

MAARTEN JANSEN *and* GABINA AURORA PÉREZ JIMÉNEZ

ENCOUNTER

WITH THE

Plumed  
Serpent

DRAMA AND POWER IN THE HEART OF MESOAMERICA



ENCOUNTER WITH THE  
PLUMED SERPENT

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*Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez*

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*To the memory of  
Flying Eagle Woman  
Ingrid Washinawatok  
(1957–1999)*



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## FOREWORD

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“Just as religious convictions determined social ethos and the way Native Americans behaved toward nature, ideology provided the frame for the recording and interpretation of history itself. . . . We see this reflected in the archetypal king of the archetypal civilized kingdom: Quetzalcoatl of Tollan.” So writes Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez at the end of the first chapter in the long-awaited, innovative, and significant *Encounter with the Plumed Serpent: Drama and Power in the Heart of Mesoamerica*. The Mesoamerican Worlds series has two other books whose titles include the famed name of Quetzalcoatl: David Carrasco’s *Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire: Myths and Prophecies in the Aztec Tradition, Revised Edition* and H. B. Nicholson’s classic study *Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl: The Once and Future Lord of the Toltecs*. Jansen and Pérez Jiménez’s *Encounter with the Plumed Serpent* adds a new complexity and richness to our understanding of Mesoamerica’s widespread Plumed Serpent tradition. The authors use

archaeological, iconographical, historical, and mythical evidence but also include contemporary ethnographic insights gleaned from years of working with indigenous peoples. Focusing intensely on the historical narratives of the Ñuu Dzauí peoples (the name given the Mixtecs by the Nahuas), Jansen and Pérez Jiménez describe the complex relationships among creator deities, rulers, warriors, place-names, and sacred storytelling not only to illuminate Quetzalcoatl's past significance as archetypal ruler, priest, and warrior but also to explain some of his living legacies today. As they mention in the preface, the authors strive to carry forward the "vision of a sovereign people with their own history and culture, with values and with projects for the future" by taking us deeper into the dynastic discourses, religious symbolisms, and political traditions of these Mesoamerican peoples than other scholars have done previously. The authors present these people as historical and mythical; filled with profound attachments to the material conditions of their towns, lands, and cities; and animated by extraordinary imaginations, intellectual commitments, and creative ways of expressing them. It is by focusing on this potent combination, in part, that we are able to grasp new understandings of how religious convictions and political ideology combined to make the Plumed Serpent the focal point of many creative aspects of Mesoamerican history.

Additionally, the thorough introduction explicates the nature of the primary evidence, linkages and disjunctions between codices, and the nature of kingships and gods in Mesoamerican traditions. The authors also confront us with the need to give back to these people and their documents their original names. We have eagerly looked forward to sharing the innovative work of Maarten Jansen with our readers, and here it is deeply enriched by the companion voice of Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez.

As was prophesied long ago, the Plumed Serpent has returned yet again, this time through the research and writings of Jansen and Pérez Jiménez.

DAVÍD CARRASCO AND EDUARDO MATOS MOCTEZUMA  
GENERAL EDITORS

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## PREFACE

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**I**N 1975 WE FIRST VISITED THE SACRED VALLEY OF YUTSA TOHON, SANTIAGO Apoala, in the Mixteca Alta (state of Oaxaca, Mexico)—a small village surrounded by steep cliffs on two sides and a precipice on the third, offering an overwhelming view of the blue mountain ranges behind the Cuicatec Cañada. Our journey was motivated by statements in ancient pictorial manuscripts and in reports by Spanish monks that this had been the place of origin of the dynasties that ruled Ñuu Dzauí, the “Nation of the Rain God”—the Mixtec people, the Mixtec land—in the centuries before the Spanish invasion.

Soon, with the help and orientation of knowledgeable people like Don Raúl García, Don Prisciliano Alvarado, Doña Otilia Alvarado, Don Macario López, and many more, we started to see the connection: the representations in the manuscripts coincided with the landscape that surrounded us, and in that landscape the legends from ancient times fused with those of the present. To the east, overlooking the precipice, rises the peak of Kaua Kaandiui, the

Mountain of Heaven, where in the time of darkness and mystery the primordial Ancestors had manifested themselves and built their home. From here their son and pupil, the Plumed Serpent, Lord 9 Wind, had come down to bring light and life to the world.

At the other end of the valley, where the two rock faces meet and leave only a narrow passage, is the Cave of the Serpent (Yauí Koo Maa), a dark and ancient place of ceremony. A huge stalagmite inside is called the “Bishop,” a venerated image: people go to him to ask a favor. Another story tells us that when the sun rose for the first time, a princess kept prisoner in this cave turned into stone in the center of the small subterranean pond. The waters that flow from her body feed the brook that gave its name to the town, the Yutsa Tohon, “River that pulls out and drags along” or the “Storytelling River”; it runs through the valley and forms a beautiful cascade where it plunges down. On its bank once stood the huge *pochote* tree that covered the entire valley with its shade and gave birth to the First Lords and Ladies, who, following the example of the Plumed Serpent and carrying his Sacred Bundle, became the founders of the Ñuu Dzaui kingdoms. It was the Plumed Serpent, then, who guided the rulers to be devout and just, who taught the people to work the land, to count the days, to express their thoughts and experiences in flowery songs and colorful paintings.

Yutsa Tohon, in many ways the chosen town of the Plumed Serpent, became for us the starting point of a quest to uncover Ñuu Dzaui history. A civilization is not a mere collection of archaeological artifacts but a living system of communication and interaction undergoing continuous development, with dramatic transformations over time. Searching for the connections between the past and the present, we became conscious of the multiple effects of colonialism rising around and between us. Indeed, the past is always the source of a specific present, and the present is always the product of a specific past. It is the problems of the present that determine our perspectives and the injustices of the past that haunt our relationships. In the colonial mind the peoples of the Western Hemisphere are being reduced to “indigenous ethnic groups” and “people without history,” locked in a vicious cycle of exploitation and discrimination. On one hand, they are fantasized about as mere symbols of national identity or romantic stereotypes; on the other their society falls victim to a rapid process of erosion, disintegration, and ethnocide. This inescapable context, rarely put forward explicitly in research designs, has unsettling, even traumatic consequences for both the investi-

gators and the investigated peoples. The past decades have witnessed a rise in consciousness, however, and the development of international standards on these matters. This process has important implications for the direction of research. In a postcolonial perspective, the notion of a “people without history” has to be replaced by the vision of sovereign peoples with their own history and culture, with values and with projects for the future.

With this in mind, we present here a synthesis of an important part of the precolonial Ñuu Dzaui pictorial manuscripts. These screen-fold books with figurative paintings tell us about the politics of the so-called Postclassic period (± A.D. 900–1521), their royal families, rituals, wars, alliances, and ideology. Most manuscripts have been taken out of their original context and are now kept in distant libraries and museums, where they have been renamed after foreign collectors, scholars, or political figures whom the investigators sought to please. Different authors and institutions have followed their own preferences in naming the documents. This has resulted in a confusing situation. For example “Codex Bodley” is called with more precision “Codex Bodley 2858,” adding a catalog number, but it is actually designated “MS. Mex. d. 1” in the Bodleian Library. More as a matter of principle, we recognize that the use of alien names for the ancient Ñuu Dzaui books reflects the colonization process. This situation has been analyzed critically, and in some cases more appropriate names have been accepted. Thus we no longer speak of the “Lienzo Antonio de León” but of the “Lienzo of Tlapiltepec.” In a similar way it seems fitting to change “Codex Muro” back to “Codex of Ñuu Naha” and “Codex Porfirio Díaz” to “Codex of Tututepetongo” or rather “Codex Yada.” In all these cases we are now certain of the place from which the document came. More problematic is the renaming of other codices, which have become generally accepted by scholars and for which it is not easy to find a new designation. Some proposals do not constitute any progress in this respect, like that of “Codex Caso” for “Codex Colombino-Becker,” while others actually represent a step backward, like “Tonalamatl de los Pochtecas” for “Codex Fejérváry-Mayer” or “Tepexic Annals” for “Codex Vindobonensis.” In earlier publications we mostly continued to use the old names to avoid confusion. But by now the situation has become somewhat chaotic anyway, so we have decided to start using more appropriate names for the Ñuu Dzaui pictorial manuscripts. In all cases we have tried to find names directly and unequivocally related to the document. The main changes are summarized here.

The Codex Bodley and the Codex Selden, named after the first known European owners, could better be named for the first Ñuu Dzaui owners, Iya Qhcuua (Lord 4 Deer) and Iya Sicuañe (Lord 10 Grass), respectively. As the interpretation of their contents has progressed, we can now identify them by the communities they are connected with. The Codex Selden comes from Añute (Magdalena Jaltepec). The obverse side of Codex Bodley deals with Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) and the reverse reflects the historiography of Ndisi Nuu (Tlaxiaco). It therefore may be called “Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu” (or, if we take into account the local pronunciation of these toponyms, “Codex Ñuu Toon and Ndijin Nuu”).

The Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I actually consists of two different manuscripts: the obverse and the reverse. Instead of naming it after the European library where it is now kept, we propose to call it after the place to which the main part of the obverse refers, namely, Yuta Tnoho (or Yutsa Tohon, as the village is pronounced locally today). The reverse deals with the dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo, although it does not show the place sign. To avoid confusion with the Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu we prefer to call it simply “Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse.” If we must give this part of the document its own name, we could make use of the prominent presence of the Temple of Heaven (Huahi Andevui) of Ñuu Tnoo and call it “Codex Huahi Andevui.”

The Codex Colombino-Becker consists of two fragments, named after the fourth centennial commemoration of Columbus’s voyage and a German collector, respectively. We propose to call both fragments after the protagonist of the story, Iya Nacuaa (Lord 8 Deer), and to distinguish them with roman numerals (I = Colombino; II = Becker I).

Last but not least, the name of the Codex Zouche-Nuttall eternalizes one of its European owners and the scholar who published it, again without any relationship to the contents of the book. Because of its composite character we prefer to change it to “Codex Tonindeye,” after the term for “lineage history” in Dzaha Dzauui, the Mixtec language.

With this intent of partially renaming the most important sources, we situate our work in a process of transition from colonial and alienating terminologies, through which a culture is defined by others from outside, hegemonic, and objectifying perspectives, to an emancipatory description and analysis, in which a people can recognize itself and recover its heritage. Similarly, we prefer to use toponyms in the native language and to substitute

certain anthropological *etic* (outsider's) notions such as “myth” (“a story of special value to others in which the speaker does not believe”) with more *emic* (inside) ones, such as “sacred history.” This is not just a matter of terminology but part of the ongoing decolonization of perception and research practice. It also brings us closer to the original sphere of communication. Whereas the designation “Codex Vindobonensis” or “Vindo” evokes the image of a curious document placed outside its original context, a mere object of study and discussion by others, the conceptualization of it as Ñee Ñuhu Tnuhu Sanaha Yuta Tnoho, “the Sacred Deerskin of the Ancient History of Yuta Tnoho (Apoala)” recognizes some of its solemnity and protagonist voice.

We started out to write a commentary on one specific source, the so-called Codex Bodley 2858, as a logical sequel to our earlier work on related documents. The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) financed a sabbatical year (1997–1998), which enabled us to lay the foundation for this study. The resulting interpretation accompanies the photographic reproduction of this pictorial chronicle by the Bodleian Library (Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2005). In the process, however, it became clear to us that the focus on its main narrative—the genealogical history of the royal families of two specific communities—does not do justice to the comprehensive view this manuscript offers on Ñuu Dzauí precolonial history. Another NWO grant permitted us to continue this work in the context of the research project “Mixtec city-states” (2001–2005), analyzing the social and political dynamics that underlay the early history as presented by the codices while simultaneously studying the ancient literary style of storytelling as evidenced in the Dzaha Dzauí translation of a Spanish treatise on the miracles of the Rosary. During this project we explored the many cross-references that link Codex Bodley with other pictorial manuscripts from the same region and were able to reorganize the data in a coherent chronological sequence. This, of course, is not what the ancient painters-historians did—they *selected* from a huge reservoir of oral and written data what they needed for a particular story for a specific occasion. Our procedure goes in the opposite direction: we try to *combine* the biased fragments and to (re)construct a general picture. This permits us to postulate relationships between the data in terms of causality and political purpose and even to discover dramatic structures that transformed the historical experience into literature. The resulting (re)construction is necessarily subjective and speculative, but it may serve as an explicit reference point for further study of the historical processes that affected Ñuu Dzauí



and the ideological concepts that sustained the sovereignty of its communities and determined most of the rulers' actions.

The present text deals with the early part of Ñuu Dzauí historiography. The first chapter provides a short introduction to the ancient Ñuu Dzauí world and pictography. Chapter 2 deals with the relations between this form of history writing and ritual. Chapter 3 synthesizes the account of how the sovereign communities and dynasties were created by Lord 9 Wind, the Plumed Serpent, and focuses on Codex Yuta Tnoho, while Chapter 4 connects this information with the primordial figures and struggles as related in Codex Tonindeye. The early political history, the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo (as presented in Codex Tonindeye, Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú, and Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse), is analyzed in Chapter 5, which sets the scene for a detailed reconstruction of the epic of Lord 8 Deer, Lady 6 Monkey, and Lord 4 Wind in Chapters 6 and 7 (based on Codex Iya Nacuaa, Codex Tonindeye, Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú, and Codex Añute). Our focus is the encounter between Lord 8 Deer and the ruler of the Toltecs, the so-called historical Quetzalcoatl. The reading of the codices presented here leads to new conclusions about the relationships between the different sources and about the Ñuu Dzauí conceptualization of power—these topics are discussed in Chapter 8. The analysis of later royal lineages, together with basic arguments and methodological considerations for the decipherment of ancient pictorial writing, will be included in another book. The epilogue in Chapter 9 traces a line from this ancient history to present concerns.

During our research we have received numerous helpful suggestions and stimulating comments from many people, first of all in the Ñuu Dzauí region itself. In Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo) our family and friends received us with great hospitality, shared their knowledge of traditions, and helped in innumerable ways. We honor the memory of the late Doña Crescencia Jiménez Quiroz and the late *curandera* María Jiménez Quiroz, who were a direct link to the ancient Ñuu Dzauí world. We further owe special thanks to Esther Pérez Jiménez, Monica Pérez Jiménez, and many individuals from different villages throughout the region, who all contributed valuable insights and added pieces to the puzzle.

Two maestros taught us the art of reading and appreciating the codices and have guided us with their ideas and enthusiasm: Ferdinand Anders and Nancy Troike. Ferdinand always insisted on a holistic approach to Native America and involved us in the enterprise of writing commentaries for the

series *Códices Mexicanos*. Nancy's vision of the life of the great ruler Lord 8 Deer in terms of a Shakespearean tragedy has proved inspiring. Following the lead of Luis Reyes García and from discussing the scenes with Ñuu Dzauí participants in workshops organized by the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios en Antropología Social in Oaxaca, we developed ways to read the codices in Ñuu Dzauí terms.

We have benefited from the cooperation of the regional center of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia and the opportunities offered by the Monte Albán Round Table conferences and the Mixtec Gateway meetings to exchange thoughts with many colleagues. Similarly, we found great inspiration in the encounters to which Antonella Cammarota invited us in Sicily and Rome.

Our daughter, Itandehui Jansen Pérez, who has directed video documentaries on the story of Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey, on Sicilian puppet theater, and on life in La Mixteca, contributed significantly to our understanding of the literary, dramatic, and performative aspects of these narratives.

Fortunately, more and more Native American students and scholars are taking a lively interest in the study of their own history, language, and culture. It has been particularly rewarding to give lectures on the codices for Mixtec audiences at institutions in Oaxaca, Huajuapán, and Tlaxiaco, as well as in local villages such as San Agustín Tlacotepec and Chalcatongo. Ñuu Dzauí poet Carlos España, Ñuu Dzauí lawyer Hugo Aguilar Ortíz, Ngigua priest Serapio López Cruz, Ñuu Dzauí archaeologist Iván Rivera Guzmán, Chah Tnio archaeologist Ninfa Pacheco Rodríguez, and Ñuu Dzauí sociologist Gaspar Rivera Salgado, holder of the Prince Claus chair in Development and Equity (University of Utrecht), have especially enriched us with their profound and positive vision.

Leiden University has continually provided a positive working environment, both in the Faculty of Archaeology and in the Centre of Non-Western Studies Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies. Discussions with participants in the international M.A. and Ph.D. programs made us aware of many iconographical details we otherwise would have missed. We thank the draftsmen who have contributed to our project over the years. Long ago, Jorge Pérez Morales traced Codex Yuta Tnoho. Later, Frans Schoonens drew Codex Tonindeye and the Map of Chiyo Cahnu, while Peter Deunhouwer traced large parts of Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu and Ferdinand Anders provided drawings of the Codex Añute. In the

## PREFACE

final phase Megan Hershey, Franci Taylor, and Arie Kattenberg helped with correcting, preparing, and illustrating the manuscript. Finally, we thank the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences for its significant support.

The narrative of the Ñuu Dzaui codices constitutes a special chapter in the history of the native peoples of the Americas, a history that from today's global perspective is a tragic one, dominated as it is by the traumatic incision of military conquest, genocide, and colonial oppression. This is not something of the past but a burning actuality that is still affecting people's identities, relationships, and possibilities today. The ongoing social injustice and violence are felt throughout the indigenous and poor regions of the Americas. We again became painfully aware of this in March 1999 when our dear friend and sister Ingrid Washinawatok, Menomenee, a true ambassador of the indigenous peoples and an active defender of their rights, was brutally murdered while on a humanitarian-cultural mission in Colombia. We dedicate this book to her memory.

ENCOUNTER WITH THE  
PLUMED SERPENT



## Chapter One

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# *The MAT and the THRONE*

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MEXICO TENOCHTITLAN, THE DAY 8 WIND, THE 9TH DAY OF THE MONTH Quecholli of the year 1 Reed in the Mexica (Aztec) calendar, which may correspond to A.D. November 8, 1519. In a dramatic first confrontation, the Mexica ruler Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin greeted Hernán Cortés, the Spanish invader, with a respectful speech. The rendering of his words by Cortés himself, based on the difficult intercultural translation by his female interpreter Malintzin, was not done without particular interest. The conquistador selected and shrewdly highlighted the convenient elements, so that a polite welcome became transformed into nothing less than a recognition of Spanish rule.

In our books our ancestors left notice that I and all who live in this land originally came here as strangers from other places. We also know that our lineage was brought here by a supreme lord (*un señor cuyos vasallos todos eran*), who afterwards went back to his realm. And we always have believed

that his descendants one day would come to subdue this land and us as his vassals. Because of the region where you say you come from, which is towards the East, and because of the things you tell about that great lord or king that sent you to us from there, we conclude that he is our natural ruler. Thus, be sure that we will obey you. (Cortés Hernán 1963: ff. 44v–54r)

Under this tendentiously colored surface, however, we find several authentic references to Motecuhzoma's own views on the historical importance of this meeting. There is no reason to doubt that the uneasy encounter with such a strange person—a human being but clearly from another world, coming from overseas, from the East, from “the House of the Sun”—made the Mexica ruler search history for indications of how to interpret and deal with the events. History was written, or rather painted, for reflection and use in critical moments. It was recited during rituals to bolster the collective memory and identity, to provide a frame for political strategies. Motecuhzoma had at his disposal a library of ancient pictorial manuscripts that dated back at least 500 years. In all of his realm there must have been thousands of such manuscripts. Consulting these books, on the threshold of the passage from one historical stage to another, he looked back to the very beginning of the political order of his day.

When talking about his own foreign origins, Motecuhzoma was commemorating not the primordial journey of the Mexica people from Aztlan to Tenochtitlan but the foundation of his own royal house long ago. He remembered that during the inauguration ceremony of a Mexica ruler the honorable priests and leaders of the nation used to emphasize:

From now on, Lord, you remain seated on the throne  
that was installed by Ce Acatl Nacxitl Quetzalcoatl. . . .  
In his name came Huitzilopochtli and sat down on this same throne,  
and in his name came the one that was the first king, Acamapichtli. . . .  
Behold, it is not your throne, nor your seat, but it is theirs,  
it is only lent to you and it will be returned to its true owner.

(Tezozomoc 1975: 439)

Power came from Quetzalcoatl, the “Serpent with Quetzal Feathers” or “Plumed Serpent,” a mysterious personality from the past associated with an earlier civilization. The Mexica or Aztecs, whose realm had expanded since 1428 over large parts of what is now Mexico, considered themselves the cultural and political heirs of the Toltecs, whose civilization had flour-

ished centuries before. These Toltecs, in turn, continued the tradition of Teotihuacan, the great capital of Central Mexico during a period designated by archaeologists as the Early Classic ( $\pm$  A.D. 200–650). In this succession of empires an emblematic model of civilization was developed, known to the Mexica as *Toltecayotl*, a term we can translate as “the Toltec legacy.” It characterizes the large cultural area we now call Mesoamerica, which stretches between the deserts of Northern Mexico and the tropical forests of Central America.

The great Lord referred to by Motecuhzoma was a specific Toltec ruler of legendary proportions—the Spaniards later compared him to King Arthur. Also known as *Topiltzin*, “Our Prince,” *Ce Acatl*, “1 Reed,” and *Nacxitl*, “4 Foot,” he reportedly had been a high priest and king in Tollan Xicocotitlan (presently known as Tula in the State of Hidalgo). In an atmosphere of magic and conflict, he had left that capital and established himself as a ruler in Tollan Cholollan (Cholula in the State of Puebla). From there he had undertaken a long journey to lands far away in the East, beyond Xicalango and the Laguna de Términos to the Maya country—precisely the region where Cortés’s first landing had occurred. That coincidence in place, in combination with the year being 1 Reed, which was one of Quetzalcoatl’s names, suggested to the Mexica ruler that Cortés was in some way related to that ancient source of power.

But Quetzalcoatl was more than a mysterious personality from ancient history. The Plumed Serpent is the most powerful image and the most complex symbol Mesoamerica has left to humanity. The amalgamation of the circling snake—chthonic and dangerous—with light and precious attributes of the augural inhabitants of heaven, creates an intriguing metaphor that makes sense in and appeals to many different religions in many different ways. The Plumed Serpent is first and foremost the whirlwind, the road sweeper who announces the coming of the Rains, a source of creative powers. The quetzal feathers stand for nobility and civilized life. The serpent also symbolizes trance and visionary experiences. The Plumed Serpent was an important *nahual* (“animal companion” or “alter ego in nature”). According to the Mesoamerican worldview, each human being is intimately connected to a *nahual*, which may be an animal or a natural phenomenon, with which he or she identifies and shares his or her destiny. When the animal dies, the individual dies too. In dreams, one experiences being that animal or phenomenon. Powerful persons, such as traditional healers or authorities, generally have strong and dominant *nahuales*.<sup>1</sup>



So the Plumed Serpent came to represent the breath and spiritual essence of unseen Gods and the trance of priests, a marker of the liminal sphere in which humans enter in contact with the Divine. Over time this image of power was appropriated by successive charismatic empire builders and became synonymous with the ideal of civilization and rulership. Sculptures and reliefs representing the Plumed Serpent adorned the Citadel, the main temple in the abode of the rulers of Teotihuacan. Perhaps even then Quetzalcoatl had already become the main title and symbol of the rulers. As a God he was the bringer of civilization; as an exemplary ruler he created a flowering empire throughout much of Mesoamerica.

While considering how to approach this being, which was coming back on its tracks, Motecuhzoma had first sent messengers to the invader to offer him special gifts: the ceremonial dresses of four major deities, each of whom played an important role in the symbolism of rulership. Two sets of gifts were related to Quetzalcoatl: an elaborate feather crown (*apanecayotl*) of the type Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl used to wear, and the pointed cap of jaguar skin combined with a long beaked mask, an attribute of the Wind God Ehecatl Quetzalcoatl. The other dresses and ornaments were those of the Rain God Tlaloc and of Tezcatlipoca, the “Smoking Mirror,” the supreme deity of rulers and priests.<sup>2</sup>

In those critical days, Motecuhzoma was pondering his heritage and the spiritual connection to his Ancestors. Power and life are only lent. One rules only for a short time, as in a dream.<sup>3</sup> This is the aspect that dominates the other version of the emperor’s speech to Cortés, preserved in the work of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún. It is written in the native language, Nahuatl, and sounds more authentic than the version first described. Just like Cortés’s report, this text is a reconstruction after the fact, but it is likely based on local oral tradition and certainly on a good knowledge of literary conventions. The Nahuatl version shows Motecuhzoma’s recognition of divine power as the true and permanent owner of the throne. He knew about this power through stories, visions, and religious thought, but now he felt he was standing face-to-face with it in common reality.

*camo çan nitemiqui amo çan niccochitleoa,  
amo çan nicobitta, amo çan nitemiqui,  
ca ie onimitznottili. mixtzinco onotlaxich,  
ca ononmentlamatticatca in ie macuil in ie matlac,  
in umpa nonitztica, in quenamican in otimoquixtico*

*in mixtlan in aiauhitlan:  
anca iehoatl inin quiteneuhtivi in tlatoque  
in ticmomachitiquiuh  
in matzin in motepetzin  
in ipan timouetzitiquiuh in mopelatzin, in mocpaltzin  
in tioalmouicaz.  
Auh in axcan ca oneltic, otioalmouicac.*

Because I am not just dreaming, not just imagining it in my sleep,  
I do not just see this as in sleep, I am not just dreaming:  
I really see thee, look into thy face.  
I have been troubled already five, already ten times [for a long time].  
I have gazed into the unknown whence thou hast come,  
the place of clouds, the place of mist [the place of mystery].  
Thus they have foretold it, the (ancient) rulers,  
that thou wouldst come back to teach  
to your water, your mountain [your community],  
that thou wouldst again sit down on your mat, your throne,  
that thou wouldst return.  
And now it has become true: thou hast returned.

(Sahagún 1950–1978, book XII: ch. 16)

This example of Motecuhzoma's speech introduces us to the intricate relationship of history and power in ancient Mesoamerica, as well as to the religious and emotional dimensions of both. We will explore these aspects as we analyze a corpus of ancient pictorial manuscripts, proceeding from a specific region within Mesoamerica. In our story we will come back to Quetzalcoatl, the Plumed Serpent, several times and learn more about him as inventor of the art of writing and humanity's guide in the visionary encounter with the past.

## LAND *of the* RAIN GOD

Located in the heart of the Americas, Mesoamerica is a complex mosaic of different peoples and original civilizations. At the arrival of the Spanish conquerors it had already experienced a multifaceted development of at least 2,500 years. Its formation as a specific culture area was based on the development of agriculture: by the first millennium B.C. the native population had passed through a crucial economic and social transformation, from nomadic tribes of hunter-gatherers to sedentary rural communities that primarily

subsisted on the cultivation of maize, beans, squash, and many other plants. The consequences of this process were demographic growth, a more encompassing social organization, and the construction of towns, which became production centers for impressive works of art as well as the elaboration of hieroglyphic and pictorial writing systems. In archaeology this period is called Preclassic or Formative. The culmination of this development toward full-fledged urban states is generally designated as the Classic period ( $\pm$  A.D. 200 –  $\pm$  900).<sup>4</sup> The crisis and end of this era occurred at different times and at different places but proceeded between A.D. 650 and 950 throughout the entire culture area. It was the first major and overall break in the cultural development of Mesoamerica, resulting from a complex interaction of different factors that is still poorly understood. Afterward, an even more fascinating process occurred: the “rebirth” of the culture, leading to recovery and new florescence in the Postclassic period ( $\pm$  A.D. 900–1521).

The peoples themselves saw this succession of different cultures, now clearly visible in archaeology, as a series of eras, each with its own dawn and under its own Sun. In the case of Central Mexico the complexity of cultural memory was such that the Mexica situated the earlier civilizations within a cosmogram of four Suns: each era was symbolically associated with one of the four world directions and characterized by a sacred foundation date and specific food; each had been destroyed in a peculiar way by its own cosmic cataclysm. This structure provided the Mexica with the foundation for their own Sun, the fifth, situated in the center of the world.<sup>5</sup> Their immediate cultural ancestors, the Toltecs of Tula, had lived during the fourth Sun and perished because of their leader’s failures and the tricks of the Gods.

Today, scores of Mesoamerican peoples live on their ancestral lands. An estimated total of 15 to 20 million residents of Mexico, Guatemala, and neighboring Central American countries are preserving not only their languages but also many elements and structures of this ancient civilization. They are not officially recognized, but like “indigenous peoples” all over the planet, they are still suffering a fundamentally colonial situation, inherited from the past. For them the political independence of Mexico and other American republics after the period of European colonial expansion did not mean decolonization, much less emancipation, but only a shift of the center from the exterior to the interior of the country. This new configuration, therefore, is known as “internal colonialism.” Much more than a simple outcome of the conquest, this internal colonialism is a re-creation and reaffirmation of both economic

and cultural dominance within the context of the modern nation-state, reinforced as it is by modern neocolonial and imperialist policies. A characteristic aspect of indigenous peoples' predicament is that they are generally seen as "others," as mere "objects" of investigation, embedded in the dominant discourse as "peoples without history"—that is, peoples whose history has been expropriated and obliterated (Wolf 1982). Just as the colonial perspective influenced Spanish sources, internal colonialism underlies and penetrates many modern studies.

Conscious of the need to develop a postcolonial perspective, we focus here on the precolonial history and historiography of Ñuu Dzauí. This name refers to both the land (*ñuu*) and the people (*ñuu*) of the Rain God (Dzauí). The land is located in the southwestern part of what is now the Mexican republic, mainly in the State of Oaxaca but also partly in neighboring areas of the States of Puebla and Guerrero. The people is also known as "Mixtec," after the name given by its Nahuatl-speaking northern neighbors: *Mixtecâ*, which actually means "inhabitants of the place of the clouds." From the same word comes the commonly used geographic designation "la Mixteca" for the region.

Based on geographic criteria, the Ñuu Dzauí region is generally subdivided into (1) the Mixteca Alta (mountainous, mostly above 2,000 meters above sea level [m.a.s.l.]), (2) the Mixteca Baja (mountainous, rarely above 2,000 m.a.s.l.), and (3) the Mixteca de la Costa (tropical coastal lowlands along the Pacific Ocean). As for the Baja and the Costa, the native subdivision used other names, often following the toponyms of the most important polities (*yuvui tayu*), but the Alta was identified as Ñuu Dzauí Ñuhu, "Sacred Land of the Rain" or "Ñuu Dzauí of the Gods."

Today, hundreds of thousands of people speak the Mixtec language, Dzaha Dzauí. It belongs to a family of languages that occupies a significant part of Mesoamerica and is designated by linguists as "Oto-Mangue." As are the other members of this family, Dzaha Dzauí is a tonal language, which means that words may have very different meanings when pronounced with different tones. The first Dzaha Dzauí reference works are the grammar and vocabulary written at the end of the sixteenth century by the Spanish Dominican friars Antonio de los Reyes and Francisco de Alvarado, respectively. They recorded the dialect of Yucu Ndaa (Tepozcolula), which at that time was understood widely throughout the region and since then has functioned as a sort of standard in historical studies. In that orthography the

region and people are written as Ñuu Dzavui and the language as Dzaha Dzavui. The latter word is also written as Dzahui in colonial texts. In modern dialects it is pronounced *sau*, *sau*, *daui*, or *dau*.

Ñuu Dzavui today is one of the poorest regions of Mexico, suffering from many ecological and economic problems that affect both the speakers of Dzaha Dzavui and those who live in the same region, sharing the traditional way of living and part of the ancestral culture, but who no longer speak the mother language as a consequence of internal colonial politics. Traditionally, like other indigenous peoples, the Ñuu Dzavui communities practice small-scale subsistence agriculture, generally in mountainous and not very fertile terrain. Harvests are poor, and malnutrition reigns. In general, health services are deficient: there are too few doctors and clinics, so there is much illness and people die unnecessarily. Today, as in the past, criminal enterprises and ambitious individuals—invaders from the outside as well as those with roots in the region—enter and take over the land, clear the forests, look for oil, or engage in the planting and trafficking of marijuana. And it is the poor who, because of their hardship and lack of alternatives, perform the dirty and dangerous jobs for the big bosses. They are used as intermediaries and couriers and often end up in jail.

These and other factors make life in the region very difficult and lead to continual emigration to urban areas, especially Mexico City, the northern part of the republic, and the United States. There again the migrants, because of their deficient preparation, are often forced to perform the most difficult and lowest-paying jobs (laborer, servant, and similar tasks). They are often discriminated against, and they even lapse into criminal behavior, prostitution, and the like. This constant migration gives the Ñuu Dzavui region an aspect of abandonment; it is filled with “ghost towns” inhabited only by the elderly and children.

It is in this time of diaspora, in this desolate and dramatic landscape, that we start to search for the messages of the precolonial Ñuu Dzavui pictorial manuscripts, trying to uncover the history of a “people without history” to recognize and revive the voices that have been silenced.

## PRECOLONIAL HISTORY

Precolonial Mesoamerican history is the story of autonomous communities (*ñuu*), constructed around networks of lineages and connected by exchange

and communication. The sovereignty of these communities or nations was designated in the Mesoamerican languages with the poetic *hendiadys* “mat and throne”: *petlatl icpalli* in Nahuatl, *yuvui tayu* in Dzaha Dzau, *pop tz'am* in Maya. To distinguish this unit from their own kingdom, Spanish authors refer to it as a *cacicazgo*, derived from the term *cacique* for indigenous ruler in the Greater Antilles (cf. Redmond & Spencer 1994). These polities were usually small. Since the early days the varied, abrupt landscape, with its many mountain ranges, had led to a fragmented political panorama of de facto independent communities. Generally, these units are called “city-states” in the literature, although in the case of Ñuu Dzau, “village-states” is a better term. During early state formation, the polity in many respects conserved the basic characteristics of a chiefdom. Hereditary rulers organized the structure of communal labor, demanding tribute from and redistributing goods among their subjects and forming alliances (e.g., through marriage) or waging wars with one another. As leaders, they became emblematic of their communities, the protagonists of history whose names and deeds were remembered by the people for many generations. The study of their historiography offers unique, in-depth insights into their mentality and worldview, as well as into the dynamics of the ancient power structure.

The mat and throne was located in a specific ceremonial and political center, the seat of the ruling house. The ruler and the ruled were connected in a tributary relationship that had a reciprocal character; the farmers supported with their goods and services those who took care of both the administration and the ceremonial obligations to the gods. The notion of territory did exist, but as a general indication of the hinterland where the tributaries lived. In a nonmonetary economy and a cosmovision dominated by religious sentiments, the land itself was considered not a commodity but a manifestation and dwelling place of the divine powers of Nature. Those who worked the land and reaped the fruits did so as a community bound together by a devotion to the deity that was the “real” (i.e., spiritual) Owner of that land. Among themselves they developed a series of communitarian and egalitarian principles, such as mutual assistance and communal labor. The rulers, supported by the priests, were intermediaries between the human community and the Other World, the domain of the Gods.

