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A Reconstruction of the History of San Miguel Tulancingo, Coixtlahuaca, Mexico, from Indigenous Painted Sources¹

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Introduction

The native painted records from the Coixtlahuaca Basin, in the northern Mixteca Alta region of Oaxaca, comprise the largest and richest group of sixteenth century historical-cartographic documents provenant from any area outside the Basin of Mexico (Figure 1). The following study is based on the analysis of two colonial paintings, not included in the Glass (1964, 1975a, 1975b) catalogues because they were previously unknown to scholars. The two paintings are kept in the municipal archive of the village of San Miguel Tulancingo, as part of the group of documents that constitute this community's land titles. Their contents are analyzed and compared to information derived from each other,

and from other colonial sources, including the sixteenth century cotton cloth paintings known to scholars as the *Lienzo de Ihuitlan* (Glass 1975b:No. 157) and the *Lienzo de Tlalpitepec* (Glass 1975b:No. 8). A field reconnaissance of existing boundaries and the general environmental conditions of the community's territory was carried out in 1989 in order to better understand the spatial context implied by the paintings.

Ninga Xingo or San Miguel Tulancingo as it is known today, is a very old Chocho-speaking community nestled in the western range of Upper Tertiary volcanoes that comprise the western boundary of the Coixtlahuaca Basin. Translated from Nahuatl, Tulancingo means "small place of cattails." The potential importance of this village to students

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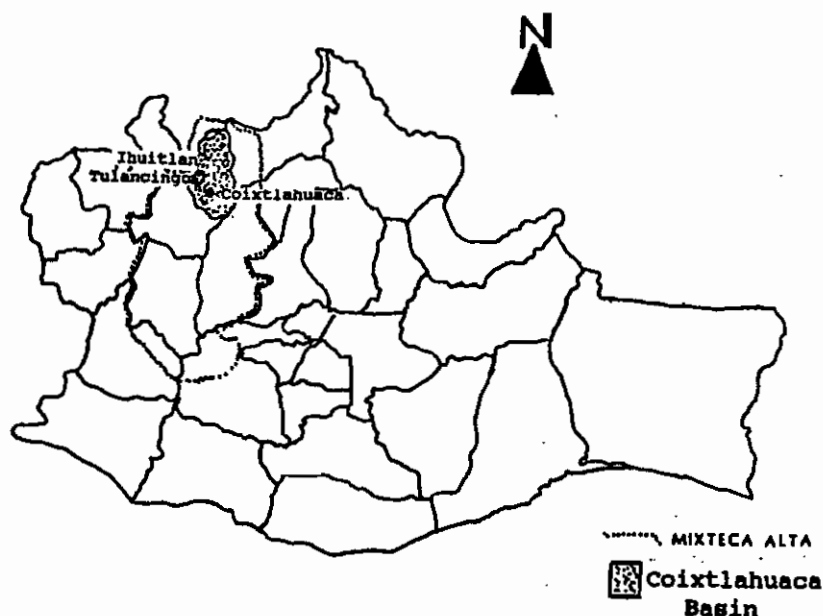


Figure 1. Map of Oaxaca showing the Coixtlahuaca Basin in the Mixteca Alta region and the villages of Tulancingo, Ihuatlan and Coixtlahuaca

of Mesoamerica was first suggested by Smith (1973:72,74). A short monograph on the village (Nieto Angel 1984) briefly mentions the existence of a codex and a colonial "pintura" together with other interesting documents. In 1989, the opportunity arose to study and photograph these two paintings. The paintings were subsequently rephotographed in 1991 (Figures 2 and 3).

Most of Tulancingo's inhabitants have never seen their *codices*, the local term by which these colonial paintings are known. The community has become familiar with the paintings through the officials designated periodically to care for the village's communal property or *bienes comunales*, of which the paintings are part. Despite the fact that first hand knowledge of the paintings is only reserved to a few of the community's members, the general population who has learned about the documents indirectly has a profound reverence for these powerful objects. The villagers attach great

importance to the paintings primarily because they constitute the earliest records of their village's history and territorial claims.

Until recently, both documents were kept a well guarded community secret. Thanks to the cooperation and interest expressed by the municipal authorities of Tulancingo during the period 1989 to 1991, permission was obtained by the author to study the paintings and other colonial documents in their care as part of the research project currently underway for reconstructing the historical ecology of the Coixtlahuaca Basin communities.

The Record of Village Communal Property

It is quite obvious that both paintings are maps of the "pueblo." The church located at the center of both documents confirms their colonial origin.

The glosses in European script on the sixteenth century document are in Chocho, while those of the later painting are in Spanish. Both documents record the village's boundaries and their location relative to the cardinal directions from the center of the village and to each other. The extant *Memoria de los linderos* or *Títulos primordiales* from this and other villages support this interpretation. However, the sixteenth century document also contains a partial record of Tulancingo's rulers and of their descendants who became rulers elsewhere. A large number of colonial paintings depict rulers or members of the nobility and their ancestral lines. Most of these paintings were

drafted as supporting material to other documentation related to inheritance of land, property, tribute, and servants for the maintenance of the rulers and their families.

The two old villagers considered by other community members as most knowledgeable in matters relating to their village's history and territorial possessions, were unable to read or give Spanish translations of the Chocho glosses. They were also unable to identify the people portrayed on the early document. However, these men and the municipal authorities see the 16th century codex as an earlier



Figure 2. General view of sixteenth century Codex Tulancingo I. (photograph by Carlos Rincón Mautner, 1991, courtesy of the H. Ayuntamiento of Tulancingo)

generation of the subsequent *pintura* dating to the middle of the eighteenth century.

By referring to the original *Títulos*, it was possible to find a few glosses in Chocho that correspond to those on the early codex. Furthermore, these men understand that the earlier document is also a visual record of their lands. They know the painting's general orientation and how it relates to the eighteenth century painting.

On the basis of the study of other documents in the Coixtlahuaca corpus and colonial documents in European script from the Mixteca Alta, it seems quite likely that the codices and colonial cloth paintings were created for the village's rulers.

