary by the natives of the neighboring towns. (See Plate 4)

Next to and under each inscription runs a landscape portraying many of the sites, though each picture does not necessarily fit the written text but may indicate the description written in the next square. It is possible that an original prehispanic document depicted the sites in the native system of writing. The artistic style of the present pictography can be classified as "mestizo" rather than Indian or European.

The personal tone of the description of the boundaries of the town ("We passed", "We descend", "We followed") is not common in colonial land titles. The use of the first person plural and the past tense conveys the feeling of personal experiences undergone in the past, not of a tour of boundaries in the present. A few excerpts from other colonial titles can serve as contrasts.

In the sixteenth century land title of San Gregorio Acapulco in the lake area of the southern part of the Valley of Mexico, the scribe first announces his theme:

Know, my dear children, that I am recording all the lands . . . so that it may continue to be seen on paper. It is put in order so that our beloved children will know the names of those who received grants. . . . six of us asked for public lands (McAfee and Barlow 1952: 125).

Later on we follow the limits of the village lands: "The boundary turns in order to descend . . . We are on its border, here in San Gregorio, (on the border of the lands of) the people of Santa Cruz Acalhuacan; the boundary continues; it descends upon the Coatepetl . . ." (McAfee and Barlow 1952: 131).

In another colonial document dealing with the lands of a town near



MAP 4
(After Galarza 1972 Pl. 10)

Tetzoco, the text reads: "And the boundaries reach the *ahuehuete* in Acolihcan and to Tochatlahuqui and to Corpus Christi of Xocotlan to the *teponete* on the hilltop and from there to the San Juan road as far as the Río Grande" (McAfee and Barlow 1946: 121). In this, as in the following example, it is the boundary which is the actor, not the ancestors of the village group.

In the Nahuatl annotations to a colonial codex from the area south of Toluca, the impersonal form of expressing boundaries is prevalent: "Here

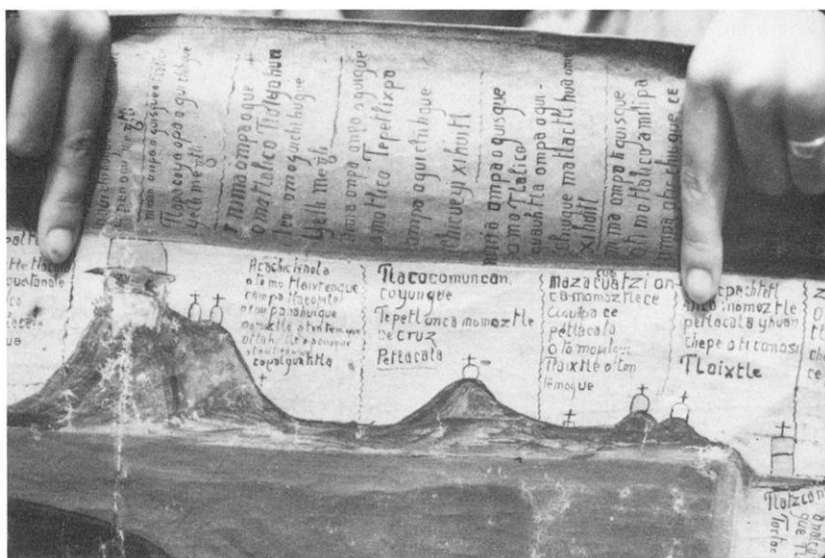


PLATE 4

next to the cross are 300 lengths of land belonging to the people of the village" . . . "the boundary line continues . . . ; it stops at the forest" (Horcasitas and Magrelli 1975: 253).

The significance of the personal narrative form in indicating the borders of Petlacala becomes clear on examining the boundary section of the Xalatzala document published by Dehouve (1976b). The tour of the contemporary boundaries of the town, at least in its first part, is told as a continuation of the migration story. The following contains an excerpt from the Xalatzala text.

After receiving as gifts a deer and a rabbit, a native chieftain took the immigrants on a tour of the boundaries of their future homeland.

". . . from there, in the morning, they reached Ahuapexco (which in Spanish means 'the place of oaks'). From there they went on to set up a cross. From there they came out on the other side, on the crags. From there they descended into the ravine of the avocado. They went up a hill called Ocotepc (which in Spanish means 'the hill of pines') and Azacamiltepec (which in Spanish means 'the marsh next to the hill'). Then they descended down a slope which passes through the woods. . . ." (Dehouve 1976b: 149). Though told in the third person, the story closely parallels that of the text in the inner border of the *Lienzo of Petlacala*.

In a sense, therefore, the inner border is simply the continuation of a story which began when Popocatecatl and his family fled from Mexico Tenochtitlan some sixty years earlier.

Paleography

NAHUATL TEXT

Site I

Ahuehuetepantli otopanoque otontlecoque otonpanquisque Tlacopile onca atiopa otonotlique otontlatoque canoca title cosque Petlacala yhun atlamaxatzinco

Site II

Quaquetzpaltepetl onca momoztle tlachia campa calaque tonale Atlalmaxaczinco Aquilpa Petlacala otontemoque Tlapizaco

Site III

Acachichinola otimotlaixtenque campa tlacopile otonpanahuique momoztle otontemoque atlahutle opanoque otontlecoque copalcuatitla

Site IV

Tlacocomuncan coyunque tepetl onca momoztle ce cruz Petlacala

Site V

Mazacuacuatzi onca momoztle ce Aquilpa ce petlacala otomopilque Tlaixtle otontemoque

Site VI

Thenepachtetl onca momoztle petlacala yhuan chepe oticonasi Tlaixtle

Site VII

Zoyatepaco onca momoztle onca cruz chepe yhuan ce petlacala Tlatzcanyoca

Site VIII

Nextematco otontemonque atenco ateopan otonpanoque analco ompa tonlecoque tlaconextli toctoc

Site IX

Caltonaltepetl onca ome momoztle ce chepe ce petlacala otontemoque tecomaxochitl ahuelica

Site X

Thecuechhua otontemoque oticonasique Thelihuitl otonpanquizque Tlapizaco chahuitl toctoc

Site XI

Theposteyo ome momoztle ce Quillathepec ce petlacala otontemoque atlamaxacliya atocaczi

Site XII

Thexayacatetl onca yeyi momoztle ce Quiathepec ce Tenango ce petlacala atenco Thepetlatl axoque tlamanalla otonpanoque ypan tlacopile otonpanoque thelihuitl acallochitla otonpanquizque

Site XIII

Tlazzcantitla ome momoztle ce tenanco ce petlacala otoniztlapaltemoque atlaco amaxczintla tecamac thepetl atlatli otipanquizque telihuitl

Site XIV

Tlapalhuaxcuatitla toctica nexmetlo comalchico otimotoaixtenque otipanquizaco tlapizaco tlatentle

Site XV

Thetlyztac onca momoztle oaci Thenextepetlatl coyunque thepetl otontemoque pan Tlacopile

Site XVI

Thehhualtepetl onca momoztle petl otontemoque tolintlan chahuitl tenexllahualtetl

Site XVII

Talintlan chahuitl ome momoztle ce Tenanco ce petlacala otimotoaixtenque otilecoque oticanque tlatentle otipanquizque

Site XVIII

Cuahuitzi onca momoztle ce tenango ce petlacala otontemoque otonpanoque Tlapizaco tlatentli

Site XIX

Tlalchichiltepetl onca ome momoztle ce Tlapa ce petlacala otocanque tepetl izin tapayole tepexitl chichiltec otonpanquizque