Communication over large distances and time periods became possible through the development of writing systems based on shared iconographic codes. As communication is a crucial factor in culture and social cohesion,

writing is not just a by-product of the evolution of social complexity but one of its important propelling forces. On one hand, the development of writing systems corresponds to the needs of an expanding society to codify and transmit specific arrangements, laws, and obligations, as well as historical data and religious ideas, while on the other it makes possible further internal differentiation and structures social complexity accordingly. As this communication technique became more advanced and widespread, specializations and institutions increased in scope, as did political hierarchy and the social distance between ruler and people.

The mountainous landscape and the absence of transportation technology, however, seriously limited regional integration and the development of early statehood. Only a few Mesoamerican city-states succeeded in permanently enlarging their territory at the expense of others (through conquests and alliances) and in developing into empire-like realms, which made their influence felt throughout the entire region. At the time of the Spanish conquest, large parts of what is now the Mexican republic were subject to the Mexica agrarian tribute-state, created in a mere hundred years of military and commercial expansion. Actually, this state consisted of a triple alliance among three capitals—Mexico-Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan—each with its own governing dynasty and specific tribute rights.

The direct antecedent of the Mexican expansion was the Toltec cultural phase (A.D.  $\pm$  900 –  $\pm$  1200), centered on the cities of Tollan Xicocotitlan (i.e., Tula in the State of Hidalgo) and Cholula. This empire, in turn, seems to have been an effort to revive the splendor of the huge city Teotihuacan, which flourished in the so-called Early Classic period (A.D.  $\pm$  200 to  $\pm$  650).

All three successive realms were based in the central valley (Altiplano) of Mexico, where Lake Texcoco permitted a unique cultural interaction and economic integration through ridged field agriculture and intensive commerce by canoe traffic. In addition, the area supplied obsidian, a crucial strategic resource. The extraordinary concentration of people, the prosperous economic conditions, and the development of large-scale urban life were synthesized in an emblem: *Tollan*, “Place of Cattail Reeds” or “metropolis,” the ideal capital. Comparable to Rome in European cultural history, this Place of Cattail Reeds developed from a concrete imperial center into a concept of civilization and political order. The term *Tollan* is used for Teotihuacan in Classic Maya inscriptions and appears as an explicit name or title for several main cities of the Early Postclassic (the phase called “Toltec” by archaeologists):

Tula (Hidalgo) but also Cholula (known as Tollan-Cholollan).<sup>6</sup> In several Mesoamerican languages Mexico-Tenochtitlan was—and still is—called the Place of Cattail Reeds: *N̄nuu Cohyo* in Dzaha Dzau (Mixtec).

Imperial expansion was propelled by technical innovations in warfare, a warrior ethos, and a stimulating ideology. The fights between the polities were necessarily small-scale and carried out mainly by the champions on both sides—heroes consecrated to the Gods, invoking the spiritual powers of their Patrons and *nabhuales*. The emphasis was on direct combat, calling for the use of “shock weapons” like clubs and spears. Teotihuacan introduced large-scale warfare, mobilizing numerous armies from the lake surroundings, which called for complex internal organization; standards, conchs, and drums were used to direct the movement of the troops. The earlier “artillery,” based on slings, was improved radically by mass use of the *atlatl*, the dart thrower, which changed the entire aspect of the fight. In the Early Postclassic, the Toltecs added the use of the short obsidian inlaid “sword.” Later, the Mexica transformed it into the broadsword and integrated it with the Chichimec bow and arrow into an effective arsenal.<sup>7</sup>

Even the most successful city-states had too few inhabitants for a military occupation of the conquered areas. The enormous distances armies had to cover, without wheeled vehicles or even beasts of burden, ensured that the empires could not exercise complete territorial control. Each small polity was established in a more or less continuous territory, but the empires were hegemonic in character: they only had effective control over their heartland and the routes to faraway regions, but they extracted tributes from local leaders who were kept in submission through alliances or the permanent threat of a devastating surprise attack by the empires’ mobile forces. Thus the few larger pan-regional states essentially incorporated a number of small states without dramatically changing their internal structure.

Consequently, two models of early state formation dominated Mesoamerica’s political arrangement: that of “peer polity interaction,” or rather a “city-state culture”—a landscape of small sovereign communities whose specific local ruling lineages engaged in all kinds of economic and political contacts, influenced each other, and met as allies or rivals—versus that of imperial expansion of the successful “super-*cacicazgos*.”<sup>8</sup>

Parallel to these two distinct social formations, we can postulate the continuous presence of two fundamentally different political views and strategies. In the city-state culture, power was distributed among different



centers ruled by essentially independent lineages, competing and coexisting with specific functions in a shared geographic-economic network and cosmological matrix. Constructing alliances was the key to success for the leaders. The cultural practice of gift giving made them focus on the long-distance procurement and exchange of precious, high-status goods, which functioned as emblems of those alliances. At the same time, commitments and loyalties had to be made manifest in elaborate ritual celebrations in the ceremonial centers. The rulers' daily political task was to nourish and balance the alliances by carefully taking into account the viewpoints and interests of the different factions. Rhetoric of diplomacy and codes of court life had to be developed. The rulers had to participate actively and visibly in the rituals, contacting the Gods through their bloodletting ("self-sacrifice") to obtain charismatic power.

The expansionist, imperial states could not depend on ritualized exchange and reciprocity ethics alone, so the mechanisms of direct and indirect domination became more prominent. A broad, integrated economic base was needed, including the management of long-distance trade routes and access to critical resources such as obsidian, as well as a strong military apparatus and a generally intelligible communication system. This more complex and institutional hierarchy must have produced a centralist ideology, focusing on a supreme authority and ruling over many subdued *cacicazgos* from a clearly defined regional capital.<sup>9</sup> The charismatic power and *nahual* character of this elevated monarch, already important in the city-state culture, were now completely immersed in divine mystery. The ceremonial centers, stages for the manifestation of elaborate court life as well as for large-scale and complex rituals, expanded accordingly. An ideology of order and civilization flourished, in which Tollan was the emblematic capital and Quetzalcoatl the emblematic ruler.

### *The* LITERARY LEGACY

Writing was a crucial element in the development of Mesoamerican urban societies, as it permitted codification and planning beyond face-to-face contacts and individual memories. This extension of communication across time and space was a necessary correlate of the expanding social format. Writing was intimately connected with the power structure and promoted the notion of a canon. The acts of rulers, especially their conquests, and the

resulting tributary obligations could be registered, as well as the complex kinship relations that structured the royal family and formed the base for future marital alliances. Thus history was no longer a matter of oral tradition and personal interpretation but became perceived as normative and verifiable through the creation of authentic, permanent accounts. A dynasty's divine origin was recorded as the source of power, legitimacy, and moral standards. Spiritual and socio-political stability was provided by a canon of prescriptions on how to interpret the will of the Gods and carry out ritual actions. We can therefore study the ancient manuscripts as an interface between cosmivision and practice, following the fundamental contributions on the role of power in history and discourse by authors such as Michel Foucault.

“Power” thus becomes the name for a complex set of interconnections between the spaces where truth and knowledge are produced and the systems of control and domination. (Braidotti 1994: 74)

[P]ower is founded where it is the least visible: in the infinitely multiplying web of discourse; in the social and material relations it engenders; in the symbolic relations it mediates. Power is the name given to a strategic complex situation in which relations of production and of knowledge are simultaneously organized. Power is language, it is a discursive link; it is conjugated with the verb *to be* and not with the verb *to have*. (Braidotti 1994: 212)

Discourse in this sense is a whole field or domain within which language is used in particular ways. This domain is rooted (as is Gramsci's or Althusser's notion of ideology) in human practices, institutions and actions. (Loomba 1998: 98)<sup>10</sup>

The Ñuu Dzauí registered formal discourse in pictorial writing for recording history and for creating and expressing relationships of power.<sup>11</sup> Writing itself has a long tradition in Mesoamerica; in the precolonial era, two main forms developed. Both consist of combinations of figurative scenes with hieroglyphic elements, but the proportion is radically different. The Mayas (in Eastern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras) used full phonetic writing: hieroglyphs, representing syllables or entire words, register a discourse in a specific language.<sup>12</sup> Many peoples in Central and Southwest Mexico preferred pictorial writing, *pictography* (*tlacuillo* in Nahuatl), which registers and transmits information directly in stylized figurative images. Both systems have iconic and phonetic aspects, however, and show a number of

significant similarities in contents (themes) and even in the ways in which they render ideas and represent concrete elements.

In terms of form, the pictographic manuscripts can be divided into two main categories: (1) *codices*, that is, screen-fold books, and *rolls*, consisting of strips of deerskin or indigenous amate paper whitened with stucco; after the conquest these works were rearranged as European books; and (2) *lienzos*, large pieces of cloth made of cotton. Generally, both groups contain polychrome paintings or black outline drawings of figurative scenes using a special system of pictographic conventions, registering relatively long and coherent messages about how Mesoamericans saw and understood their world and their history.<sup>13</sup> The narrative sequences in a codex are organized in horizontal or vertical bands in a *boustrophedon* pattern, “as the ox ploughs.” In Dzaha Dzaui a line of writing is *yuq*, literally “furrow” or “row.” The *boustrophedon* pattern might be called *yuq yuq*, “following the furrow.” Generally, a lienzo fits the events and genealogies in a map-like painting, emphasizing spatial relationships in terms of roads, rivers, and boundaries.

The codices and lienzos form part of the archaeological record, and, as such, they are related to a much larger corpus of pictographic scenes on different materials, such as frescoes, reliefs, gold jewelry, or painted ceramics, but the scenes on these latter artifacts are generally much more limited. There is no doubt that in precolonial times the manuscripts were kept in special collections in palaces and temples and frequently accompanied the deceased into the grave. In style and content, they are very similar to other decorated archaeological objects (polychrome ceramics, frescoes, carved stones).<sup>14</sup> Because of the climatological circumstances, however, organic materials like deerskin, cloth, and amate paper normally do not survive underground.

We can trace the origins of pictography to earlier phases of Mesoamerican civilization. Codices are depicted in scenes painted on Classic Maya vessels. The frescoes of the ruined city of Teotihuacan bear impressive testimony to the fact that the main conventions of pictography were already in use there. Some elements can be traced even further back, to the Olmec in Preclassic times (1200–600 B.C.).

As a consequence of the Spanish invasion, many artifacts and monuments were destroyed or lost, including an enormous treasure of native painted books. Spanish missionaries persecuted the religious experts and burned their documents. Historical and other secular paintings soon became obsolete and irrelevant, victims of a general lack of interest and the ravages of time.

Only a handful of the precolonial (i.e., Late Postclassic) pictorial manuscripts escaped. The tradition did not die immediately after the conquest, however, and native painters continued to produce codices and lienzos in the ancient style—in part with European elements—until the end of the sixteenth century. Most codices and lienzos that have survived to today did so because they were kept for long periods in local archives above the ground, for example, as important land documents, or because they passed into the hands of interested Spaniards or other collectors who preserved them as *curiosa* or sent them to Europe, where they ended up in libraries and museums. For similar reasons, the extremely delicate feather mosaics and highly sought-after (and subsequently melted) gold jewelry survive mostly in European collections of curiosities that date back to Renaissance and Baroque times. In archaeological terms, these artifacts are out of their primary context. It is colonialism and, as a consequence, the “western” history of ideas that constitute the main factor in the formation of their new, secondary context.<sup>15</sup>

The manuscripts known today came from different subregions in Mexico. Two areas with significant painting traditions were (1) Central Mexico (with important centers like Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, Tlaxcala, and Cholula), mainly Nahuatl speaking, and (2) Oaxaca in southwestern Mexico, where the Ñuu Dzauí (Mixtecs), Ngigua (Chochos), Beni Zaa (Zapotecs), and other peoples created a unique corpus of codices and lienzos. This documentation adds a fascinating dimension to archaeological study, as it provides abundant information about the ancient society and religion. More important, these data are given by Native American authors according to their own vision and in their own terms. Once we understand the basic pictographic conventions, we can identify the main places, times, and actions to which the manuscripts refer and even suggest possible contexts in which they were produced or meant to function.

Often, different pictorial documents are related to and complement one another, thus enabling us to distinguish specific groups. In terms of contents, a distinction can be made between (1) the religious, or “prescriptive,” books, used for divination and rituals, and (2) the historical, narrative, or “descriptive” texts, which deal with the history of the precolonial dynasties, their sacred origins and ritual activities, marriage alliances and genealogies, the geographic extension of the kingdom, conquests, tribute rights, and similar areas.

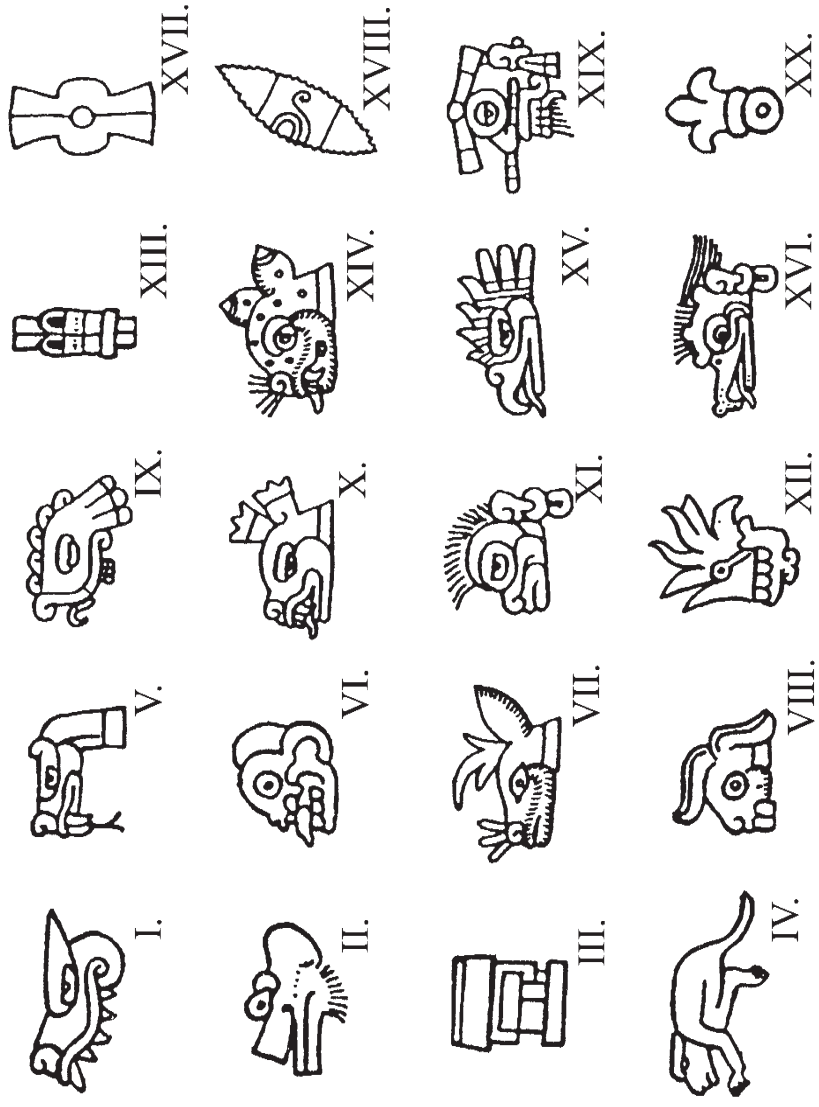
*The* BOOKS *of* WISDOM

The precolonial religious codices are known as the Borgia Group, after the most prominent member, Codex Borgia, named after a cardinal who owned it in the late eighteenth century. Closer to the Mesoamerican worldview is the designation “Books of Wisdom.” The corresponding term in Nahuatl was *teoamoxtli*, “divine books.”

The internal structuring principle of both the divinatory-ritual and the historical-narrative manuscripts is the Mesoamerican calendar (the “day count,” *tonalpohualli* in Nahuatl), which is based on a combination of the numbers 1 to 13 with twenty signs in a fixed sequence, listed here with their names in Nahuatl and Dzaha Dzau:

- I. Alligator (*cipactli* / *quevui*)
- II. Wind (*ehecatl* / *chi*)
- III. House (*calli* / *cuau* or *maa*)
- IV. Lizard (*cuetzpallin* / *que*)
- V. Serpent (*coatl* / *yo*)
- VI. Death (*miquiztli* / *mahu* or *maha*)
- VII. Deer (*mazatl* / *cuaa*)
- VIII. Rabbit (*tochtli* / *sayu*)
- IX. Water (*atl* / *tuta*)
- X. Dog (*itzcuintli* / *bua*)
- XI. Monkey (*ozomatli* / *ñuu*)
- XII. Grass (*malinalli* / *cuañe*)
- XIII. Reed (*acatl* / *huiyo*)
- XIV. Jaguar (*ocelotl* / *huidzu*)
- XV. Eagle (*cuauhtli* / *sa*)
- XVI. Vulture (*cozcacauhtli* / *cuii*)
- XVII. Movement (*ollin* / *qhi*)
- XVIII. Flint (*tecpatl* / *cusì*)
- XIX. Rain (*quiahuatl* / *co*)
- XX. Flower (*xochitl* / *huaco*)

The Nahuatl names are the regular designations for the creatures and elements referred to; the Dzaha Dzau day names, however, are part of a special calendrical vocabulary and do not correspond to the terms in the daily language. For example, “deer” is *cuaa* as a calendrical sign but *idzu* in normal Dzaha Dzau. The same holds true for the numbers: whereas Nahuatl uses



1.1. The twenty day signs.

the same designations for these creatures and elements in both the calendar and daily speech, Dzaha Dzauí employs a unique set of calendrical prefixes, several of which are differentiated only by tones: *ca* = 1, 2, or 12; *co* = 1, 2, or 3; *qh* or *qui* = 4; *q* or *qhu* = 5 or 9; *ñu* = 6; *sa* = 7; *na* = 8; *si* = 10, 11, or 13.

The first thirteen-day period (*trecena* in Spanish) of the *tonalpohualli*, then, starts with 1 Alligator, 2 Wind, 3 House, and so on, until 13 Reed. The second thirteen-day period follows, which starts with 1 Jaguar and ends with 13 Death. The third *trecena* runs from 1 Deer to 13 Rain, the fourth from 1 Flower to 13 Grass, and so on, until the twentieth and final *trecena*, which starts with 1 Rabbit and ends, logically, with 13 Flower. The same sequence then starts all over again.

The day on which somebody was born became his or her “calendar name” (Lord 8 Deer, Lady 6 Monkey, and so on) and had a specific significance, a divinatory or *mantic* value, because of the connection of the number, the day sign, and the relevant period in which the day fell, with the influences of different deities. In the Borgia Group, or rather the Teoamoxtli Group, many subdivisions of time are associated with different *mantic* scenes, expressing positive or negative aspects of that period, the divine forces at work, and similar factors. There are *mantic* symbolic images for the twenty day signs and the twenty thirteen-day periods but also for married couples (according to the sum of the numbers in their calendar names), the four world directions, different manifestations of the Rain God during certain years and segments of years, the first rising of Venus on certain days, and the like. Other scenes prescribe the carrying out of rituals, varying from the ordered laying out of counted bundles of objects (leaves, pine needles, and similar items) on altar tables to the ecstatic worship of the Sacred Bundle.

In this way, the Books of Wisdom refer to various aspects of religious symbolism relevant to the devotion and the daily lives of the rulers and their subjects. The same symbolism is present in the historical narratives and gives them an ideological dimension. The basic conceptual ingredients are similar in the iconography of the Ñuu Dzauí (Mixtec), Mexica, and other Mesoamerican civilizations; they are even found in Classic Maya reliefs and hieroglyphic texts.

Very few examples of these religious books survived the persecution campaigns of the Spanish missionaries. In the process, information about their provenience was lost forever.<sup>16</sup> Each has special characteristics but also shares specific themes (“chapters”) with the others. Until now, each book

has been named after its European location or first known European owner. More appropriate names could be introduced, referring to special features or diagnostic aspects of the books' contents. To create uniformity in citation, we can use terms in Nahuatl, not because we think all these codices are from the Nahuatl-speaking region but because Nahuatl is the standard language of reference for the study of Mesoamerican religion and is identified with the Toltec tradition, which codified much of this calendrical symbolism and divinatory-ritual practice.

- Codex Vaticanus 3773 or B, in the Vatican, is clearly a compendium, used as a manual for divination. It could be named "Book of the Diviner" or, using the Nahuatl word for "divining priest, day keeper," Codex Tonalpouhqui.
- Codex Borgia, now in the Vatican, has similar contents but also contains a distinctive chapter on rituals carried out in a great ceremonial center, dominated by a Temple of Heaven and a Temple of Darkness. The visionary experience of the priests is represented as a transformation of humans into serpents with the masks of the Wind-God and a body consisting of darkness, according to the Nahuatl expression *yoalli ehecatl*, "night and wind," which describes the mysterious character of the deities and those who have contact with them. After this metaphor we could call this work the "Book of Night and Wind" or Codex Yoalli Ehecatl.
- Codex Fejérváry-Mayer, now in the Free Public Museum, Liverpool, England, opens with a famous cosmogram, situating the nine deities that rule the nights in a quadripartite division of time and space. On the first and last pages, the God Tezcatlipoca, the Deity of the Smoking Mirror, figures prominently as the Lord of Time. On the first page the blood of his sacrificed body flows to the center to animate the count of 260 days; on the last page he appears as the magic ruler of the 13-day periods. Codex Tezcatlipoca, therefore, would be an adequate name for this document.
- Codex Laud, Misc. 678, now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, England, contains a unique section about the influences of the Death Deities, a reason to call it the "Book of Death" or Codex Mictlan.
- Codex Cospi, now in the University Library in Bologna, Italy, contains chapters of the divinatory calendar on the obverse side and instructions for the laying out of bundles of counted leaves or similar elements on altar tables on the reverse. A general theme seems to be protection



against bad influences or “attacks” of dart-throwing deities. We might refer to this document as the “Book of Offerings” or, using the Nahuatl term for such offerings, Codex Tlamanalli.

For other members of the group the origin has been defined:

- Codex Porfirio Diaz comes from Yan Yada, in Nahuatl known as Tututepetongo, in the Cuicatec region of the State of Oaxaca. We therefore call it Codex Yada. At present it is preserved in the collection of codices in the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City. A relatively small section has religious (divinatory) contents and is part of the Teoamoxli (Borgia) Group. The rest of the manuscript deals with the history of the foundation of a Cuicatec city-state.
- Codex Yecu, a single sheet, preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris and generally known as Fonds Mexicain 20 (and a copy known as number 21), contains a large scene that situates deities of the Teoamoxli Group in landscapes, which played an important part in early Nuu Dzau history. The four directions of this landscape are connected with a chevron band that stands for “war,” *yecu* in Dzaha Dzau. Because of these similarities, its origin is probably the Mixteca Alta, Oaxaca.<sup>17</sup>
- Codex Borbonicus deals with the Patron Deities and symbolism of the twenty thirteen-day periods and the rituals during the eighteen year-feasts. It clearly reflects Mexica religion and seems to be related to the chinampa area around Tenochtitlan. The main sanctuary depicted can be identified as the Tlillan or Temple of Cihuacoatl, the “Woman Serpent” in Xochimilco. The ceremonial cycle is initiated by the high priest, who also carried the title *cihuacoatl*. We therefore propose to rename this book Codex Cihuacoatl.
- A shorter Mexica work with just the twenty thirteen-day periods and their divinatory images is known as the Tonalamatl Aubin. We would call it Codex Tonalamatl.

There is an arbitrary element to this renaming process. Deities such as Tezcatlipoca or Cihuacoatl are not limited to the manuscripts we propose to name after them; neither are the references to offerings or death. And, in fact, all these codices were in the possession of diviners, or *tonalpouhque*. We feel it is imperative, however, to start using names that conform more strongly to the character of the documents and bring us closer to crucial aspects of the Mesoamerican worldview.

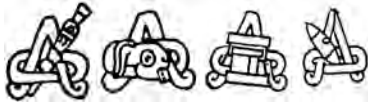
## ÑUU DZAUÍ HISTORIOGRAPHY

The precise provenance of the historical codices is usually easier to identify, as they contain place signs and other geographic features. Here we will focus on the few spectacular Ñuu Dzauí pictorial manuscripts that survived colonization. In combination with a few early colonial documents, they constitute a specific, coherent corpus that informs us about the history and ideology of those who ruled Ñuu Dzauí, the Mixtec people and their region, in the centuries before the Spanish invasion. Most of these manuscripts are no longer in their region of origin but have been dispersed among different libraries and museums in Europe and the United States. The most important pictorial books in an entirely precolonial style are:

- Codex Yuta Tnoho, originally from Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), now in Vienna and formerly referred to as Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I. The two sides are distinguished as “obverse” and “reverse.”
- Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu (Bodley), originally from Ñuu Tnoo, now in Oxford.
- Codex Tonindeye (Zouche-Nuttall), originally from Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco), now in London.
- Codex Añute (Selden), originally from Añute (Jaltepec), now in Oxford.
- Codex Iya Nacuaa (Colombino-Becker I), probably from Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec); now one part (Colombino / Nacuaa I) is in Mexico City and another (Becker I / Nacuaa II) is in Vienna.<sup>18</sup>

This core group is amplified by codices from Ñuu Naha (San Pedro Cántaros), Yodzo Yaha (Tecomaxtlahuaca), Ñuu Ñaña (Cuyotepeji), a roll dealing with the dynasties of Yucu Yusi (Acatlan) and Toavui (Chila) but found in Yucu Nindavua (Huamelulpan), and lienzos from various villages, such as Yucu Nama (Amoltepec) and Yucu Satuta (Zacatepec). An important related corpus is the group of lienzos from towns in the Coixtlahuaca Valley.

Historical events were dated in cycles of 52 “solar years.” Each year (*xibuitl* in Nahuatl; *cuiya* in Dzaha Dzauí) consisted of 365 days. This periodization was made within a continuous sequence of cycles of 260 days (*tonalpohualli*). A specific day, the “year bearer,” gave its name to the year. It is a topic of debate whether this was the first day, the last day, or the 360th day of that year, but the distance between the year bearers was constant (364 days). In Ñuu Dzauí codices the year is marked with a special sign that resembles a



### 1.2. Sign of the year bearer.

bound or chained sunbeam but seems to have developed out of a diadem. Given the combination of 13 numbers with 20 signs, mathematics dictates the structure of the larger periods in the Mesoamerican calendar. When solar years of 365 days are counted, only 4 of the 20 day signs can occupy the position of year bearer. The reason is that when 365 is divided by 20 (the cycle of day signs), there is a remainder of 5; consequently, the next period is initiated by another sign, 5 positions further. The year count in use during the Postclassic in most of Mesoamerica consisted of Reed (XIII), Flint (XVIII), House (III), and Rabbit (VIII), in that sequence. The associated number with each occurrence is different; because the division of 365 by 13 (the cycle of calendrical numbers) yields a remainder of 1, the number associated with the consecutive year bearer signs progresses one unit per year. This results in a “calendar round,” or a cycle of 52 ( $13 \times 4$ ) differently named years, designated with the Nahuatl technical term *xiuhmolpilli*, “binding of years.” In the Ñuu Dzauí chronology the sequence starts with 1 Reed (year 1) and ends with 13 Rabbit (year 52).

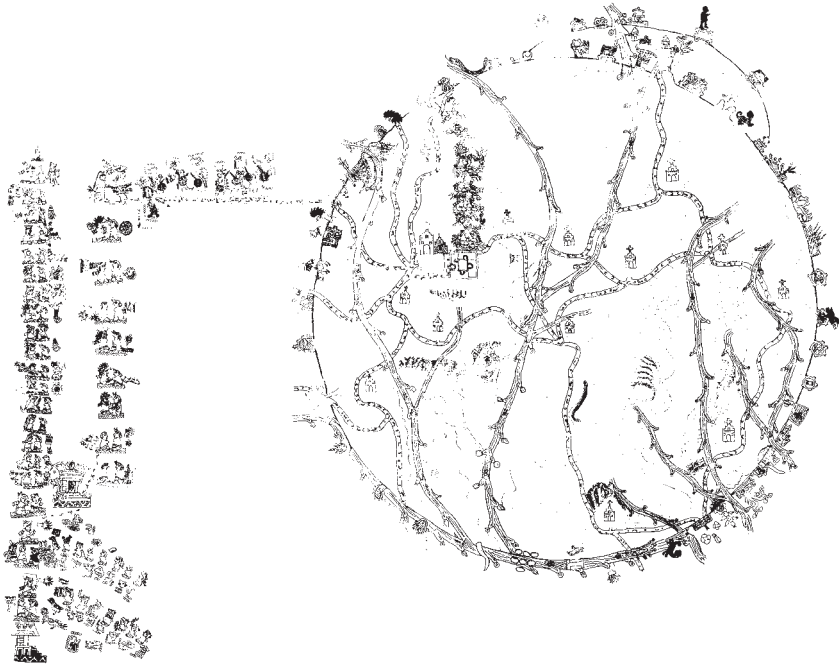
The time on which the native sources focus spans the six centuries before the Spanish conquest, that is, the Postclassic era ( $\pm$  A.D. 900–1521), a period during which Ñuu Dzauí civilization flourished. The pictorial manuscripts are our richest source of information about the ancient culture and history. Archaeology in the region is still very limited; it is expected that future projects will considerably enrich our knowledge.

Very few Spanish authors have written about this region during the colonial period. The most eloquent of these is a seventeenth-century Baroque historian of the Catholic missions in Oaxaca, the Dominican Fray Francisco de Burgoa. His works, the *Palestra Historial* and especially the *Geográfica Descripción*, originally printed in 1674, were meant as eulogies of the “servants of Our Lord” but included many valuable references to the indigenous culture and history. From Burgoa’s missionary perspective, the ancient Ñuu Dzauí histories were “barbaric superstitions” and “fantasies taught by Lucifer” (Burgoa 1934a: 210; 1934b I: 288).

Earlier and more neutral in style, but brief and limited in their contents, are the *Relaciones Geográficas* of 1580, the answers to a questionnaire sent to local authorities to obtain information for the Spanish administration (Acuña 1984, I & II). These documents often include valuable details and maps (Mundy 1996), but several important ones have been lost. Based on these sources, the official chronicler of the Crown, Antonio de Herrera, included a first synthesis of Nuu Dzauí customs in his magnum opus *Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra firme del Mar Océano* (1947). A unique text is the synthesis by the Dominican friar Gregorio García (1607) of an ancient sacred book about the beginning of time and history according to the Nuu Dzauí cosmovision. We can also learn a great deal about the early colonial situation from the legal acts and other notarial documents preserved in the Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico City), the Archivo General de Indias (Sevilla), the Archivo del Juzgado de Tepozcolula (Oaxaca), and some local archives.<sup>19</sup>

With the introduction of alphabetic writing and the development of colonial society, the pictorial manuscripts and ways to read them were forgotten. Only in the second half of the nineteenth century did scholars start to search for the ancient books and for clues to decipher them. Local historians in Oaxaca, such as Manuel Martínez Gracida, Mariano López Ruiz, and Abraham Castellanos—the latter two belonging to the Nuu Dzauí people—made important contributions in this respect. Documenting and evoking the past, they tried to strengthen historical consciousness and cultural identity. On the eve of the Mexican revolution, Castellanos's *El Rey Iukano y los Hombres del Oriente* (1910) was a poetical and mystical reading of the Codex Iya Nacuaa and an emotional protest against the exploitation of Native American peoples.

At the same time, European and North American scholars, such as Eduard Seler and Zelia Nuttall, were debating where the codices came from and whether they dealt with astral religion or with history. Finally, in the 1940s the Mexican archaeologist Alfonso Caso, using the Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco) as a Rosetta Stone, was able to identify the Nuu Dzauí group of codices and to show that they dealt with the dynasties of Nuu Tnoo and other states. Caso wrote fundamental commentaries on a number of pictorial manuscripts, such as the Codex Nuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu (Bodley) and the Codex Añute (Selden), also producing a vast synthesis of their contents and an index of all personages (published posthumously in 1977–1979).



1.3. *Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco); drawing by Frans Schoonens.*

From the 1970s onward, several investigators have carried on Caso's work—clarifying problems, correcting earlier misunderstandings, and proposing new ideas by combining the information in the codices with other data from archaeology, history, and oral traditions. We want to mention the monograph on place signs by Mary Elizabeth Smith (1973a), the commentary on Codex Iya Nacuaa (Colombino-Becker) by Nancy Troike (1974), the revision of Caso's chronology by Emily Rabin (1979, 2004), and the study of symbolism by Jill Furst (1978). An innovative, often speculative, political-ideological analysis was developed by Bruce Byland and John Pohl (1994), who carried out archaeological surveys in the Ñuu Tnoo area. Several identifications of place signs in the codices as sites in their survey area are questionable, but research should definitely move forward in this interdisciplinary way.

Building on this earlier research, we try to connect the pictorial manuscripts to the cultural tradition that produced them and to the language in which they were conceived. After a series of detailed studies of individual codices, we present here a synthetic reading and overall interpretive vision

that inevitably still has many hypothetical aspects but aims to transmit something of the grand narrative that permeates this unique corpus of epic historiography.

## DYNASTIC DISCOURSE

The study of Dzaha Dzau is essential for understanding the literary genre to which the codices belong and its conventions. In trying to “read” the images in the terms of the original language, one finds not only literary forms but also specific concepts. Although pictography is not a register of a spoken text but rather a direct codification of data in images, it frequently expresses itself in the same way the language does, especially in figures of speech. The term “mat and throne” is a good illustration of a common Mesoamerican figure of speech, the *hendiadys*, called *difrasismo* in the Mexican literature, that is, the expression of one concept through two parallel elements. We also find it represented in pictography: a lord or lady seated on a throne and a mat, generally in combination with a toponym, meaning he or she became the ruler of that place. The *difrasismo* for the community itself was “water and mountain” (*yucu nduta* in Dzaha Dzau; *in atl in tepetl* in Nahuatl), referring originally to the ecological niche in which the human population lived.

Just like persons, each *yuvui tayu* had its “calendar name,” a sacred date conceived as a founding date.<sup>20</sup> It probably functioned as a base date for determining public ceremonies. The connection of peer polities with such dates situated them within a network of spatial-temporal relationships, creating a large-scale ceremonial cycle over the region, similar in function to the cycle of markets. The Christian correlate is the feast day of the Patron Saint.