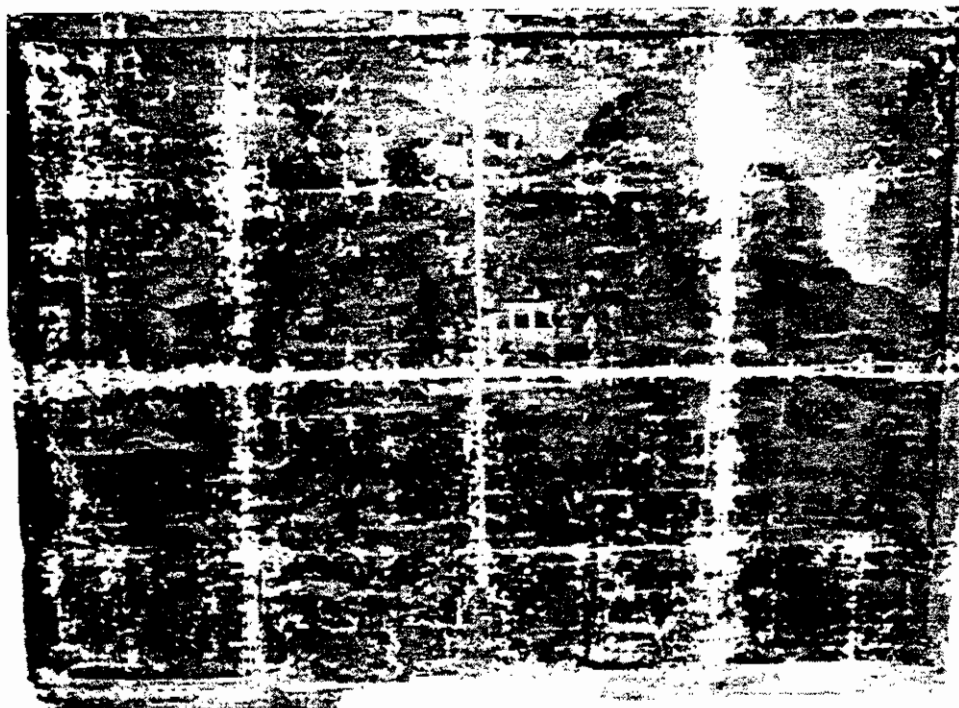


Figure 3. Codex Tulancingo II, an oil painting dating to 1753. (photograph by Carlos Rincón Mautner, 1991, courtesy of the H. Ayuntamiento of Tulancingo)

Given the nature of the records, both documents express concerns related to the land holdings of the indigenous communal territory. The local Chocho name for this territorial unit does not appear to have survived, and could not be identified with any certainty from the extant colonial documentation in that language. Locally the village, or *pueblo*, is referred to as *xade*, a Chocho word that may be the equivalent for the territorial unit. From other areas of Mexico, where Nahuatl was spoken, the term used in reference to this territory was *altepetl* and the noble who governed the territory was the *tlatoani*. The equivalent administrative term for the territorial unit in Mixtec is *sina yya*, and that for village is *ñuu*.

In 1753, a year after the *composición* — during which the properly appointed authorities saw the lands claimed by Tulancingo, met with its neighbors at the different boundary markers, and formalized the *Titulos* in European script — the second codex, to be referred to as Tulancingo II, was commissioned. This oil on canvas painting shows the boundaries agreed upon through the *composición* and incorporated into the *Titulos*. It was painted from the vantage point of Cerro Tepetroje, the promontory just south of the village. Like Tulancingo I, the village with its church was placed at the center of the painting. In addition to the baldcypress tree (*Taxodium* sp.) that appears in the early codex and which is still alive today, the Old

World cedar (*Cupressus* sp.) planted in the church atrium is also depicted on **Tulancingo II**. Once the painting was completed, the village's *principales* signed it. Although this painting appears to have been framed and hung at one time, it is presently kept folded together with the lienzo and the other leather-bound land documents. The study of the files kept in the municipal archive provided no direct reference to the use of either painting in litigation.

General Description of Codex Tulancingo I

Tulancingo I is made of four sections of loosely woven cotton cloth. Each band section is approximately 34 cm wide and 145 cm in length. These sections were stitched together to create a surface of approximately 115 x 145 cm, on which the painting was subsequently drafted. This small format *lienzo* is bounded by a red line and alternating red and blue pinnate forms resembling *mojoneras*, the boundary markers made of piled stones and mortar, located at specific locations along the edges of a village's communal lands. Each pinnate form has two tones for each of the colors. Associated with almost all of the blue pinnate forms is a gloss in European script with the name of the boundary marker in Chocho. The script is crude, difficult to read, and was added by a native with some knowledge of this form of writing shortly after the painting was finished.

The once white cotton cloth is now light tan from age and handling. The colors are pale. Blue and red predominate. Four blue streams originate at the top of the document and merge into each other half way down. The two resulting streams merge into one at the bottom right. A church roughly outlined in black occupies the center of the document. Eight roads radiate out from the church, six of which go to either small churches or chapels representing close neighboring communities. Two of these chapels lie within the boundary. Drawings of the church or chapels became the convention used to represent villages. In this case the two chapels almost certainly represent small ward communities.

Ten human couples are represented, of which nine are within the boundary. Five of these cou-

ples are associated with buildings and dates. There is also a date associated with the church. The men in each couple can be identified as rulers by their *tlatoani* crowns and their seated position on woven thatch *icpallis*, or thrones. Three rulers are seated with their backs to their spouses.

The buildings associated with the five rulers represent the *tecpan*, or ruler's house. The principal church and the five houses shown were stuccoed and traces of the thin white layer may be seen still attached to the cloth. Furthermore, the faint decorations on each house roof can still be seen. The principal decorative element appears to represent a six-petalled flower sculpted on the *ndequé*, or calcrete from which most elite houses were made during the Postclassic Period (c.a. A.D. 1000-1520).

The Depiction of Rulership

All the males on the manuscript wear a *tilmatl*, or white cloak. Unlike other documents from the Mixteca, where the ruling lord's hand is extended before him, none of the rulers' hands can be seen on this document. Furthermore, their legs are flexed and drawn up to their chests. The representation of the rulers is also suggestive of the Postclassic Period funerary custom for interment of nobles. Since the reference made in the document is to ancestors of the ruling lineage, it is not unlikely that this convention is a way of representing the departed.

The document uses two additional conventions to distinguish the rulers. First, the men in the second and third couple do not wear headbands. The fourth lord is once again shown wearing the *tlatoani* great speaker's crown. This symbol of rulership is most often seen in documents depicting rulers from Nahuatl-speaking Central Mexico, but it also occurs with relative frequency in the Coixtlahuaca corpus. The crown is the convention used to indicate the rank of the bearer as ruler of the *altepetl*, the indigenous territorial unit discussed above. The second distinction is the position of the males with respect to the females. The second, third, and fourth rulers are shown seated with their backs to their spouses, whereas in the other couple groups, the men face their wives.

Conceptually rulership, or *toniñe* in Mixtec, is defined as the bond between the ruler and the

land. On this *lienzo*, this bond is usually associated with a date. The social metaphor is marriage, usually an agreement arrived at by mutual consent between the members who have the highest rank in each of two families. This agreement also included defining who would in time be chosen as the succeeding king or village ruler, and the particular land parcels, tribute, servants, and laborers that would accompany those titles. The tradition is well described for the *cacicazgo* of Yanhuítlan in 1580, and appears to have been common in the rest of the Mixteca: *Se ha tenido y guardado esta costumbre de sucesión de los señorios y cacicazgos de este pueblo y los demás pueblos a el comarcanos* (AGN², Civil #516, exp.9, f.11 v.)