Site XX

Thehuaxtepetl onca momoztle lleyi cruz ce tlapa ce Atlamaxalzigo ce petlacala otitemoque ipan tlapizaco

Site XXI

Ahuatpetl onca cruz huei onca tonalatl quixnomictica tonale onpa otialmalzaloque otitlalcotonque oticasique telihuitl tlaco momoztle—otitemoque atenco

Site XXII

Acuecuellachapa otontlecoque

Site XXIII

Tepetapayole ome momoztle Atlamaxaczinco—petlacala otitemoque xaxocotl chichiltec yhuan—iztac oticanque atlaule

Site XXIV

Themimile atlaco oticanque tayecma atlautli tetl—canpan atepantli tlapizaco pano atle—otitlaixtlapaltlenque tlapopili chichiltec yzintla amatl costic

TRANSLATION

Site I

Ahuehuetepantli.¹ We passed; we ascended; we went ahead on the division.² There is a canal.³ We took the path; we followed along to where we will ascend to Petlacala⁴ and Atlamaxatzinco.⁵

¹ The first element in the place name *Ahuehuetepantli*, "Wall or Row of Bald Cypresses," is *ahuehuetl*, the Mexican cypress, a corpulent tree of the genus *Taxodium* related to the redwood of California. It usually thrives at the edge of watery places. Age-old examples of the coniferous tree exist at Chapultepec park in Mexico City and at Santa María del Tule in Oaxaca. One of the most famous examples is the Tree of the Dismal Night in Popotla, a suburb of Mexico City, where Cortés is said to have rested after his disastrous flight from Mexico Tenochtitlan in 1520. *Tepantli* is usually translated as "wall" but in this case the word "row" would fit equally well. The local Petlacala artist translated the place name as *Ahuehuetes sembrados en hilera* or "Bald cypresses planted in a row."

² *Tlapopilli* is not to be found in the Molina or Siméon dictionaries. Molina, however, gives a number of terms incorporating the element *tlaco-*, revealing the concept of "half," "middle," "cut," or "clearing." Key (1953: 204) translates *tacotona*, in the Puebla dialect of Nahuatl, as *brecha*, meaning "breach" or "opening."

³ The word *atiopa* is partially erased in the modern Lienzo, as if the copyist had not been sure of its original form.

⁴ *Petlacala* is the "The Place of the Mat House" or "Houses." A pictograph of the name is shown on *Lienzo I* of Chiepetlán (Galarza 1972: Plate 6, No. 10). It depicts a rather elaborate house surmounted by three vertical objects, probably rushes, out of which mats are fabricated. (See Figure 2)

⁵ *Amamaxac* is translated by Molina as *lugar donde se divide el río en muchas partes*. Therefore we translate Atlamaxatzinco as "The Place where the Waters of the River Divide."

Pictography

A black line, meandering as if it indicated flowing water, starts in the two previous squares and enters a black square object below the inscription in Site I. The "stream" continues into Site II, where a bent *ahuehuetl* tree is shown standing next to a reddish brown, plank-shaped object.

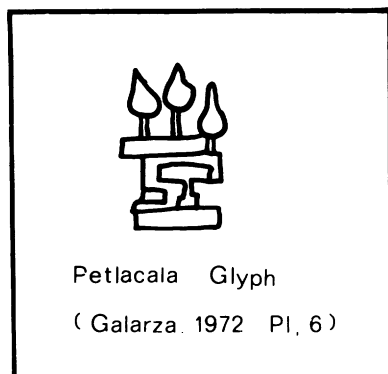


FIG. 2

Site II

Quaquetzpaltepetl.¹ There are boundary shrines.² They watch toward where the sun sets: Atlalmaxaczinco, Aquilpa,³ Petlacala. We descended to the steep, craggy rock.⁴

Site III

Acachichinola.¹ We explored the land where the division is. We passed the

¹ *Quaquetzpaltepetl*, more properly *Cuauhcuetzpaltepetl*, is "The Hill of the Iguana" and was translated as such by the artist in Petlacala. Hernández (1959: II, 368) refers to the *cuetzpallin* as a type of lizard, to the *quauhcuetzpallin* as a *lagartija montés* or wild lizard (1959: II, 379) and to the *acuecuetzpallin* as an iguana (1959: II, 369). However, the modern word for iguana in Tetelcingo, in the hot country, is *betzpalí*, *bretzpalí* or *cuetzpalí* (Brewer and Brewer 1971: 53), the term for lizard being *comixi*. This together with the illustration of the reptile in the Lienzo in our opinion justifies the present translation of the word as iguana.

² The word *momoztli* or *momoztle* in the Lienzo obviously refers to a boundary shrine. In the Xalatzala document (Dehouve 1976b: 149, 151) *momoztli* is translated as *mojenera* or "boundary marker." Nevertheless, in Molina's dictionary *mumuztli* is given as *altar de los ídolos, o humilladero* and in Siméon *momoztli* means *autel, chapelle, oratoire dressé aux entre-croisements des chemins*. "Wayside shrine" would be an adequate English approximation of these two interpretations. Doris Heyden (1968) has explored the religious meanings and functions of the *momoztli* in the archaeology of Mexico since Teotihuacan times. The rounded, upright, plastered stone marker surmounted by a cross, sometimes adorned with flowers and candles, is a familiar feature in the Mexican countryside today and serves a dual purpose: as wayside shrine and boundary mark. The present translators feel that the new term "boundary shrine" is justified in view of these functions.

³ "The Place of the Water Plants." Though *aquiltilí* does not appear in the works of Hernández, its etymology is clear: *atl* + *quiltilí* (water + plant). The *aquilotl*, however, is described as a water plant used commonly in the fabrication of perfume (Hernández 1959: 1, 74).

⁴ *Tlapizaco* could be interpreted as "the narrow place," derived from the element *pitzahuac*, "narrow" or "thin." But in the Spanish version of the Xalatzala text (Dehouve 1976b: 145) the word *tlapizaco* becomes *cuchilla* or steep, craggy, rugged rock or hill. We have therefore translated *tlapizaco* as "steep, craggy rock."

Pictography

Upon a large hill rests a greenish gray iguana in profile. Behind it is shown a light gray oval, which could represent the sun, which is mentioned in the text at this point. To the right are two boundary shrines.

¹ *Acachichinola* means "The Place of the Burned Rushes."

boundary shrine from one side to the other. We descended; we passed the ravine. We went up to Copalcatitla.²

Site IV

Tlacocomuncan coyunque tepetl.¹ There is a boundary shrine there, a cross for Petlacala.

Site V

Mazacuacuatzi.¹ There are boundary shrines there, one for Aquilpa, one for Petlacala. We stayed² on the flat surface.³ We descended.

Site VI

Thenepachtetl.¹ There are boundary shrines for Petlacala and Chepe.² We reached the flat land.

² *Copalcatitla* is "The Place of the Incense Tree." The *copalcuahuitl* is a tall tree which produces a gum widely used in Mexico and Central America as incense in both ancient and modern times. Known in Spanish as the *planta de incienso de Indias* it also possesses medicinal properties. Hernández (1959: 1, 176-183) describes various species, all of which grow in hot and humid areas.

Pictography

On a slope below the two boundary shrines mentioned under Site II rises a solitary cross, under which there is no boundary marker.

¹ *Tlacocomuncan coyunque tepetl* could mean "The Hill Pierced with a Hole" though the artist at Petlacala translated the name as *tierra hueca* or *tierra que suena hueca*, "Hollow Earth" or "Earth which Sounds Hollow." In the Spanish translation of the Xalatzala text (Dehouve 1976b: 148) we read *Tlaicocomonca: que significa en castellano, la tierra que aqui retumba*, "Tlaicocomonca: which means in Spanish: the earth resounds here."