The historical record usually starts with the *yuvui tayu* and its sacred date, then the Founding Couple and their descendants, whose births, marriage, and different activities can be dated as well. There is no consistent pattern; however, the painters seem to have been primarily interested in genealogical relationships and specific activities, such as conquests. Those elements had implications for the inheritance and tribute rights of the descendant at the end of the lineage, for whom the manuscript was made. Given such a context, many dates were likely recorded more for their symbolic, ideological value than out of a preoccupation with chronology. The dates anchor a cyclical view of time that is focused on the repetition of seasons, connected to the changing places of sunrise and sunset.

Although cyclical and linear views of time are not mutually exclusive and do not constitute a radical opposition (cyclical time is also conceived of as proceeding forward, and linear time is known to have rituals and commemorations that return in a cyclical manner), their implications for worldviews are quite distinct.<sup>21</sup> The linear time view of the Christian tradition is eschatological, that is, focused on a final judgment, and thus is apt to promote—at least ideally—an awareness of moral good and wrong, of sins one should avoid to escape punishment. On a similar level of abstraction, the cyclical time view of Mesoamerica is ecological, focused on the cycles of Nature, and it produces another form of responsibility: respect for the natural powers, an awareness that the human being is weak, irrelevant in the great cosmic scheme, and should be prepared for disasters with an attitude of perseverance and resignation. Although the community is the permanent locale of history, pictorial writing registers and commemorates events by depicting individuals engaged in certain actions. The focus on the community thus shifts to highlighting specific persons, the rulers of the village-states, as the protagonists of Ñuu Dzau history. The traditional “Western” individualistic perspective reinforces this tendency in modern interpretations.

Colonial documents inform us about their titles: *Iya* and *Iyadzehe*, “Lord” and “Lady.” When comparing this with other contexts and with present-day usage of these terms, it becomes immediately clear that there is an association with sacred, divine character. Today, these words are used for the divine powers of Christianity, especially the Saints and the Virgin. According to the dialectal variants, *Iya* is also pronounced *ihya*, *iba*, or *yaa*. In the traditional worldview this title can be applied to the venerated beings of Nature. In Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo) today, *Iha Nuni* is “Lord Maize,” often equated with Jesus Christ, and *Iha Ndikandii*, “Lord Sun,” is “God the Father” (“Padre Eterno”). This is important for a clear understanding of the stories told by these manuscripts. Far from being just particular individuals, marked as male or female, the protagonists are personages of high, nearly divine status who still have influence and should be respected. Often they are thoughtlessly described as an “elite.” It is problematic, however, to what extent this term, with its specific meaning and associations in present-day society, can be projected back to the precolonial (pre-capitalist and preindustrial) world. The protagonists of the pictorial manuscripts are comparable to the biblical figures of Christian cosmivision. Their history, just like the accounts of Homer or the Bible, is not just a register of events pertaining to

an elite; it has first and foremost a moral, symbolic character and, as such, forms part of the shared convictions of a community. The ruling families were participating in communal life and were connected with their people in a relationship of tribute and reciprocity. The ancient heroes are emblematic of the communal history; the defunct *Iya* have become one with the landscape.

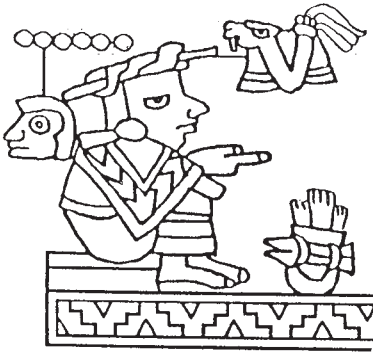
When we talk about kings and queens, we should keep in mind the present-day concept of authority in indigenous communities: it defines the respect people have for the responsibility of office holders, not for those individuals themselves as members of a “class.” We therefore think that in the precolonial period it was not so much the individual rulers who were shrouded in sacredness but their hereditary offices, or *cargos*. It was the seating on the mat and throne of their Predecessors that gave the *Iya* their special status. To be successful, that is, to cultivate the prestige and power bestowed upon them, the living *Iya* had to take into account existing networks of loyalties and use the available political strategies. Obviously, those who had inherited such respectful positions could easily try to manipulate them to their personal benefit, selfishly enjoying their privileges and abusing their power. A strong ethic of communal responsibility was developed and expressed in flowery speech at many ceremonial occasions to avoid that danger.

The names of the rulers tell us a great deal about the values associated with their personalities. In addition to the calendar name (equivalent to the present-day Saint’s name), each individual had a given name, which the child received at age seven when taken to the temple for an ear-piercing ritual (Herrera 1947, decade XIII, book XIII: ch. 12). This was also the age at which priests initiated their service in the temple.

The Ladies are characterized as flowers (*ita*), jewels (*dzeque*, *yusi*), precious birds (*tedzaa ndodzo*, “quetzal bird”), large feathers (*yodzo*), butterflies (*tecuvua*), fans (*huichi*), and delicate cobwebs (*nduvua*), in combination with adjectives and nouns that refer to colors, the sky, and other elements of beauty and brilliance. Several names contain the triangular woman’s garment, or *quechquemitl*. In Dzaha Dzauí this is read as *dzico*, a word that designates not only that type of dress but also the concepts of nobility, beauty, honor, bravery, fame, virtue, and authority. When *dzico* occurs in the name of a man, it is represented by the *xicolli*-tunic, also called *dzico* in Dzaha Dzauí.

One of Ñuu Dzauí’s most famous women had such a name: Lady 6 Monkey, “Serpent Quechquemitl.” As the serpent in her name has a tail of





1.4. Calendar name and given name: Lady 6 Monkey 'Quechquemilt (Virtue / Power) of the Plumed Serpent' (Codex Añute, 8-III).

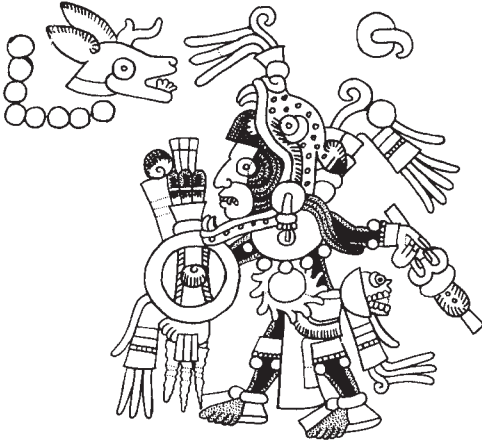
quetzal feathers, generally read as *yodzo* ("plumes") or *ndodzo* ("quetzal"), we can reconstruct her given name as Dzico Coo Yodzo or Dzico Coo Ndodzo, meaning "Virtue or Power of the Plumed Serpent."

Later, after she had been successful in an armed conflict, she received a new name: "War Quechquemilt," that is, Dzico Yecu, "Famous Through War."

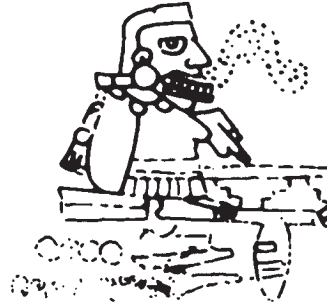
A similar name element, both in form and significance, is the skirt. Actually, the border or fringe of the skirt seems to be intended: *huatu* in Dzaha Dzauí, a word that also means well, grace, nice, happy, and content. As an alternative this term could be rendered as a woman's braids (also *huatu* in Dzaha Dzauí). Together, *huatu* and *dzico* form a *difrasismo*, used in colonial times to translate into Dhaza Dzauí the Catholic concept "glory of the saints" (*sa dzico, sa cuvui huatu ini*, "gloria de los santos").

Signs of strength and courage characterize the names of the Lords: jaguar (*cuiñe, ñañá*), eagle (*yaha*), hummingbird (*tedzaa ndeyoho*), rain (*dzavui*), sun (*ndicandii*), fire serpent or lightning ball (*yahui*), in combination with war (*yecu*), blood (*neñe*), fire (*ñuhu*), and similar terms. Several of these names obviously have a connotation in the sphere of the *nahuales*: the name expresses the power of the animal or being that was the "alter ego" of the person in question. The *yahui* is the "fire serpent," painted as a red serpent with an upward-curved snout, a body covered by a tortoise shell, and a tail of pointed scales. Alvarado translates *yahui* as "wizard that flies through the sky." The term clearly corresponds to the present-day concept of the fireball, a very powerful *nahual*.<sup>22</sup>

A special category of given names is one that includes references to places or peoples. Thus we find Ladies called Yusi Ñuu Dzauí, "Jewel of the People of the Rain," or Yusi Ñuu Cohyo, "Jewel of the Toltecs."<sup>23</sup> A brief examination of the names of male rulers and princes shows that many contain connotations of or direct references to war, bravery, and bloodshed. Also, names that include wild animals with claws transmit the notion of a strong *nahual* with power over life and death.



1.5a. Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw' as warrior (Codex Tonindeye, 43).



1.5b. Priest of Death (or Ancestor Cult) in a xicollí or tunic (Codex Ānuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 28-V).

In this context, the title of the ruler, generally translated as “king,” *toniñe*, can be understood as “noble lord (*toho*) of blood (*neñe*).” Possibly this term points to his original function as warlord, which later may have been enriched with other connotations such as “person who does the bloodletting (performs self-sacrifice) for the community” and “person of noble blood.”<sup>24</sup> In fact, several of the names that contain “blood” and are now interpreted as “bloody” may actually refer to this title.

The distinctive attribute of high status is an ornament of quetzal feathers, generally located in the headdress. In itself it can be read as *toho*, “noble lord, respected person, *principal*.”<sup>25</sup> Today the great kings of antiquity are known as *ndodzo* (*ndoso* or *ndodo* according to the different dialects), a word that refers both to the position of a leader (being in front or on top) and to the quetzal bird. This association confirms the reading of quetzal feathers as a sign of nobility and rulership. The man with quetzal feathers can be *tay ndodzo*, “valiant warrior” or “leader” (Alvarado).<sup>26</sup>

The nahualistic connotations of the names of male rulers not only emphasize their strength and bravery but also fit well the widespread idea that the *nahual* animals function as protectors of the community. Their religious charisma was enhanced by the fact that part of their preparation as future rulers was to serve as priests for one year.

A constant element in the discourse of a ruling couple is the manifestation and legitimation of their power; political realities or projects are related explicitly to the generally accepted cosmology and value system. This is not just a monologue but an interaction with other powerful individuals (e.g., lineage heads) and the people at large. The archaeological study of state formation suggests that at a certain phase in history, hereditary leaders, adding military prowess to their traditional religious power, took permanent control over the small states as rulers and tribute receivers, supported by a growing bureaucracy and, in general, economic specialization and social stratigraphy. Large-scale ruins are indicative of a hierarchical structure based on tribute of goods and services, as well as the symbolic construction of a community through collective self-expression. Where ecological, economic, and technological factors set the scene for the possible formation and growth of the village-state, ideology and ritual had to provide the inspiration for the internal cohesion and identity of the community, the fundament for the legitimacy of the leadership, and often the engine for expansion and development.

One of the central themes in the sources is the ideology of the historical personages who commissioned these documents. That ideology needed to be communicated in permanent visual messages and to be expressed in ritual enactments that obliged all participants to manifest their acceptance of the canon and allegiance to the power structure based on it (cf. Rappaport 1999: ch. 4). Like the iconography and architecture of monumental centers such as Teotihuacan, Monte Albán, Tikal, Palenque, Tula, and Chichén Itzá, the codices and lienzos functioned in a performative context and expressed the interaction between communities and their rulers. It is important to identify their ideological character and see how it was produced through a specific historical and social context. Both in Mesoamerica and in the Caribbean region,

The centralized authority of the hereditary paramount *caciques* was legitimized by their presumed descent from mythical ruling ancestors. . . . Through ritual, paramount *caciques* enjoyed privileged access to their divine ancestors, who interceded with supreme supernatural forces on their behalf. Since the ancestors of *caciques* were closely identified with the supernatural forces, they were revered by means of elaborate rituals that were performed in the inner sanctum of temples as well as in public ceremonies. . . .

These native rulers were entitled to other privileges befitting their high rank—special insignia, dress, diet, residence, forms of transportation,

and a bevy of wives. In view of their privileged access to esoteric knowledge and their ritual interaction with supernatural forces, *caciques* were considered semi-divine themselves. (Redmond & Spencer 1994: 218)

For the rulers of the Mesoamerican village-states, the combination of military success and religious activities was crucial. The principle of legitimation for rulers was to put themselves in an axial position within the cosmos and derive their strength from the Other World of Gods, Ancestors, and forces of Nature. This is seen most clearly in Maya sites where numerous reliefs eternalize the rulers, engaged in ritual celebrations at key positions in time and space. Both in Ñuu Dzau and in Maya iconography it can be shown that the ancestors of the rulers, the founders of the noble houses, were deified, and, as such, they became one with the powers of Nature. In their direct connection to those ancestors, in their fasting and visionary experiences, their transformation as *nahual* animals, and their symbolic identification with Patron Deities, the kings and queens acted on behalf of the entire community. The evoked charismatic power was used in a social context of shared values and was combined with the key concept of reciprocity:

While the divinity of the ruler and of the high nobility gave ideological satisfaction to members of the dominant strata, it was the reasons for this divinity—that they were charged by the gods to be benevolent towards their subjects—that would have had more appeal for the subordinate classes. . . . Just as the gods worked on behalf of humans, generously maintaining the natural order, so humans had to provide nourishment for the gods. As a generous and benevolent king ruled on behalf of his people, so the people ought to repay him with their loyalty and obedience. Class relations can thus be viewed as an exchange. (Hicks, in Claessen & Oosten 1996: 271)<sup>27</sup>

The idea of a covenant with the powers of Nature was the basis for offering the first harvested products and the life force of hunted animals to the Gods. This age-old practice, then, was translated into



1.6. Toltec ruler Quetzalcoatl, seated on a nahual throne, according to Duran.

a militaristic ideology of sacrificing defeated and captured enemy warriors to the Patron Deities to guarantee the continuous existence of the world order and the realm. It was a matter of reciprocity: the Gods lent power to the rulers in exchange for demonstrations of their prowess and piety. As the rulers nurtured the people, the people had to nurture them with life force and devotion. The rulers were locked in a cycle of bloodletting and other ritual obligations, which reminded them of their modest human condition.

Just as religious convictions determined social ethos and the way Native Americans behaved toward Nature, ideology provided the frame for the recording and interpretation of history itself. Emblematic for the communities, the ruler, as both commander of the armies and supreme mediator with the Gods, both warrior and *nahual*-priest, became the focal point of history. We see this reflected in the archetypical king of the archetypical civilized kingdom: Quetzalcoatl of Tollan.

*Chapter Two*

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STORYTELLING *and* RITUAL

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HISTORY WAS RECALLED AND COMMUNICATED MAINLY IN THE HEART OF THE community, the ceremonial and administrative center. Actually, no clear descriptions of such events in Ñuu Dzauí have come down to us, but they can be reconstructed on the basis of patterns observed in the Classic Maya cities. There, the important historical statements are inscribed as images with hieroglyphic texts on stelae and tablets and are directly related to temples, palaces, and similar structures. Their reading, therefore, always took place in the presence of the Gods, the Ancestors, and those who held important offices in the sovereign community. History was embedded in the sacred precinct of power, and at the same time it made that sacrality even more manifest to the people.

This connection is also found in the record itself. History unfolds from a basic statement embedding human agency within a context of time (as the divine order) and place (as the sacred heart of the community). As a rule,

Maya inscriptions begin by elaborately stating the date, relating it to the time of origin, and mentioning the diverse Divine Patrons of the moment. This is the Long Count. After describing the event itself, they end with the so-called Emblem Glyph, reaffirming the sacred connection of the ruling lineage to the place. In fact, the superfix of the Emblem Glyph seems to represent the *difrasismo* “mat and throne.”

Similarly, Ñuu Dzaui codices and lienzos start the dynastic record with a sacred foundation date and a place sign. Rulership is expressed as a couple, the Lord and Lady, seated on the mat and the throne at that specific place. Their descent from a sequence of earlier couples—mentioned explicitly or connoted implicitly—connects them to the sacred time in which the sovereign community was created. In this way the mat and throne (*yuvui tayu*) becomes an emblem of governance and at the same time an emblem of a community’s sovereignty.

The *difrasismo* “father, mother” occurs even today as an important title of deities, shaman priests, and authorities.<sup>1</sup> The ruling couple in ancient time was also likely considered the “Father and Mother” of the people. These fundamental relationships were expressed by the depiction of the king and queen seated on the place sign. These relationships were also the main issue in commemorating history during celebrations in a ceremonial center.

The analysis of its contents shows that Ñuu Dzaui historiography goes beyond the recording of simple annals with straightforward statements about past events. This is an epic history of communities as told through their heroes. It aims at involving its public by evoking and communicating emotions within the context of a ritual and by expressing a specific shared ideology. Writing is not some form of “objective” documentation but the point of departure for artistic elaboration and dramatic performance. Codifying the information directly in figurative images and scenes, pictography is very close to body language and physical enactment, making it especially appropriate for ritualized expressions. Involving both the storyteller and the audience, such a performance has a much more compelling effect than simple discourse would have. The painted representation is an image (*naa* in Dzaha Dzaui, *ixiptla* in Nahuatl) in which the past and the Ancestors can actually become present.

Storytelling is an art in all cultures. Parallels can be drawn with the Homeric epic tradition, the medieval troubadours, the Wajang theater, and the storytellers of the Arab world. In the course of our investigations we

became acquainted with the Sicilian puppet play, the *opera dei pupi*, an oral performance of Carolingian and other epics that has survived to today. We found it extremely illuminating to see the universality and depth of the art of the *pupari*, not only in handling the puppets and giving them voices but also in sculpting the figures, painting the scenery and the lienzos that announce the presentations, decorating the traditional wooden carts with scenes from the dramas, reflecting on narrative structures and human psychology, and similar activities.<sup>2</sup>

In present-day Ñuu Dzaui tradition, such an oral art form survives in the *parangón* (*sahu* in Dzaha Dzaui), the formal discourse for special occasions, such as prayers, handing over authority, or asking for the hand of a bride. Thus it is not surprising to encounter in the heart of the Ñuu Dzaui region, in San Agustín Tlacotepec (originally located at the site of Tixii), the very same Carolingian epic cycle in the form of an extremely popular performance of dances, known as “*los doce pares de Francia*.” Each year at the occasion of the Patron’s feast, on August 28, the inhabitants gather in front of the former municipal building to watch realistic battle scenes, with flashing machetes, and hear the chivalrous and defiant speeches of Roldán, Oliveros, and the other knights of Charlemagne. According to local memory, the spectacle was introduced in 1926 from Yucu Uvui, Ometepec, in the State of Guerrero. It came with a hand-copied manuscript. A new copy was brought from the same town in 1976 and is still in use today.

Oral literature in general can be characterized as, among other things, “agonistic,” that is, focusing on events, with praise of heroic deeds. Its presentation is additive rather than subordinative, aggregative rather than analytic (Ong 1982). Indeed, the codices enumerate events, leaving the causal relationships between them mostly implicit, and paint personages in a schematic way, without attention to their individual characteristics, let alone to psychological peculiarities or motivations. The viewpoint of performative art is empathetic and participatory: the performer takes sides and takes into account the often very local bias of the audience. Indeed, we find numerous examples in which the local perspective may have been responsible for certain information being mentioned or omitted. This is a conservative, traditional medium. No creative originality in the plot or composition is expected from the performer; quite the contrary, it is crucial to represent the well-known story with sophisticated and flamboyant performance techniques. Performer and audience are locked into a specific frame of reference; oral transmission



is not well suited to include data outside that scope. The tradition can be surprisingly strong in a continuous context, but breaks do occur, especially when the social-cultural panorama has gone through major changes.

The presence of a system that could fix data in a controllable fashion helped to codify history, to give it the legitimacy of “this is what really happened and was registered in ancient times,” and to preserve it with respect, precision, and care. The very notion of writing creates the preoccupation with a fixed canonical text as a norm for performances and interpretations (cf. Goody 2000). It is possible that the use of *difrasismos* and formal pictorial language originated as a mnemonic technique aimed at verbatim reproduction of ancient texts during oral performances.

In Europe, starting with the ancient Greek historian Thucydides, the central questions of the dominant historiography have long been close to the concerns of judges and lawyers: finding out what really happened and why. Often this procedure implied some form of judging the past. This is not the character of Ñuu Dzaui pictorial manuscripts. They are closer to an older form, that of the epic narrative, a kind of discourse that usually sets out simply to conserve the memory of the deeds of great people. Focusing on the constants and internal contradictions of the human condition, this discourse may develop a deep layer of cultural symbolism and psychological insights. The main issue is not what “really” happened but the exemplary value of deeds, usually connected with a dramatic dimension and a ritualized performance. This is the narrative art of the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Marabharata, and Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey. The tragedies of authors such as Aeschylus, Shakespeare, and Goethe continue this tradition.

Consequently, stories about the past are structured according to literary conventions and to the ideas of ruling families regarding power, social-religious functions, and legitimacy. History is presented and experienced as the foundation of the present. Monuments and permanent visual images (in codices, on carved slabs, and the like) are palpable products of and references to what we may call, with Paul Ricoeur, the “narrative identity” of the community. Declamation and reenactment of the story during ritual occasions re-create and reaffirm the sense of belonging to a community with a common background. This implies a respectful attitude toward the past. The storyteller knows that in the performance he or she is invoking the Ancestors; they are present at the occasion, watching if the storyteller does his or her job well. The Ancestors are not to be manipulated as mere puppets on the string of our

imagination; their deeds and motivations must be commemorated and interpreted with care. Thus personal interpretations can be brought into the historiographer's epic work, filling in the gaps of the register with imagination. But this element of fiction occurs within a framework of serious empathy, limited by shared convictions and conditioned by human experience. Respect for the past ensures that the epic memory not only expresses a cosmological vision but also records many detailed facts and dates, both as indications of the working of higher powers and for their own sakes.

In telling our own story now, we are trying to follow the same path of respect, combining all kinds of fragmentary data to voice that ancient epic and striving for insights into both the historical process and the ideological dynamics of the society that produced it. In exploring this field in such a way, we are particularly interested in the structures and concepts of power that become manifest in the story. The sovereignty of the communities, expressed in its dynastic records and rituals, is therefore one of our leading threads.

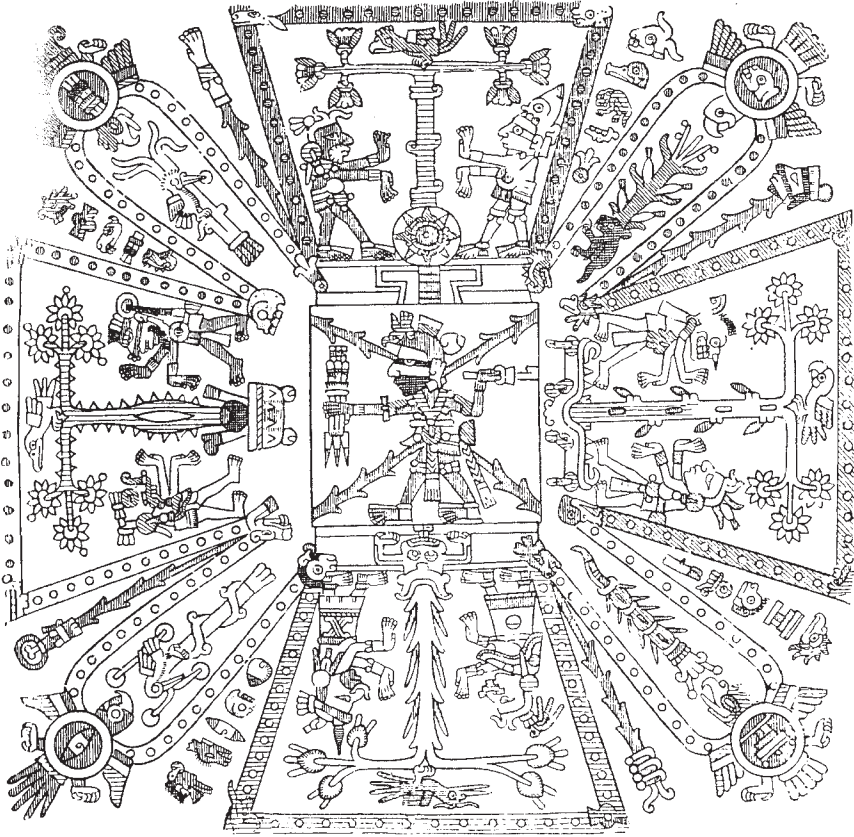
### *The* RITUAL DIMENSION

The occasion to bring out the codices and lienzos must have been a community event, a large ritual on a specific commemoration date. The discourse about the past was formal, in accordance with the conventions of oral literature known as "flowery speech": the *sahu*. The pictorial register was both a point of departure for such performances and concrete evidence of the canonical truth of the story told. While the codices and lienzos may have expressed a message or monologue on the part of the rulers, the text was also meant to have an effect on the people at large. Therefore, it had to take into account the expectation horizon of the public, including its social ethos and norms. The aim of the performance was not just to please a passive audience but also to motivate the beholders and involve them in a ritual action.

In discussing the differences between theater and ritual, Roy Rappaport has pointed out:

Those present at a ritual constitute a congregation. The defining relationship of the members of a congregation to the event for which they are present is participation. (Rappaport 1999: 39)

[T]he transmitter-receivers become fused with the messages they are transmitting and receiving. In conforming to the orders that their performances bring into being, and that come alive in their performance, performers



2.1. Calendar with the four World Trees and nine Deities of the Night (Codex Tezcatlipoca, 1).

become indistinguishable from those orders, parts of them, for the time being. . . . Therefore by performing a liturgical order the participants accept, and indicate to themselves and to others that they accept, whatever is encoded in the canon of that order. (Rappaport 1999: 119)

Ritual is usually the reenactment of an ancient codified set of acts and texts with the aim of marking and (re)establishing relationships in the present, such as the bonds between a person and him/herself (as in a healing process), between individuals and groups, between humans and Nature, or between humans and divine powers. In other words, ritual performance often has to do with positioning individuals or collectives within society, life, and

the cosmos. As such, it provides a shared experience that may become an ingredient of “identity,” a rather vague concept, which we do not see as a pre-existing “monolithic” essence but as a web of developing relationships with others, an ongoing act of developing and communicating within a spatial and historical dimension. Identity is a project, a journey, and, in terms of the philosopher Deleuze, a “becoming.”<sup>3</sup> Braidotti insightfully describes the prototypical subject in this process as a nomad, which “stands for movable diversity” and “expresses the desire for an identity made of transitions, successive shifts, and coordinated changes, without and against an essential unity” (Braidotti 1994: 14, 22). At the same time, with our identity we look back, honoring a spiritual connection to the land and earlier generations. The multiple relationships involved are not neutral but are laden with specific meanings and emotions that are actualized in ritual.

Rituals may inspire respect and awe and reestablish spiritual equilibrium and confidence, giving people the strength for critical confrontations. This positioning within a web of relations in turn produces, reinforces, and states publicly the individual’s commitment to that which is perceived as a higher-order meaning. Thus ritual expresses and provides power of at least two types: loyalty (the collective acceptance of authority within a social hierarchy or institution) and inner strength or charisma, received from an outside, divine source. A high-intensity religious ritual usually provokes a special state of mind: a catharsis, an inner empowerment with religious overtones, and a form of consolation or at least strengthened confidence in a social order and a normative ethos.

Not all rituals have this effect. Obviously, many ritual acts may be experienced as routine, fun, or boring, repetitive actions, depending on their character, their context, and the participants’ background and state of mind. On the other hand, some high-intensity rituals are expected to have a great influence on people. In many societies these rituals express central religious values capable of overruling rational discursive thought. With the process of modernity and secularization, these rituals are often being replaced by cultural historical values. Sacred places then simply become cultural and historical monuments. Archaeology, at least in Mesoamerica, plays a crucial role in this transformation.

For researchers, it is wise to reflect first on what ritual has done for them in their own lives, not only because in those cases one is usually better informed about contexts and meanings but also because an examination of one’s own

experiences is the basis for a careful and respectful treatment of other people's feelings. Such a comparative and engaging perspective makes us aware of the many different emotions a ritual may evoke in specific individuals.

To our eyes, for example, modern Dutch society is not very religious, at least not publicly. The process of transforming sacrality into cultural history and reducing religion to the private sphere is well advanced there. One of the country's few large public rituals is the commemoration of those who died in World War II and other conflicts, defending the causes of freedom and human rights. Each year, on the eve of May 5, a minute of silence is observed, garlands and flowers are ceremoniously laid down at specific monuments, and bells toll. Some may look upon all this without engagement, but others will feel deep emotion, stemming from personal experiences or a shared commitment to combat racism and Nazism. The same difference holds true for the attitude toward sacred places. In Dutch society, quite a few churches have been secularized and are now public activity halls. As a consequence, parties may be held in former ceremonial environments and on top of ancient sepulchral slabs. This is acceptable to some but shocking to others, either because they find it inappropriate in view of the monument's cultural value or because they sense that such activities will offend the divine powers still present there.

In exploring what rituals might achieve and how, we go back to a personal experience, a ceremony in which we became *compadres* of a family from San Pablo Tijaltepec, a community close to Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo). It is a small, relatively isolated village, with a breathtaking view of the blue mountain ranges of the Mixteca Alta. All inhabitants speak the local dialect of Dzaha Dzau; many are monolingual. The women dress traditionally, with colorful embroidered blouses. Because of this, the people of San Pablo are easily recognized in Ñuu Ndeya, a town in transition, with traditional *agencias* (hamlets) but also a booming commercial center. Being poor and associated with the indigenous tradition, visitors from San Pablo are often discriminated against and treated badly.

More than twenty years ago we asked an elderly San Pablo couple to become our daughter's godparents. Consequently, their own daughter, in the first years of elementary school at the time, respected us as her godparents. Later, we lost contact with this godchild; after finishing school, she cut her braids, abandoned the traditional dress, and went to seek work in Mexico City and Tijuana. A few years ago we met her again. She had married and

gone back to the village, dressed again in the traditional way, and was raising her children in Ñuu Dzau traditional culture. It was an occasion of joy and true emotion.

The renewed contact led one of her family members to ask us to take her two small children to the church for the Catholic *evangelio* ceremony. We all went to the late colonial church of Ñuu Ndeya, where an elderly German Capuchin monk celebrated Mass. The Capuchin mission in this area follows the ideas of Liberation Theology. In a radical break with the demonizing of “pagan idolatry” that was so characteristic of colonialism and is still widely practiced by conservative Mexican clergy, members of this order, working in the Franciscan tradition, see the work of God manifested in Nature and as such recognized by precolonial religions. A conscious effort is made to respect and integrate the native spiritual tradition. During the ceremony the German monk, keenly aware of the discriminatory views held by many in Ñuu Ndeya, asked the people from San Pablo to assist him in the Mass, handling the sacred objects and walking through the church in their traditional dress, incensing with copal.

The physical actions of the ritual are rather ordinary—the Mass, the words of the priest, the incense, the holy water, the embracing—but they are realized within an extraordinary setting and within a specific context with its own particular history.<sup>4</sup> All movement is situated on a permanent focus line that directs the minds of the participant public in the nave toward the altar, dedicated to the *Virgen María de Natividad*, celebrated on September 8. The church reproduces the basic form of the ancient Roman basilica, shaped as a cross to represent the Virgin’s Son, the crucified Founder. In a similar way, the ancient Mexican temple was the body of a God or Goddess. According to tradition, this particular church (*vehe ñuhu*) is built on the spot of an ancient spring, where dark cattail reeds, or *tules* (*kohyo*), were growing. Our Lady, originally from Nuú Yoo, appeared among the reeds and manifested herself to the people. Under the main altar is the head of a large serpent, whose tail lies under the market square where the civic center is located. Tradition has it that a child was buried in the fundament of the building, a sacrifice that inspires awe. The Virgin Mother, both Demeter and Tonantzin, represents earth as a universal female principle, the power of life and death. Jesus Christ has become the divine personification of corn, while God the Eternal Father is generally identified with the Sun, who sees everything and guarantees ultimate justice. The *evangelio* ritual—insignificant at first sight—is held in great

esteem locally; it replaces the precolonial naming ceremony when a child first enters the temple at age seven.

Gathered in a circle in front of the altar, we stood under the dome supported by the four evangelists, painted in their well-known representations as man, bull, lion, and eagle, representing the four cornerstones of the religious universe and, as astrological symbols, the four seasons and segments of time. This quadripartite temporal-spatial order comes from medieval European churches and castles but blends with similar Mesoamerican ideas. One is reminded of how in both Europe and Mesoamerica, churches were often built on more ancient sanctuaries (e.g., the San Clemente in Rome on top of a Mithraeum). Words of the Catholic liturgy mingled with clouds of copal incense burned in the typical Mesoamerican tripod vessels (*koho kuu*).

All these different symbolic references in interaction produce a stream of consciousness, a feeling of being immersed in a complex spiritual process of long duration, a fusion of aesthetic impressions with reflections on cultural history and with love for real people. The awareness of values and powers out there, greater than the beholder, evokes the feeling of being a creature in control of neither life nor destiny. In this context the ritual induces a sense of responsibility. It establishes a spiritual kinship between families, which will respect each other as *compadres* and *comadres*, and a serious commitment to take care of the godchildren if anything happens to their parents.

Even in this brief presentation of a particular and very personal experience, some fundamental characteristics of ritual are evident. The “true” and “real” meaning, the impact itself, is beyond words, like the Tao of the ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tse. Precisely in this beyondness lies the power. Ritual achieves this by a warp and woof of different symbolic references, actions, and structures that are thus interconnected and become mutually determining.

Clearly, several relationships are established in this example: the responsibility of godparents for their godchildren, the bond between parents and godparents, the reaffirmation and readaptation of the religious authority of the priest vis-à-vis his parish, the integration of a foreign researcher into Ñuu Dzau society, the struggle to put traditional values and social change on equal terms, and to combat discrimination. These relations are continuous, occurring between contemporaneous, interacting individuals; we can call them *syntagmatic*. They are established through repetitive or paradigmatic actions within a specially designed or paradigmatically encoded structure. Placing oneself syntagmatically in a symbolic context evokes the emotion

of being connected paradigmatically with primary encoders and Ultimate Sacred Postulates.<sup>5</sup> In this way, the paradigmatic aspect of the performance produces religious experiences and creature feeling, inducing the public manifestation of a personal commitment to a certain truth or social ethos.