Rulership is recorded using the convention of a noble couple seated on the *petate* (straw mat) and *icpalli* (throne), or the *yuhuitayu*, in Mixtec, at the foot of the ruler's house, or *tecpan*. The spring flowing underneath the straw mat and house, especially when associated with a mountain, is a reference to the *altepetl* (*atl*, "water," *tepetl*, "hill") or the community lands. On the document there are two mountains in close proximity to buildings with springs emerging from beneath them. Trees are another convention always related to rulership in documents from the Mixteca. In the case of this *lienzo*, the tree is at the bottom center and associated with the couple named 10 Motion and 4 Rabbit. They sit at the base of the "hill of the ear," from which grows the baldcypress (*Taxodium* sp.) still revered in the village today. The same hill is depicted on Codex Tlalpítepec.

Tulancingo I and other Coixtlahuaca Documents

Codex Tulancingo I differs markedly in style from rest of the Coixtlahuaca corpus of sixteenth century paintings. It more closely resembles depictions of rulers and date notations found in the Nahuatl-speaking communities of Central Mexico, Tlaxcala, and southern Puebla, than the other documents from Coixtlahuaca. Rather than the usual Coixtlahuaca convention of representing Year Bearers within the "AO sign," dates in Tulancingo I appear on miniature platforms of cut and fitted stones. In particular, the document appears to have close stylistic similarities to the Codex of Te-

camachalco, from the village of that name in the state of Puebla (Vischer I, Glass 1975b: No. 300). However, the convention used in naming the rulers is the same as that used in the rest of the Mixteca region. Additional names, possibly indicators of rank, but which scholars have usually interpreted as personal names, were used in the case of the two lords that appear within the boundary in the upper right hand corner of the document.

The pattern on the palm thatch thrones closely resembles the rhomboid markings found on the back of a rattlesnake. The dots within the spaces are suggestive of the ocelot skin markings associated with the Toltec ancestry of the Coixtlahuaca monarchs. Although Tulancingo I does not mention the ancestor 8 Death, who was a blood relative of the founder of the principal line of Coixtlahuaca during the reestablishment of the dynasty within the Basin, the snake-ocelot mats, thrones, and additional elements to be discussed support a connection to Coixtlahuaca.

According to Smith's (1983:243) interpretation of the pictorial convention of rulership illustrated by the straw throne and mat, Tulancingo I was drafted after the Spanish Conquest. The document also originates from an area that paid tribute to the Aztecs and contains other conventions found in documents from the Basin of Mexico, such as the women's pose (depicted kneeling in front of their spouses). However, an alternative interpretation should be considered. There are so few Precolumbian documents that our ability to make any substantive statement correlating style with regional distribution is severely hampered. Rather than representing spatial or even ethnic variability, these stylistic differences, when they occur, particularly in the case of early colonial paintings, perhaps more closely reflect the disruption of indigenous culture and the rapid changes that affected indigenous society after the Spanish Conquest. These included especially disease and acculturation. Therefore a community's need to compile a register of its boundaries should be seen within this context. If local talent was unavailable, which was very likely the case at the end of the sixteenth century, when the local population reached its nadir, the community may have commissioned an itinerant artist to create the *memoria de los linderos* in a codex style reflecting not only Nahuatl-speaking ar-

eas, but including European innovations, such as those which we find in the document at hand. Therefore, the possibility that the village of Tulancingo hired a *tlacuilo* familiar with the notation used in the Nahuatl speaking areas of southern Puebla should be considered.

Chronologically, Tulancingo I appears to have been made late in the sixteenth century. The rigidity and flatness of figures and elaborate personal ornamentation found in the pre-Hispanic codices and the earliest of the Coixtlahuaca Basin colonial paintings, Tequixtepec I, are replaced after the middle of the sixteenth century by more naturalistic renditions of the human form and less elaborate ornamentation. On Tulancingo I, the artist even attempted to give the painting a three dimensional character by shading the creases in the rulers' cloaks, an innovation adopted after the Conquest.

The data contained in the paintings useful for a historical reconstruction differ markedly between early and late works. The late sixteenth century painted documents from the Coixtlahuaca Basin communities are much simplified and abbreviated by comparison to the early ones. Tulancingo I gives an abbreviated list of its rulers. In fact, while Ihuitlan depicts 171 personages (Caso 1961:239; 1989:76) and provides a full record of rulers for three communities, including 34 for Tulancingo, the former document depicts only 20. This is not a rare occurrence within the Coixtlahuaca painted corpus. For instance, the principal codex of Coixtlahuaca, Coixtlahuaca I, better known as Seler II, provides the most complete register of rulers and their spouses for the two dynastic lines which governed from the *cabecera* community. Subsequent documents from Coixtlahuaca, the paintings or tracings known as Ixtlan and Meixueiro, (or, using the nomenclature reflecting generation, Coixtlahuaca II and Coixtlahuaca III, respectively), present an abbreviated list of rulers without their spouses. Rather than 23 rulers for the principal line, only the rulers associated either with the conquest of territory or the reestablishment of the dynasty in the Basin are recorded.

Orientation and Scale

The four streams so conspicuous in the codex represent the basic drainage pattern of the area, from west to east. These streams begin along the

ridges to the west and northwest of the village. The top of the painting corresponds to the direction west. Perennial water sources are particularly important in the temperate subhumid environment of the Coixtlahuaca Basin. Tulancingo, with its abundant streams, is one of the most humid localities. Its glyph on the Coixtlahuaca documents, the "place of cattails," or on Codex Ihuitlan, as a "temple with springs," underscores its importance as one of the more humid localities of the Basin. The Oligo-Miocene Andesites of the range that surrounds the village rise from 2,300 to 2,600 m in elevation. These mountains intercept the moisture-laden Trade Winds that blow from the northeast during much of the year. The four principal streams are formed by numerous springs and seeps along the contact between these volcanoes and the underlying Lower Tertiary siltstones and sandstones.

The bounded area contains two place signs and several dates which allow us to relate Tulancingo I to the other Coixtlahuaca Basin documents. The place sign for Tequixtepec, the neighboring village represented by the "hill of the shell," just east of Tulancingo, appears along the boundary at the bottom center of the document. Within the boundary, in the upper right hand corner of the painting, is the place sign for Ihuitlan, consisting of a mountain with a copper axe on its summit. The mountain rides on the back of a black snake (Caso 1961:247; 1989:84). This glyph is almost identical to that identified by the people of that neighboring community as representing their village on their codex (Parmenter 1982:12). Ihuitlan is located north of present day Tulancingo. The nuclear area included by the territories of these two villages is of approximately 24 km².