Pictography

On a small hill stands a single boundary shrine.

¹ *Mazacuacuatzin* means "The Little Deer Horn." Molina translates *cuerno de animal* as *quaquauitl*.

² According to Molina the reflexive verb *piloa* means *asirse de algo, forcejar o perseverar*. The form *otomopilque* seems to indicate "we held on to" or "we persevered in."

³ *Tlaxitl* is connected with *tlaxitectli*, which, according to Molina, means *cosa allanada* or "something flattened."

Pictography

On a flat piece of land stands a single, diminutive boundary shrine.

¹ The etymology of *Thenepachtetl* is uncertain. The artist gave the tentative translation *Piedra encimada* or "Stone on top" (Stones on top of one another?) This would be in accordance with Molina's translation of the verb *pachoa*, "to tighten," "to lie on top of," "to be inclined on," or "to place something next to something else." If, however, the place name is an incorrect rendering of *Tenopaltecl*, the translation would be "The stone of the Wild Prickly Pear Cactus." The particle *pach* "Spanish moss" could also be involved.

The use of the letters *th* for what is usually the sound *t* in Nahuatl is a common practice among the writers of the colonial period, far into the eighteenth century. It is especially common when the sound is followed by the vowel *e*. The *th* in place of *t* occurred a number of times in the story of the migration and continues to be used in the present boundary list. The spelling vouches for the antiquity of the Petlacala document, at least as far back as the eighteenth century, since a modern falsifier would hardly be tempted to use a *th* instead of a *t*.

² *Chepe* is mentioned a number of times as a neighboring town or city-state. The problem, though, is that two towns, Chiepetlán and Chiepetpec, border Petlacala. Since the name

Site VII

Zoyatepaco.¹ There are boundary shrines, crosses, for Chepe and Petlacala. *Tlatzcanyoca*.²

Site VIII

Nextematco.¹ We descended to the edge of the water, to the canal. We passed to the other side of the water. There we descended to the middle of the ashes. Sown land.

Site IX

Caltonaltepetl.¹ There are two boundary shrines, one for Chepe, one for Petlacala. We descended to the *tecomaxochitl*.² The Place of good water.

Site X

Thecuechhua.¹ We descended. We reached the slope.² We went ahead to the steep, craggy rock. *Chahuil*.³ Sown land.

Chepe falls between Aquilpa and Quiauhtepec, the direction would indicate that it refers to Chiepetepec. In both cases the origin of the word is Xipe, deity of Flaying and Spring.

Pictography

The two boundary shrines mentioned in the inscription ("for Petlacala and Chepe") appear on small hills to the left. One actually falls in the square dedicated to Mazacuacuatzi.

¹ *Zoyatepaco* was translated by the artist-copyist as *palmas filadas* or "palms in a row." An alternate translation would be "The Place where the Palm Trees Face One Another."

² *Tlatzcanyoca* is a word written far below the inscription for *Zoyatepaco* and could equally be ascribed to the next square headed by the word *Nextematco*. The meaning is "The Place Covered with Cypresses" or "The Place where Cypresses Abound." However the modern artist considered that the word meant *Lugar de Pinos* or "Place of Pines," though the traditional word for "pine" is *ocotl*. Molina gives *ciprés* for *tlatzcan*. Above the word is shown what looks like a stream ending in an oval shape with vegetation on one side.

Pictography

To the left of Site VII, actually in the previous square, is a *momoztli* in two storeys, unique in the Lienzo. It is surmounted by a cross.

¹ López Recéndez, the Petlacala artist, believed the word *Nextematco* to be connected with *nextamalli*, corn that has been boiled in lime and is ready to be ground into meal.

Pictography: None

¹ *Caltonaltepetl* may mean "The Hill of the House of the Sun," possibly to be interpreted as "The Hill where the Sun Sets" or "The Hill where the Sun Goes to His Home." The local artist translated the term as *Casa del cerro del sol* or "House of the Hill of the Sun."

² *Tecomaxochitl* or "cup flower," according to Hernández (1959: I, 141-142) is the name of a corpulent tree which bears large flowers, purple inside and yellow outside. The fruits of the tree were used as medicine for headache and bruises and it was highly prized by the Indian noblemen who cultivated it in their gardens. Hernández also indicates that a form of this tree grew wild among the rocks at Acuitlapa, to the east of Tlapa, Guerrero. It is not clear whether the *tecomaxochitl* of the present document was cultivated or whether it was a wild variety.

Pictography: None

¹ *Thecuechhua* is of uncertain meaning. Molina states that the *cuechtli* was a certain type of long snail. If we follow this lead, we can translate the name as "Stone Snail." Nevertheless, Sr. López Recéndez interpreted the toponymy as *Piedra con cascabel*, "Stone with a rattle." Molina translates *coacuechtli* as *caxcauel de biuora*, "Snake Rattle."

² In the Ocotequila document (Dehouve 1976b: 138-142) *telihuilitl* is translated repeatedly as *ladera*, *loma*, "slope" or "hillside."

³ *Chahuil* is a word of uncertain meaning.

Pictography: None

Site XI

Theposteyo.¹ Two boundary shrines, one for Quillathepec,² one for Petlacala. We descended to the place where the waters divide. We arrived.

Site XII

Thexayacatetl.¹ There are three boundary shrines, one for Quiathepec, one for Tenango,² one for Petlacala. Porous limestone³ at the edge of the water. They trespassed⁴ into the flat land. We passed over the division to the slope, to the water deposit.⁵ We went ahead.

Site XIII

Tlatzcantitla.¹ Two boundary shrines, one for Tenanco, one for Petlacala. We descended into the ravine on one side to (the place) where the water divides, to the hill of the stone mouth, to the ravine. We went ahead on the slope.

Site XIV

Tlapalhuaxcuatitla.¹ Century plants are sown. Comalchico.² We came ahead in this direction, to the edge of the steep, craggy rock.

¹ *Theposteyo* is "The Place where Metallic Stones Abound," or "The Place Covered with Metallic Stones."

² *Quillathepec*, more properly *Quiauhthepec*, is "The Place of the Hill of Rain."

Pictography: None

¹ *Thexayacatetl* can be rendered as "The Stone Face." Actually the place name includes the element for "stone" twice: the *the* or *te* at the beginning and the *tetl* at the end. "The Rock of the Stone Face" might be a more adequate translation. Though the name might refer to a natural configuration on the stone, no trace of a face appears on the accompanying pictograph.

² *Tenango* or *Tenanco* is "The Place of Walls" or "Walled Place."

³ *Tepetlatl* is translated by Molina as *tozca o cuzilla* (calcareous tufa, porous limestone, or travertine). The Nahuatl word has survived in modern Mexico as *tepetate*.

⁴ The *axoque* of the present document is perhaps derived from the verb *xocoa*, which in Molina appears as *passar los términos o mojonos, tomando a otro sus tierras*, "to pass limits or boundary markers, robbing someone of his lands."

⁵ *Acallochtla* seems to be derived from *atl* "water," *calli* "house" or "container" and *-tla* or *-tlan* "place of." The precise meaning, however is uncertain.

Pictography

The left side of this site is marked by a high, slender crag. Running from this to a larger mound on the right hand side is what appears to be a stream. This large mound is brown in color. On top stands a single large boundary shrine with three crosses, which probably indicate the three towns mentioned in the text.

¹ *Tlatzcantitla* is "The Place of the Cypressess" or "The Place Next to the Cypressess." See note 2 for Site VII.