There is an incisive interaction between self and other, between thought and experience, religion and society. On one hand, there is the reflective and symbolizing projection of the individual mind on the outside world, on the other the impact of outside forces, through symbols designed by others and by earlier generations, on the active mind. Significance is officially given (as the *evangelio* ritual is part of a general liturgy), but its actualization in the form of experience is personal to the individual participant or beholder; the emotional intensity is dependent on many factors, such as concentration, consciousness, and commitment.

In this case, a special emotion is produced because of the interconnection (“magic fusion”) of different fields: the mind, already sensitive because of coping with specific incidents and vicissitudes of life, is now directed to reflect on symbolic meanings, partly consciously and partly subconsciously (through the rhythm of the actions within the special environment), to open up and become alert to connected values. In a number of lectures, presented in the first years of the twentieth century and published later under the title *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James attempted to describe this process:

[M]an identifies his real being with the germinal higher part of himself; and does so in the following way. He becomes conscious that this higher part is coterminous and continuous with a MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with. . . .

So far . . . the experiences are only psychological phenomena. They possess, it is true, enormous biological worth. Spiritual strength really increases in the subject when he has them, a new life opens for him, and they seem to him a place of conflux where the forces of two universes meet. (James 1958: 383–384)

Fundamental in religious experience is the recognition of the existence of a superior other power (the Numinous) and of being embedded in a larger, essentially mysterious “cosmic plan.” Religious emotion is produced in the encounter of self with that other power, which is not only MORE of the same quality but also COMPLETELY DIFFERENT (*das ganz Andere* in the words of

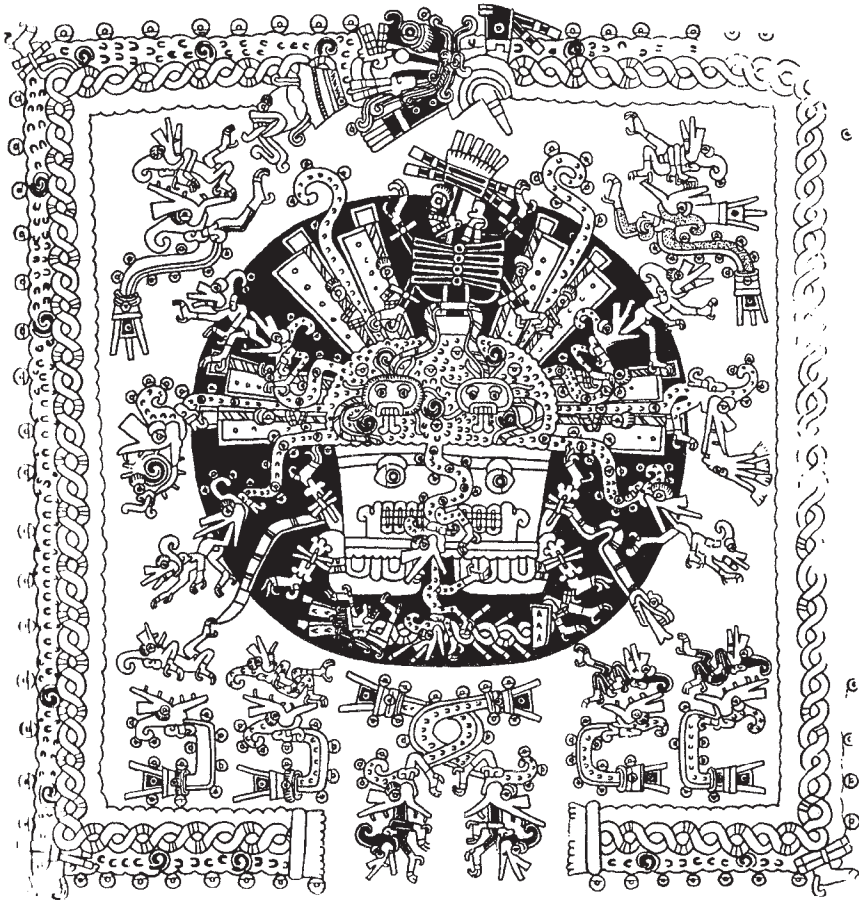


Rudolf Otto). Ritual (re)creates the sphere in which such encounters become possible, resulting in moral, aesthetic, and catharsis-like experiences. Space is important here: on one hand it structures the acts, on the other it is given meaning by those acts. Ritual indeed “takes place” (Smith 1987). In it space and time structure each other, with specific implications for social organization, planning, and memory.

## IDEOLOGY *and* HISTORIOGRAPHY

Experienced as a part of ritual performance, epic history becomes a shared reflection, serving to admonish rulers and to manifest the people’s commitment to respect them. The collective memory, actualized through commemoration rituals, obtains the character of a moral prescription: the rights of the dynasty are translated in terms of a social ethos. The listing of past conquests and marital alliances explains the political actuality, indicates who is friend and who is foe, and defines possible marriage candidates and ways of conduct for the future. The Ancestors are not simply talked about; in the ritual context they are invoked, their ancient powers are brought to life in the present. Recalling their exploits and legacy becomes a catalyst for the progress of history itself. The *sahu* goes back to the time of origins, explaining the sacred connections among places, dates, and dynasties. Its starting point is the time of primordial darkness “before there were days or years.” That was the time of the Plumed Serpent, who, as a supreme liminal figure, guided humanity and culture into existence.<sup>6</sup> Places were established as anchors of spiritual power, to which the ritual reaches back.

Seen in this light, sacred history becomes part of ritual practice within the context of the architecture and iconography of a ceremonial center. All these interconnected levels refer to fundamental symbols of Mesoamerican thought. A central element is the passage from darkness to light, seen in the rising of the sun and the sprouting of maize and from there projected onto a social and individual level as the passage from the occult forces of the Other World to the daily realities and institutions of human life and history. The sacred history mentions the activities of the divine Founders in the primordial time of darkness: priestly figures carrying the Sacred Bundle, emerging from dark caves (Chicomoztoc), wandering in pilgrimage to their final destiny where the Sun rises (i.e., history begins) and the new fire is drilled (i.e., the dynastic and ceremonial life is inaugurated). A series of rituals starts in the



2.2. Priests transformed into vision serpents stand in the corner of the Temple of Cihuacoatl, in the center of which another priest offers his blood into a deified vessel (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 29).

Dark Temple of the Death Goddess Cihuacoatl, whose body is the hallucinogenic tobacco (*piciete*). We see priests offering their blood and carrying the Sacred Bundle through the night. Their awakening from trance is like emerging from the mouth of the vision serpent (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 29 ff). Using the same symbolism, temple entrances, as caves, can be represented as the mouths of reptiles. Darkness, mystery, has its powers.

According to Mesoamerican cosmology (as expressed in the Popol Vuh), the Founding Ancestors had a clearer view and knowledge than we do today—

since then, human understanding and vision have dimmed. Religious experience and power are created in the interactive liminal sphere between the two worlds. It is in this *nahual* sphere that the source of inner power is located, which, in turn, is the basis of social realization on the slippery earth. Therefore the Mexica said “already a *nahual* comes out, emerges” (*ye onquiza naoalli*) when people took care to gain a good livelihood or, through study, quickly attained what was taught them (Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 41).

In registering events, historiography includes implicit and explicit references to their significance on that cosmic stage—for example, the coincidence of what happened on certain dates with the role of those dates in the story of creation and primordial order or the way in which calendar names contain mantic symbolism and connect rulers to their destiny.

Today, looking back, we tend to see works of art as expressions of a general cultural or ethnic identity; we relate the manuscripts to the whole of Ñuu Dzau, the region and the people. In their own time, however, they were conceived of as much more particularistic, related to a specific *yuvui tayu*. Ethnicity—basically speaking the same language and belonging to the same polity—was less important than religion in the creation of social solidarity. The same holds true in other preindustrial and pre-nationalistic societies. From a modern perspective, influenced by nationalism, the idea of a circumscribed territory owned by a specific people or community is too easily projected on precolonial data. Colonial documents indeed focus on the boundaries of the village-states, but, in contrast, precolonial texts do not deal with this topic at all. Ancient society was made up of agricultural communities without clear boundaries, nucleated around the seat of a lineage or a noble house, often identical to the shrine of its Founders. That seat and shrine determined the central place of the mat and throne. Native history is about the establishment and sovereignty of that place. In the absence of a monetary economy, the land was not reduced to a commodity that might be sold and bought; nor were people driven to accumulate wealth. Instead, the native view recognized the Patron Deities and the Ancestors as the true Owners of the land, from whom the present users took their livelihood as a loan. With those spiritual powers (*Nuhū*), humankind had a ritualized, reciprocal relationship, defined in terms of food. Offerings and sacrifices were made in return for permission to work the land, construct houses, hunt, and harvest. The combination of all these elements was the foundation of the dynasty’s social function and moral authority. Coming from the time of creation and descending directly

from the forces of Nature, the rulers were *Iya*, “divine Lords and Ladies,” and would-be *Ñuhu*, “deities,” after their death.

## RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM

The ideological character of the origins and actions of the rulers connects the Ñuu Dzau narrative paintings with the Books of Wisdom, the codices of the so-called Borgia Group. Those codices are prescriptive in character; they guide the ritual and divinatory practice and focus on the relationship among time, space, and the divine powers. We gain some access to the symbolic forms of the Teomoxtl Group by studying the metaphors, riddles, and similar figures of speech registered by sixteenth-century chroniclers, especially Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (in book VI of his Florentine Codex).

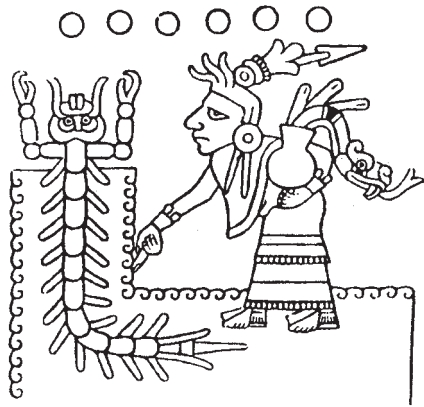
For example, one prognostication in the Books of Wisdom shows a woman with a flower on her head, from which an arrow is pointing outward. She has a water vessel in her arm, from which a coral snake emerges, and she is passing over water in which a huge scorpion is painted (Codex Tezcatlipoca / Fejérváry-Mayer, 27). A woman with flowers, passing over water, appears in the work of Sahagún as a frivolous and dissolute woman; the arrow, scorpion, and coral snake are symbols of attacks, intrigues, and destructive viciousness. The message is clear: in this period, vices affect the woman who is going for water; as a consequence, she will run into great and potentially mortal danger. In a cognate scene the coral snake is falling apart and burning, emphasizing its destructive character (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 20). A cooking pot with a dead man in it has taken the place of the scorpion, signaling the danger of being killed and eaten. In accordance with the religious vision of the painter, who transports even trivial scenes of daily life to a cosmic level, the woman protagonist is represented as the Goddess of Lakes and Rivers, in Nahuatl known as Chalchiuhtlicue, “Jade is her Skirt”: this deity is in charge during this period, being the cause of potential trouble, but it is also the remedy if she is properly adored with offerings.

Metaphorical expressions not only played an important role in addressing the religious and political authorities but also formed part of the historiographic idiom. An illustrative example of how metaphorical expressions affected the historical register is found in the comparison of two versions of how the primordial unity of the Central Mexican peoples was broken. The Mexica manuscript roll, known as “Tira de Peregrinación,” depicts this event

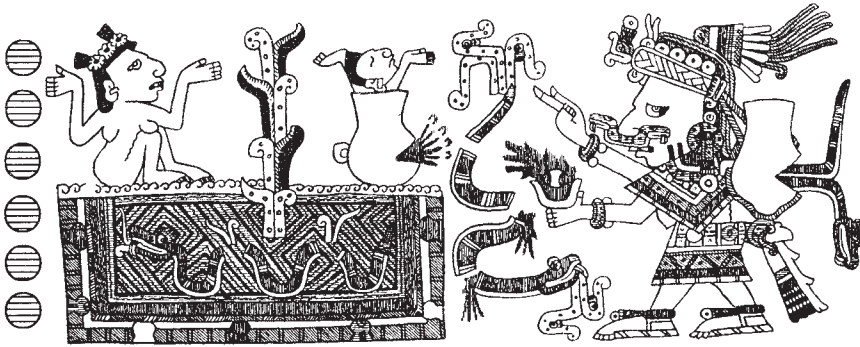
as a tree that breaks above the heads of consulting personages—the broken tree being a well-documented metaphor for rupture, discontinuity, and disaster. But the cognate scene in Codex Azcatitlan shows a destructive flood, comparable to the mantic symbol for instability and loss.<sup>7</sup> We conclude that the message (loss of unity) is given in two alternative symbolic statements (broken tree, flood) that, once included in a historical tale, became interpreted as events.

The tree is an important metaphor in Mesoamerican iconography; it symbolizes the genealogy of a family and the success of enterprises in general but also the stability of the Heaven and the fertility of the Earth. Primordial trees were raised by the Creator Gods Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca to sustain the heaven.<sup>8</sup> As an axial symbol, the “world tree” was an apt symbol for the strength, continuity, and growth of a community under the protecting shadow—that is, the good governance—of its ruler. In accordance with the Mesoamerican conceptual organization of the cosmos in four parts (each associated with deities and segments of the ritual calendar, with their divinatory implications), some sources speak of four or five trees, associated with the cardinal points.<sup>9</sup> When we read about the Founders of the dynasties being born from trees in the primordial time of darkness—or, in other versions, from caves, mountains, or rivers—we understand this as a symbolic reference that underlines the connection between the ruler and Earth and therefore a connection with the mysterious powers that control fertility.<sup>10</sup> It was this connection that allowed the rulers and their descendants to give the land in usufruct to the people, who, in reciprocity, then owed tribute to them.<sup>11</sup>

Of several great rulers of the past—Motecuhzoma of the Mexica, Tecum Umam of the Quiché—it is said that after death they transformed into earth deities who control the fertility of the land and the fortune of their descendants and vassals. On the sarcophagus in the Temple of the Inscriptions in



2.3. A woman who carries water finds scorpions, that is, conflicts, on her road (Codex Tezcatlipoca, 27).



2.4. A woman who carries water encounters the broken coral snake, that is, dangerous divisions and conflicts (*Codex Yoalli Ehecatl*, 20).

Palenque, the deceased ruler, Lord Pakal, is deposited on a spirit bowl, or “god pot,” as an offering at the foot of the sacred Tree of Rulership.<sup>12</sup> In this way he enters the subterranean realm and takes his place there as a deity in the circle of his Ancestors, represented in reliefs on the four sides of his tomb as humans who now grow from the Earth as plants, to feed their community.

In Mesoamerican thought, the opposition between darkness and light is crucial. Human life and history are associated with light. Human history starts with the dawn, the First Sunrise, separating “our time” from the primordial era in which there was not yet light and no days or years. Darkness is the time of creation, before history, and the place of mystery, where the souls exist before birth, where the dead go. It is the environment and essence of the Gods, where the mind dwells in vision. Therefore Mesoamerican sacred history starts in the time of darkness and mists; the founding of a town or dynasty is described as “dawn” and the beginning of a reign as the kindling of a new fire.

The moral authority of a ruling lineage was inherited from the past, specifically from the sacred phase of foundation. The link to the mysterious time of origin was both physical (through the bloodline of descent) and paradigmatical (through the realization of rituals). Following the example of the Creator Gods, the rulers and their vassals offered their blood—extracted from their tongues, ears, or genitals—in “self-sacrifice” to the relics and symbols of this primordial time, generally represented as the Sacred Bundle, and so made the cosmic tree of the dynasty grow and flourish.<sup>13</sup> In a similar way, the drilling of the new fire enacted and re-created the First Dawn, while

2.5. A nahual shrine (round altar with Fire Serpent) connected to the entrance (mouth) of a ball court (Codex Tonindeye, 15).



community festivities commemorated the specific sacred dates that symbolized the foundation of the village-state.

On many occasions we find rulers represented as *nahuales* or deities. This is the other aspect of power—not a mere economic or military faculty to control the behavior of others, to make them obey and pay tributes, but a charismatic power, a religious authority, based on the sacred experience of personal contact and identification with the Ancestors, Earth, and Creation.

The Mexica rulers were seen as “manifestations” (*ixiptla*) of Patron deities, “flutes” played by those divine powers. The corresponding Ñuu Dzauì concept is probably *yuhu nuu*, “mouth, face,” that is, “delegate.” So we find the *tlatoani* Tizoc represented as Tezcatlipoca on the famous round stone that commemorates a series of conquests as cosmic struggles between Tezcatlipoca-Huitzilopochtli (the Patron Deity of the empire) and other Deities (Patrons of the conquered towns).

It is interesting to compare this monument with the cosmogram on the first page of the religious Codex Tezcatlipoca (Fejérváry-Mayer), which shows the Lord of the Smoking Mirror as a mysterious, omnipresent deity, sacrificed in the four corners. His blood streams to the center, where it feeds the God of Fire as Patron of war and human struggle. As the spatial structure of the page is defined by a cyclical band of days and years, we can say that the blood of the supreme god flows through time and space, creating a dynamic relationship between the distinct human activities and destinies, ordered symbolically in the temporal-spatial structure. The calendar’s mantic symbolism conveys a sense of belonging, an idea of order in life, both on a cosmological and a socio-political level, everything and everybody having its position and destiny in time and space. This established order should be maintained through proper behavior, that is, by respecting the rhythms of rituals and tributes.

Nahuatl texts, registered by Sahagún in the Florentine Codex (book VI: ch. 1), characterize the God Tezcatlipoca as *yoalli ehecatl*, “night and wind,”

a *difrasismo* that stands for “invisible and impalpable.” This is a metaphor for the quality of “mystery” of the Gods and the *nahualistic* experience in which the shamanic priests meet with them. In paintings, this concept is rendered through a serpent, which functions as a symbol for the visionary experience.<sup>14</sup>

In the central Temple Scenes of the Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29 ff), priests in visionary trance are shown as serpents of wind and night. If one did not know this pictographic convention, the entire scene would be impossible to interpret. Several serpents—Xiuhcoatl, the fire dragon, and Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent—clearly function as markers of *nahuallohtl*, the *nahual*-experience. Their images surround temples and holy places as a *coatepantli*, a serpent wall, which marks the liminal zone between ordinary human life and the Other World of Spirits, deified Ancestors, and Gods. This iconographic phenomenon is observed not only in the Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlan but also in earlier sites such as Teotihuacan, Cacaxtla, and Xochicalco. In present-day oral tradition, serpents are often mentioned as guardians of ruins and even churches.

### *The* CEREMONIAL STAGE

As demographic growth brought about craft specialization and further social stratification, the central place became an urban nucleus, with permanent structures and monuments for social cohesion and administration. Archaeology finds only the remnants of those architectural spaces and artifacts. Taking into account that ritual and other religious practices are structured in a superabundant way, we may partially and hypothetically reconstruct some of their overall meaning. Historical and contemporary sources inform us about the root metaphors and focus points of the spiritual culture, which enables us to speculate about syntagmatic and paradigmatic aspects of past ideology and ritual activity. We see that the divine forces of Nature, originally situated within a liminal sphere in the periphery (mountains, caves, springs), were represented in the ceremonial center as a re-creation of the Other World in a controlled space, identified with the arena of political power. Heaven becomes a Heaven Temple. Through a principle of homology, the mountains (liminal places to contact Heaven) were represented as pyramids, the springs and caves (entrances to the earth) as temples and ancestral tombs, reproducing the original notion of the “house of the deity” (*huahi Nuhu*).



In archaeological sites we see that temples indeed have the basic form of the *huahi*, “house,” generally constructed of permanent material (stone). In the more elaborated examples, the liminal aspect (porch, staircase) received extra emphasis. The concept of the deity being present in the building was expressed in the representation of the temple itself as an animated being, a divine body (cf. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 29 ff). This is in accordance with common Dzaha Dzaui prepositional expressions, which define the inner part of the house as its heart (*ini*), the facade as its face (*nuu*), the door as the mouth (*yuhu*), the roof as its head (*dzini*), the foundation as its foot (*saha*), the walls as its chest (*sica*), and the outer courtyard as its back (*yata*).

The symbolism of light and darkness translates into an axis between a Temple of Heaven (a mountaintop) and a Temple of Death (a cave) as the characteristic combination of a Temple of visions above the entrance into the Earth (Codices Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 33–34, and Tondindeye, 15). Indeed, we find temple pyramids with subterranean passages and tombs inside or otherwise associated with caves or rock shelters (e.g., in Yucu Ita and San Martín Huamelulpan). Once again, Classic Teotihuacan, with its Pyramid of the Sun constructed above a Chicomoztoc-like cave, provides a model. In the mountaintop shrines, with their pyramids and tombs, we feel the vertical axis creating a dynamic relationship between Heaven (“hot”), as the source of vision and the seat of all-seeing justice, and Earth (“cold”), as the womb of fertility and the resting place of the buried Ancestors. This axis is represented as a column, rooted in the depth of the Earth and rising into Heaven, sustaining the sky as a post and roof beam (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 47).

It seems that the vertical axis Heaven-Earth-Underworld was projected onto a horizontal plane of four cosmic directions, Heaven becoming the East and Death situated in the South, while the earth was divided as a *difrasimo* “mountain and water,” of which the first element became the North (Dark Mountain) and the second the West (Ash River). These emblems then were connected to specific places in the landscape, delimiting the Ñuu Dzaui world.

On the horizontal plane, the division into the four world directions orients social and ritual organization. The sign for a ceremony consists of four volutes in four directional colors, bound together, that is, “speaking to the four directions.” The interaction with the cosmic forces is manifested in ritual movement (processions) along special roads, over staircases, and through plazas, as well as in the creation of perspectives on the focal points of a devout,

religion-based society: the houses of the Gods, whether the divine mountains and springs around them or the sanctuaries in the built environment of the ceremonial center.

A good example of a mountaintop shrine that is still in use is a chapel in Toavui (Chila). The village is situated in a valley, directly surrounded by several impressive, isolated mountains. One of these is the steep Tepeyac that rises above the village. On its top is a Catholic sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin Mary, surrounded by huge boulders—normally considered *Ñuhu* or *Ndodzo* in the *Ñuu Dzau* tradition—marking the entrance to a small precolonial temple complex. In Yuta Tnoho lore such stones are primordial Lords of the time of darkness, petrified at the First Sunrise. Moreover, the top of the Tepeyac not only offers a commanding view over the valley where the village is located and the wide panorama around but in particular of the nearby Cerro de la Tortuga, with its large archaeological site. Such associations and sightlines establish connections with sacred power in both space and time.

Considerations and impressions such as these must have been determinant in choosing a specific location for establishing a center of worship, a place where the encounter between humans and the Other World became possible. The mountaintop shrines are the locales of an important daily hierophany. They are the first places to catch the sun's rays in the morning, producing an impressive change from darkness to light, fundamental in Mesoamerican cosmivision.

As ceremonies are taking place in time, each of the sacred sites has its specific date, which in turn implies mantic and other religious associations: "Places in existential space are foci for the production of meaning, intention and purpose of societal significance. . . . Architectural space only makes sense in relation to pragmatic, perceptual and existential space, but involves a deliberate attempt to create and bound space, create an inside, an outside, a way around, a channel for movement" (Tilley 1994).

All the different devotions had to be represented in the center and had to play their role in the ritual cycle. The center reproduced the principles of cosmic order, both in space and in liturgical time, and so became a *nuu ii*, "sacred place." Dramatic sceneries were selected or constructed with an inspiring view over the exterior space, such as a mountaintop overlooking the valleys where people worked the fields. The experience is frequently not one of domination, however, but of being embraced by the landscape. A special emotion was provoked by the interaction between shared interior spaces

for collective ritual (plazas, avenues), where the strong bond of *communitas* could be experienced, and the small and hidden interior spaces of personal ecstatic encounter with the deity—temple rooms and retreats, entrances to the Other World. The sense of group identity was further enhanced by collective memories about the Ancestors who built these monuments, who lived and performed the rituals previously, about specific persons and historical events, moments of triumph and crisis that had brought the people together here. Explicit markings (buildings, reliefs) triggered and revived this awareness.

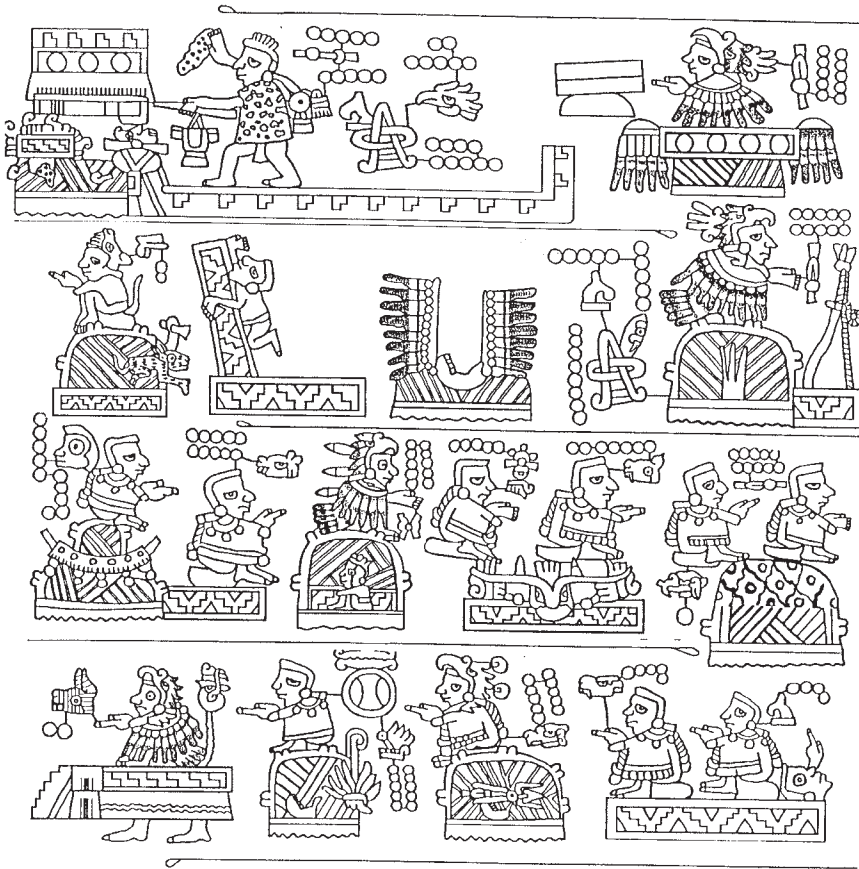
A ball court is an important element in a Mesoamerican ceremonial center. It is connected to that atom of Mesoamerican sanctuary, the temple pyramid and its plaza, which belong together just as the altar and nave of a church do. Complexes of ball court–plaza–pyramid can be observed in many sites in Ñuu Dzau: Yucu Duha near Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), the complex behind the church in Yucu Nindavua (Huamelulpan), the Cerro de las Minas in Ñuu Dzai (Huajuapán), the Cerro Pachón of Yucu Ndaa Yee (Tequixtepec), and similar sites.

The ball court is not just a monument; it suggests dynamic acts of confrontation. The game establishes winners and losers; as such, it is a way to test the favor of the Gods. Thus it became a place where ritual execution of captive enemies could be initiated, but this is not its only or its most prominent association. The ball game was also an explicitly peaceful competition, one that could substitute for war. After confronting each other in a game, the different parties would enter the sacred precinct together and, through shared ritual experiences, focusing on the imposing temples, form a *communitas* or alliance. The Toltec king Quetzalcoatl proposed the ball court to his vassals as a model for cooperation, interaction, and division of powers. Taking into account the context of a structured cosmology with rather fixed temporal-spatial orders, the game provides political actors with a means to introduce dynamics and suspense in attributing to the winner a preferential role in social-religious activities. Both in the conceptualization and the actual layout of the ceremonial center, the ball court is a liminal space, situated between the secular areas of daily activities and the ceremonial center. As such, it is a portal to the Other World, a place where humans can encounter the Gods. It is through the outcome of the game that the Gods demonstrate their will to us and give us permission to enter their abode. This is probably the background of scenes that depict mortals playing ball with the Gods.

In this way the ceremonial center can be read very much like a codex: the architecture can be interpreted as a series of events and experiences.<sup>15</sup> Monte Albán is a good example of a Classic ceremonial center. Its location suggests its origin as a mountaintop shrine, a liminal area directed toward heaven, and a focal point for all those living on the slopes and in the valleys around it. The plaza forms a sort of circular avenue; the presence of many buildings in and around it indicates a complex society, which made it necessary to integrate many distinct social-religious groups during rituals. A specific ritual sequence is suggested moving clockwise around the central temples, following the direction suggested by the arrowhead-shaped building known as Mound J. The ball court in the northeast corner on certain occasions may have been a preparatory or initial point for rituals, which then logically would end at the North platform, the main residence of authority. Mound J was probably dedicated to the veneration of the Sacred Arrow. Its direction-giving position in the circular avenue reminds us of the central role of struggle in life and of war in imperial society.<sup>16</sup>

In such a ceremonial center, the rulers' palaces were constructed in the shadow of the pyramids and integrated into the ritual spaces. The ruler was the pivot. He or she received the tribute, redistributed it, and took care of the community. He or she supervised the economic life and intervened for the community with the Deities: remaining vigilant, fasting, making painful sacrifices. Thus the political and economic sphere, which centered on the *Iya*, was identified with the religious sphere, centered on the *Nuhū*. There were several *Iya* in each village-state but only one main *Iya toniñe*. The tribute areas or realms could extend into different communities. In some cases the tributary space may have been continuous and delimited by clearly identifiable boundaries (rivers, mountain ranges, or similar features), while in other cases it may have been more dispersed and surrounded by the uncultivated "wild lands of the mountain" (*yucu*), where people were free to hunt and gather food.

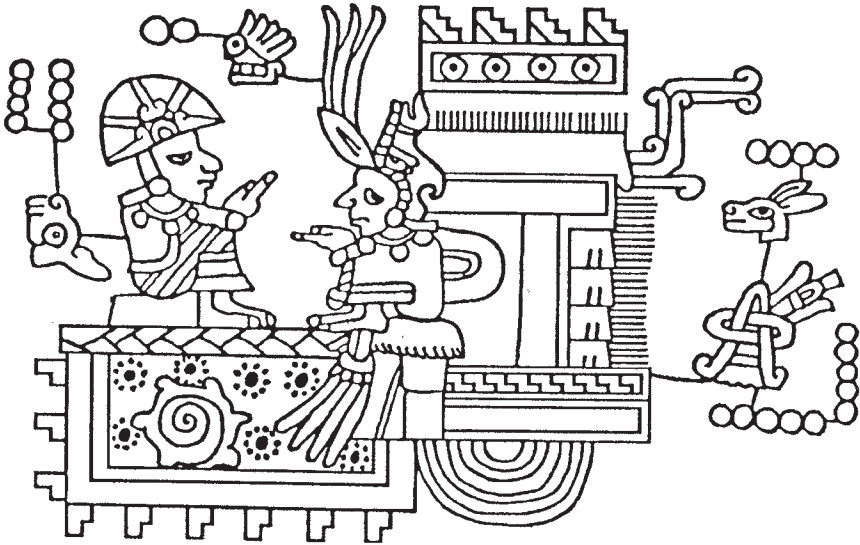
Codex Añute gives an interesting example of the beginning of central authority in this ambience. In the beginning of the dynastic history (page 4), the Lords of several towns—immediate neighbors and subject villages of the central place, Añute—come together to confer on one young man the power to make people prisoners and to take lives in sacrifice. The parents of this prince were characterized as a primordial couple of divine origin (1–2), while he is shown to have manifested himself in a local shrine of the Plumed



2.6a. After receiving the allegiance of noblemen of subject settlements and neighboring towns, the new ruler enters the Main Temple of Añute (Codex Añute, 4).

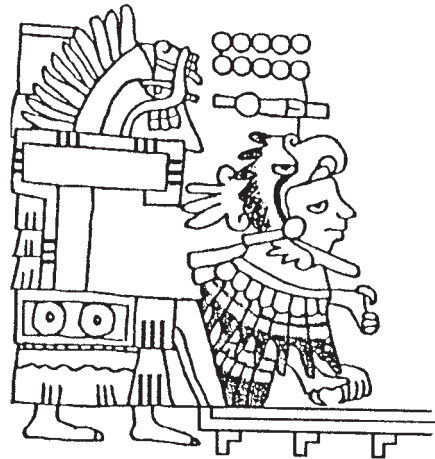
Serpent (3). In addition, he fulfilled the necessary religious obligations, honoring the Sacred Bundle in Añute’s main mountaintop temple. Contracting marriage with a noble Lady from another town, he effectively created a royal lineage. In those early periods, local power holders were apparently chosen by leading personalities of different settlements, who were committing themselves to some form of confederation for the purpose of war or defense. The “offering of royalty” ceremony, depicted in many codices, seems to be the logical continuation of such a custom.

At the same time, the intervention or support by powerful outsiders may have added significantly to the ruler’s legitimation and prestige. A

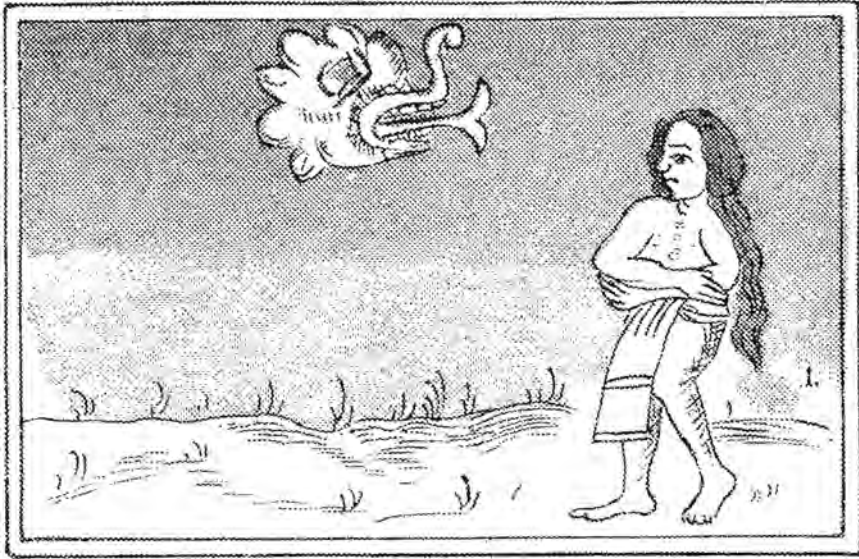


2.6b. *The Primordial Founders of the Añute dynasty marry in the Temple of Altar of the Spiderweb, Chindua (Codex Añute, 2).*

prefiguration of the Toltec intervention in Ñuu Dzau history is found on a series of Early Classic reliefs at Monte Albán, known as “programme B” (Urcid Serrano 2001). They show the arrival of Lords from Teotihuacan, saluting a local ruler. The copal bags they carry indicate their priestly function: they are participating in an important ritual, showing religious respect. The theme of the arrival of strangers is also found in inscriptions at Tikal, the Classic Maya metropolis in Guatemala, where it has been interpreted convincingly as the enthronement of a local ruler by the forces of Teotihuacan (Stuart, in Carrasco, Jones & Sessions 2000). The associated date in Tikal is A.D. 378. Similar events at Monte Albán and



2.6c. *Their son presides over a ritual in front of Temple of the Plumed Serpent of the Place at the Foot of the Altar, Sachio (Codex Añute, 3-II).*



2.7. Representation of the deity as a serpent (Sahagún 1950–1978: ch. 1).

Tikal may well represent successive stages in one single historical wave of military and ideological expansion. An additional point of interest is the fact that one of the Teotihuacan lords at Monte Albán carries a round bundle on his back. This detail demonstrates the importance of devotion to the Sacred Bundle and its connection to royal power at an early date. Giving full weight to the scene, we might conclude that the Bundle cult was strongly propagated as part of the Teotihuacan expansion.