On Codex Tlalpatepec, the place sign identified by Caso (1961:270; 1989:101) as Ihuitlan, (the church on a feather mat) is also associated with the attributes of Tulancingo. These consist of a small black ruler's house, the tree (which Caso considered to be a mimosa), and the dates 11 Reed 8 Flower and 2 Flint 1 Grass. The way that these data have been grouped further suggests that a close relationship existed between the two villages. Yet, Caso did not recognize this association. The church has the date 11 Reed 8 Flower, which is virtually the same as that associated with the

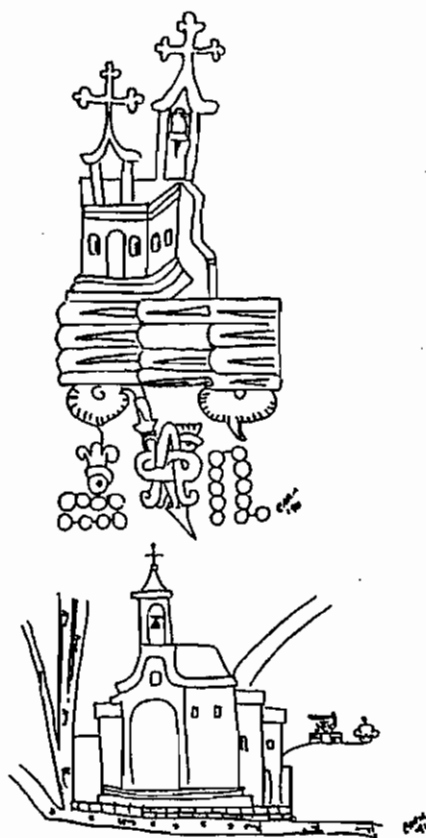


Figure 4. Tulancingo's church, as represented on **Codex Tlalpítepec** (above) and on **Codex Tulancingo I** (below). Note the coinciding dates, which probably represent the church's foundation in 1543

church on **Tulancingo I** (Figure 4). The numbers 1 and 8 are often interchanged on Coixtlahuaca documents. Caso considered this date to mark the beginning of the dynastic line of rulers. However, in the light of the evidence given on **Tulancingo I** in reference to rulership, the date most probably represents the foundation of the church in the year 1543. The year falls within the period in which the Church was renewing what would become the definitive evangelization effort to convert the inhabitants of the Mixteca to Christianity.

The Identity of the Rulers and Location of the Seat of Government

In reviewing other documents from the Coixtlahuaca Basin, we find additional correlations permitting us to establish the relationship between **Tulancingo I** and the rest of these manuscripts. A number of the ruler-spouse combinations in the manuscript are shared with both **Codex Ihuitlan**



Figure 5. The daughter of the rulers of Tulancingo, Lady 9 Wind, and Lord 11 Deer, her husband from the hamlet of Ihuitlan, surrounded by three corrals. The house of Tulancingo gains possession of Ihuitlan through this marriage alliance. Drawn by the author from the original *Codex Tlalpитеpec*

and *Tlalpитеpec*. Using the ruler sequences given on both of these documents, it is possible to establish the proper reading sequence on *Tulancingo I*.

If we turn to the *Codex of Tlalpитеpec*, the place sign identified by Caso (1961:270; 1989:101) as Ihuitlan has four of the ten sets of noble couples depicted on *Codex Tulancingo I* associated with the town. However, an earlier ancestor, 8 Death, or her spouse 13 Vulture, who appear on *Tlalpитеpec*, are not mentioned on *Tulancingo I*.

On *Tlalpитеpec*, the sequence of rulers associated with the double toponym for Tulancingo-Ihuitlan is: (beginning at the bottom)

10 Flint	6 Rain
3 Grass	4 Rain
2 Motion	6 Grass
8 Death	13 Vulture

The record of these nobles accounts for the passage of time before the branch of the ruling family is established at Tulancingo. The sequence also provides the information necessary to link these no-

bles to 9 Alligator and 12 Eagle, the couple whose return to the Coixtlahuaca Basin reestablishes the dynasty, as recorded in **Tequixtepec I** and **Ihuitlan**.

A synthesis of the data obtained from these two documents reveals the following: a branch of the same dynastic line that was established at Tequixtepec by two brothers, lords 3 Lizard and 11 Lizard, and which would eventually rule Coixtlahuaca, was established in the environs of Tulancingo and Ihuitlan in the year 12 Flint 5 Snake by the descendants of their sister, 8 Death. According to the documents that inform us about the early dynastic history, these rulers would claim to be the descendants of 7 Reed, the first ancestor who emerged from the water, through 7 Water, founder of the branch of the dynasty in the Coixtlahuaca Basin.

Continuing with our analysis of the data for Tulancingo and Ihuitlan given in **Tlalpитеpec**, we see that the ruler sequence then bifurcates. One couple, 4 Rabbit and 10 Motion, shown by the column of rulers, is associated with the previously mentioned small black *tecpan*, or ruler's house, baldcypress tree, and the date 2 Flint 1 Grass. Using the orientation given by this painting, the couple becomes established south of the compound place sign for Tulancingo-Ihuitlan. The other couple, 9 Wind and 11 Deer, is connected with a line and appear at the same level as the earliest rulers 8 Death and 13 Vulture, at the bottom and to the right of the column of rulers (Figure 5). They are surrounded by three deer corrals.³ This area would correspond to north. Therefore the basic north-south layout of the two villages, Tulancingo and Ihuitlan, is given by this document.

The dynastic record for Ihuitlan on the document from that village begins with the marriage of 9 Wind to 11 Deer, as mentioned above. However, her parents, 6 Motion and 1 Monkey, who were rulers of Tulancingo, were not recorded on either **Tlalpитеpec** or **Tulancingo I**. Although both **Ihuitlan** and **Tlalpитеpec** mention her sister, who married the ruler of "chile hill," **Tulancingo I** does not mention either the couple or this place.

Significantly, on **Ihuitlan**, the mat upon which the wedding of 9 Wind takes place does not have the ocelot markings or the tail. We can confidently interpret this convention as an indication that the

village of Ihuitlan acknowledged, through its own codex, its subordinate status to Tulancingo. This interpretation is further supported by **Tulancingo I**, which includes the place sign of Ihuitlan within its boundaries, although it does not mention any of its rulers. Caso (1961:246), in his original description of the sequence as that for "Agua," had mismatched the rulers. This error was corrected in subsequent references to the dynasty (Caso 1979; 1989:83).

In his study of **Codex Ihuitlan**, Caso (1961:244, 1977:Appendix V; 1989:82-83) established that there were two early dynasties, one corresponding to Yucucuy, and another to Pinoyalco-Ihuitlan. He read the sequence of rulers from the bottom up, as is customary. Caso interpreted the space between 4 Rain, which he placed in the first dynasty, and 6 Rain, the first ruler of the second dynasty, as a dynastic change. This same early sequence, as recorded on **Tlalpитеpec**, also led him to continue reading in the appropriate column. However, he could not find evidence on **Ihuitlan** to support **Tlalpитеpec's** record of the relationship between 4 Rain and 6 Rain (Caso 1961:244; 1979:420,422; 1989:82).