Pictography: None

¹ *Tlapalhuaxcuatitla* means "The Place of the Red Gourd Trees" or "The Place Next to the Red Gourd Trees." It is made up of the elements *tlapalli* "color," "red," or "scarlet"; *huaxin* "gourd"; *cuahuatl* "tree" and *-titla* "place of" or "place next to." The name was translated by the Petlacalan artist-copyist as *guaje de color* or "colored gourd."

² The meaning of the term *comalchico* has eluded the present translators. A *comalli* is a flat earthenware plate upon which tortillas are baked.

Site XV

Thetliztac.¹ There is a boundary shrine. It reached the porous limestone which resounds. We descended upon this division.

Site XVI

Thellahualtetl.¹ There is a boundary shrine. *Petl*.² We descended to the place of rushes *chahuatl*.³ The circle of limestone.⁴

Site XVII

Tulintlan chahuatl.¹ Two boundary shrines, one for Tenango, one for Petlacala. We explored the land. We ascended. We stayed on the edge. We went ahead.

Site XVIII

Cuahuitzi.¹ There are boundary shrines, one for Tenango, one for Petlacala. We descended. We passed the steep, craggy rock on the edge.

Pictography

The gourd trees of the place name do not appear in the illustration. However, a plantation of century plants, the *nexmetlo* or *nexmetla* of the text, is shown on the left on top a raised area. On the right of this site, also on top of a raised area, is located a boundary shrine with a cross.

¹ *Thetliztac* or *Tetliztac* means "The Place of the White Stone."

Pictography: None

¹ Perhaps "The Rock of the Circle of Stones," more properly spelled *Teyahualtetl*. According to the artist the word means *Piedra redonda* or "round stone."

² The fragment of a word, *petl*, appears alone in the text.

³ *Tolintlan* is "The Place of Rushes," a plant described by Hernández (1959: 126). The artist referred to this place as *pantano con tule* or "Swamp with rushes."

⁴ The name *tenexllahualtetl*, or *tenexyahualtetl*, which appears in the pictograph, is made up of *tenextli* "lime," *yahualli* "circle" and *tetl* "stone." It could refer to a lime kiln, or the ruins of one.

Pictography

What looks like a stream or road runs from the previous square into Site XVI; it ends in an oval, apparently hedged in by vegetation. Within this oval is the word *tenexllahualtetl*.

¹ See Note 3 for Site XVI.

Pictography

Shown are two boundary markers without crosses upon which rests a flat board, possibly indicating an altar. Above these markers is a hill out of which rises a bundle of rushes.

¹ "The Brambles," from the word *cuahuitzli* "bramble." According to the local artist the term means *punta aguda* or "sharp point."

Pictography

To the left of the inscription is a slender hill on top of which are located three crosses. To the left of the hill is a flowering bramble, with green leaves and a dark flower.

Site XIX

Tlalchichiltepetl.¹ There are two boundary shrines, one for Tlapa,² one for Petlacala. We stayed on the hill, at the foot of the ball,³ on the red cliff. We went ahead.

Site XX

Thehuaxtepetl.¹ There are boundary shrines, three crosses, one for Tlapa, one for Atlamaxaligo, one for Petlactal. We descended on the steep, craggy rock.

Site XXI

Ahuatepetl.¹ There is a great cross. There is dry-season water. sun. There we went around.² There we measured the lands. We arrived at the slope, half way to the boundary shrine. We descended to the edge of the water.

Site XXII

Acuecuellachapa.¹ We ascended.

Site XXIII

Tepetapayole.¹ Two boundary shrines: Atlamaxaczinco—Petlacala. We descended to (the place of) the red and white fruit.² We stayed in the ravine.

¹ *Tlalchichiltepetl* means "The Red Earth Hill" though Sr. López Recéndez translated the toponym simply as *Cerro colorado* or "Red Hill."

² *Tlapa* is "The Place of Dye."

³ The proper form would be *itzintla tapayolli* "at the foot of the ball" or "at the foot of the round object."

Pictography

The dominant pictograph (actually inside Site XVIII) is a round hill of reddish color on which stand two boundary shrines with crosses. To the left of this hill is an unidentified form of vegetation. Two low rolling hills follow to the right, under the inscription beginning with the word *Tlalchichiltepetl*.

¹ *Thehuaxtepetl* was translated by the Petlacala artist as *Cerro del guaje silvestre*, "Hill of the Wild Gourd."

Pictography

On the left side of this site stands a medium sized hill, dark in color, on which rises a boundary shrine surmounted by a cross. To the right of this hill, in what appears to be a valley, stands a second boundary shrine. To the right of this valley is another hill on which rests a third boundary shrine and cross.

¹ *Ahuatepetl* is "The Hill of Oaks." *Ahuatl* also means "thorn."

² The translators have interpreted the badly spelled word *otialmazaloque* as *otimalacachoque* from the verb *malacachoa* "to turn round and round." However, this interpretation is doubtful.

Pictography: None

¹ *Acuecuellachapa* is derived from *acuecuyachin* "leech," according to Molina, and means "The River of Leeches."

Pictography: None

¹ *Tepetapayole* is "The Ball Hill" or "The Rounded Hill." The artist translated it as *Cerro boludo* or "Ball-shaped Hill."

² The suffix *-xocotl* is used by Hernández (1959: II, 210-211) to designate a number of acid fruits. One of them, the *texocotl* (*tejocote* in modern Mexican Spanish) is often translated into

Site XXIV

Themimile atlaco.¹ We stayed to the right, on the stone of the ravine, where the stream is, at the steep, craggy rock. The water passes. We explored the red division at the foot of the yellow wild fig tree.

English as "hawthorn." Though the term *xaxocotl* found in the Petlacala text does not appear in the work of Hernández, in northern Puebla the guava is designated by this name.

Pictography

On a very low hill to the left stands a single boundary shrine with a cross. Immediately to the right is a leafy plant.

¹ *Themimile atlaco* can be translated as "The Place of the Ravine of the Round Stone Column." According to the copyist a *temimile* is a *piedra rolliza*, meaning a "rolled up stone" or "rounded out stone."

Pictography

Below the inscription begins the dark line or stream which leads into Site I.

IV. THE CENTRAL PANEL

The portion of the *Lienzo of Petlacala* which most immediately gains the attention of the viewer is the central panel. It was clearly intended to be the focal point of the document for it occupies the greatest amount of space in terms of volume and is by far the most colorful portion of the painting.

As mentioned in Chapter I, the central panel presents five personages—four males and one female, and a rectangularly shaped building inside of which are located objects of varying sizes, shapes, and colors. Together, these components of the *Lienzo of Petlacala* provide us with additional pieces of information for our reconstruction of Petlacala's prehispanic and early colonial history. Let us now look more closely at these components.

CARLUS QUINTOS

Clearly the most important personage of the central panel is a king called Carlus Quintos de Gratia (See Plate 5). On a version antedating that of 1953, this personage may have been portrayed as Charles V, Roman Emperor (1519–1558) and King of Spain (1516–1556); however, his attire belongs to the period of Ferdinand VI (1746–1759) or Charles III of Spain (1759–1788). His wig, slippers, breeches, and coat are all typical of the reigns of these monarchs. The flowers above his head could be a vestige of a Roman laurel wreath popular in the neoclassic art of that period.

It is possible that a painting intended to depict a sixteenth-century subject was brought up to date, merging the two highest authorities who could assure Petlacala its legitimate rights to land: the king who ruled at the time of the conquest and the eighteenth-century monarch who ruled at the time of the manufacture of this later version. The authoritarian nature of this figure is manifest in his size—he is at least twice as large as any other person in the central panel.