Once established, the individual *Iya* had to draw on charisma, prowess, and strategies to extend his sphere of influence. The codices stress the *nahualistic* aspect of rulership, especially in the names of many Lords. This conceptualization of power goes back to the earliest manifestations of Mesoamerican thought: Olmec iconography depicts the powerful as jaguars and similarly strong animals.<sup>17</sup> The same is true for the immediate antecedent of the codices, the Nũiñe reliefs. One of the most interesting themes depicted on these carved stones is a feline (jaguar or puma) on top of a mountain, often accompanied by a day or full date.<sup>18</sup> This animal may wear a feathered crown, recalling similar figures in the frescoes of Teotihuacan; this attribute probably indicates lordly status. If painted red, they would represent the title *to(ho) niñe*, “blood lord,” that is, “king.”<sup>19</sup>

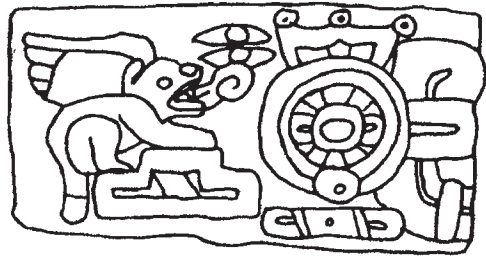


2.8. *The jaguar ruler on Stele 1 of the South Platform of Monte Albán (Caso & Bernal 1952).*

In the same manner, we interpret the animal's specific positions or ornaments as additional name elements. In some cases the feathered jaguar emits speech scrolls topped with flints.<sup>20</sup> We might read this as "Jaguar who shouts: knife, knife," which in view of modern idiomatic expressions in Dzaha Dzauil would be "Lord Jaguar who Threatens to Kill." Another possibility is to take the knives as an indication of the character of the animal's voice. In the Postclassic Language of the Lords, knives (*yuchi*) are a metaphor for "teeth." This would lead us to a reading of the image as "Feathered Jaguar Gnashing his Teeth." The knives or teeth may function as indicators of the qualities



2.9. *Ñuiñe relief: Lord Jaguar 'Speaking Flints,' that is, 'Roaring Jaguar' or rather 'Great and Eloquent Speaker,' climbing the mountain, that is, taking possession of the realm (Tequixtepec Stone 19; drawing by Ivan Rivera).*



“sharp,” “dangerous,” and “brave” (*dzaa* in Alvarado’s orthography, *shraan* in Ñuu Ndeya). At first sight this suggests a meaning such as “Lord Growling or Roaring Jaguar,” “Lord Wild Jaguar,” or something similar. The expression *kaban shraan* in Ñuu Ndeya, however, actually means “to speak well,” “to speak intelligently,” or “to speak convincingly.” Thus the name of the ruler is more properly interpreted as “Lord Jaguar, the Great Speaker.”

The record furthermore contains given names like “Feathered Jaguar Holding a Mountain in its Paw,” that is, “Lord Jaguar Ruler of the Mountain,” and “Feathered Jaguar Holding a Man in its Paw,” that is, “Lord Jaguar Ruler of the People” or “Lord Man-Eating Jaguar,” recalling a designation of this animal in Nahuatl: *tecuaní*, “man eater.”<sup>21</sup>

If these signs are to be read as names, what, then, is the action to which the monument actually refers? Clearly, it was an important one for it to be commemorated in stone. Therefore we are not satisfied by earlier suggestions such as that the flints on the speech scrolls signify that a “feather-crested tiger on place glyph utters twice the name of 1 Flint or declares war in words as cutting as flint knives” (Paddock 1966: 187). Normally, it is the victory, not the declaration of war, that is commemorated.

In view of the pictographic conventions, it is significant that the jaguar or puma is usually represented on top of a mountain (*yucu*), the basic element of a toponym, to be read as “our town” or—if we take it as an abbreviated sign for “mountain and water” (*yucu nduta*)—“our community.” Clearly, the relationship between the individual and the place is the central theme of these carved slabs. Since the act of seating is a well-known Mesoamerican convention for taking control of the polity, we read the depiction of the animal standing or seated on top of the mountain sign, or sometimes climbing it, as a statement of a ruler’s accession to the throne. The accompanying day, then, is probably the date of the ceremony, although it may also refer to the ruler’s

calendar name. In some cases the jaguar is seated or standing on a pyramid.<sup>22</sup> Here the ceremonial center itself is explicitly referred to as the site where the enthronement took place.

The same concepts are present at Monte Albán, the main Classic site of Oaxaca. A synthesis is found on Stele 1 of the South Platform, which depicts the ruler as seated on a jaguar cushion on top of a mountain with a mat design, that is, on the mat and throne of the community (Urcid Serrano 2001). He is dressed in a jaguar skin, indicative of his *nahual*, and holds the staff of authority. The mountain—supposedly Monte Albán itself—is flanked by outward-looking heads of *nahual* animals, making explicit its sacredness and power. The same animal is repeated in the headdress of the ruler, suggesting again his visionary capabilities.

The Nuiñe urns, deposited in high-status tombs, give additional information about the nature of the most important rituals carried out by the Lords and Ladies. A key piece is the urn from Tomb 5 of Cerro de las Minas, Ñuu Dzai (Huajuapán), now in the Museo Regional, Oaxaca.<sup>23</sup> It shows the modeled image of an old man sitting on a basement that is decorated with the stepped fret motif, that is, the sign of *ñuu*, a town. The seated person again has to be read as the ruler of the place. In his hands he holds a small vessel or gourd, decorated with a precious stone. We recognize a parallel with the figure of the old priest carrying a *piciete* gourd on his back in the Postclassic codices. The man on the urn is in the process of transforming into a winged fire serpent (*yabui*). Clearly, we see the effects of a hallucinogenic ritual, during which the protagonist enters the *nahual* world. On the upper rim of the urn the *ñuu* sign is repeated, flanking the representation of rising vapors. By being anthropomorphized this way, the urn itself becomes a “god pot,” an animated entity that has life of its own and at the same time refers to a specific ritual event. It is comparable to the anthropomorphized vessels in the ritual preparation of the priests’ hallucinogenic ointment, depicted in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 29, both as the receptacle for bloodletting and as the origin of the vapors that produce a state of trance.

The urn from Tomb 5 of Cerro de las Minas is by no means unique. Similar scenes of old men and other individuals holding vessels or gourds and turning into *nahual* beings are found on other Nuiñe urns and on urns from Monte Albán and the Valley of Oaxaca.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to note that the basic concept of these “urns” is actually that of the priest carrying the *piciete* gourd. In fact, we suspect that many *nahualistic* scenes on Monte Albán urns



2.10. Consuming piciete, the ruler (seated on the  $\bar{n}$ uu sign) transforms into a winged nahual. Urn from Tomb 5, Cerro de las Minas,  $\bar{N}$ uu Dzai (Huajuapán).

and other vessels are references to such rituals of vision quest during which contact was established with the Gods and the Ancestors. Supposedly, participation in such rituals was not a daily routine for the kings but a very special moment in their lives, during which they entered the *nahual* sphere of the Other World. The urns buried with them may have been the very vessels used during those ceremonies, now again functioning as their companions on the road to the Hereafter and in the renewed encounter with the divine beings. They have come down to us as testimonies of the religious nature of rulership, the ceremonial obligations and charismatic powers of the precolonial Lords and Ladies. By playing such pivotal roles in ritual, the rulers reaffirmed and justified their privileged position and at the same time effectively contributed to forging a feeling of *communitas*. We can read the testifying artifacts, monuments, and scriptures as expressions of both personal power and communal identification.

In synthesis, the Ñuu Dzau historical codices were to be read as a kind of score or point of departure for oral performances to be carried out by a specialist (storyteller) for an audience (the nobles and the people of specific village-states). The seriousness of the contents, however, suggests that the occasion was not one of a simple theatrical presentation but of a ritual with ideological and religious implications. Similar statements were made in the decoration or form of other artifacts and monuments, which also played a part in such occasions.

To understand these ancient texts, we need to educate ourselves to listen and to open up to a special world of aesthetic experiences. We have to reconstruct the horizon and codes of communication of the original public. To translate their terms, we have to know their language, their forms and contents, their concepts and aims, as well as the particular cultural and historical context of the original performance. At the same time we have to be conscious of the fact that by rereading the texts, we join the participants in an ancient ritual.



### *Chapter Three*

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## DESCENT *of the* PLUMED SERPENT

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HUMAN HISTORY, ACCORDING TO THE MESOAMERICAN WORLDVIEW, STARTED with the First Sunrise. Before, there was darkness, a mysterious time of origins. The most impressive and complete expression of this concept is found in the Popol Vuh, the sacred book of the Quiché in Guatemala. The story begins in darkness and night (*chi quecum chi acab*). The divine plan of creation is to bring about germination and dawn (*ta chauaxoc, ta zaquiroc*), connecting and even identifying the natural cycle of fertility with the cycle of day and night. Humanity, which exists within these cycles, is referred to as “people of light” (*zaquil amaquil*), “children born from light” (*zaquil al*), or “children begot by light” (*zaquil qahol*). Several attempts to create a human being are unsuccessful until the twin brothers Sun and Moon gain their victory over the spirits of the Underworld.

In Classic Maya iconography the primordial darkness, which at the same time is the Underworld and the abode of the Ancestors, is represented in

“watery” terms, with references to water lilies, shells, and similar items. As a coincidence, the *interpretatio christiana* (interpretation of a non-Christian worldview in Christian terms) of the early colonial authors often equated the primordial period or earlier creation with the time before the Deluge. With this in mind, we can decode statements like those that qualify Chichén Itzá as “the most ancient settlement and, according to the count of the Indians, the first that was populated after the Deluge” (de la Garza 1983: 426).

### *The* TIME of DARKNESS

The Popol Vuh is an early colonial registration of precolonial sacred history. Similar texts existed in Ñuu Dzaui civilization. Burgoa describes one such work, which was confiscated by the monks in Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan):

Several years after this people had been baptized and after some of them had learned how to write, a manuscript book was found, on good paper, which contained histories in their language, such as those in Genesis, beginning with the creation of the world, the lives of their leaders, comparable to those of the patriarchs, and the Great Flood, combined with illustrations, such as in our Bible. . . . And the identity of the author of this book was kept so much a secret that it was impossible to discover him or find him out, as the owner of the book claimed he had inherited it. The worst was that, although kept in the deposit box under two keys, it disappeared as if it were smoke. (Burgoa 1934b, I: 288–289)

At the end of the sixteenth century the vicar of the Dominican convent in the Ñuu Dzaui town of Saha Yucu (Cuilapan) in the Valley of Oaxaca possessed a similar book, which also consisted of a combination of an alphabetic text, probably in Dzaha Dzaui, and pictographic illustrations. The vicar in question may have been Fray Diego de Ontiveros, companion of the famous missionary Fray Gonzalo Lucero who spoke Dzaha Dzaui fairly well.<sup>1</sup> The book in question is lost, but the Dominican friar Gregorio García included a Spanish summary in his book on the origin of Native American peoples. The first sentences seem to be a direct translation from the original:

In the year and on the day  
of darkness and obscurity  
before there were days or years,  
when the world was in great darkness  
and everything was chaos and confusion,

the earth was covered with water:  
there was only slime and mud  
on the face of the earth.

(García 1981, book V: ch. 4)

The Spanish translation still contains the characteristic *difrasismos* of the original Dzaha Dzau text. The expression *quevui, cuiya*, “day, year,” means “time.” Obscurity and darkness—*sa naa sa yavui*—is a metaphor for “mystery.” So the first phrase, “in the year and on the day of obscurity and darkness,” is to be understood as “in the mysterious time.” The primordial darkness is the time of sacred history, in which Gods and mythical creatures are the principal actors.<sup>2</sup>

This concept of a primordial era of darkness is present in many other areas of Mesoamerica. In Cholula an old man, “learned in the antiquities,” told the Spanish chronicler Diego Durán:

In the beginning, before light and sun were created,  
the earth was in darkness and obscurity,  
and without anything created.  
All flat, without mountain nor abysm,  
surrounded on all sides by water,  
without trees nor creatures.

(Durán 1967, II: 17)

The Nahuatl word *yoayan*, “in the time of night,” is used in the same sense in chronicles like the Annals of Cuauhtitlan and is at the core of the sacred story of the First Sunrise in Teotihuacan.

Mitoa in oc iooaian,  
in aiama tona, in aiama tlahui:  
  
quilmach,  
mocentlalique, mononotzque  
  
in teteuh:  
in umpa teutiuaan,  
quitoque: quimolhuique.  
“Tla xioalhuiian, teteuie:  
aquin tlatquiz? aquin tlamamaz?  
in tonaz, in tlathuiz?”

It is said that in the time of darkness,  
when there was still no light, no  
dawn,  
it is said,  
that they assembled and consulted  
together,  
the Gods,  
there in Teotihuacan,  
they spoke and said:  
“Come here, oh Gods:  
Who will take charge and be responsible  
for the daybreak, the dawn?”

(Sahagún 1950–1978, book VII: ch. 2)<sup>3</sup>





3.1. The first page of Codex Yuta Tnoho (52); the reading starts in the lower right-hand corner.

This basic concept of a time of darkness, *Nuu Naa* in Dzaha Dzaui, determines the structure of the Codex Yuta Tnoho. The book starts with a “prologue” in Heaven. First, ten anonymous priestly figures (painted black) are seated with specific attributes and gestures. Taking the anonymous figures as representations of specific actions, we read their position as the verb “seating” (*yocoo*), which in Dzaha Dzaui has the connotation of “establishing oneself” and “beginning.” Combining these considerations, we understand the images as a series of phrases referring to the seating (i.e., establishment or creation) of elements, institutions, and places. Their sequence is clearly composed as a literary text: the figures are paired as *difrasismos*, and their hand gestures show a rhyming pattern: a-b, c-d, a-d, e-d, a-c. We can render its basic meaning more or less as follows:

These are the elegant words (of the *sahu*, *parangón*),  
the holy words, for which offerings of tobacco are made,  
about how it all began in Heaven,

about when darkness was all around,  
when it was determined how the days would be counted in scores of  
twenty,  
when it was arranged how the divine power (*Ñuhu*) would rise and set,  
when death was seated, when worship was seated,  
when the courses for the streams were traced,  
when the mountains were put in place,  
i.e., when the water and the mountains, the communities, were  
established:

first the Black Town, *Ñuu Tnoo* (Tilantongo),  
then the White Town, *Tocuisi* (Zaachila?),  
the Place of Heaven (on *Cavua Caa Andevui* near *Yuta Tnoho*),  
the Place of the Throne (*Yucu Aníñe*, *Monte Albán?*).  
These were places of flint knives, of power over life and death,  
places where the staffs of authority were planted,  
the valleys of quetzal feathers and blood, i.e., of the noble lords,  
holy enclosures of the rosette and the palm leaves for bloodletting,  
with the House of Down Balls, the House of the Throne,  
i.e., the houses of holiness and peace, the temples of ecstasy,  
and the houses of the royal seat and glory, the palaces of authority.  
There were seated the primordial celestial pair of *Ndodzoz* (Ancient Rulers)  
the venerated Ancestors: Lady 1 Deer and Lord 1 Deer,  
First Mother and First Father, Founders and Protectors,  
who united in themselves the Power of Death and the Breath of Life.

The opening phrase—a speaking priest to whom another priest makes an offering of *piciete* (*Nicotiana rustica*)—can be interpreted as a parallel to the beginning of the *Popol Vuh*: *are u xe ober*, “this is the beginning of the ancient account.” The images that follow have several symbolic associations. The dichotomy of darkness and days, which connotes the opposition between chaos and order, leads to that of the rising and descending *Ñuhu*, a term used for “sun” but also for “divinity” in general. The image therefore refers to the movement of the sun as the logical element to follow the creation of the days, but at the same time it connotes the cycle of the forces of life and Nature: the sprouting and withering of crops, birth and death. The latter opposition is made explicit in the following image: the seating of death, paired with the figure of a priest carrying the tobacco gourd, representing the cult. This combination, also seen in other Mesoamerican sources, reminds us that death and worship belong together. Human life is characterized by respect for superior forces, and the religious emotion itself is provoked by the

awareness of our limitations.<sup>4</sup> Religious practice leads logically to the concept of the human community, situated in its natural niche of “water and mountain,” a well-known *difrasismo* (contracted to *altepetl* in Nahuatl). The fact that both terms form a conceptual unity stresses once again the interconnect-edness and coherence of the foregoing pairs.

After this initial phrase, a number of concrete communities are mentioned. Here the same principle of symbolic combinations is applied. The toponyms are ordered in pairs, starting with Ñuu Tnoo, the Black Town (Tilantongo), as the place with which the codex was connected. It is combined with a White Town, which must be interpreted as a place of equal status. Tocuisi, “(Place of the) White Lords,” that is, the city-state of Zaachila, capital of the Beni Zaa in the Valley of Oaxaca, is the best candidate in view of its importance in Ñuu Dzau history. The next two toponyms contain symbolic references to power; the Place of Heaven is associated elsewhere with Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) as the primordial site of the origin of dynasties, while the Place of the Throne must have a similar status and is probably identical to the Mountain of the Seated Ruler, which represents the center of Monte Albán on the Map of Xoxocotlan.<sup>5</sup> As we will see, both places played a crucial role in the early history of the Ñuu Tnoo ruling family.

The fifth and sixth toponyms pair a Place of Flint Knives with a Place of Staffs. A Town of Flints appears in the historical record; Ñuu Yuchi, identified as Mogote del Cacique (in San José Tres Lagunas, today an *agencia* of Ñuu Tnoo), for a short but important period, took the position of Ñuu Tnoo as the central mat and throne in Ñuu Dzau. The pairing with a Place of Staffs, however, suggests another reading; the latter could also indicate a specific place, such as Yucu Tatnu (Topiltepec, “Mountain of Staffs”), but it does not function as an important toponym in the codices. We therefore prefer to read that sign for the moment as a general reference that qualifies the five mentioned toponyms as “places where the staffs have been located,” that is, “places of rulership and power.” This suggests that the reference to the flint knives is to be interpreted in a parallel way, as flint knife and staff often appear combined. On page 48, the Codex Yuta Tnoho shows how the staff with flint was brought down from the Place of Heaven to Ñuu Tnoo. The symbolic associations of the flint knife are determined by its use as a killing instrument.

The beginning of the codex, then, after the opening phrases, seems to mention four concrete places, which we can identify as the two primary polit-

ical centers of Ñuu Tnoo and Zaachila with their respective sacred places of origin: the Mountain of Heaven near Apoala and the ancient acropolis of Monte Albán. The other signs we can understand as qualifiers that indicate the ritual and ideological importance of these sites.

In the next scene, Lady 1 Deer and Lord 1 Deer appear. This establishes a direct connection with Gregorio García's text about the primordial time of darkness:

In that time . . . appeared visibly  
a God (*Ñuhu*) whose name was 1 Deer  
and whose given name was Puma Serpent,  
and a very pretty and beautiful Goddess (*Ñuhu*),  
whose name was 1 Deer  
and whose given name was Jaguar Serpent. . . .  
With their omnipotence and wisdom  
they made and founded a huge rock,  
on top of which they constructed some palaces,  
very sumptuous and made with great skill,  
which were their seat and dwelling on earth. . . .  
This rock with the places of the Gods (*Ñuhu*)  
was on a very high mountain, close to the village of Apoala,  
which is in the province of the Mixteca Alta.  
This rock . . . was called *Place where the Heaven was*.

(García 1981, book V: ch. 4)

On the eastern side of the small valley in which the village of Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) is located, we find the mountain these historical sources name as the residence of the primordial couple: the Kaua Kaandiui (Cavua Caa Andevui), “Rock that Rises into Heaven” or “Rock on which the Heaven Rests.” Combining this identification with the idea that Heaven is also a symbolic place where shamans go to visit and receive power from the Ancestors, we understand this reference as an indication of an important ancient worship that must have taken place on that mountaintop.

When we climb it today, we become more and more impressed. The Mountain of Heaven is indeed a shrine, crowned by a series of walls that



3.2. *The Primordial Couple, Lady 1 Deer and Lord 1 Deer (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 52).*

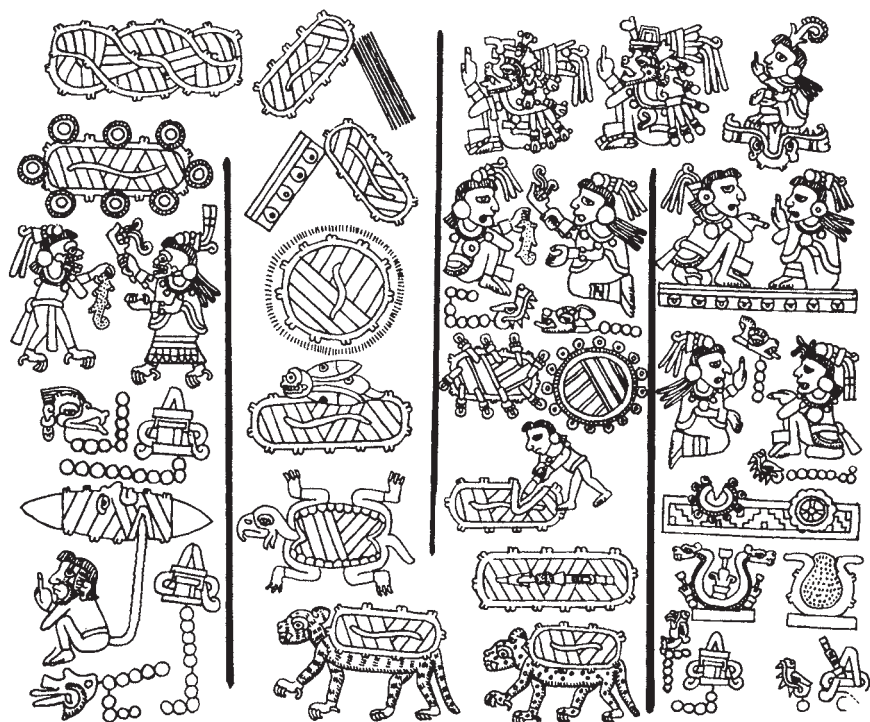
integrate natural boulders into an ancient pyramid. On the top we still find offerings of shells and other remains of ongoing rituals. We are standing high in a wide-open space, with blue mountain ranges all around. Floating on the distant horizon is the shining white cone of the Pico de Orizaba. Far below lies the sacred valley of Yuta Tnoho as in a vision. We are close to the drifting clouds in a sphere of mystery. Above us a soaring eagle. Silence. Only the wind and the first drops of the summer rain . . .

### *The BIRTH of LORD 9 WIND*

Codex Yuta Tnoho continues, showing that Lady 1 Deer and Lord 1 Deer, as primordial Parents and Creators, brought forth the Elements of Nature and the First Beings, among whom were Lord 4 Alligator ‘Coyote Serpent’ and Lord 11 Alligator ‘Jade Serpent,’ as well as Lord 4 Serpent (*Qh̄yo*) and Lord 7 Serpent (*S̄ayo*), the Patron Deities of Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>6</sup> They also gave origin to the Spirits of trees and stones, to the Spirits of the days 7 Eagle and 7 Rain, the sacred days of the dynasties of Ñuu Tnoo and Zaachila, as well as to the volcanic powers, illnesses, and specific symbols of priestly ranks. The Spirits of trees, stones, the days 7 Eagle and 7 Rain, and the volcanic powers then marched toward the huge *pochote* tree in the Sacred Valley, that is, the Sacred Mother Tree in the Valley of Yuta Tnoho (Apoala).

The story is interrupted here to introduce a second primordial couple: Lord 8 Alligator and Lady 4 Dog, seated in the Town of Jade and Turquoise (49). They too were Old Ones, deified Ancestors, seated in Heaven. The Maize Flower Maiden (*Yoco*) and the Dog Spirits of Wealth (*To-ina*) were their offspring.

The Town of Jade and Turquoise is obviously an important place in this origin story. The context suggests that it was located inside the Ñuu Dzau region and had a status similar to that of the Mountain of Heaven at Yuta Tnoho (Apoala). A jewel or jade occurs next to a large Tree of Origin depicted in Codex Añute, page 2. In that case it is the Sacred Tree of the Town of Flames, which has been identified as Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). Indeed, the latter town is mentioned in the chronicle of Fray Francisco de Burgoa (1934b, I: 277) as one of the places to which the Ñuu Dzau dynasties attributed their origin. Burgoa further calls Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla) the “main temple of this nation, the oracle to consult for all matters of war and peace,” and documents the name of its Sacred Bundle as “Heart of the People” (Burgoa 1934b,



3.3. *The Place of Thirteen Stones and the birth of Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl' (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 49).*

I: 332 ff). Three stones form part of the Ñuu Ndecu toponym in Codex Añute (2): Stone of Jade (or Jewel), Stone of the Puma, and Stone of Flames. The latter of these is probably connected with the toponym Town of Flames, while the first two may represent two of the four wards mentioned with their Nahuatl names in an early colonial document known as the *Suma de Visitas*: Xiutepeque, “Turquoise Mountain,” and Miztepeque, “Puma Mountain,” respectively. The other two wards were called Iquipaltepeque, “Throne Mountain,” and Iztepeque, which may mean either “Knife Mountain” (*itz-tepec*) or “Blood Mountain” (*ez-tepec*).

These combined data suggest that the Town of Jade and Turquoise in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 49, is an alternative (possibly more archaic) place sign of Ñuu Ndecu.<sup>7</sup>

The old couple, Lord 8 Alligator and Lady 4 Dog, performed rituals for a series of thirteen stones, each named in a particular way. Among them are

Stone of the Jewel (Xiutepeque?), Stone of Sacrifice (Iztepeque?), and Stone of the Puma (Miztepeque?). The listing of thirteen stones recalls the Nahuatl concept *teicpalli*, “stone seats (of rulership).”<sup>8</sup> A prayer text from Guerrero comes to mind:

Yoco, on the mat, on the throne,  
 on the thirteen thrones of the Great Rain,  
 I came to put in rows of thirteen for you, Rain,  
 you who are living in the houses of the mountain,  
 in the sanctuaries of the mountain.  
 Thirteen are the offerings for you,  
 thirteen to drink, thirteen to eat.

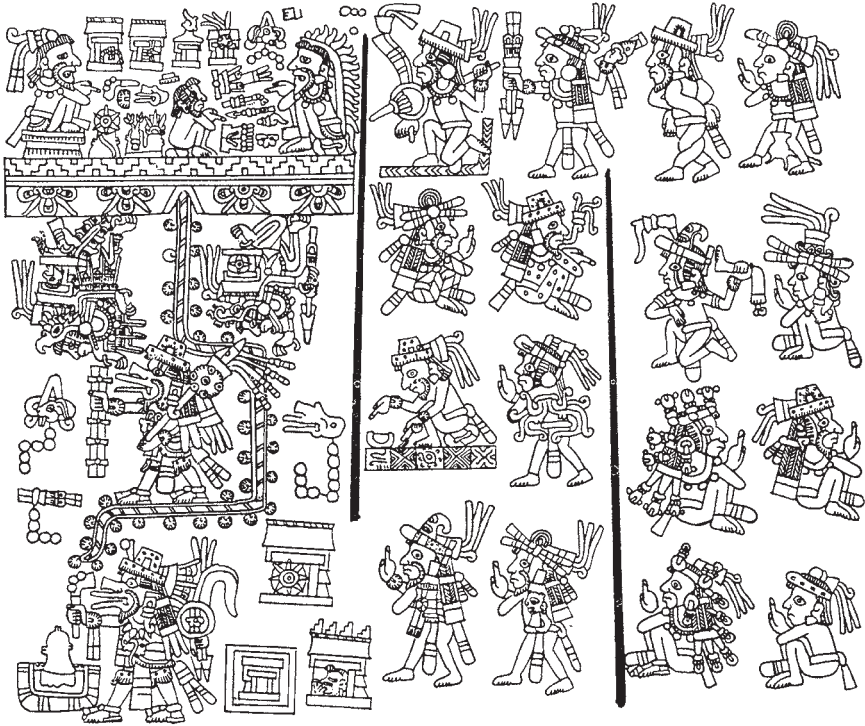
(Schultze Jena 1933–1938, III: 84)

After all the stones have been mentioned by name, Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ was born from a huge flint. He was the principal Founding Figure of ancient Ñuu Dzauil sacred history, a direct parallel to the divine Quetzalcoatl, the Plumed Serpent, that is, the Whirlwind, the main culture hero in the Central Mexican, that is, Toltec, tradition:

Quetzalcoatl—the wind,  
 the guide and roadsweeper of the rain gods,  
 of the masters of the water, of those who brought rain.  
 And when the wind rose, when the dust rumbled,  
 and it crackled and there was a great din, and it became dark  
 and the wind blew in many directions and it thundered,  
 then it was said: Quetzalcoatl is wrathful.

(Sahagún 1950–1978, book I: ch. 5)

He is still very important in local lore. In present-day Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo) he is well-known as *Koo Sau*, the “Rain Snake,” which corresponds to *Coo Dzavui* in the orthography of Alvarado. Codex Yuta Tnoho shows his actions in the primordial time of foundation (*in illo tempore*); later, he was venerated as a Sacred Bundle in different important sanctuaries.<sup>9</sup> According to Burgoa, the Sacred Bundle that was venerated as the Heart of the People in Ñuu Ndecu contained a jade statuette of a winged serpent, clearly an image of Quetzalcoatl. If our reading is correct, Codex Yuta Tnoho explains that Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ was born from a huge flint in that Town of Jade, Ñuu Ndecu.



3.4. Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl' descends from the Place of Heaven (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 48).

The following series of paired manifestations of the Quetzalcoatl figure, each with different attributes, is to be read as an invocation phrased in *dif-rasismos* (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 48). Lord 9 Wind is characterized as the lord of the precious materials and adornments that symbolize civilization: cotton, jade, gold, specific earplugs. He is the one with religious power: the magic dancer who fascinates and baffles people, the one venerated with braziers, the one who twists his limbs in shamanic convulsions. He is the mighty conqueror who inspires the warriors. And above all he is the speaker of precious words, the painter of books, from whose heart the songs flow because he is the pious one, the one who carries in his heart the Nuhu and the Sacred Bundle of sticks symbolizing the Ancestors.

Lord 9 Wind was instructed by the Old Ones in the Place of Heaven as a young *nahual*-priest in a visionary trance. Heaven is the general symbol of the celestial abode of the Gods, comparable to *Do Asean*, the East, the place



where the Mazatec shamans go to receive their power and instruction from the Ancestors. At the same time, as we have seen, in Ñuu Dzaui cosmology the Place of Heaven was situated on a mountain near Yuta Tnoho: Kaua Kaandiui (Cavua Caa Andevui), the “Rock that Rises into Heaven” or the “Rock on which Heaven Rests.” Lord 9 Wind came down from that celestial sanctuary on a whirling cord, covered with down balls, a symbol of his shamanic flight.<sup>10</sup>

Two titles behind him further clarify his status: eagle and fire serpent, *yaha yahui*, the *difrasismo* for *nigromántico señor*, that is, a *nahual* or shaman priest. Apparently, Fray Gregorio García was transcribing a very similar scene when he, or rather the person he was interviewing, interpreted the shamanic title as an indication that there were two brothers named Lord 9 Wind. The widespread Mesoamerican story of the twin brothers in the primordial time of creation (the Hunahpú and Ixbalanqué of the Popol Vuh) may have promoted such an interpretation. García says that the First Couple, Lord 1 Deer and Lady 1 Deer, had two sons: “Wind of 9 Serpents” and “Wind of 9 Caves.” The latter names do not make sense and have to be reconstructed as 9 Wind ‘Serpent’ and 9 Wind ‘Cave.’ As for this last term, “cave” is *yahui* in Dzaha Dzaui, a homonym of “fire serpent” (not taking into account tonal differences). In the following lines it is explained that the first boy could change himself into an eagle and that the *nahual* of the second boy was the fire serpent or ball of lightning:

Living, thus, these Gods [*Ñuhub*], Father and Mother of all the Gods  
 [*Ñuhub*],  
 in their palaces and court, they got two male children,  
 very handsome, discrete, wise and skillful in all arts.  
 The name of the first was *Wind of Nine Serpents* [9 Wind ‘Serpent’],  
 taken from the day on which he was born.  
 The name of the second was *Wind of Nine Caves* [9 Wind ‘Yahui’],  
 which was also the name of the day of his birth.  
 These two boys grew up with great talents.  
 The elder for recreation transformed himself in[to] an eagle, flying high in  
 the sky.  
 The second also transformed himself, in[to] a small animal, like a serpent  
 with wings,  
 with which he flew through the air with such agility and subtlety,  
 that he passed through rocks and walls and made himself invisible,  
 so that those down on earth heard the loud noise that both made.

They took these forms to symbolize the power they had to transform themselves and return to the form they had before.

(García 1981, book V: ch. 4)

The garbled names, then, qualify Lord 9 Wind as eagle (*yaha*) and fire serpent (*yahuí*), that is, as a person of magic powers. Codex Yuta Tnoho shows how he brought down from Heaven a series of objects that later played a crucial role in royal rituals. Among these were the Sacred Arrow and a staff with a quincunx motif consisting of a disk with five dots on it. By following such objects in the record, we learn how political power was established and passed on in early history.