The apparent break on **Ihuitlan** can actually be explained as the need to illustrate the "place of Water," Caso's (1961:246; 1989:83) "Agua," before the register or account of succession could proceed. The space also ends the record of events prior to the establishment of the family within the Tulancingo-Ihuitlan boundary in the year 12 Flint, day 5 Snake. However, because he was following the dynastic sequence of Pinoyalco-Ihuitlan, and dealing with the document from that village, he continued ascribing the sequence to Ihuitlan. According to Caso, Ihuitlan's record of dynastic succession was in the center column and that for "Agua" immediately to the right. From the analysis of **Tulancingo I**, it is now possible to determine that the center column corresponds to Tulancingo's rulers and that the place sign which Caso called "Agua" is actually another way of portraying the place name of Tulancingo.

Caso's two dynasties actually correspond to the two branches of the same family which were discussed earlier. At the bottom center of **Ihuitlan**, where the record begins, is a place sign glossed in European script as *Mitzmitoco-Tlachixtlavaca*.

Given the relatively extensive qualifiers that depict this place: the date 12 Flint 5 Grass, a ballcourt, the shrine of the Rain God, two priestesses and a tree (which we earlier associated with rulership), it is unlikely that the reference being made is to a ward or *sujeto* of Ihuítlan. This is an obviously important place whose geographic location remains unknown.

The date 12 Flint 5 Grass marks an event. Most likely it refers to 9 Alligator reestablishing the dynastic line upon returning to the Coixtlahuaca Basin. Tequixtepec I portrays this lord on an ocelot skin, whereas the two previous rulers sat on plain stools. Both of his male children ride ocelots and take second spouses from the local elite. The ocelot, or its skin, when associated with rulers, appears to be a distinction of rank indicating higher nobility, perhaps even Toltec ancestry. This painting records the two brothers as becoming rulers of the village of Tequixtepec. However, their sister, whose descendants give rise to the house of Tulancingo, is not portrayed.

The Record of Early Rulers

The earliest noble couple recorded on Tulancingo I, Lord 6 Grass and his spouse 2 Motion, appear at the extreme left (south), slightly below the middle of the document (Figure 6A). The convention of placing them outside the *lienzo* boundary suggests that they never entered the bounded space while they were alive. The reference made is to the ancestors of the rulers to be. The date over the valley with the tree immediately above these rulers is 4 Flint 7 Alligator.

The sequence then continues within the bounded area of the painting with the lowermost of the two couples located on the upper right hand side (Figure 6B). The ruler named 4 Rain-Snake sits on an *icpalli*. His spouse, 3 Rabbit, and a baby in a bundle behind the throne are on the *petate*. The date associated with this couple is year 12 Flint, day 5 Snake. The day sign and numeral coincide with those given on Ihuítlan for the place sign "Water." The year sign also coincides, but the numeral has been destroyed by a tear in the cloth fabric. Although the three are on the mat, his posture suggests that he leads his family to the lands in the vicinity of Ihuítlan.

6 Rain "Heart"- Snake and his spouse 10 Flint inherit the lands by Ihuítlan (Figure 6C). He is depicted as a conqueror with a lance in hand by the Ihuítlan place sign. Again his position relative to his wife suggests that he is leading her, as if on a journey. The building, spring mat, and mountain are all symbols denoting the *altepetl*. On Ihuítlan, he appears seated on ocelot skin as the first lord of Tulancingo. A vessel is between the pair and the date 1 Rabbit 7 Death. The rabbit as year bearer is not clearly visible, and the day sign death, usually represented by a skull, appears here like the wind sign. A snake adorned with feather balls is above and behind this lord's head. The date appears to be quite significant, as it appears on several other paintings from the Coixtlahuaca Basin.

Using Ihuítlan as the template, the sequence on Tulancingo I skips the ruler who gave rise to the house of Ihuítlan (6 Motion and his spouse 1 Monkey) and continues with the lords 10 Motion and 4 Rabbit (Figure 6D). The lord is again portrayed with his back to his wife, suggesting that it is this couple who enter the small valley and become the first rulers of Tulancingo of the Eared Hill-Baldcypress Tree, establishing the seat of the *altepetl* at the site of the present day village. The event is recorded on both Tulancingo I and Tlalpítepec as having occurred in the year 2 Flint, day 1 Grass. This couple had 5 children: 3 Ocelot, who became ruler of Tzozopatzla; 10 Snake, who governed Tlacotepec; 7 Wind, ruler of Tlavixtlahuaca, 2 Rabbit, who married 10 House of an unnamed place in the vicinity of the village of Tlalpítepec; and 12 Motion, who became the fourth ruler of Tulancingo.

The Record of Late Rulers

The record of succession on Tulancingo I then skips seven rulers and continues with the ninth lords of Tulancingo, 4 Water and 4 House, who ascended the throne in the year 7 House, day 1 Motion (Figure 6E). However, her name was recorded as 3 House on Ihuítlan. They had two sons, 3 Wind, who succeeded them as ruler of Tulancingo (Figure 6F), and 6 Snake, not recorded on this codex, but on Ihuítlan. However, Tulancingo I records 6 Snake's son 11 Monkey (Figure