The crown of this dominant figure does not appear on his head but at his feet, as was common in paintings of kings. This crown, and the attire of the personage, are almost identical to those found in the late eighteenth-century document from the State of Puebla referred to earlier: *El mapa de Chalchihuapan* (Castro Morales 1969: Fig. 2-111) See Plate 6.

THE THREE INDIAN NOBLES

At the left of "Carlus Quintos," standing on the roof of a building, are three Indian men, representing the *principales* (leaders or elders) of Petlacala



PLATE 5

(See Plate 7). The elder shown closest to the king, according to the local artist, was called Mendoza. He is slightly taller than the others and has his right hand open as if addressing the monarch. His left hand is crossed over his chest. The other two figures stand with both hands crossed on their chests, and are almost identical, the third being slightly smaller than the second. These last two men are apparently subordinate to the first.

On their heads all three Indians wear blue diadems or caps out of the back of which protrude three elaborate feathers, white, pink, and blue. Red cloth bandannas run around their foreheads and hang conspicuously down



PLATE 6



PLATE 7

on the left side of their heads touching their shoulders. Around their necks all wear a white scarf resembling the ecclesiastical amice. The upper part of their bodies is garbed in dark blue coats fitted at the waist. From under these hang light red or pink knee-length skirts. All of them are shod in simple sandals similar to those worn in the area as recently as fifty years ago and referred to as *pazos de gallo*.

These costumes can be compared to European interpretations of Indian garb in the second half of the eighteenth century. Good examples can be found in the Madrid edition of Solis's *Historia de la conquista de México* (1783-1784).

The four figures discussed thus far suggest an artistic interpretation indicative of the middle or late eighteenth century. Again, perhaps this constitutes an updating of an earlier rendition of the document.

Above the head of the third plumed native is an empty black square whose functions are not easily identified. However, according to the local artist-copyist, the pre-1953 document contained in this square the almost illegible traces of the three Arabic numerals 551, though not necessarily in that order. The 551, if actually present in the earlier version, would suggest the date 1551 and a reference to the reign of Charles V.

THE KNEELING WOMAN

In the center of a building and in a kneeling position on the floor is a woman, diminutive in size, attired in a full length pink skirt and blue shawl (See Plate 8). Her hands are folded on her chest. Both her attire and

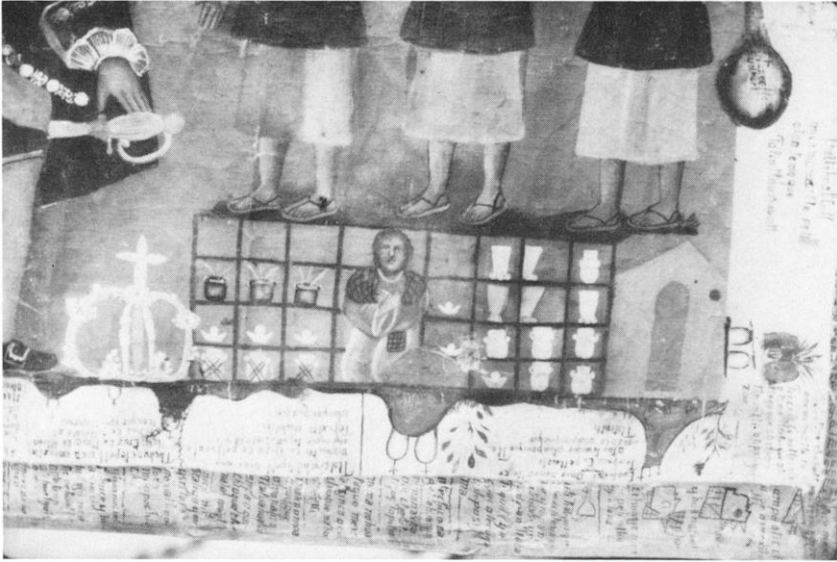


PLATE 8

her gesture are similar to the kneeling figures found in the *Mapa de Chalchihuaqan* (Castro Morales 1969: Fig. 2-111).

According to Petlacala tradition this woman was María Nicolasa Jacinta, one of the founders of the community. María Nicolasa Jacinta also is represented in the form of a stone figurine, apparently pre-Columbian in origin, with strong Mexcala features (See Plate 9). As in the Lienzo, this statuette is in a kneeling position and is usually dressed in a pink silk garment. This figurine is kept in a basket together with the fragments of the earlier burned lienzo and a modern stone idol said to represent the rain god Tlaloc.

This double presence of María Nicolasa Jacinta (on the Lienzo and in stone) suggests the following interpretation. She is transposed from a two dimensional European type representation to a more native sacred sculpture in the round which can be dressed, placed upon an altar, and revered in an independent and more exalted fashion. There is no doubt that she is considered special; the local shaman stated that María Nicolasa Jacinta was considered "como una diosa" (like a goddess) by the people of Petlacala.

According to Petlacala folk history as repeated by the local artist, all five personages shown in the central panel, including Charles V, came to the present location of the community of Petlacala where they walked around, measured the land, and placed the boundary shrines which now define the limits of the community's lands. All five individuals are referred to as *teome* which is the plural of *teotl* and literally means "gods."

THE TRIBUTE

In the lower right hand corner of the central panel stands a rectangular structure suggesting a public building. The façade faces the right and is



PLATE 9

grayish in color with a red arched doorway. The roof is slanted and is also red. The side wall of this building is absent, revealing a series of 36 compartments, 23 of which contain diverse objects which can be divided into five types.

On the center left are three blue bowls out of which protrude three light blue feather-like objects. These are strikingly similar to the gourd vessels for drinking chocolate called *tecomates* depicted on folio 39 of the *Codex Mendoza* which shows the tribute paid to Moctezuma by the province of Tlapa. The three protruding objects could represent a bastardized form of the numerical glyph *tzontli* (400).

In the compartments below are shown small white crown-like objects. No parallels were located in the Mendoza tribute list or in the *Codex Azoyú* (Number 2), another document which lists tribute paid by inhabitants in and around the ancient town of Tlapa.

In the bottom compartments are clay pots bound with cords almost identical to the *cantarillos* or little jars of honey shown in folio 37 of the *Codex Mendoza* as part of the tribute paid by the province of Tepecuacuilco, not far from Petlacala.

In the upper compartment to the right are depicted several long vertical objects, perhaps containers, probably made of clay, some with claw-like basal supports. Others have ring supports. Two are depicted as if vertically halved and may indicate that a half quantity of the object was paid.

According to the interpretation given to us by the artist, this building

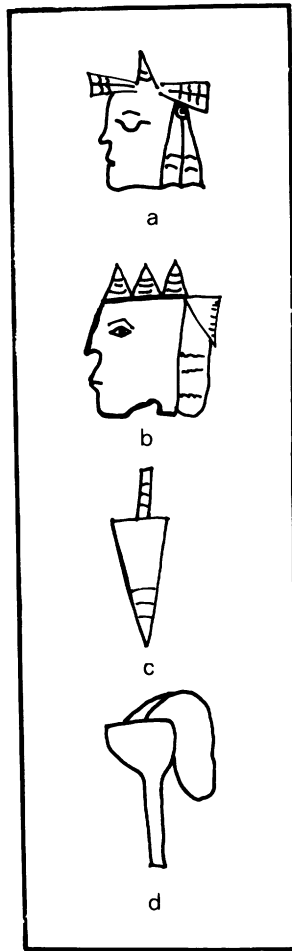


FIG. 3

is the house of María Nicolasa Jacinta and the objects inside represent kitchen and diningware arranged on the wall in a manner done today. We feel, however, that the entire structure with its contents is some type of repository for regional tribute. Thelma Sullivan's comments on the etymology of "Petlacala" (p. 16) support this position.