To this day, staffs are symbols of authority in Mesoamerican villages. Because of the quincunx on top, the German scholar Eduard Seler referred to these particular staffs as “Venus Staff.” Indeed, the same iconographic motif is found in the facial paint of the Venus deity. Ubaldo López García (2001), however, has pointed out that this motif survives today as an important symbol in Yuta Tnoho (Apoala), where it is known as *Tukukua*, “comb.” The term corresponds to *Tnucucua*, short for *yutnu cucua*, in the orthography of Alvarado, who translates it as “fence” (*rexa*). We think its basic meaning is “wooden frame.” In Yuta Tnoho today, it designates a special object, made of reeds and consisting of a square with two diagonal lines, that is put above the doors of new municipal authorities on the day of their inauguration. In this context, it probably represents the quadripartite structure of the village and the cosmos, connected in the center. Thus we interpret the quincunx as a symbol of ordered society, divided into four directional segments that meet in the center (*axis mundi*) and sustain each other in reciprocal interaction. With it, one evokes the cosmic order and primordial power. One is reminded of the God’s Eye (*Ojo de Dios*) staff of the Huicholes.

In the codices, this specific staff is associated with the ruling dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo and clearly represents the authority of that noble house. The combination with a flint knife reinforces its symbolic ability to control life and death. The fact that Lord 9 Wind brought it down from Heaven affirms the celestial and visionary origin of dynastic power. The Plumed Serpent carried these sacred objects to the water and mountain, that is, the *yucu nduta* (*altepetl* in Nahuatl) or “community,” of Ñuu Tnoo. He is shown in charge of the Temple of the Sun and the Temple of the Flayed God (Xipe)—references to the cults connected with the Ñuu Dzauí versions of the Mexica feasts *Panquetzaliztli* and *Tlacaxipehualiztli*, respectively.<sup>11</sup>

*The SACRED MOTHER TREE and the FIRST DAWN*

After consulting with the Ancestral Spirits, Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl took it upon himself to bring life and order to the greater Ñuu Dzauí region, carrying the water of Heaven, that is, the seasons, to the different places and in the process assigning sacred foundation dates to each.

The Great Lord “Plumed Serpent” took charge of the heavenly waters and so caused the rain to fall, the seasons to come, for all the mountains, all the rocks, all the rivers, all the plains, all the towns and nations that form Ñuu Dzauí; thus he established the holy years and days, the feasts, for the towns, founded in the beginning, in the past, for those on the banks of rivers full of gold, where from the depth of the earth all living creatures sprouted, for both oceans, with waves covered with foam, for the sacred water (Pacific Ocean) where the horrific hurricane dwells, the monster that demolishes the houses, destroys the fields and kills the people, for the mountains of Ñuu Dzauí, which form a circle around, in harmony, peaceful and soft as fur, as down-ball feathers, in the center of which the Spirit lives, stretching towards the four directions, for all lands, mountains, plains, bound together and unified, for all that rises and has Heaven as its roof beam for all that grows and has Earth as its fundament and origin, where the sacred mountain of abundance is located, where pulque is made.<sup>12</sup>

Lord 9 Wind’s link to the creation of the religious and political landscape, as well as to the first rituals, is also reflected in Gregorio García’s text:

Living, thus, in the house of their parents, these brothers, enjoying great tranquility, agreed to make offerings and sacrifice to the Gods [*Ñuhu*], their parents. Therefore they took some ceramic incense burners with charcoal on which they threw some powdered tobacco as incense. And this was the first offering made in the world. Having offered this sacrifice, these two brothers made a garden for their recreation, in which they put many sorts of trees, that bore flowers and roses, and others that bore fruits, many herbs of fragrance and other species.



3.5. After having consulted with the Ancestors and the Nahuales, Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl' carries the waters of Heaven to the Mountains of the Rain God, that is, *Nuu Dzau*. Notice (to the left) the symbol of the column rising from the open jaws of the alligator (Earth) into Heaven (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 47).

In this garden and orchard they used to recreate and amuse themselves.  
Next to it they made a very beautiful field,  
in which were all the things they needed  
for the offerings and sacrifices,  
that they had to make to the Gods [*Nuhu*], their parents.

(García 1981, book V: ch. 4)

Then, again after consultations, this time with the Primordial Beings and Spirits of Nature, Lord 9 Wind caused the First Lords to be born out of the Tree in a Plain of Burned Tobacco, that is, a Sacred Plain. In the next pages it becomes clear that all this took place in the vicinity of "River with a Hand Holding Feathers," which in several documents appears as the most important place of origin for the *Nuu Tnoo* dynasty (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 37–35).

Both the sign itself and the context point to the town of Yuta Tnoho (Santiago Apoala), mentioned by Friar Antonio de los Reyes as the place where the first Ñuu Dzauí Lords were born from a tree:

The general opinion among these Mixtecs was, that the origin and beginnings of their Gods and Lords had been in Apoala, a village here in the Mixteca, which in their language is called Yuta tnoho, "River from which the Lords came forward," because they say that they were plucked from some trees that grew out of that river, which had specific names. They also call that village Yuta tnuhu, "River of the Lineages," which is the most appropriate name and the most fitting. . . . As for the Lords and their birth, it could be that in ancient times some lords came from this village and that from there they dispersed over the other towns of La Mixteca, because of their eminence and success in war and that because of their heroic deeds they won specific names, as is now told about those who founded the principal towns in this Mixtec region. (Reyes 1976: 1)

This opening statement of the Dominican friar in his grammar of Dzaha Dzauí gives several possible etymologies of Yuta Tnoho. The first word, *yuta*, means "river." The second, *tnoho*, refers to the act of "plucking," actually suggestive of the force with which the stream pulls out and carries away the plants and weeds that grow alongside it. A "plucking hand" therefore is painted in the sign of the river. To make the reading more pregnant, feathers are put in the hand. This device is in accordance with the verb "plucking," but the fact that the feathers are those of a quetzal bird is indicative of the status of nobles or lords (*toho*), and their bundling may symbolize the lineage (*tnuhu*).

Obviously, the ancient account of how the Founding Ancestors of the Ñuu Dzauí dynasties had been born from a huge tree in Yuta Tnoho was extremely important to those dynasties. Fray Francisco de Burgoa gives a similar version in his chronicle: "The origin of La Mixteca was attributed to two high and proud trees with large branches, from which the wind plucked the leaves, standing on the bank of the river in the far-off solitude of Apoala between mountains . . . with the veins of this river grew the trees that brought forward the first *caciques*, man and woman, and henceforward they multiplied and populated an extended kingdom" (Burgoa 1934b, I: 274).

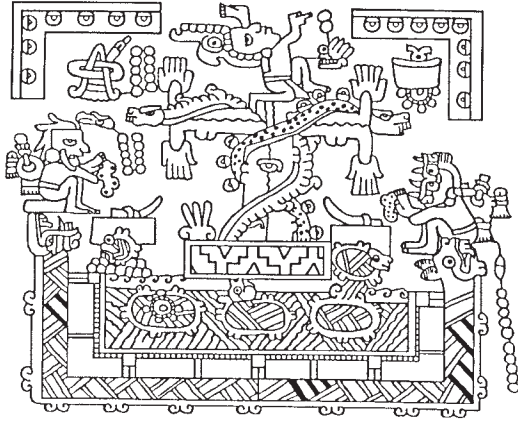
The Sacred Plain where the Tree stood, then, must be the small valley along the banks of the Yuta Tnoho, the river of Apoala. Those born from the Mother Tree were the divine Ancestors of the Ñuu Dzauí dynasties. Lord 9

Wind made fire, that is, created light, and gave them their names. Similarly, the Mexica believed Quetzalcoatl to be the Deity who carves the unborn babies as flakes of precious stone and, following the orders of the Powers of the Starry Sky, brings them out of the dark (*yoayan*) into the light of life (Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 7, 34).

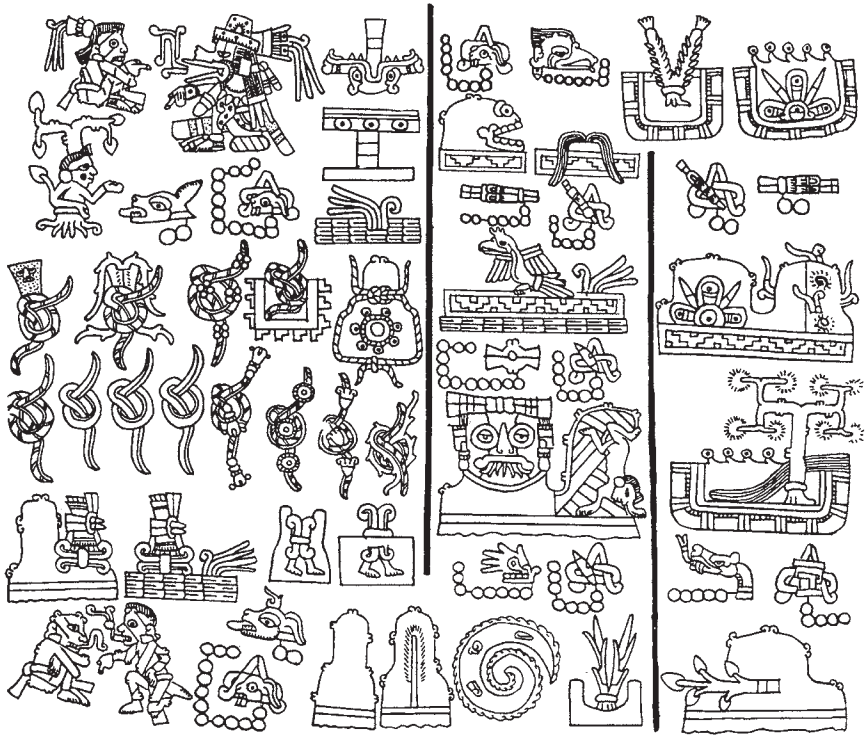
By using the metaphor of the First Ancestors being born from a tree, Codex Yuta Tnoho (37) states that the Ñuu Dzauí ruling families identified their place of origin as Earth itself. The tree in question seems to have been a *pochote*, a thorny *ceiba*; one representation shows it with thorns and an eye (*nuu*) as a phonetic complement to make sure we read “ceiba” (*nuu*).<sup>13</sup> In this version the tree is situated in the sacred valley of Yuta Tnoho. Another, similar tree is depicted in the opening scenes of Codex Añute, where it is situated in Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). Both towns, we saw, were places of special religious significance, associated with origins.

The tree birth took place in the time of creation, described as the primordial darkness. Later rulers claimed to be directly descended from those Founders of the dynasty. According to Codex Yuta Tnoho, it was the consultation between Lord 9 Wind and the primordial beings (*Ñuhu*) that caused the tree, represented as a maiden, to open and give birth. The *pochote* thus became the Sacred Mother of the dynasties. Two priestly figures are shown smoothing and incising the surface of the tree, decorating it with symbols of rulership and power (disks and arrows). They were the Spirits of the days 7 Eagle and 7 Rain, the former associated with the dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo and the latter with that of Zaachila.<sup>14</sup>

It was not until the First Lords had performed (and thereby instituted) a series of rituals dealing with maize, pulque, and hallucinogenic mushrooms that the Sun rose for the first time as a symbol of the beginning of human history. This great event is associated with a source of saltwater—possibly



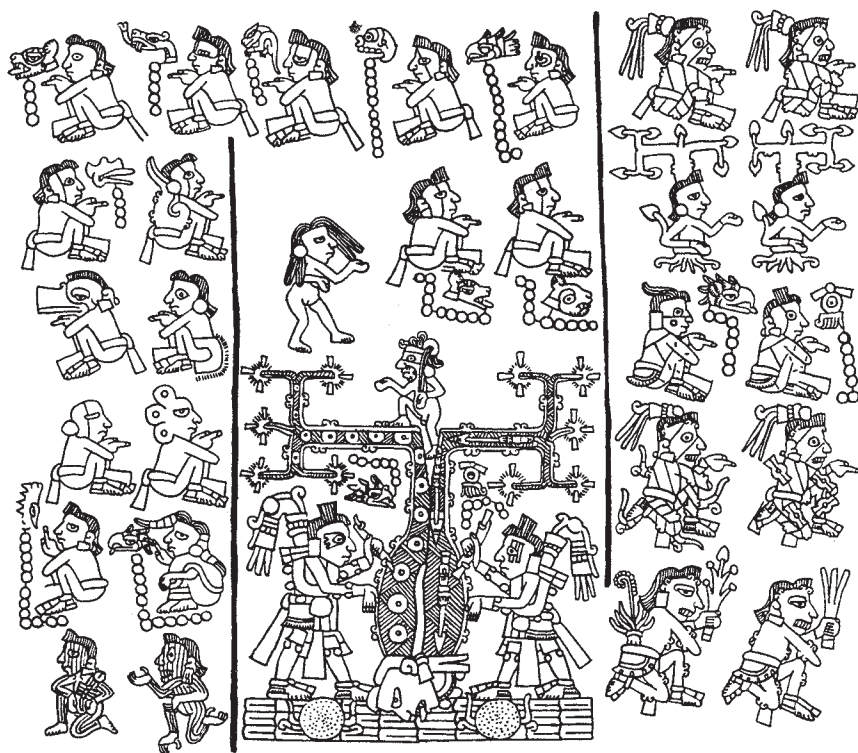
3.6. *The Sacred Tree of Ñuu Ndecu (Codex Añute, 2).*



3.7a. After the binding (alliance) of the primordial places of the region, Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ meets with the Spirits of Nature (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 38).

a reference to the sea above which the Sun was known to rise—and with an Altar of Songs or Voices (*chiyo yehe ndudzu*), that is, a “Famous Pyramid.” The latter sign may, at least conceptually, recall the Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan.

Next to the Altar, however, we find the toponym Stone Circle. This sign elsewhere occurs as part of a set of places situated in the Mixteca Baja. Reading stone as *yuu* and the circle as a “ring,” *dzahi*, we think this is the toponymic sign of Ñuu Dzai (Huajuapán). This was and still is a very important settlement, dominantly located in a large valley. Its main archaeological site, Cerro de las Minas, is an impressive acropolis dating back to Late Classic (Ñuiñe) times. The association of the First Sunrise with that area clearly refers to a collective memory of important early cultural development there, which is confirmed by archaeology; the Late Classic (Ñuiñe) carved stones from the Mixteca Baja are an important antecedent of the codices.



3.7b. *The Mother Tree in the Sacred Valley (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 37).*

The pictorial representation of the event (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 23) explicitly refers to a phrase of the *sahu* or *parangón*, which we can reconstruct in Dzaha Dzau:

*Nicana Iya Ndicandii dzeque yucu.*

*Nicana Iya Ndicandii dzeque yodzo.*

*Nicana Iya Ndicandii dzeque ichi.*

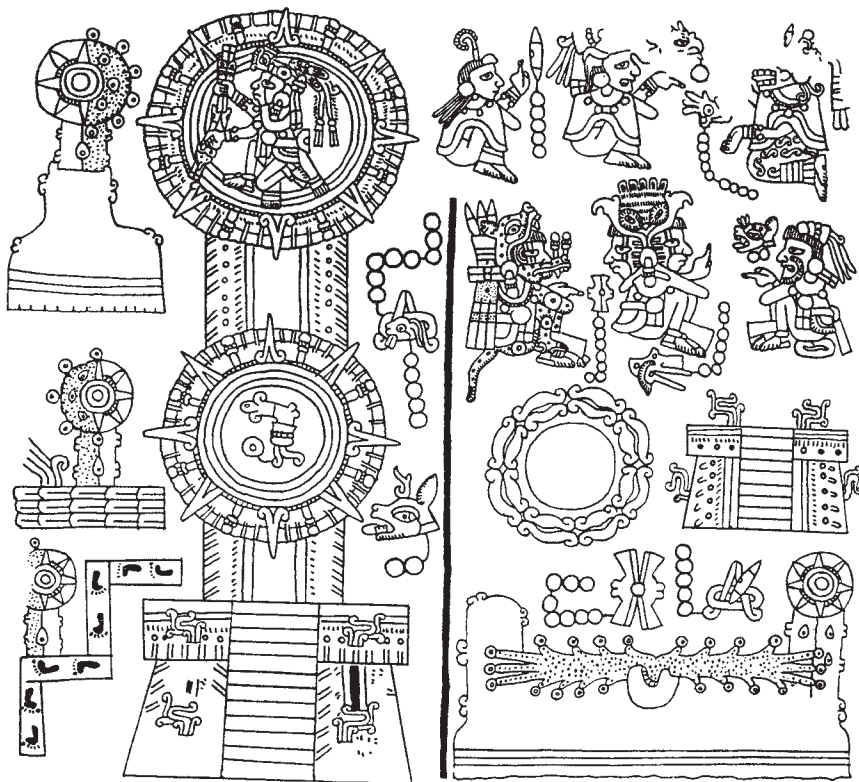
The Sun rose above the mountains.

The Sun rose above the valleys.

The Sun rose above the roads.

The accompanying sacred date is the one often given for primordial events: year 13 Rabbit day 2 Deer. It is the day after 1 Death, the calendar name of the Sun God. The day 2 Deer may further allude to the Great Mother and Great Father, Lady 1 Deer and Lord 1 Deer, mentioned in the beginning of the codex. An additional day is associated with the First Sunrise: 1 Flower,





3.8. Meeting in Ñuu Dzai (Huajuapán) and the First Sunrise (Yuta Tnoho, 23).

indicative of the close symbolic relationship between flowers and sunshine (the precious prince Lord 7 Flower being an alternative manifestation of the Sun God). The primordial dawn is the moment of the foundation of settlements and dynasties; it marks the destiny of a people to enter history.<sup>15</sup>

Then, already in the time of light, the First Lords and Ladies founded the mats and thrones, the dynasties, by celebrating the new fire ceremony, in commemoration and magical repetition of the primordial sunrise. Fray Antonio de los Reyes adds an important detail: the First Lords and Ladies divided themselves and took possession of Ñuu Dzai in a quadripartite fashion.<sup>16</sup>

Codex Yuta Tnoho lists these four directions of the Ñuu Dzai world, together with the center, each identified through specific toponyms:

- The North is *Yucu Naa*, “Dark Mountain,” and is represented by a Split Mountain with Checkerboard motif. The sign likely refers to a

specific mountain or ravine in the area of Tepexic (Tepeji de la Seda).<sup>17</sup> The Founding Priest is Lord 2 Dog. The description of the foundation rituals in this area is given special prominence, as this was where the main towns of the Ñuiñe (Classic Mixtec) culture had flourished. Thus, after having been performed for the landscape of Yucu Naa, the new fire ritual took place in the land of Yuhua Cuchi (Guaxolotitlan) in the Mixteca Baja, under the direction of Lord 4 Movement, and in the lands of the First Sunrise, under the direction of Lord 7 Flower.

- *Yaa Yuta*, Ash River, represents the West. Clearly, the Río Nejapa is meant, the western boundary of the Ñuu Dzau region. It is the area of the Grandmother of the River (*Sitna Yuta*), Lady 1 Eagle, Patroness of childbirth. Fourteen steam-bath buildings are named as part of her invocation.
- In the South stands the Death Temple *Huahi Cahi*, a cave close to Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo) where the Ñuu Dzau rulers were buried. Lady 9 Grass 'Cihuacoatl' holds power here.
- The East is called *Andevui*, "Heaven," in Dzaha Dzau. It is represented by the Place of Heaven, the Kaua Kaandiui close to Yuta Tnoho (Apoala). The ceremony was directed by Lord 4 Alligator and Lord 11 Alligator.
- The Center is painted as the Heart of the Earth (*Ini Ñuhu*). It is the realm of Lady 5 Flint and Lady 7 Flint, both called Maize Flower. In Dzaha Dzau this name (*yoco*) is synonymous with a term for "spirit." The Heart of the Earth is associated with both death (burial) and fertility (germinating seeds). The religious center of the Ñuu Dzau region was Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla), where the Heart of the People was venerated.

These directional markers probably stem from the Classic time, as they include the Mixteca Alta and the Mixteca Baja but not the coast, which may not have been settled by speakers of Dzaha Dzau until the Early Postclassic. On the other hand, these signs delimit an area in which the Ñuu Dzau people lived together with the Ngigua (Chocho-Popoloca), the Cuicatecs, and other peoples. These peoples used the same set of directional markers, as demonstrated by the Codex Yada (Tututepetongo), the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec, and the Roll of the New Fire (commonly referred to as the Selden Roll).

In the emblematic sites of the center and the four directions, the First Lords drilled the new fire and thereby initiated history. We interpret the ritual

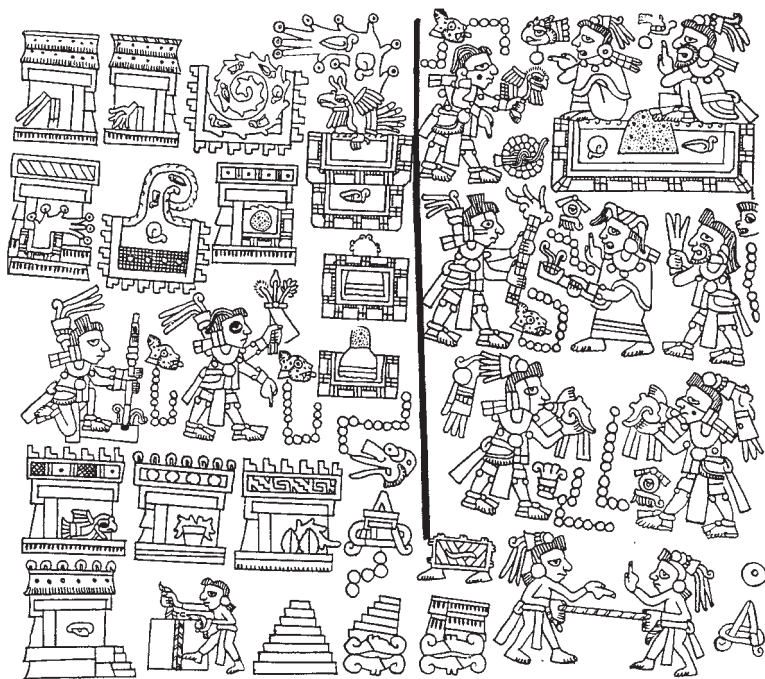


3.9. Lord 2 Dog cleansing the landscape of the North (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 21).

of drilling (kindling) a new fire as a symbolic reference to the first light of the primordial sunrise. At the same time it is a ceremony of inauguration of new rulership. In the Mexica world the ruler himself was compared to a torch. During his enthronement the priests declared:

In axcan: at ie nellaxcan  
 otonac, otlathuic,  
 omanaco in tonatiuh  
 otlanez:  
 ca opitzaloc omamalioc  
 in chalchiuhtli, in maquiztli,  
 in teuxiuitl:  
 oiol, otlatc,  
 oxotlac, ocuepon,  
 omoquetzaco

Now, truly  
 started to shine, to radiate,  
 became manifest the sun;  
 it became bright,  
 because it was worked and perforated:  
 the jade, the bracelet,  
 the divine turquoise;  
 he was formed, he became man,  
 he sprouted, flowered,  
 and came forward:



3.10. Lady 1 Eagle receiving homage in the West (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 16).

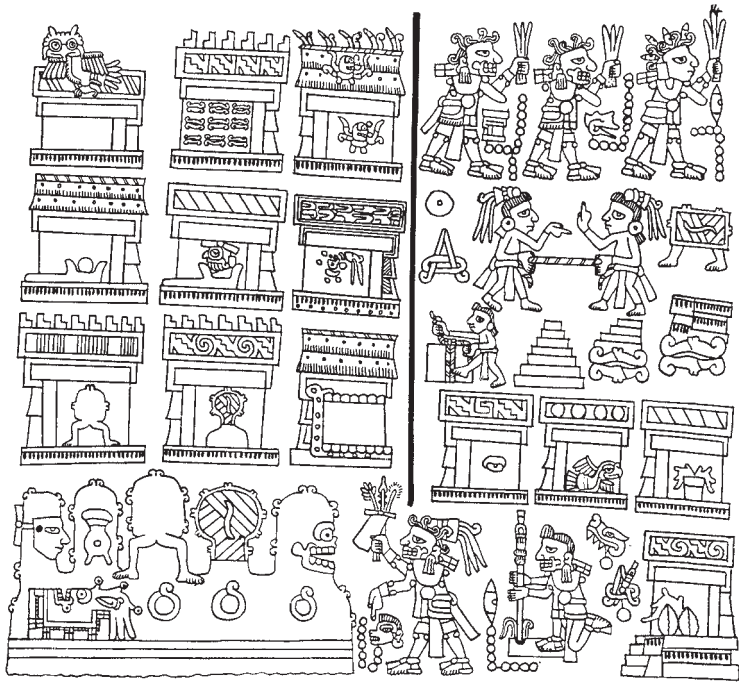
in ocutl, in tlaulli  
in apiaz in tepepiaz . . .

the torch, the light [the wise king],  
who will guard the water and the  
mountain [the community].

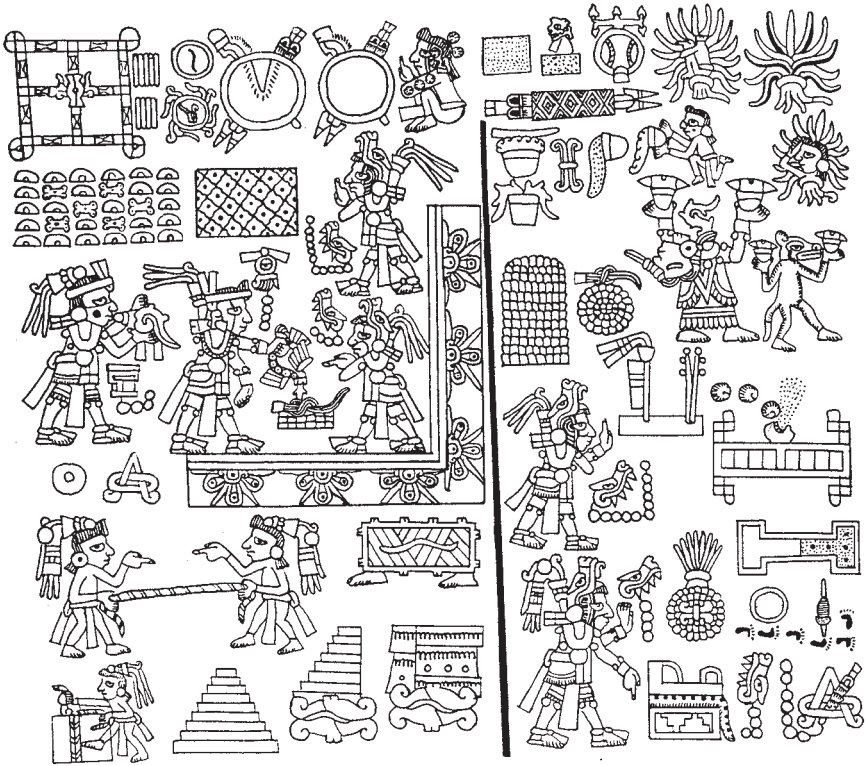
(Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 4)

The same symbolism of a passage of darkness to light is the root of many other conceptualizations in Mesoamerica. The Mexica situated the souls of the unborn in *Yoayan*, “the Place / Time of Night,” and the origin of tribes in the subterranean *Chicomoztoc*, “Cave 7.” The same cavern is referred to as a metaphor for the womb.<sup>18</sup>

The new fire ritual is combined with the foundation of a ceremonial center. The ritual starts with a sacred date, in connection with the sign for “foundation and dedication of the town.”<sup>19</sup> Offerings are mentioned. In “year 1” (*cuiya ee*) the lands are measured with cords, and a special carved rectangular stone (*yuu saha*, “foot stone”) arrives to serve as the cornerstone and fundament of the main temple. It is followed by other stones for the construction of altars (*chiyo*) and pyramid staircases (*ndiyo*). This activity is combined



3.11a, b. Lady 9 Grass and the landscape of the South (Codex Yuta Tnobo, 14, 15).



3.12. *Founding ceremony in the East (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 13 left).*

with a ritual cleansing, today known in Spanish as *“limpia”*: a priest raises a handful of branches (in this case carefully selected to represent the different kinds of leaves) and passes them over the land, purifying it and giving names to the mountains, rivers, and places. The temples, in turn, take their names from the distinctive places in the landscape. In other words, the constructed world (*huabi*, “house,” or *yuc*, “temple”) mimics the natural landscape (*yucu*, “mountain”). At the same time, a binary opposition between the urban world (*ñuu*) and Nature or Earth (*ñuhu*) is created. A central area (plaza) is laid out, on the sides of which four temples are constructed. They likely represent the four cosmic directions, with their specific symbolic and mantic associations.

Such an arrangement is also present in the religious pictorial manuscripts of the Teamoxtli Group (e.g., Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 49–52):

1. The cycle starts with the Heaven Temple in the East, the home of the Sun God.
2. In the North is the Temple of the Moon, dedicated to the Deity *Itztlacoliuhqui* (“Curved Obsidian Blade”).
3. The Temple of the West is characterized by a precious *yetecomatl*, the gourd with *piciete* (*Nicotiana rustica*) as the symbol of cult, and is dedicated to the Maize God.
4. The South is the Temple of Death.

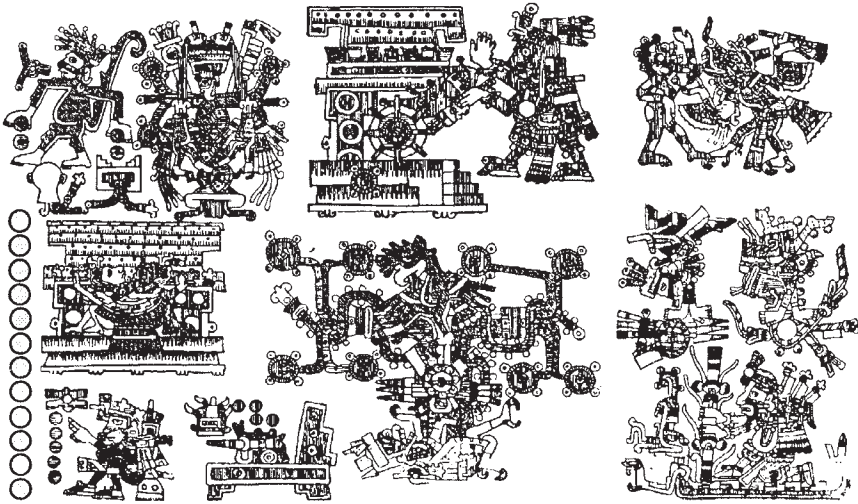
Codex Yuta Tnoho gives the Ñuu Dzauí canon of the four sanctuaries:

1. Temple of the Eye has to be read as *huahi nuu*, “the first or most important house.” The eye also likely connotes the obligatory vigil of the priests. The eye (*nuu*) is also used to identify the *ceiba* or *pochote* tree (*yutnu nuu*), the sacred origin of the rulers.<sup>20</sup>
2. Temple of the Fallen Bird, perhaps to be understood as *Huabi Cadza*, “Potent Temple,” in which *cadza* would have been written as *caa dzaa*, “the bird lies down.”<sup>21</sup>
3. Temple of the Bowl with Blood, that is, of bloodletting.<sup>22</sup>
4. Temple of Cacao and Blood.

Even today, turkey blood and ground cacao are the ingredients of Mazatec offerings to the Spirits of the Earth, to confirm the covenant with Nature.<sup>23</sup> In a phonetic way the cacao (*dzehua*) and the color red (*quaha*) of the liquid can also be read as the verbs *yodzehua*, *yoquaha*, “to create, to invent,” which appear in the expression *Iya ñuhu tnani huisi, ñuhu ninduyu nidzehua niquahaya*, “Lord God (who is) intelligent and



3.13. *The two Ladies of the Center* (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 12 left).



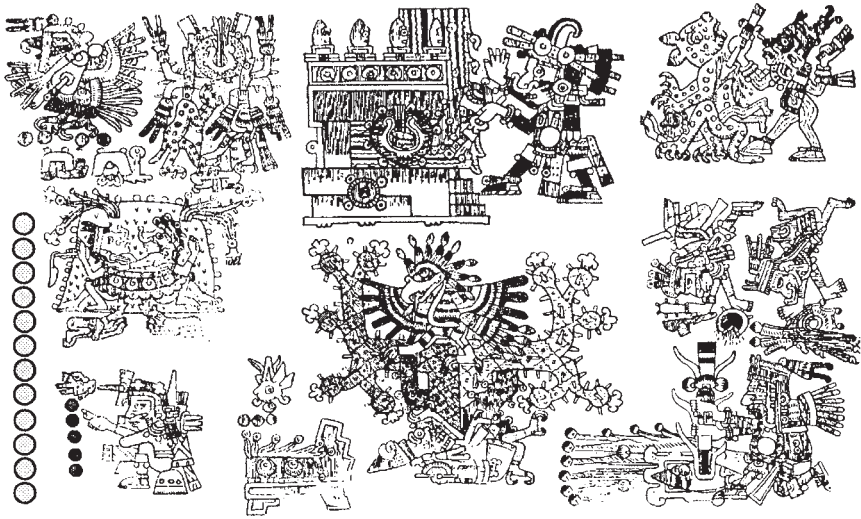
3.14a. *Temple of the East with its “divinatory landscape” (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 49).*

capable, God (who) thought, created and constructed,” apparently an ancient title used to render the Spanish reference to the Creator: “*autor Dios creador de todas las cosas.*”

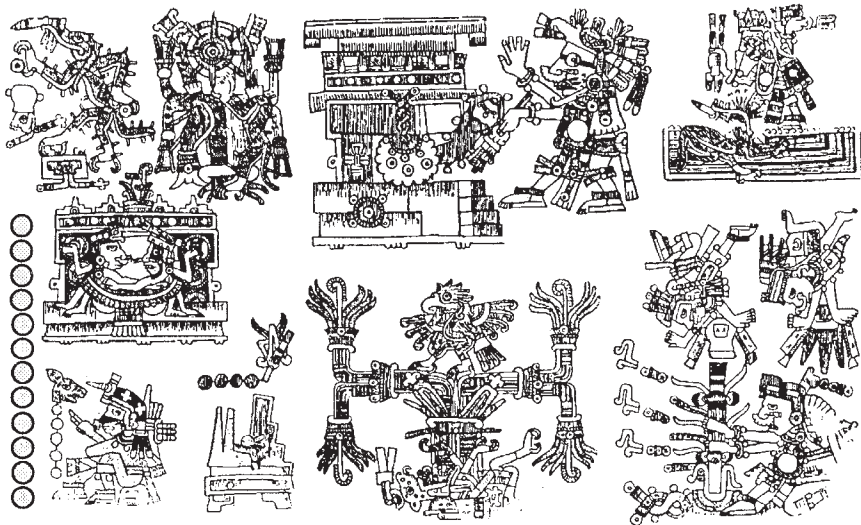
Many symbolic references surround the personages and dates of that foundation era. The version in which Lord 9 Wind was born from a flint knife recalls the Mexica sacred story in which Quetzalcoatl is the “son” of the Goddess Cihuacoatl. His mother, it is told, went around as a market woman, carrying the sacrificial knife as her baby, reminding the community of its obligation to make offerings. In the representation of a long and complex ritual in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl (Borgia) we find the Quetzalcoatl priest associated with the dark ceremonial center of Cihuacoatl in her death aspect.