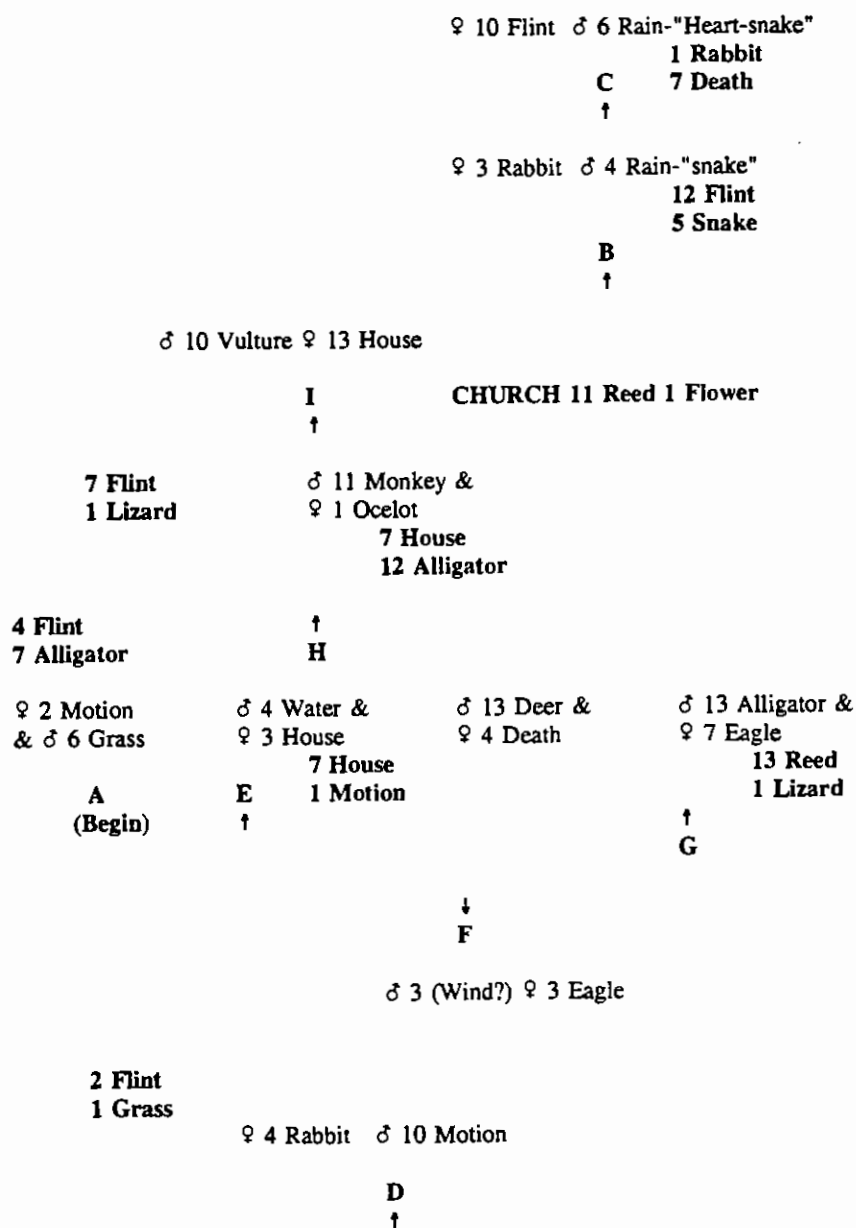


Fig. 6. Diagram of the dynastic information on *Codex Tulancingo I*. Dates appear in bold.

6H), who can be cross referenced as 10 Monkey on *Ihuitlan*.

11 Monkey and 1 Ocelot are installed as rulers of an unnamed place in the year 7 House day 12 Alligator. On *Ihuitlan*, his spouse's name is 8 Ocelot. He is the grandson of the couple described immediately below. 11 Monkey is recorded as the second lord in the sequence on *Ihuitlan*. He holds a lance and wears a warrior topknot. These elements suggest that he conquered the place and became ruler there. Caso (1979:267,327) considered him the second lord of Texcalhueyac, or, the "place of the bundle and the digging stick." He earlier proposed (Caso 1961:248;1989:84) that the sequence of lords are those of Texupan on the basis of *Codex Sanchez Solís* (cf. Egerton 2895).

The tenth lords of Tulancingo, according to *Ihuitlan*, were 3 Wind and 3 Eagle (Figure 6F). On both *Tulancingo I* and *Ihuitlan* a line connects them to 13 Alligator. This indicates that this is a son who marries 7 Eagle. He does not become a ruler of Tulancingo. The date 13 Reed 1 Lizard indicates his accession as ruler of a place not specified on either *Tulancingo I* or *Ihuitlan* (Figure 6G). According to the latter codex, his daughter 8 Lizard marries 13 Eagle, lord of Cozcatlan. Caso (1979:37) read his name as 12 Alligator and considered him a ruler of Coixtlahuaca, and a son of its last ruling couple, 10 Rabbit and 5 Deer. However, such an interpretation is anachronistic. It is also unlikely that the principal house of Coixtlahuaca, with higher status, would have married into Tulancingo's ruling family. The records of Coixtlahuaca's rulers show them marrying women from neighboring villages, such as Texupan, where no previous kinship ties with the local elite existed. As stated before, the kinship ties between Coixtlahuaca and Tulancingo rulers had been long established through their common ancestors 9 Alligator and 12 Eagle, according to the record on *Ihuitlan*.

Although there is no connecting line to the succeeding 13 Deer, the columnar arrangement on *Tulancingo I* and the successional record of *Ihuitlan* indicate that this lord inherited the *altepetl*. He was the other son 3 Wind and 3 Eagle (Figure 6G). Together with his spouse 4 Death, they became the eleventh lords of Tulancingo.

10 Vulture and 13 House are the final individuals recorded on the upper left of the painting (Figure 6I). Since they are not referenced either on *Ihuitlan*, or on any other painted source from the Basin, it is highly likely that they were Tulancingo's last rulers. Perhaps they aspired to inherit the *altepetl* sometime after the Spanish Conquest, after that painting had been created. *Tulancingo I* may have been commissioned by them, or by one of their immediate descendants.

Another possible interpretation is that these "rulers" were patrons of the church and were involved in community efforts to build that structure. The *tlatoani* would have been the logical person to approach in a community to procure both funds and labor. Furthermore, in their wills, ruler's always left a good deal of their material possessions to the church through established *capellanías*. The codex would have served as an ideal vehicle to record such a relationship between the ruler and the church. According to Spores (1967:87,162), during the 1540s, the Dominican friars in Yanhuitlan were "the directing force in community affairs and ...conspiring with the "caciques" [rulers] to exploit the indians."

In conclusion, *Tulancingo I* does not give a full record of its rulers. Nor does it present any successional information for any of the principal villages of the Coixtlahuaca Basin. The comparison of its personages with the complete sequence of rulers for the village given by *Ihuitlan* suggests that rather than preserving an historical record of its own rulers, the principal concern of the former document was to provide a record of the marriage of the children of its rulers into the noble houses of other villages.

The choice of rulers on this document also reflects a need to demonstrate familiarity with the village's early history. The first four couples account for the time between departure from Mitzmitoco Tlachixtlavaca and the establishment of the dynasty at Tulancingo. The other rulers mentioned were relevant both to the interests of the ruler and those of the villages he represented. Because the record accounts for those rulers who were established at other locations through marriage, it is quite plausible that there may have been land, and tribute in both material goods and labor derived from such