THE GLYPHS

In relation to the subject of tribute, we must now take into account a series of glyphs which appear twice in the outer border, once in squares 49-53 and at another time in squares 2-5 (see plates 8 and 3 respectively). They are not connected in any way with the story of the migration but are easily recognizable as hieroglyphs representing months in the prehispanic calendar of eighteen periods of twenty days each.

Before discussing these signs, it must be remembered that tribute

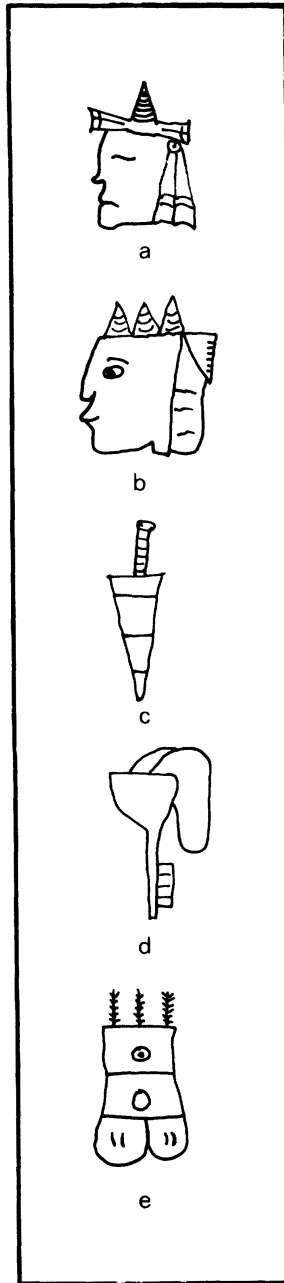


FIG. 4

to Mexico Tenochtitlan was paid by the subjugated provinces annually, semiannually, and quarterly, "every eighty days" (Barlow 1949: 14). In some cases, such as that of the city-state of Tlatelolco, as portrayed in the *Codex Mendoza*, payment was made on a "quarterly basis," that is, on four dates

of the year (Long 1942: 42.) In the *Codex Azoyú No. 2* which was painted in a town not far from Petlacala, and in the *Codex Humboldt I*, a Tlapa tribute list covering the years 1487–1521, payment was made on four months or feasts of the year: Tlacaxipehualiztli, Etzacualiztli, Ochpaniztli, and Panquetzaliztli. The first day of each of these twenty day periods fell respectively on 21 March, 9 June, 17 September, and 6 December according to the calendar transcribed by Durán (1967, I: 213–293).

To return to the four glyphs shown in squares 49–53 of the Petlacala document, all are recognizable through comparison with Aztec pictorial sources and with the calendar glyphs covered by Caso in his succinct study *Los calendarios prehispánicos* (1967). The four feast days in the Petlacala painting are a) Tlacaxipehualiztli, March 21; b) Etzacualiztli, 9 June; c) Quecholli, November 16; and d) Panquetzaliztli, 6 December (See figure 3, a–d). The above dates are based on Durán (1967, I: 213–293).

It is evident that the periods between the dates are not spaced evenly. Between the first and the second dates we have 80 days; between the second and the third 160 days; between the fourth and the first, 105 days. From the last period should be deducted the *nemontemi* or five useless days. We have, therefore, the Mesoamerican year of 360 days. The explanation for the proximity of the dates of payment of tribute in November and December could be that the agricultural cycle having ended, the termination of the year was and still is a time of transacting business.

The matter becomes more complex if we examine the glyphs in squares 2–5 (See fig. 4). Again the signs for a) Tlacaxipehualiztli, b) Etzacualiztli, which appears twice, the first time in incomplete form, c) Quecholli, and d) Panquetzaliztli are shown, but a fifth sign is added, that of the feast of e) Ochpaniztli, which began on 17 September (Durán 1967, I: 275). This would give five annual dates for paying tribute to Mexico Tenochtitlan, unique in the Aztec tributary system. They cover, respectively, periods of 80, 100, 60, 20 and 105 days (See figure 4, a–e).

In summary, the four (or five) glyphic indicators of times of payment, notwithstanding the problems and contradictions they present, are so similar to those found in the *Azoyú No. 2* and *Humboldt I* codices, both from nearby Tlapanec communities, that they suggest a regional tributary system.

The position of the calendrical glyphs in the outer border, which deals with the migration, may be due to the composite nature of the document. In their attempt to coordinate oral tradition and sketchy written accounts of the remote past, the local scribes of 1758–1771 may have squeezed in a fragment of an ancient tribute list, the only vestige of the prehispanic system of writing in the Lienzo as we know it today.

V. FUNCTIONS OF THE LIENZO

What are the contemporary functions of the Lienzo for the people of Petlacala? Unlike most other Mexican codices and lienzos whose authentic functions ceased to exist long ago, the *Lienzo of Petlacala* is today a vibrant tool around which revolve much of the organization and ritual of Petlacala society. Although its ancient origins are acknowledged, Petlacalans recognize its relevance in contemporary life. Three functions are readily apparent and will be discussed in the following pages.

LAND DOCUMENTATION

The principal motivation behind the manufacture of this document was to provide legitimization to communal land holdings. The inner border described earlier deals exclusively with the delineation of Petlacala's land boundaries. Throughout its two hundred years of existence the primary function of this document has undoubtedly been in connection with land and its maintenance.

As most scholars familiar with colonial archives in Mexico well know, administrators and farmers alike since the earliest periods of Spanish rule have spent much time and energy over land disputes. In Mexico's Archivo General de la Nación one immense section, the Ramo de Tierras, deals exclusively with litigation related to the resolution of land disputes. Other archives such as those in the Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria bulge with page after page of testimony and other evidence related to the question of land holdings. Some of the cases contained in these files have persisted generation after generation for several hundred years. It is not unusual to encounter modern land disputes which have been kept alive 400 years or more. Such cases of prolonged antagonism between communities often result in the institutionalization of conflicts which are acted out year after year along the borders being contested.

The area around Tlapa is well-known for its plethora of land quarrels. Some are heard locally by officials of the two opposing communities; others are taken to district or state headquarters such as Tlapa or Chilpancingo; still others are heard in Mexico City where they are argued before national courts. Many are resolved to the mutual benefit of both parties; many are not. Some communities cannot remember times when all of their borders were uncontested. It is often considered normal for communities to lose a corner of land to a neighbor one year only to gain a new parcel the following year from another neighbor. Boundaries in this region of Mexico are constantly shifting as the result of such contests.

Petlacala, like most other communities in the Tlapa region, has a long history of land problems. Although probably much more ancient, the earliest mention we find of land disputes in Petlacala is 1758 when a case concerning land holdings was heard before a magistrate in Tlapa. In 1771, title to Petlacala's land claim was recognized and, according to available information, went uncontested until 1807 when, on 4 February, there arose another dispute, and an official once again inspected the boundaries and confirmed the previous title. At this point the boundary names listed for Petlacala were identical with those in the Lienzo. We suspect that the Lienzo was used to validate these boundaries at the time of the 1807 litigation.