Lord 9 Wind is also presented as the son of the First Couple (in the Roll of the New Fire), which in turn parallels the Mexica Creator Couple associated with Chicomoztoc: Cipactonal (“Day Alligator”) and Oxomoco (“Force of the Pregnant Woman”).<sup>24</sup> The Cipactonal figure is the typical carrier of the *piciete* gourd. Many priests have this attribute. One in particular, Lord 2 Dog, is portrayed as the companion of Lord 9 Wind. The two men assist each other in the ear piercing and name giving ritual. They were probably archetypal priests, the prototypes of Quetzalcoatl priests and Cipactonal priests. Both personages had directional associations: Lord 9 Wind is connected with the East and the Heaven Temple, while Lord 2 Dog is the Priest of the North.<sup>25</sup>





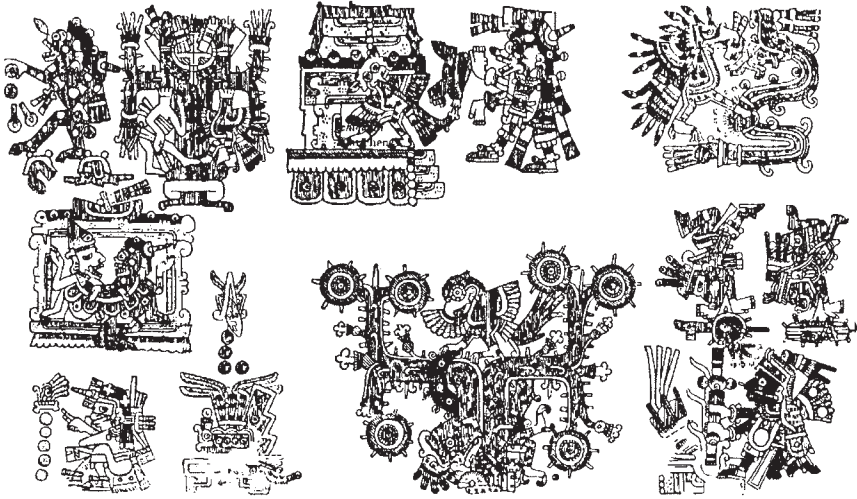
3.14b. Temple of the North with its “divinatorial landscape” (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 50).



3.14c. Temple of the West with its “divinatorial landscape” (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 51).

### MARRIAGE *in* YUTA TNOHO

Events in sacred time are by definition impossible to date. Reconstructing a chronological sequence of this early part of Ñuu Dzau history is therefore a hazardous enterprise, fraught with difficulties and possible mistakes. Sacred



3.14d. *Temple of the South with its "divinatory landscape"* (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 52).

dates that mark the foundation of kingdoms and dynasties (in place-date combinations) and symbolic dates chosen as proper for a scene (because they point to the influence of certain deities) are mixed with the dates of actual historical events. Moreover, contradictions and inconsistencies exist in the record, partly because the paintings correspond to a later period and register different oral traditions about "the ancient time," not unlike European medieval epics about the Knights of the Round Table or the court of Charlemagne. Furthermore, the process of reading and copying the ancient manuscripts produced and accumulated its own errors.

Following the genealogical sequence and the synchronic relationships of some individuals, we offer here a series of hypothetical correlations. Often we have doubts, however. Personages meeting in one scene were not necessarily contemporaneous; some may have been deceased Ancestors, shown present at the event because of their emblematic value, while others may have ended up in the scene because of the combination of different oral traditions. When we try to bring the data together to form one coherent picture, a particular image emerges that, however vague and insecure, seems to represent the general outline of how people in the Postclassic looked at the beginning of their history.

During the time of darkness, before the First Sunrise, Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoat' was approached by Lord 1 Flower and his wife, Lady 13 Flower. Both belonged to the offspring of the Tree in the sacred valley of Yuta Tnoho.

They were an old couple, but from their marriage a daughter had been born: Lady 9 Alligator ‘Rain Woman, Plumed Serpent.’ Lord 9 Wind acted as a marriage ambassador for her. He went to the Place of Heaven and spoke to Lord 5 Wind ‘Rain,’ who was also among the offspring of the Tree and resided in the celestial sanctuary. Listening to Lord 9 Wind’s request, Lord 5 Wind came down from Heaven, and, shortly thereafter, his marriage to Lady 9 Alligator was celebrated in Yuta Tnoho.<sup>26</sup>

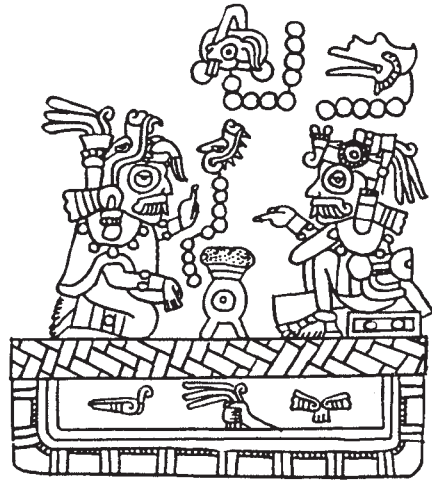
A more detailed historical account is given in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–

Ndisi Nuu (verso, 40–39). It starts with a sacred date, which is no longer legible, and then confirms that Lord 1 Flower ‘Quetzal’ and Lady 13 Flower ‘Quetzal’ were born in the Place of the Two Rivers, Yuta Tnoho.<sup>27</sup> Their daughter was Lady 9 Alligator ‘Rain, Plumed Serpent.’

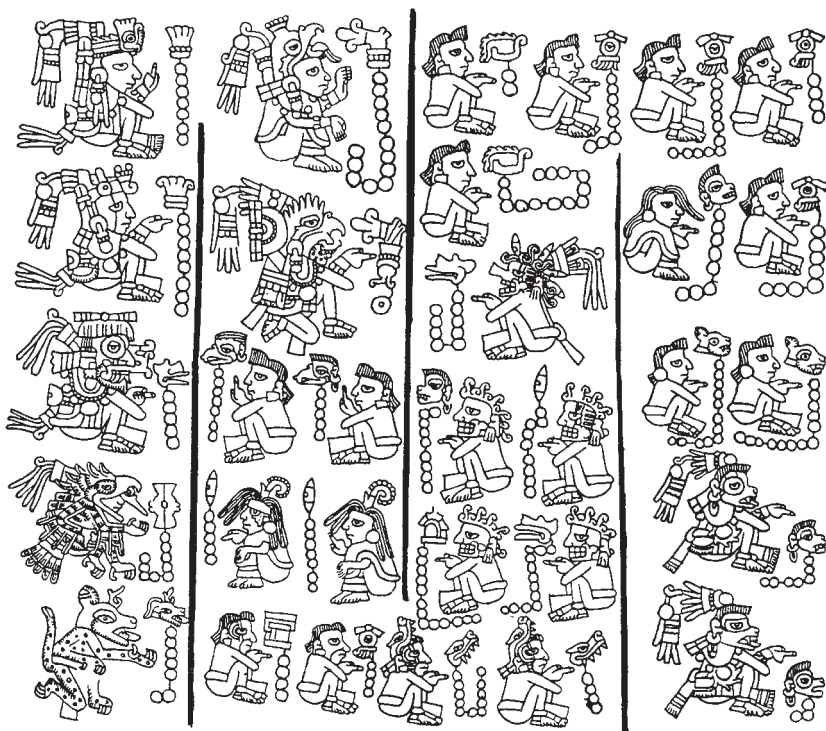
The father and mother, Lord 1 Flower and Lady 13 Flower, listened to the words of the old Lord 4 Alligator and another person, whose name is no longer legible but was probably Lord 11 Alligator. The two men acted as ambassadors.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly, here the ambassadors come to speak with the father of the bride, as is the Ñuu Dzauí custom, while in Codex Yuta Tnoho it was the father of the bride who took the initiative to send somebody to look for a son-in-law.

The parents of the prospective groom, who sent the ambassadors, were the rulers of a town, painted as Carrying Frame and Sweat-bath. The Nahuatl terms for these elements are *cacaxtli* and *temazcalli*, respectively. In Dzaha Dzauí the carrying frame is called *sito*, which can be used to express the word *sitoho*, *toho*, or simply *to-*, “noble lord”; it may refer to the title of the persons associated with this place. The sweat-bath, *ñehe*, is the diagnostic element in the sign of Ñuu Niñe, “Town of Heat” (Tonalá) in the Mixteca Baja.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, according to Codex Yuta Tnoho, the prospective groom, Lord 5 Wind, was born from the Sacred Tree, but Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu



3.15. *The marriage of Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator in Yuta Tnoho (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 35).*



3.16. Lord 1 Flower, Lady 13 Flower, and Lord 5 Wind among the offspring of the Sacred Mother Tree (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 36).

explains his ancestry in a special note (40/39-I). First, a sacred foundation date is given for the Place of the Carrying Frame and Sweat-bath (Ñuu Niñe) and its dynasty. Only the day sign Flower is still visible, with a number of dots that may have been seven in total. It was then that in Ñuu Niñe both Lord 8 (?) Alligator 'Coyote-Bird' and Lady 7 Flower 'Quetzal' were born from the Earth. They married and became the founders of the dynasty.<sup>30</sup> On the day 9 Wind of the year 6 Flint, Lord 9 Wind 'Flint Serpent' was born, who later married Lady 4 Wind 'Beauty of Flowers.' Their son was Lord 4 Movement 'Eagle,' who married Lady 6 Eagle 'Parrot-Maize Flower.' This couple, in turn, gave birth to Lord 5 Wind 'Rain who came down from Heaven' in the year 5 Reed. This date may well be historical, as it fits the chronological sequence; it would then correspond to A.D. 835. This is fascinating information because, if correct, it goes back to the Classic time, the period in which the Ñuiñe style dominated the Mixteca Baja.

Coming originally from a noble family in Ñuu Niñe and later seated in the Place of Heaven, Lord 5 Wind seems to have become a priest and to have left his hometown in the Mixteca Baja to do service in the ceremonial center on Cavua Caa Andevui. Obviously, the implication of a priest coming from a rather distant town like Ñuu Niñe is that even in those days, the ninth century, Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) was a religious center of regional importance.

After finishing his priestly service, Lord 5 Wind married a local lady whose parents were from Yuta Tnoho, “born from the earth” or “born from the Tree.” His wife, Lady 9 Alligator, had been born in the year 8 Flint (864). The marriage took place in the year 9 Rabbit (878), when she was fourteen years old (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 35). Keeping in mind that Lord 5 Wind would have passed some time in priestly service in the Place of Heaven, these dates harmonize with his birth in the year 5 Reed (835); he would have been forty-three years old when he married.<sup>31</sup>

An offering was made at the river; paper, beads, a rosette of leaves, and a jewel were deposited there.<sup>32</sup> Both Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind are wearing the mask of the Rain God. This can be interpreted as a name element, but it also connects them to the Patron Deity of Ñuu Dzauí. As this is a detail they have in common with most people of those days, as represented in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú, it suggests an emphasis on the fact that they belonged to the Ñuu Dzauí people and were devotees of the Rain God.

Moreover, Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind are called “people who were like rabbits and deer.” The Mexica used this *difrasismo* for wandering people (Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 43), that is, nomads, living in the mountains. Here it may also refer to the Ancestors being considered “divine procreators of the plants, stones, animals, and Ñuhu.” A more extensive series of titles in Codex Yuta Tnoho (34) qualifies this Founding Couple as:

those who gave throne and cradle (i.e., the origin of the dynasty),  
 who are lying on the roads and in the irrigation canals,  
 under the rocks and the trees  
 (i.e., present both in cultural constructions and in nature).

These qualifications were immediately recognized by a Ñuu Dzauí *curandera* (medicine woman) as a description of the earth spirits (Ñuhu), who are present in specific spots and can cause soul loss to a human being who suffers a sudden traumatic experience (Spanish: *susto*) in such a spot. Thus we can interpret the statement as saying that this was the ancestral couple who gave

birth to the elements of Nature and to the nobles, who, after death, became *Ñuhu*, Spirits of Nature.

Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator had two children: Lord 5 Reed ‘Valiant Warrior’ and Lady 8 Deer ‘Decorated Quechquemitl’ (or ‘Beauty of Mosaic’). Lord 5 Reed’s given name is painted as “arrows in the back.” The back is normally *yata*, but in the metaphorical language of the nobles it is *yusa*, which actually means “shield.” The combination *yusa* (shield, back) and *nduvua* (“arrow”) is the *difrasismo* for a valiant warrior.

Lady 8 Deer went to see her paternal grandparents, which suggests that she would become a future ruler of Ñuu Niñe. Her father, Lord 5 Wind, was then approached by an ambassador, Lord 1 Alligator ‘Rain Sun,’ who arrived with a precious marriage gift (tobacco and cacao, jade and gold) to ask for the hand of Lord 5 Reed. After the arrangements were made, Lord 5 Reed was carried by another ambassador, the priest Lord 1 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl,’ from Yuta Tnoho to the home of his bride, Lady 3 Serpent ‘Flower of the Rising Ñuhu’ (*Ita nicana ñuhu*, “Flower of the Dawn or the Orient”). She was the daughter of Lord 7 Movement ‘Rain, Visible Maize Flower,’ who held the titles ‘Jaguar, Jade Toad, Turquoise Frog,’ and Lady 7 Grass ‘Rain, Maize Tooth (i.e., Corn Kernel).’ The names and titles of both clearly refer to the symbolic sphere of the Rain God and agriculture. The couple had sprouted from the Mountain of the Feather Ornament, a precious place (of jade and gold), a place of *nahuales* (coyote-serpent and blood serpent).<sup>33</sup> Its sacred dynastic date was year 5 Rabbit day 7 Jaguar.

The normal procedure in Postclassic and present-day Ñuu Dzau culture is for the ambassador to ask for the bride’s hand in marriage and for the bride to be carried to the groom’s house. As here it is the groom who is carried to the place of his bride, we suppose that Lord 1 Alligator is the ambassador who represents the interests of the woman’s family. His role is similar to that of Lord 9 Wind one generation earlier (Yuta Tnoho, 35). Obviously, the deviation from the normal custom is the reason this detail is mentioned in the codices. Its occurrence in this early period may reflect the survival of an older custom (the norm of the Classic period?) or simply the girl’s parents’ need to find a suitable groom.

Lady 3 Serpent and Lord 5 Reed had a daughter, Lady 13 Eagle ‘Bird with Precious Tail,’ who married Lord 5 Alligator ‘Rain.’ He had been born in the year 8 Reed (903) and came from the precious Mountain of Pearls with Face, which may represent Nuu Siya (Tezoatlan) in the Mixteca Baja.<sup>34</sup>

Antonio de los Reyes gives the Dzaha Dzauí name of that town as Nuu Siya, which can be analyzed as “Face (*nuu*) of (*si*) the Lord (*iya*).” The toponym may have been represented by a mountain with the face (*nuu*) of a lord (*iya*), phonetically reinforced by a heap of pearls (*sii*). Moreover, the mouth with beard and teeth suggests it is an old face, and in Dzaha Dzauí “grandfather” is *sii*, homonymous with “pearl” (not taking into account the tones).

Given the connection of Lady 13 Eagle’s grandfather with Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá), it would not be unusual for her to marry a lord from its important neighbor, Nuu Siya (Tezoatlán).

The marriage date is given as the day 12 Deer of the year 8 House. The equivalence of this year would be A.D. 877 or 929, neither of which fits into the sequence of year dates here. A good solution would be to correct the year to 9 House (917).

A big stalk of maize with flowers and cobs characterizes the union (mat) of Lady 13 Eagle and Lord 5 Alligator. The multiple references to maize establish a contrast between this couple and Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind of Yuta Tnoho, who had been qualified as “rabbit and deer.” The story seems to indicate that the early rulers were nomadic hunters and that the intermarriage with the noble house of Lord 7 Movement and Lady 7 Grass introduced the cultivation of maize. Thereby the place of origin of this latter couple becomes identified with the primordial “Mountain of Sustenance,” called *Tonacatepetl* in Nahuatl. Archaeology shows that milpa agriculture was much more ancient in Ñuu Dzauí, but the codices seem to project the different ways of food procurement—hunting and agriculture—on the first generations of rulers. At the same time, the image of maize flowers and cobs symbolizes fertility and prosperity.<sup>35</sup>

Lady 13 Eagle and Lord 5 Alligator had a daughter, Lady 6 Eagle ‘Jewel Flower.’<sup>36</sup> When the time came for her to marry, her father, Lord 5 Alligator ‘Rain,’ was visited by Lord 2 Rain ‘Jaguar-Sun.’ He did not come empty-handed but offered a large number of birds he had shot with his blowgun when they were perched on a tree on the Hill of Vapors, in the territory of the Rain God, that is, in Ñuu Dzauí.<sup>37</sup>

Clearly, the short scene implies a reference to a story well-known to the audience. The context suggests that it was a specific task the young man had to bring to a good end to merit the bride’s hand—a well-documented narrative theme.<sup>38</sup> Bird hunting seems to have been an important activity, with both a “sport” element to it, like a ball game, and an economic profit: the

feathers were a precious commodity, to be used in mosaics and elegant clothing. It was associated with a specific place, full of danger: the huge and windy mountain range near Tutla, in the frontier zone between the Mixteca Alta and the Mixteca Baja. Such a context suggests good possibilities to elaborate on the painted scene in oral performance: the frightening landscape, the determination of the daring and ambitious young man, and similar factors.

As the consequence of all this, Lady 6 Eagle married Lord 2 Rain, who had been born from an arrow thrown by Lord 1 Movement ‘Venus’ into the Mountain of the Brazier and the Jaguar. The arrow of a star can be understood as a metaphor for ray of light—both are *nduvua* in Dzaha Dzau. The statement, then, is to be understood as saying that Lord 2 Rain was a “child of light”: he belonged to the people created at the beginning of history.<sup>39</sup> The sacred foundation date of this place included the day 1 Alligator. The area where the year sign should be has been damaged. We reconstruct year 1 Reed day 1 Alligator, a frequently occurring metaphoric date for “beginnings.”

In the year 4 Rabbit (938), Lady 6 Eagle and Lord 2 Rain had their first child: Lord 7 Movement ‘Earth Face’ (or ‘Cave Mouth’). In following years, 6 Flint (940) and 9 Reed (943), respectively, a son, Lord 1 (?) Dog, and a daughter, Lady 5 Reed ‘Jewel Pulque-Vessel,’ were born.

In the year 5 House (965)—or, less likely, 6 House (953)—on the day 1 Alligator, the eldest son, Lord 7 Movement, married Lady 12 Serpent ‘Blood Knife.’ They became the rulers of the Town of the Xipe Bundle, allied with the Mountain of Blood and White Flowers.<sup>40</sup> Their descendants would rule the Town of the Xipe Bundle—the most famous among them Lord 4 Wind. His is the noble house that traces its origin back to Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind.

Actually, this is the clearest case of direct descent claimed from Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind, who are so important in the early history treated in these manuscripts. Furthermore, this primordial couple associated with the town of Yuta Tnoho became a reference point for other noble houses to connect with in a more indirect way; the Founding Fathers of those other lineages went to Yuta Tnoho to make offerings to Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind and to ask them for permission or blessings.<sup>41</sup>

#### SUMMARY OF THE LINEAGE

Lord 1 Flower + Lady 13 Flower (Tree of Yuta Tnoho)

Lady 9 Alligator (b. 864) + Lord 5 Wind (b. 835, Ñuu Niñe), married 878



Lord 5 Reed + Lady 3 Serpent (daughter of Lord 7 Movement and Lady 7 Grass)

Lady 13 Eagle + Lord 5 Alligator (b. 903, Nuu Siya)

Lady 6 Eagle + Lord 2 Rain (“child of light”)

Lord 7 Movement (b. 938) + Lady 12 Serpent, rulers of Xipe Bundle

### *The* SACRED LANDSCAPE *of* YUTA TNOHO

Codex Tonindeye (36) shows Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator, along with her parents, seated on the two rivers in the Valley of Yuta Tnoho surrounded by stony cliffs. Comparing this impressive landscape painting with the geographical situation of Yuta Tnoho, we observe that the painting was conceived from the perspective of the Mountain of Heaven. The landscape is shaped in the form of a Plumed Serpent, indicating that his divine power dominated the area and was manifest there.<sup>42</sup> The head of the serpent represents the Yavui Coo Maa, “Deep Cave of the Serpent,” located at the entrance of the Valley of Yuta Tnoho. A spring flowing from the cave nourishes the main river in the valley, the Yuta Tnoho, locally pronounced Yutsa Tohon, which gave its name to the village. The tail of the serpent is formed by the waterfall that plunges into the lower Yodo Maa at the precipice that is the natural end of the valley.

Today, the area where the cave is located is called “the head” of the valley, while the part where the precipice and the waterfall are found is considered “the foot.” The small valley is filled with terraces, the surfaces of which show many sherds, pieces of obsidian, and other archaeological fragments, indicating that the area was inhabited intensively for a long time. In the center a small stream, Danama, now dry during most of the year, comes down through a gorge next to the main cliff, the Kaua Laki, and joins the Yuta Tnoho. Kaua Laki calls our attention because of a large cave entrance in the rock face, out of reach but filled with archaeological remains that indicate its importance in precolonial times; furthermore, the protective image of a standing warrior (*danzante*) was carved in the rock under it, probably during Classic times. The open jaws of a serpent, decorated with abundant feathers, form his headdress and characterize him as dedicated to the Plumed Serpent, sharing *nahual* power with the great Culture Hero.

Tradition has it that in ancient times a huge tree once stood along the banks of the river. Its branches covered the entire valley. Its place was some-



3.17a. Four priests make offerings to the Cave of the Serpent in the Sacred Valley of Yuta Tnoho; on the place signs: Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator with her parents (Codex Tonindecy, 36).

what farther down the river, before one arrives at the precipice, and is still known as Tinuu. Today, that term is locally known as the name of the *tejacote* tree. We suggest it comes from *tnu-nuu*, which means *ceiba* or *pochote* according to both Alvarado and present-day usage in the coastal area.

In Codex Tonindecy (36) this Tree of Origin is depicted on top of the cascade. A tongue with jade is added to the falling waters, qualifying the sound as precious. At the bottom a jade-colored square is added, probably referring to the beautiful pond at the foot of the waterfall.

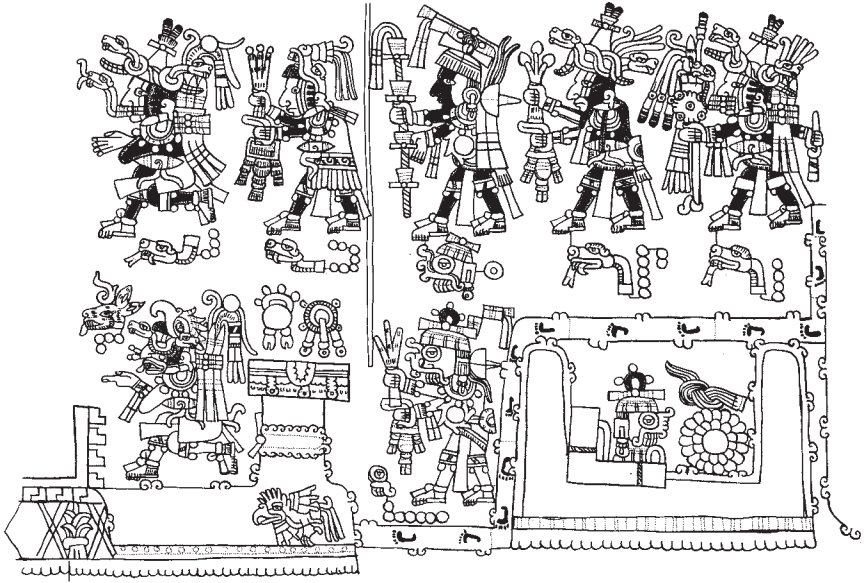
Yavui Coo Maa is still a ritual place, dominated by the figure of a large stalagmite in the cave, locally known as the “Bishop.” At the end of the nineteenth century Mariano López Ruiz explored the cave (then called “Yucuman”) and wrote down a local legend that explained the stalagmite as a petrified manifestation of the great culture hero, a white and bearded man, full of wisdom, who a long time ago had come from far away, lived in the village, and taught the people arts, sciences, and culture.<sup>43</sup> His text documents the colonial transformation of the Plumed Serpent; the ancient Creator of Social Life

is remodeled according to the ideal of a priest in European-Christian terms and described as a superior, idealized form of a Spanish monk.<sup>44</sup>

Present-day local legends tell about a fugitive king passing through the town and leaving his wife under the protection of the local Lord. When he came back for her, however, the Lord of Yuta Tnoho did not want to hand her over. The king returned with a treasure as ransom and with an army of giant warriors who uprooted the land, looking for the queen, and thus excavated the area beyond the precipice, now known as Yodo Maa. When they arrived at the location where the precipice is now, the sun came up and they all turned to stone and became Ñuhu, venerated Earth Spirits—the king, the treasure, and the warriors, as huge gray blocks lying dispersed in the valley near the precipice. The queen, who had been confined to the Yavui Coo Maa, also turned to stone in the center of a small subterranean pond. Water flows from her body, nourishing the Yuta Tnoho and reportedly other streams as well.<sup>45</sup>

In Codex Tonindeye (36) the Yavui Coo Maa is the place where the primordial priests Lord 4 Serpent and Lord 7 Serpent (Qhyo Sayo, the Patrons of Ñuu Tnoo), in the company of Lord 1 Rain and Lord 7 Rain, celebrated rituals.<sup>46</sup> From here they started a pilgrimage. The road on which they left the valley started at the cave and, therefore, must be the passage through the Peña Cerrada, where the river, before entering the valley, streams between two high cliffs, forming a natural gateway. This was likely the ancient entrance to the sacred valley of Yuta Tnoho. Now the route is still used by those who walk from the town to Atoco (Nochixtlan).

The four priests, leaving Yuta Tnoho, passed through a valley, where a “cradle,” that is, a sanctuary, of the Rain God (*dzoco Dzavui*) was located. They then arrived at a number of places in the Mixteca Alta, where they encountered Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ and other primordial Lords (Lord 7 Alligator and Lord 7 Monkey). The area is painted as a big valley between two mountains. One is a precious mountain, crowned by clouds and reaching into Heaven, associated with a Place of the Quetzal Bird. On the other side is the Mountain of a Pointed Object, the site of a palace on a pyramid. In the middle of the valley we see a ceremonial precinct dominated by a stone temple, with the signs Spiderweb and Rock of the Fly. These places occur in a similar sequence in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 42, which suggests that they are relatively close to Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), mentioned immediately after Rock of the Fly. Given the surroundings, the Spiderweb Place is probably

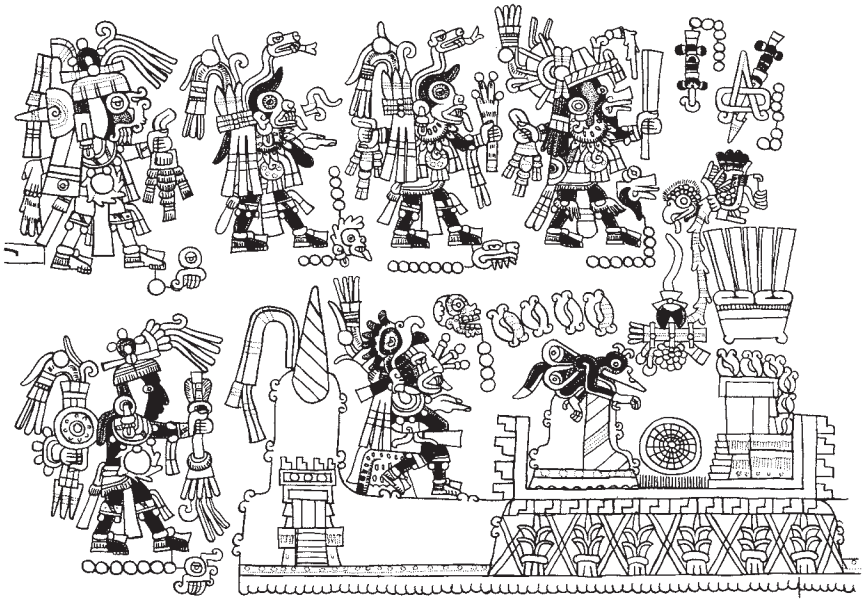


3.17b. *The four priests begin a journey (Codex Tonindefe, 37).*

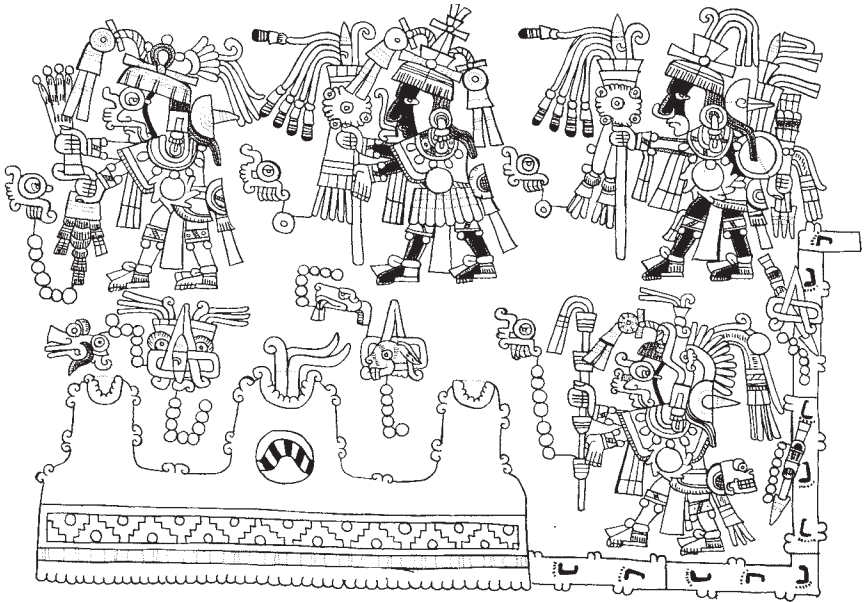
Andua in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan).<sup>47</sup> The Rock of the Fly has to be Yucu Tiyuqh (Sayultepec), “Hill of Flies,” a close neighbor of Andua. The Mountain of the Quetzal in Codex Tonindefe corresponds to the Town of the Sacrificed Quetzal in Codex Yuta Tnoho; “quetzal” is *ndodzo*, while *taa ndodzo* is the term for “valiant warrior,” associated with human sacrifice (Acuña 1984, I: 284–285). *Ndodzo* is also the preposition “on top of,” “in front of.” We therefore read the place sign as Ñuu Ndodzo, “Quetzal Town” or “Prominent Fortress, Observation Post,” known today as Huitzo, on the frontier between the Ñuu Dzauí people and the Beni Zaa (Zapotecs).

The Mountain of the Pointed Object corresponds to Mountain of the Horn in Codex Yuta Tnoho, mentioned between Huitzo and Andua. In view of this latter name and the geographical context, the most logical candidate is Yucu Ndeque, “Mountain of the Horn,” known in Nahuatl as Huauhtla or Huaucilla (probably from Cuacuauhtla), strategically located on the Camino Real that connected the Valley of Oaxaca with Central Mexico.<sup>48</sup>

After visiting these places, Lord 1 Rain and Lord 7 Rain continued their pilgrimage and arrived at the Place of the Mountain of Fire and Two Mountains with Openings.



3.17c. The four priests participate in the foundation ritual of Spiderweb Place, that is, Andua in the Valley of Yanhuitlan (Codex Tonindeye, 38).



3.17d. The four priests arrive at the landscape dominated by the Mountain of Fire (Codex Tonindeye, 39).

A round cartouche containing a curved black-and-white band appears in the central Mountain of Fire. This motif occurs later (p. 41) stretched out under a frieze as part of the place sign where the dynastic palace is located. The orifice in combination with flames in the central mountain suggests that we are dealing with a volcano (cf. Codex Tonindeye, 80), but the characteristic covering with snow is absent here, so we cannot be sure. The red orifices may also refer to places of origin. If indeed it is meant to refer to a town at the foot of three volcanoes, the painting might represent the Valley of Cholula, dominated by the active Popocatepetl in company of the Iztaccihuatl and the Malinche.<sup>49</sup> Raising the Tnucucua staff in their hands, the primordial Ñuu Dzauil Lords went there to bring order and power and to found the local dynasty.

### *The ROLL of the NEW FIRE (SELDEN ROLL)*

An alternative version of the creation story does not start with the river or tree of Yuta Tnoho but combines a reference to the Place of Heaven with a mention of the Rock of the Seven Caves, surrounded by primordial darkness (Codex Tonindeye, 14). The Nahuas called this place of origin Chicomoztoc (*chicome* = “seven,” *oztotl* = “cave,” and *-c* is the locative suffix); they used the term also as a metaphor for the womb. This symbolic image of Heaven and Chicomoztoc dominates the opening scene of a manuscript from the Coixtlahuaca Valley known as the Selden Roll. This is a particularly interesting document, as it seems to combine both Central Mexican (Toltec) and Ñuu Dzauil elements in its narrative. Its central theme is the ritual for the foundation of a dynasty. Because of this, we propose to rename it “Roll of the New Fire.”<sup>50</sup>

In Heaven we find the familiar scene of Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ receiving instructions from Lord 1 Deer and Lady 1 Deer.<sup>51</sup> Heaven itself is not represented as a concrete place but is connected with signs of Sun and Moon, which emphasize its cosmic character and indicate that we are *in illo tempore*, the time of foundations, when it became light. The associated sacred date, year 1 Reed day 1 Alligator, also situates the scene in the beginning of time. Heaven is situated above the surface of the Earth (the opened jaws of the Great Alligator) on which four men are seated: Lords 1 Flint, 7 Flint, 5 Flint, and 12 Flint. These calendar names are paired, representing the days 118 and 138, 18 and 38 of the 260-day cycle; they seem to refer to ritually

important days. Footsteps coming from and returning to Heaven may symbolize the shamanic contact.