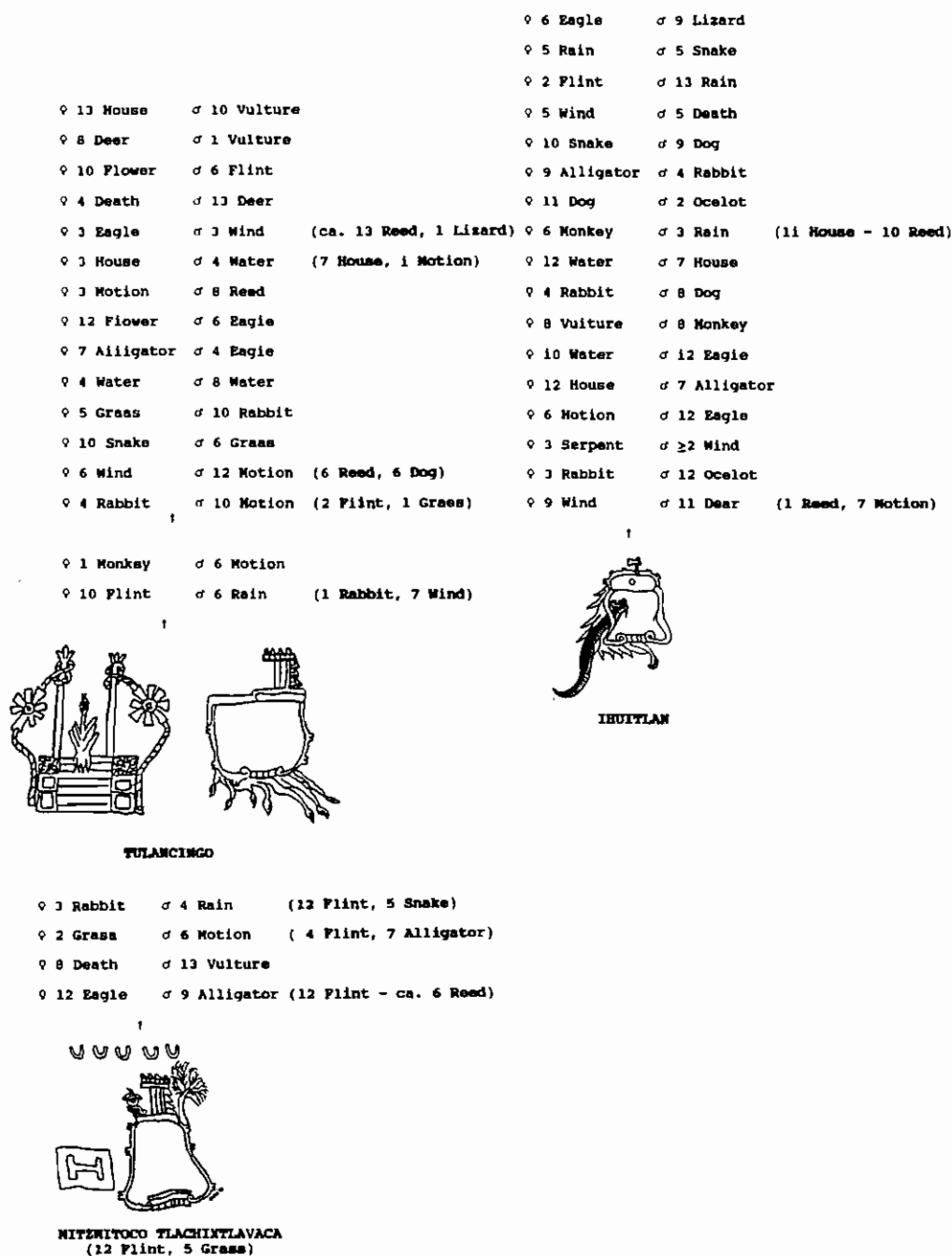


Figure 7. A synthesis of the dynastic sequence and preliminary chronology of Tulancingo and Ihuitlan, based on the indigenous painted sources from Coixtlahuaca.

unions, to which the rulers of Tulancingo would have been entitled.

On the basis of the dates given on this and other documents, a preliminary chronology for the rulers of both Tulancingo and Ihuitlan has been reconstructed below (Figure 7).

The Tulancingo-Ihuitlan Dyad as a Mesoamerican Political Administrative Model

The kinship relationship established through marriage between the ruling families of Tulancingo and Ihuitlan is well illustrated on Ihuitlan. While the former village held the seat of government and functioned as a religious center, Ihuitlan, according to local tradition, was the site of the most important tropical feather market in the southern Highlands of Mexico during the late Postclassic Period.

According to the record on Tlalpítepec and Coixtlahuaca I-II, during the reign of 12 Motion, in the year 6 Reed, day 6 Dog, a military campaign formed by an alliance of several rulers from the Mixteca, set out from Tulancingo towards the north, into what is today southern Puebla. This campaign would culminate with the return of 12 Lizard, one of the leaders of the campaign, from Cuauhtepéc by Tecamachalco, where he married 4 Grass/Reed. Upon returning, he established the dynasty at Coixtlahuaca through his marriage to a local princess 3 Ocelot.

The *altepetl* of Tulancingo and Ihuitlan appears to reflect the union of two settlements with distinct administrative and power brokering-regulating functions. The primary house based at Tulancingo was class endogamous, but provincially exogamous, that is, intermarriage occurred between members of the noble class, but with neighboring villages outside the Coixtlahuaca Basin. The rulers of the house of Ihuitlan appear to have been secondary in importance. All available evidence suggests that they were involved in forming alliances and maintaining stability within the Coixtlahuaca Basin through marriage or conquest.

Ihuitlan also seems to have provided some of the manpower to conquer villages within the Basin. This observation stems from the account given on

that village's codex regarding the conquest of Tlalpítepec, through an alliance of its ruler 3 Rain with Coixtlahuaca's ruler 10 Snake.

Tulancingo's Fate during the Colonia

The unelaborated incorporation of Ihuitlan's place sign within Tulancingo's boundaries indicates that this relationship was to be accepted, as if by default, and not to be contradicted by any authority. Codex Tulancingo II no longer incorporates Ihuitlan within its boundaries. The boundaries changed so much since the sixteenth century that it is little wonder that present day villagers cannot make sense of the glosses in European script. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, villages were allotted 600 *varas* as communal territory. That is to say, the two villages wished to be recognized as an inalienable territorial unit. At first, the measurement was taken from the edge of the village, and eventually from its center. Overall, a community's territorial possessions were greatly reduced. In the case of Tulancingo, its territory was reduced to less than half the original size.

The Spanish Conquest brought about a profound change in the political-administrative and economic realities of indigenous communities. Villages that had never been important became the seats of religious and civil administrative power. Part of the Spanish plan during the early colonial period seems to have been aimed deliberately at undermining the pre-existent indigenous power structure.

The Basin communities were divided into two *encomiendas* based at Coixtlahuaca and Tequixtepec, respectively. The *encomienda* of Tequixtepec is represented on Coixtlahuaca II and III by its place sign enclosed by a circle. Through its codex, Tequixtepec sought to de-emphasize the relationship that existed with Coixtlahuaca or Tulancingo. The new order brought about by the Spanish Conquest may have been perceived as an opportunity to seek independence and favor from Spanish authorities. Through their codices, Ihuitlan and Tlalpítepec cast their destiny with Tulancingo and Coixtlahuaca. The references to the dyad of Tulancingo and Ihuitlan, from those documents and from Tulancingo's own painting, strongly suggest that Tulancingo would have sought to maintain itself within Coixtlahuaca's jurisdiction.