On 26 January 1832 the mayor and judge of Tlapa examined the titles and boundaries once again and decided in favor of Petlacala. From that time to the middle of the present century, the archives do not record land disputes but conflicts did occur. In 1946, problems again became unmanageable, this time between Petlacala and the neighboring community of Coachimalco (See Map 4). In the documents of this litigation, boundaries of Petlacala are quite different from those in the Lienzo suggesting that previous litigation between the two communities had resulted in the re-establishment of land borders sometime between 1807 and 1946. Unfortunately, at present we do not have a record of the events which surrounded this realignment. We do know, however, that Petlacala's land dispute with Coachimalco has lasted until the mid-1970s and accounts for the bulk of materials on file in the Petlacala folders in the Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria. At times the Petlacala/Coachimalco conflict has reached catastrophic proportions and one petition by Petlacalans dramatically pleads for an end to the "zafarranchos" (scuffles), "luchas sangrientas" (bloody struggles), and other disasters the community has suffered as a consequence of the fight with Coachimalco.

It was during the early part of this recent dispute that the Lienzo was turned down as a legal land document in the eyes of the federal government but judged valid as a historical document. This was probably due to the discrepancies which exist between present boundaries and those contained in the document, legal in the late eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the Lienzo served the citizens well as a legitimization of their communal land holdings for over 150 years. Although not recognized as a valid land document by contemporary Mexican courts, its validity is still asserted by the people of Petlacala.

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

Another vital function of the *Lienzo of Petlacala* is as a tool for substantiating community history. All of the individuals who participated in the quest for and the settlement of the community are in this document. Starting perhaps as early as the middle of the fifteenth century, the migration of Petlacala's ancestors is told in epic fashion and in three variants. Beginning in the Valley of Mexico, most likely during a period of political unrest or natural disaster, this small band of men and women criss-crosses the

landscape, doubles back and forth, settles here and there, moves, and re-settles for sixty years until it finally arrives at the ultimate destination of Petlacala. Apparently, the founders of neighboring communities such as Chiepetlán, Xalatzala, and Ocotequila were participants in the same general migration and, upon arrival in the Tlapa region, began establishing their own particular histories.

It is highly probable that the migration account contained in the Lienzo, like historical accounts in other parts of Mesoamerica, were at first preserved in oral form, perhaps known and recited by village elders on ceremonial occasions. Later, around the middle of the eighteenth century, these accounts were reduced to Nahuatl script and brought together in the Lienzo in their present form.

The trials and tribulations experienced by the founders of Petlacala are typical of the epic foundation histories of most people. The foundation of other lands, for example, is rooted in suffering and sacrifice, such as that of Moses and his followers to possess the Promised Land, and of Aeneas to reach Latium. Such roots add emotional support to territorial claims, as if to say "This is our land. Our ancestors suffered and fought for it." So it was with Petlacala—their migration was born out of trials. Their trek was long and hard.

To personalize and make more plausible the foundation of the community, the personages involved in its history (Charles V, María Nicolasa Jacinta, the *principales*) are visibly present in the Lienzo for all to see and record to memory. Whether historical or fictional, these individuals further legitimize the establishment of the community by making such an event the result of human endeavor. It was these individuals who placed the boundary shrines where they are now, not to be moved but protected against all who would encroach upon them.

As a tool of history, the *Lienzo of Petlacala* continues to assist in the definition and maintenance of communal land boundaries. Whenever in doubt as to the exact location of that territory, Petlacalans need only consult the Lienzo for a proper description.

CEREMONIAL USE

In addition to being a secular part of the daily lives of Petlacala, the Lienzo has a magical and sacred function for this contemporary life of the community. The Lienzo represents the community itself, both past and present, and as such is the object of great reverence. Kept on the altar in the house of Petlacala's shaman, removed from the world of the profane, it is brought out only for special occasions such as religious rituals, the installation of new cargo holders (town and church officers), and official business concerning land.

Not only do the inhabitants of the community consider the events of the migration sacred, similar to the epic of the Jews' flight from Egypt, but those who participated in these events are also sacred. As mentioned earlier, the five personages represented in the central panel are referred to as *teome*

the plural of the Nahuatl *teotl* (god). Whether the people of Petlacala actually think of these figures as deities is not entirely clear. We feel that perhaps a more acceptable translation might be 'saintly ones' or the 'original ones'. We know that at least one of these participants, María Nicolasa Jacinta, occupies a formal status equivalent to that of a Catholic saint because of the care and attention given to the figurine representing her. Such representation as a saint adds legitimacy to the events surrounding the foundation of Petlacala, and therefore the Lienzo serves as a charter for the establishment of the community at its present location.

The most important ritual in which the Lienzo is used is during the ceremony for rain which occurs annually on 25 April, the day of San Marcos in the Christian calendar.*

Preliminary activities related to the ceremony of San Marcos begin at sundown the 24 April when select members of the community (local civil officials, lesser shamans, and relatives of the head shaman) gather at the home of the shaman who will officiate the following day's activities. The household altar is dressed for the occasion with an array of brightly painted Catholic saints, fresh flowers, and candles. Incense, a constant item in Mesoamerican ritual, permeates every corner of the house and is always spread to punctuate the shaman's orations. The Lienzo, draped with flowers, is attached to the front of the altar and becomes the focal point of these preliminary activities (See Plate 10). At the base of the Lienzo are cut flowers and a bed of evergreen boughs, upon which will be placed the evening's offerings.

The shaman spends several hours before this altar, presenting candles, flowers, cigarettes, and alcoholic beverages to the personages represented on the altar and in the Lienzo. San Marcos, San Miguel (whose figure is prominently displayed), "Carlos Quintos," María Jacinta, and others are called upon to allow for the successful completion of the following day's ceremonies.

At this point it is clear that the personages in the Lienzo are no longer merely historical characters but have been elevated to the same lofty religious positions as the surrounding Catholic saints. The foundation of the community is no longer an act of mortal men but an event of sacred character.

The shaman, accompanied by an assistant, and carrying in his arms the rolled-up Lienzo and flowers, starts the trek to the top of the mountain at 5:30 A.M. the following day. En route he makes two stops, one at a small altar half-way up the mountain and a second on the eastern side of the mountain near the top. It is at this second altar called "puerta del sol," (door of the sun) where the shaman pauses to welcome the rising sun.

An hour or so later the shaman proceeds on to the larger, more important shrine that is dedicated to San Marcos and the rain. This shrine consists

* On this date is also observed the feast of the rain among Tlapanecs and Mixtecs residing in the region around Tlapa.



PLATE 10

of a large wooden cross atop a stuccoed base. Around this shrine are 16 lesser shrines, each representing an important mountain over which rain clouds must pass before reaching the lands of Petlacala. The shaman attaches the 1953 Lienzo to the front of the altar and places at its base the palm basket containing the original document and the stone images of María Jacinta and Tlaloc.

The shaman was quite explicit about the role of the Lienzo in the quest for rain. According to him, the Lienzo contains all of the *parajes* (hamlets) which are located high in the mountains surrounding the lands of Petlacala through which must pass clouds bringing rain. These are spots to be revered and offerings must be made to appease the spirits which dwell there to assure passage of rain clouds. The personages in the Lienzo are said to guide the clouds to Petlacala in time for the planting of corn.†

† This part of the ceremony is remarkably similar to that performed by the ancient Aztecs in honor of the god Tlaloc. Durán (1971: 156) tells us that on 29 April men climbed to the

During the day, families climb the mountain, bringing with them carefully prepared items to offer to the spirits responsible for the arrival of rain. Some bring bundles of sweet leaves, others large decorative candles, and others bowls of chocolate, atole, meat, or coffee. Offerings are carefully orchestrated so that the right number of items are presented in accordance with instructions passed down through the ages. During the course of the day, thousands of objects are sacrificed and for each the shaman must recite words of offering to those represented in the Lienzo.