During the latter part of the sixteenth century, Tulancingo was placed within the jurisdiction of Tamazulapan and may have formed part of the encomienda of that village. This Mixtec-speaking village had a Chocho speaking *barrio*. The change in jurisdiction may reflect the easier access to the village from the southwest than from Coixtlahuaca, to the southeast. It could also have been the result of the greater number of priests at Tamazulapan, from which the area could be served. However, the village of Ihuitlan continued to be administered from Coixtlahuaca. Ihuitlan was congregated by 1560. The record of some of the Tulancingo-Ihuitlan ward settlements that did not survive the *congregaciones* include Flavixtlavaca and Tzotzopatzla, which are mentioned on Ihuitlan. A *vista de ojos*, or boundary visit, carried out in 1750 provides additional insight on the nature and fate of these two settlements.⁵ By that time only their ruins could be seen, and their inhabitants had either died or resettled in other villages. The document further states that the community of Tlalpítepec chose their governor from Coixtlahuaca's rival, Tequixtepec, to represent it in its territorial claims. This was a clear contradiction of the historical process and a subversion of the established order for a *sujeto*, or dependent community. Tulancingo's boundaries were most likely redefined as a result of this visit. Moreover, it was probably then that the authorities determined that the village had no claim over Ihuitlan. The 1753 painting and accompanying signatures demonstrate that the village authorities accepted this verdict.

The Representation of Village Status

In studying the manuscripts from Coixtlahuaca it has become apparent that documents from subordinate villages tend to narrate a fuller account of the history of the principal villages. This observation appears to reflect the custom of the *tonixani*, where the wishes of the person or community directly involved are made evident by a third party, the subordinate community in this case, in an eloquent and reverential manner. Usually, a person who is particularly talented in this function is designated by the interested party or parties. Today the custom is practiced in marriage requests or in welcoming of pilgrims and visitors by the *mayor-*

domo, who has received the honor of preparing that year's village saint's feast. Rather than the *mayordomo* making the welcoming speech, the *tonixani* conveys his wishes and makes the offer of hospitality. This custom allows consensus building in a non-confrontational and elegant manner. In the case of the paintings under discussion here, it would have been critical for all accounts to match.

The record also appears to reflect village status or rank. On the matter of boundaries, *sujeto*, or ward villages, appear to have depended on the village to which they were subordinate for definitions of territorial extension and representation in litigation. This custom explains why the codices from both Ihuitlan and Tlalpítepec do not portray boundaries or boundary markers as might be expected. It would have been Tulancingo's privilege to establish these, as Tulancingo I attests.

Community hierarchy depended in part on antiquity, but primarily on kinship. That is to say that an older community usually had precedence over younger ones, especially if these were small. The pattern is similar to what we observe in the area today between the community and its wards. However, the place where the principal dynastic line had its seat took precedence over those communities that were even older. Those settlements where blood relatives of the principal dynastic line governed also had a higher status.

Of all the Coixtlahuaca Basin communities, the village of Coixtlahuaca, as seat of the *señorio*, or kingdom, had the highest status. The rulers from only two other communities were direct relatives of the principal dynastic line. These villages were Tequixtepec and Tulancingo. Ihuitlan followed because its rulers were indirectly related to Coixtlahuaca through the Tulancingo lineage. Older villages such as Tepelmeme and Nativitas, which did not have a direct line to Coixtlahuaca, had a lower rank.

Conquered villages such as Tlalpítepec had an even lower rank. San Mateo Tlalpítepec lies directly north of Tulancingo. This village was conquered by an alliance between 10 Snake of Coixtlahuaca and 3 Rain of Ihuitlan. As a result, 3 Rain married the widow of the ruler of Tlalpítepec, therefore incorporating this territory into the Ihuitlan rulers' possessions. Despite the short history of independent Tlalpítepec, it produced one

of the most magnificent paintings and fullest accounts of the history of the Basin communities. It is important to note that *Codex Tlalpatepec* acknowledges 3 Rain as its ruler. Furthermore, this village seems to have been required by the more important communities to provide an extensive account of the history of all the Basin villages. Therefore an abbreviated document from a higher status village could have referred to the extended supporting account given by its ward, without the risk of presenting ambivalent or contradictory information. Such a situation could help explain why a small community such as Tlalpatepec would have produced one of the largest and extraordinarily detailed accounts of the Precolumbian history of the Coixtlahuaca Basin communities in the sixteenth century. This could also have also been the case for the village of Tulancingo, since the fullest account of its history is given by the painting of its ward, Ihuitlan.

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Notes

1. The contents of this article were presented in three different public lectures: Annual meeting, American Society for Ethnohistory, Chicago, 1989; Annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Toronto, 1990; Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers, Auburn, 1990 (Rincón Mautner 1989, 1990a, 1990b).

2. Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City.

3. Deer were used to represent horses on sixteenth century native painted sources. These animals were comparable in size and appearance to horses, which were non-existent in the New World at the time of the Spanish Conquest. The representation of the deer corrals is almost identical to that on a request for a place to keep horses on the 1590 painting from Coixtlahuaca (AGN *Tierras*, v. 2729, exp. 5, f. 117r).

4. Because the numbers 1 and 8 are recorded interchangeably on some of the Coixtlahuaca painted documents, we can also assume that we are dealing with the same person.

5. A 1750 land document from the village archive of Sta. María Magdalena Xicotlan refers to both settlements as *barrios* of San Mateo Tlalpatepec. The description is as follows:

"Habiendo salido en la diligencia en el día 19 del mes de junio de 1750 años y estando inmediatos de dicho cerro [de Ñaate] compareció el gobernador de Coixtlahuaca, Francisco de Santiago y el de Tequixtepec, Don Antonio de Cordoba como apoderado del pueblo de San Mateo, diciendo que era contradicción por lo que mira el cerro del Ñaate por incluirse en este las tierras del barrio de Tlavixtlahuaca perteneciente a San Mateo.... En el Pueblo de San Mateo en 25 días del mes de Septiembre de 1750 años.... guiado por los testigos informantes de la entidad y acompañado por el gobernador y alcaldes de la cabecera de Coixtlahuaca y principales de los pueblos sus sujetos y de don Juan Rodriguez y Miguel Garcia españoles vecinos de comercio de la cabecera de Yanhuatlan caminando para el poniente la distancia de un cuarto de legua me pusieron en este paraje donde estaban unas ruinas que dijeron los testigos ser de la iglesia vieja del barrio de Tlavixtlahuaca en donde cogí de la mano al regidor del dicho pueblo de San Mateo y paseandolo por las dichas ruinas en nombre de su Magestad que Dios guarde, sin perjuicio a terceros que represente mejor derecho y amparo, restitui a su antigua posesión y en señal de ella tiro piedras y arrancó yerbas en dicho paraje ante el regidor y otros del pueblo de la Magdalena quienes no contradijeron..."

"...y a distancia de cien varas poco mas o menos la misma direccion atravezando una cañada donde se hayan unas tierras sembradas por los de San Francisco, se llegó a otra loma tendida en cuya medialidad demostraron los vecinos unas piedras sueltas con tierra blanca y que poseían una mojonera desbaratada que se dice "Daxao" que quiere decir en castellano palo con que se teje que dicho cacique gobernador y apoderado coincidieron en ese nombre que es lo mismo que "Tzozopaxtle" que dicha señal de mojonera es vestigio de las casas del barrio de Tzozopaxtle que hubo poblado allí y que habiendo acabado la gente se agregó a otros pueblos..."

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