The rain ceremony ends at dusk with a recessional down the mountain into the village where people anxiously await the arrival of the rains. If rains do not come (a rare occurrence), the same ceremony is staged again at the same spot on June 1st.

As we have seen, the functions of the Lienzo are various. Its versatility is a measure of its worth. It is at one time a land document, at another a history of a people looking for a homeland, and at another an object of profound religious importance. All of these functions make the *Lienzo of Petlacala* a highly protected and greatly revered object to the people it represents.

summit of Cerro de Tlaloc, which is located just outside of Mexico City, where they made special offerings to the rain. "Around (Tlaloc) were a number of small idols, but he stood in the center as their supreme lord. The little idols represented the other hills and cliffs which surrounded this great mountain. These names still exist, for there is no hill lacking its proper designation. Thus the small idols which stood around the great god Tlaloc had their own names, just like the hills which encircle the great mountain."

VI. CONCLUSION

The *Lienzo of Petlacala*, while unique in its total composition, contains many elements which are familiar to anthropologists and historians acquainted with the ethnohistorical documents of central and southern Mexico. The style and theme of the Nahuatl narration in the outer border are similar to many colonial migration documents from Guerrero as well as other parts of Mexico. The manner in which the land boundaries are depicted in the inner border, through a combination of geographical glyphs and a Nahuatl text which leads the reader around the border of the communal land, also has parallels. Finally, the form and composition of the central panel are also characteristic of lienzos from other parts of the country, many of them executed during the mid to late eighteenth century. That which makes the *Lienzo of Petlacala* stand out from other lienzos of the area is the way in which all of these elements which have parallels elsewhere are combined to form one unique document which is eclectic in both form and function. How did the unique combination come about? We have concluded that this unusual document is a facsimile copy of a mid-eighteenth century original which is a composite of a wide variety of sources, probably assembled in response to a need by Petlacalans to legitimize their presence on their communal lands. In order to reconstruct the manufacture of this document, let us attempt to piece together events which probably occurred during that period leading to the production of the Lienzo.

Around the middle of the eighteenth century, New Spain was subjected to a process of general reorganization as part of a wave of enlightenment which accompanied the Bourbons and their viceroys to power. Societies in the New World were told to set things in order and to reorganize local government archives and institutions to fit the tenets of the time. The official census of 1791 which, by the way, contains valuable information from the town of Tlapa, is a product of this reorganization effort. Another product of this period of reexamination of local conditions was Villaseñor y Sánchez' *Theatro americano* (1746-1748), an ambitious and fairly detailed reconnaissance of New Spain. This epoch also produced a call for the regulation of personal and public holdings and a revision of land titles and property rights. Communities with communal land holdings were told to establish in legal fashion the boundaries of their lands and to exhibit evidence of ownership before the proper authorities.

As demonstrated in a written account preserved in the archives of the Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria in Mexico City to be cited later, a decree went out sometime during the late 1750s requiring communities with com-

munal lands to present to regional officials proof of their territorial boundaries and documentation of when and how they came into possession of these territories. Many communities were able to comply and provided authorities with the proper documents. Other communities, however, were not able to provide the proper documentation for their lands. Improper archival storage, fire, theft, and other unfortunate occurrences had destroyed the land documents of many of them. Many communities were faced with the frightening possibility of losing their lands unless something was done to meet the requirements of the regional officials. Petlacala was one such community which found itself without documentation for its communal lands. In 1758 when authorities of Petlacala appeared before a provincial representative in Tlapa asking for confirmation of their lands, they stated that they were without a written title:

Con fecha 18 de diciembre de 1758, los naturales del pueblo de San Pedro Petlacala, se presentaron ante don Juan José de Villalobos Teniente General de la Provincia de Tlapa, manifestando que desde inmemorial tiempo estaban poseyendo las tierras correspondientes a su pueblo, *aunque sin ningún título*, por lo que solicitaron se reconociera su centro y la colindancia del pueblo de Chipetepeque, ofreciendo servir a su Majestad con la cantidad de cinco pesos, dado que sus tierras son cerros montuosos, pedregales y barrancas profundas. (SRA, EX. 276.1/1237, 1946).*

Anxious to protect their interest, Petlacalan officials met and decided to have a document drawn up to meet this crisis and any future demands made upon them by the Crown. Thus all documents, probably ancient scraps of paper and cloth together with local boundary lists, migration accounts, and historical legends were gathered from the community's oral and written resources. They may have been taken to Puebla, to the capital or to some other large colonial city and exhibited before a specialist who could produce land documents acceptable to colonial courts. One can imagine the community's elders emptying a box filled with bits of old codices (some perhaps antedating the conquest), yellowed paper reports, and ancient maps. Finally, oral accounts of the Petlacalan migration into the Guerrero region with an impressive list of events were recited and recorded by the scribe. Perhaps to emphasize the historical importance of this migration, three or four versions of the same tale were offered. Out of all of these sources, written and oral, the present Lienzo was born.

In order to make the characters in the Petlacala drama seem more meaningful to the locals, sixteenth-century personages such as Charles V were outfitted in contemporary attire—with powdered wig and all. The community's Indian founding fathers were also represented in contemporary eighteenth-century garb.

* On December 18, 1758 the natives of the village of San Pedro Petlacala arrived in the presence of don Juan José de Villalobos, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Tlapa, stating that they have held their village lands since times immemorial; *although they do not possess a (written) title*. Therefore they ask that their center and its boundaries with the village of Chipetepec be surveyed, offering to pay His Majesty the quantity of five pesos, since their lands consist of rough hills, rocky places, and deep ravines.

Petlacalans must have been impressed and proud of their new document. They now had visible proof of the legitimacy of their lands and could enjoy the security of knowing that their boundaries were recognized by law. We know that on 22 April 1771 Petlacalans presented acceptable proof of communal land ownership before the courts in Tlapa. (SRA, EX. 276.1/1237, 1946) The exact place and time for the manufacture of the *Lienzo of Petlacala* cannot be established with absolute precision. We have therefore been led to speculate on its creation.

The authenticity and importance of the Lienzo do not lie solely in its antiquity, however, but also in the function of the document to those who have held it for these past two centuries. It is the history of a people, and as such is sacred to all. In some respects it *is* the community of Petlacala and personifies it in annual rituals. As a manifestation of communal land boundaries and as a tool through which such boundaries are maintained, the *Lienzo of Petlacala* is a constant source of security to the residents of the community. It tells generation after generation how their lands came to be situated, where they are, and by what authority. Each hill, each ravine, each boulder, and each grove of trees is carefully listed and read to the inhabitants annually lest they forget their rights and responsibilities. Although not a legal land document in the eyes of the contemporary Mexican government, to the people of Petlacala the Lienzo legitimately represents them as a community.

In the preceding chapters we have described, translated, and analyzed a document which is an important part of the ethnohistorical literature of southern Guerrero. Because of the dearth of historical and prehistorical information from this region, we feel that this work will add significantly to our overall understanding of this region.

Most lienzo research in southern Mexico is relatively recent. Barlow was one of the first to engage in the description and analysis of these enigmatic colonial documents. Smith's *Picture Writing from Ancient Southern México* (1973), and Volume 12-15 of the *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (1972-75) have brought to our attention how numerous these documents are and in what enormously diverse forms they appear. Galarza's *Lienzos de Chiapetlán* (1972) shows us the various ways manuscripts like this can be approached and his publication should be the standard to which all future investigations should aspire.

Future exploration in local village archives may yield additional materials which, together with this Lienzo and others already documented, will help scholars piece together the ethnohistorical puzzle of southern Mexico.

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