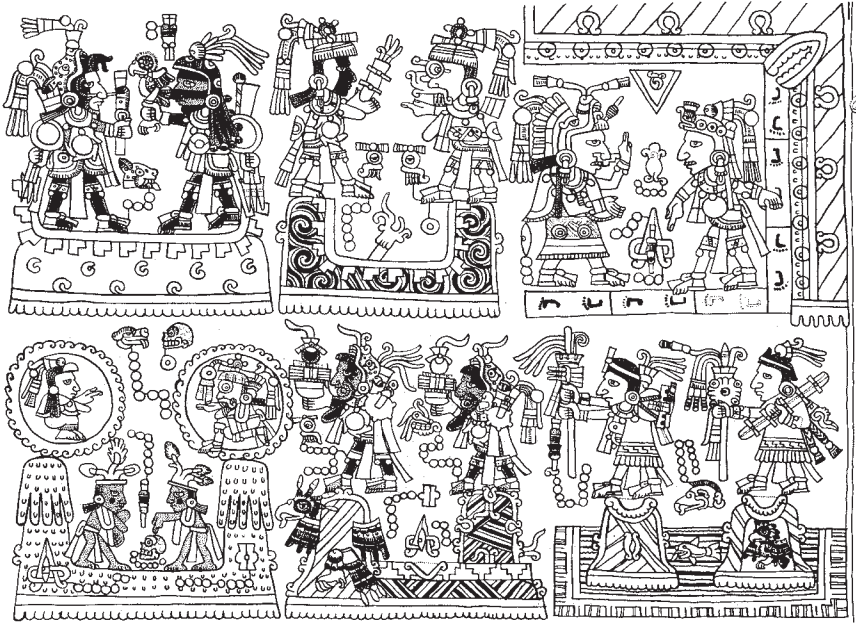
Below this scene follows the depiction of the Chicomoztoc Cave. A descending fire serpent (*yahui*) qualifies it as a place of visions. The sacred dates of Earth and Chicomoztoc are year 7 Reed day 7 Reed and year 7 Flint day 7 Flint, respectively.

Four priests are shown coming forward from this cave. Black painting around the eyes identifies them as *sabmi nuu*, speakers of the Nahuatl language, that is, Toltecs.<sup>52</sup> Woven crowns of palm leaves characterize them as belonging to a specific people. They go to fetch the Sacred Bundle of Quetzalcoatl in the Temple of Earthquakes, conquer three emblematic places—Mountain of the Jaguar, Mountain of the Eagle, and Mountain of the Guacamaya—and then cross the Stream of Dark and Light Waters, which is under the patronage of the Great Mother Goddess of the West. They ask the old priest Lord 2 Dog permission to continue their voyage through a subterranean passage, which is the entrance to the Coixtlahuaca Valley. It can be identified as the cave tunnel of the Puente Colosal situated on the Ndaxagua River, the northern entrance to the Coixtlahuaca Valley; this extremely interesting natural passage contains paintings in the Classic Nūiñe style (Rincón Mautner 1999: ch. 4).

Finally, the four priests emerge from the ground, entering the region marked by the four directional points: Temple of the Sun (East), Cave of Death (South), Temple of the River (West), and Mountain of the Knot (North). The latter sign differs from the canon and probably represents Tlapiltepec in the Coixtlahuaca Valley. This anomaly suggests that the manuscript came from a place to the south of Tlapiltepec, possibly Tulancingo.

With them the four priests carry the objects of power: the Bundle of 9 Wind, a Xipe staff, shield and arrow, conch, paper, and incense burner. Several loose signs briefly indicate narrative elements. The image of the Cactus Men probably refers to the victory over the native population and the ritual of rulership. The scene in which a warrior spears a huge serpent recalls the story told in the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Yuvui (Petalcingo) in which the Founding Hero succeeded in killing a dangerous primordial serpent that enclosed the entire area.<sup>53</sup>

After this, the four priests direct themselves to the Center, which is occupied by a huge Quetzal Mountain surrounded by Plumed Serpents. The mountain has a Toltec face (with blackened eyes) and recalls the Quetzal Mountain of Cholula, which we interpret as a Dzaha Dzauí name for the



3.18. *Primordial places; in the upper right-hand corner the Place of Heaven with the Rock of Seven Caves (Codex Tonindeye, 14).*

Tlachihualtepetl, the famous ceremonial center dating from Classic times.<sup>54</sup> The surrounding serpents give the mountain the status of a Coatepec, a liminal place in contact with the divine powers. They are decorated with knives and speech scrolls, probably referring to sacrifice and fame.<sup>55</sup> Heraldic warriors—jaguars with shields and arrows—flank the mountain. A spring at its foot flows in two directions.<sup>56</sup>

At this local variant of the main Toltec sanctuary, the four priests perform the new fire ritual in front of the Sacred Bundle of 9 Wind. One of them, Lord 13 Lizard, is shown traveling over a road of darkness and flints, originating in the Chicomoztoc Cave. He has apparently made a shamanic flight in service of the Sacred Bundle, to communicate with the Place of Origin.

### *The PLUMED SERPENT and the SACRED BUNDLE*

The earliest recorded dynastic histories begin with the activities of Lord 9 Wind, the Whirlwind or Plumed Serpent. He acts as a mediator between Heaven and Earth, between Darkness and Light. His Sacred Bundle becomes



emblematic of cult and culture. His serpentine, breathlike nature induces the visionary experience of contact with the Other World, overcoming distances across time and space. The representation of the vision serpent is extremely important in royal rituals depicted in Classic Maya art and goes back as far as the Olmec; a famous relief at La Venta (monument 19) shows a priest—or ruler in a priestly function—being encircled by a serpent, probably representing the state of trance.

The importance of the Plumed Serpent in the beginning of the Ñuu Dzau historical books corresponds with the wide distribution and popularity of this icon in the Early Postclassic. A famous example is the relief of the Plumed Serpent on the Temple of Quetzalcoatl in Xochicalco. This is the composition we recognize in the landscape of Yuta Tnoho in Codex Tonindeye (36). This use of the Plumed Serpent imagery revitalizes a Classic symbol of power.

On the reliefs that decorate the main temple in the royal residence at Teotihuacan, known as the Citadel, the Plumed Serpent clearly marks the liminal zone: the facades and the staircase. He is shown in his element, between the conchs and bivalve shells of the primordial ocean, lifting above the waters of darkness the pearl crown of the Teotihuacan princes.<sup>57</sup> A closer look identifies the two types of shells as the *tecciztli* (strombus gigas) and *tapachtli* (spondylus). Both had important ritual connotations. The conch is used as a musical instrument, blown to call the people together for public ceremonies and other activities. The spondylus appears in offerings and apparently was considered to have special powers. Although the form of the representation is quite different, we can compare the contents of these reliefs with the scene in which Lord 9 Wind carries the waters of Heaven to the different places of the Ñuu Dzau region in Codex Yuta Tnoho (47). In this scene we again note the presence of *tecciztli* and *tapachtli* in the representation of the ocean. Just as rabbit and deer are emblematic of the natural life in the mountains, these two shells seem to function as a *difrasismo* for the forces of the two oceans.

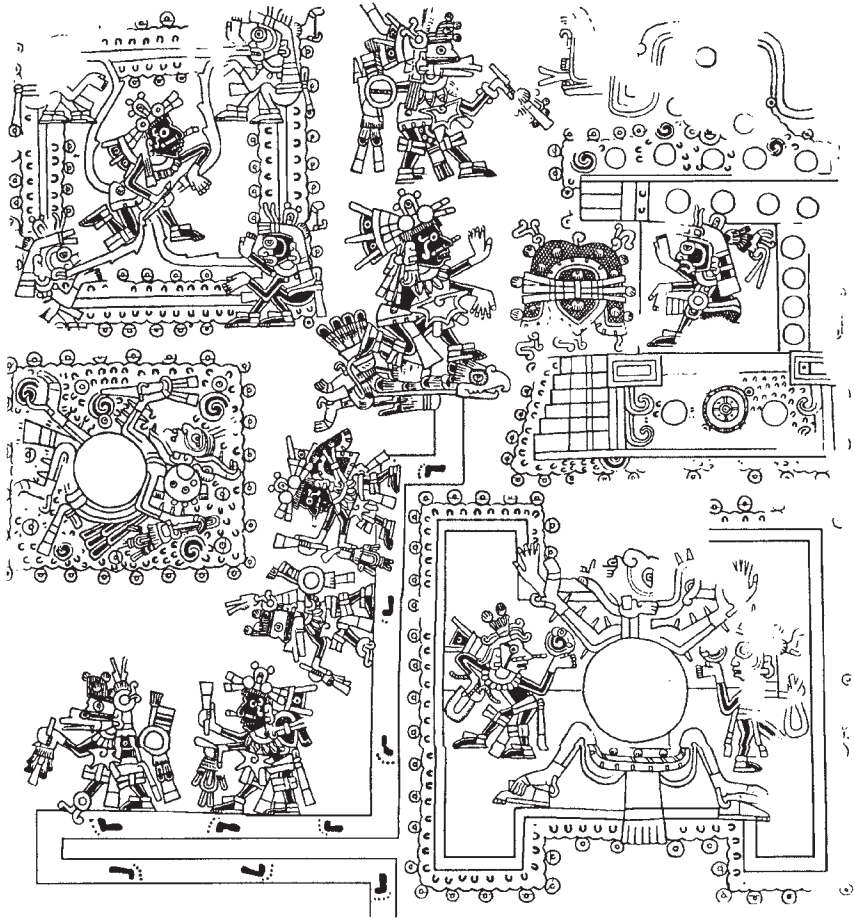
Among the main sanctuaries of the ceremonial center of Tollan were the Temple of the Strombus (*teccizcalli*) and the Temple of the Spondylus (*tapachcalli*), paired with the Temple of Beams decorated with Turquoise Mosaics (*xiuhvapalcalli*) and the Temple of Quetzal Feathers (*quetzalcalli*). These are the names given by the Anales de Cuauhtitlan (Lehmann 1938: § 66). A similar description in Sahagún (1950–1978, book X: ch. 29) adds the Temple of Jade (*chalchiuhcalli*) and the Temple of Gold (*teocuitlacalli*). Whereas the

other *difrasismos* (jade and gold, turquoise and quetzal feathers) refer to the precious elements of the land, strombus and spondylus seem to represent the treasures of the sea.<sup>58</sup>

In the religious Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29 ff) a series of temple rituals is depicted, starting during the night (*yoayan*) in the Dark Temple (*Tlillan*) of Cihuacoatl. In the four corners we find serpentine beings that carry the wind mask characteristic of Lord 9 Wind, their bodies set with “star eyes,” that is, consisting of darkness. This is the image we read as the well-documented Nahuatl *difrasismo yoalli Ehecatl*, “night and wind,” which is applied to the mysterious being of the Gods. The “night and wind” serpents seem to represent priests in trance, attending the rituals; they gather around a spirited vessel in which the “night and wind” material is prepared—in that case, probably the hallucinogenic black ointment (*teotlacualli*) the priests put on their bodies to be able to speak with the Gods.<sup>59</sup>

At a later stage (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 35), we encounter the mind-altering effects of the Sacred Bundle. The protagonist of the scene is a priest, whose title “Smoke Eye” already suggests trance visions and whose black body paint indicates that he was under the influence of a hallucinogenic ointment. This man had prepared himself ritually during the night by perforating his penis and offering his blood to the four directions, to Lord Night, Yoaltecuhtli, the Deity of darkness, dreams, and *nahualistic* powers. Apparently, this happened in a plaza in front of the Temple of Darkness and Visions, dedicated to the same deity. Having arrived in this temple on the wings of an eagle, that is, by magic flight, the priest received the Sacred Bundle from Yoaltecuhtli and followed a tortuous sacred road through the ceremonial center, guided by another priest, a combination of Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca. Meanwhile a third priest, devoted to Xolotl, had prepared himself by playing ball with the same Deity of Darkness. Still during the night he joined the others in opening the Sacred Bundle somewhere on an open spot in the ceremonial center, presumably in a plaza between a Temple of Darkness and a Temple of Heaven and Light. A strong current of mysterious divine forces, depicted as a huge “night and wind” serpent, breaks forth from the Bundle with the unsettling sounds of sharp whistles, dark drums, and the moving wings of butterflies and other flying creatures; whirling, it sweeps away the Xolotl priest in an ecstatic flight.

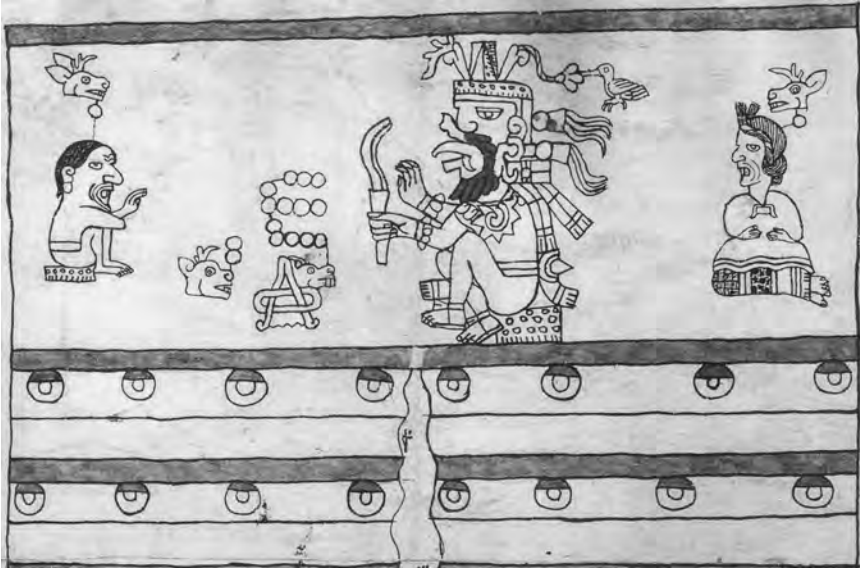
The rituals in this impressive chapter of Codex Yoalli Ehecatl pivot on the transformations of darkness into light and of death imagery into sprouting



3.19. *Procession with the Sacred Bundle* (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 35).

trees and maize. The trance of the priests is the mediating dynamic factor between those two conditions. These scenes also provide a ritual-conceptual background to the story in Codex Yuta Tnoho according to which Lord 9 Wind, the Plumed Serpent, had the Tree Maiden give birth to the First Lords and Ladies of Ñuu Dzau. Here again he is the supreme mediator, the Bringer of Life.

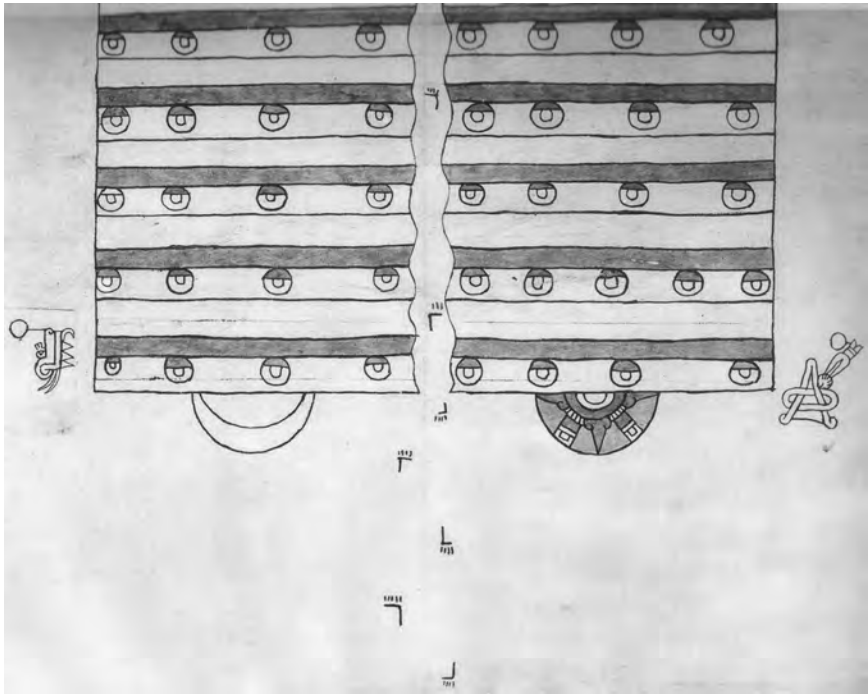
A fascinating antecedent of this relationship between the Plumed Serpent and the Sacred Tree of dynastic origins can be found in Teotihuacan. Fresco fragments from a high-status residence at the Techinantitla area of Teotihuacan represent a long Plumed Serpent that encircles the room (and those pres-



3.20a. *The Primordial Couple (Lord 1 Deer and Lady 1 Deer) with Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl' in Heaven (opening scene of the Roll of the New Fire).*

ent in it), overarching a series of trees, each characterized by a special sign. There are nine different trees, combined into larger units of thirteen (Berrin et al. 1988: 137–161). We favor the hypothesis that these named trees are symbols of different lineages, all united in the overwhelming power of their divine Founder and Sustenance. The scene can be compared to the benches in Toltec and later Mexica palaces that contain reliefs of marching warriors or nobles, likewise in combination with extended Plumed Serpents above them.

Teotihuacan art is an eloquent tribute to the importance of the Plumed Serpent. His occurrence on the facade of the Citadel demonstrates his association with rulership and his function as the guardian of the threshold to the Other World. This is his liminal character, depicted explicitly on the exterior surface of a sanctuary. At the same time we find him on the interior walls of a palace, surrounding the beholders as an inclusive force. Those standing in the room found themselves reminded of how their ancestry had been imbued with life by the Plumed Serpent, and, participating in the appropriate commemorative incantations, they would experience the fascinating spell he cast through time and space. The same would have been true for those who participated as



3.20b. *The different layers of Heaven with Sun and Moon (opening scene of the Roll of the New Fire).*

performers and audiences in the recitation and reenactment of works such as the Codex Yuta Tnoho, their minds merging, seized by this great and mysterious symbol of divine inspiration.

The layout of Teotihuacan's ceremonial center along a main avenue corresponds with the central theme in many of its preserved mural paintings: ritual processions. We can imagine the nobles and priests abundantly adorned with iridescent quetzal feathers, perhaps gathering first in the interior plaza of the Citadel palace, where they would receive instructions from the ruler. From there they would follow the Street of the Dead, marching solemnly to the sound of drums and flutes. Passing over the transverse platforms in the large avenue, they effectively took the form of a huge Plumed Serpent undulating, advancing along the central axis that connected the main temples, to finally arrive at the plaza in front of the Pyramid of the Moon. There the procession could turn and go back to the Citadel. In this way, the ritual integrated the many sanctuaries and sacred spots along the route, symbolically

connected to as many devotional groups, noble houses, and other segments of society. In addition, the ritual established the directions marked by the Pyramid of the Sun, built on top of the cave of origin, and by the Pyramid of the Moon, standing for the dominating Tenan Mountain, possibly representing the primordial Mountain of Sustenance, as the eternal focus points. And we understand how the population of the capital, together with pilgrims from all over the realm, in effect could experience representing and even becoming the Plumed Serpent, their collective symbol, in a sacred, cosmic context.



## *Chapter Four*

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# FOUNDING MOTHERS

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THE SEVEN CAVES OF HEAVEN ARE THE POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR AN INTRIGUING story about the events of a remote past recorded in the Ñuu Dzauí manuscripts (Codex Tonindeye, 14–21). Heaven, we now understand, is both the general sacred living space of the Gods and an actual sanctuary on a mountaintop near Yuta Tnoho. The seven caves (Chicomoztoc) are a metaphor for earthly origin. At the same time, they may refer to actual caves in the area with ceremonial functions. In this case, a pair emerges: Lady 3 Flint ‘Shell Quechquemítl, Plumed Serpent’ (“Power and Strength of the Plumed Serpent”) and Lord 5 Flower ‘Precious Prince.’ Note that their calendar names are in sequence, just two days apart (the day in between is 4 Rain).

Lady 3 Flint was clearly an important personage. Her name associates her directly with the powers of the Plumed Serpent, and she also has the attributes of female deities whom we know by their Nahuatl names: the spindle of Tlazolteotl and the jade skirt of Chalchiuhtlicue. The place of origin embeds



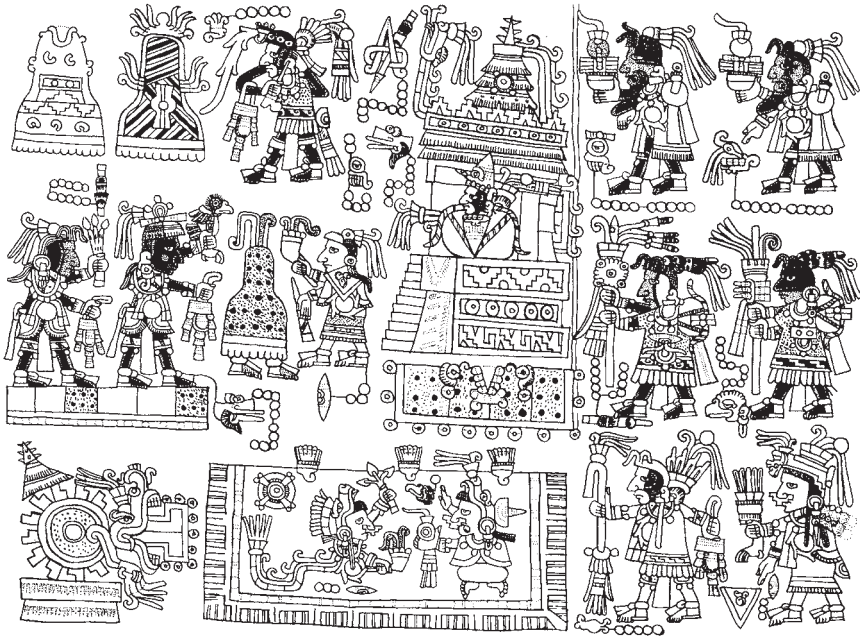
her and her husband within the broad scale of sacred origin stories. Several other places are mentioned together with the Seven Caves of Heaven; apparently they are emblematic for other dynastic beginnings. These sites are home to four priests, who will accompany Lord 5 Flower and Lady 3 Flint on a long journey in the next scene, carrying the Tnucucua staff, the Xipe staff, and the Sacred Bundle—the most important symbols of power and authority.

The last two places in this series are clearly situated outside N̄uu Dzauī. Of these, the first—a valley between two volcanoes, dominated by the Rain God and a Woman with Blue Skirt—unmistakably refers to the Valley of Puebla between the different snow-covered volcanoes. The volcano of the Woman with Blue Skirt is obviously the Matlalcueye. The other may be Mount Tlaloc or another mountain with a shrine dedicated to the Rain God. Between the volcanoes we see Plant Men, probably representing a specific origin story. The second scene, situated on the Mountain of Words, may represent the Tzatzitepetl, close to Tula Xicocotitlan. The two associated personages are clearly identifiable. Lord 2 Reed is a manifestation of Tezcatlipoca.<sup>1</sup> In front of him stands Lord 4 Jaguar, whom we will later encounter as a Toltec ruler. The reference to a personage to be dated two centuries later shows that we are dealing here with a general picture of primordial places of origin *in illo tempore*, without precise chronological preoccupations.

### LADY 3 FLINT MOTHER *and* DAUGHTER

At one stage of their wanderings, Lady 3 Flint changed into her *nahual*-animal, the Plumed Serpent, to visit and pay her respects to the Grandmother of the River (*Sitna Yuta*), Lady 1 Eagle, Patron of the West and of human procreation. During this visionary encounter, the Goddess gave her a jewel as a sign that she would become pregnant.

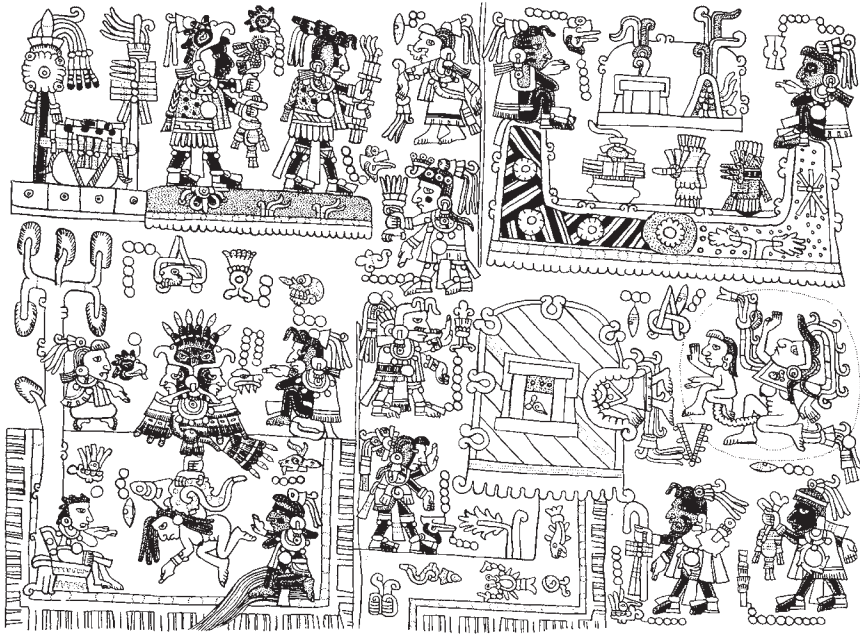
To honor the favors the Goddess bestowed upon them, the travelers built an important ceremonial center: a precious temple dedicated to the Plumed Serpent, that is, a temple of visions, situated on top of a cave. A *nahual*-altar at the entrance of a ball court, equally a place of mystery and trance, characterized the place of worship. Inside the temple they deposited the Sacred Bundle that contained the Flint from which Lord 9 Wind, the culture hero, had been born. The ceremonial center is very similar to the temple complex described in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29 ff), where it is associated with the ecstatic worship of the Sacred Bundle.



4.1a. Lady 3 Flint 'Shell Quechquemitl' conceives a child (Codex Tonindeye, 15).

Lady 3 Flint made offerings at the foot of the Mountain of Ashes, that is, to the realm of the West, venerating Lady 1 Eagle. Meanwhile, her husband directed himself to the Mountain of Earthquakes and Fire and to the Town of the Throne and the Words. These places likely have a symbolic rather than a concrete geographic meaning. Earthquakes and fire clearly represent the volcanic powers, while throne and words are signs of authority and state formation. We identified the Mountain of Words that appeared one page earlier as the Tzatzitepetl near Tollan Xicocotlan. The Mountain of the Throne, on the other hand, occurs as one of the main toponyms of the site of Monte Albán (in the Map of Xoxocotlan). In this respect it is interesting that the day for Lord 5 Flower's rituals was 7 Rain, the day of the Flayed God (Xipe), Patron of the Beni Zaa dynasty of Zaachila.<sup>2</sup>

Soon the priests had to burn wood to heat the sweat bath. Lady 3 Flint 'Shell Quechquemitl,' that is, 'Power and Strength of the Plumed Serpent,' gave birth to a daughter, Lady 3 Flint 'Jade Quechquemitl' or 'Beauty of Jade.' Then, under the supervision of Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl,' the young mother turned again into her *nahual*, the Plumed Serpent, and entered a cave



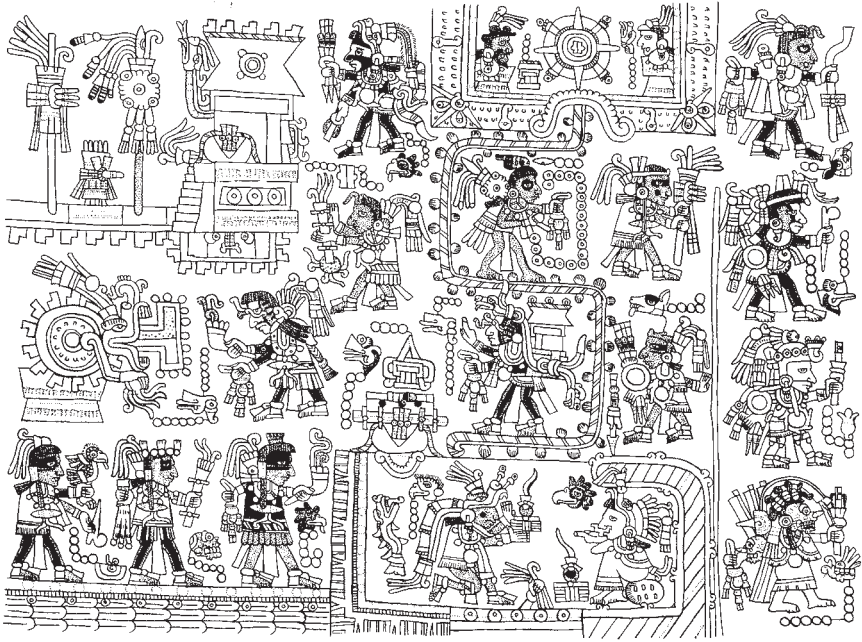
4.1b. *The birth of Lady 3 Flint 'Jade Quechquemil' (Codex Tonindeye, 15).*

where she became the Spirit of a large river. Among those present at the occasion was Lord 7 Flower, an important primordial ruler and manifestation of the solar deity.

The birth scene is dated in the year 3 Flint, but this date seems out of chronological sequence. This may be the result of confusion with the calendar names of the protagonists. Looking at the life of Lady 3 Flint 'Jade Quechquemil' as history, we would place this event scene tentatively in the year 1 Flint (948).

Father 5 Flower went with his daughter to visit important personages in different places. Several of them are associated with Yuta Tnoho in another part of the Codex Tonindeye (36 ff). Apparently they represent the earlier generation, supposedly contemporaneous with Lady 9 Alligator and Lord 5 Wind.

The date given for this "introduction to society" of the child Lady 3 Flint is the year 7 Rabbit day 3 Flower. Again this might be a sacred date, but if taken historically it would correspond to 954. At the end of the journey, father and daughter returned to their palace, close to the Temple of the



4.2. *The first arrival of Lord 12 Wind, coming down from the Place of Heaven (Codex Tonindeye, 18).*

Plumed Serpent where the Sacred Bundle was kept. The Tnucucua staff and the Xipe staff were ceremonially deposited in front of the temple, and the priests engaged in a ritual that involved burning a large pile of wood on an altar.

The culture hero 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ arrived at the palace, accompanied by the Patrons of the Four Directions. They came to honor the Princess 3 Flint and to arrange a marriage between her and a priest who had come down from Heaven: Lord 12 Wind ‘Smoke Eye,’ whose given name indicates that he was a visionary priest. The venerable elders Lord 4 House and Lady 5 Serpent, who may have been his parents, had instructed him in Heaven.<sup>3</sup>

The first date associated with his coming down from Heaven on the down-ball cord, which symbolizes the magical flight, is the year 4 House, probably marking his initiation in serving the Sacred Bundle as a priest at age seven. The scene is connected with the place sign of Hand Holding Feathers, that is, Yuta Tnoho, confirming the idea that the Heaven represents the Cavua Caa Andevui. Taken historically, the year 4 House would correlate

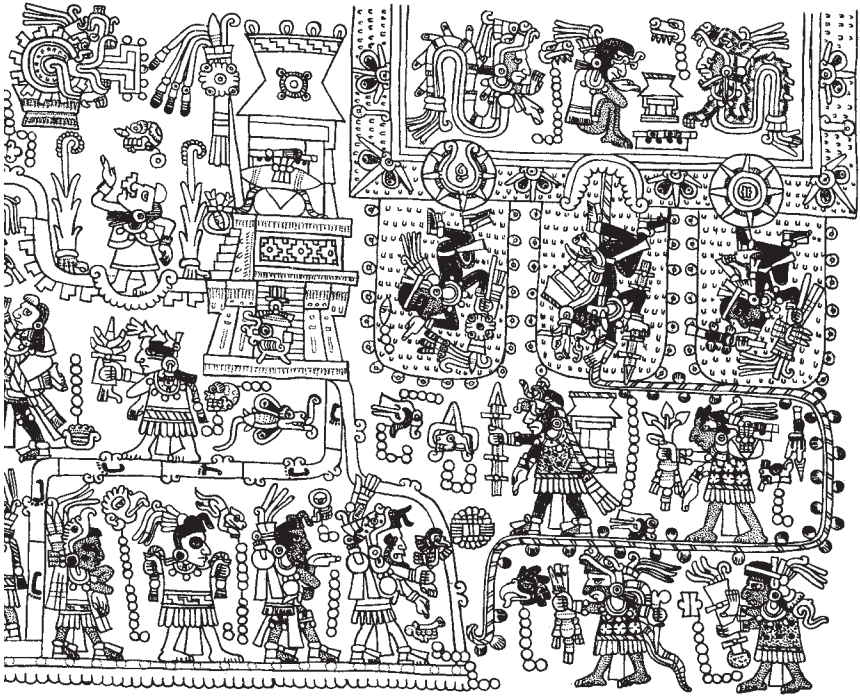
with 925. On his back Lord 12 Wind carried a temple bound with serpent cords (symbolizing the visionary character of the cult). His companions carried the Tnucucua staff, the Xipe staff, and a Sacred Arrow.

Lord 12 Wind carried out the same rituals in the Temple of the Plumed Serpent as Lord 5 Flower and Lady 3 Flint ‘Shell Quechquemitl’ had done before him. His companions made a *nabual* journey to see Lady 3 Flint ‘Plumed Serpent,’ seated in a cave next to the river. She was by now identified with the Grandmother of the River, Lady 1 Eagle. The purpose of this encounter must have been to ask for her daughter’s hand in marriage. When both parents had granted their permission, Lord 12 Wind again came down from Heaven, in the year 7 Rabbit (954), on his name day 12 Wind. That is twenty-two days after the day 3 Flower of the same year on which young Lady 3 Flint had been introduced to the Ancestors and Patrons of several places.

In Heaven, Lord 12 Wind ‘Smoke Eye’ had been instructed by the great *nabuales* Lord 4 Alligator ‘Coyote Serpent’ and Lord 11 Alligator ‘Jade Serpent.’ He had been put in charge of the worship (temple) and the founding of dynasties and kingdoms (the board and arrow to drill fire). His companions carried the Tnucucua staff and the Xipe staff. With these divine instructions and power objects he arrived at the foot of the Big Mountain, *Yucu Cabnu* (represented as a bent mountain), that is, Monte Albán.

The profile of this acropolis in Codex Tonindefe as a huge table mountain, standing on its own, is actually fairly realistic. The position of the toponymic elements corresponds well with the slopes as seen from the East (Xoxocotlan).<sup>4</sup> On the northern side are the Yucu Yoo (Acatepec) and Tiyuqh (Sayultepec) slopes. In the center is the palace and site of the throne (*Aniñe Iya*). The southern part is represented as a big rock, with a cave (*yavui*), considered a place of lightning ball *nabuales* (*yabui*) and apparently dedicated to the visionary veneration of the Founding Ancestor, Lord 1 Alligator.<sup>5</sup> Such details suggest that the Tonindefe painter—or the author of the work he was copying—knew this area from his own observation.

The same can be said about his rendering of the Valley of Yuta Tnoho (36) as an enclosure of steep rocks with its two rivers down below, its holy cave (Yavui Coo Maa, “Deep Cave of the Serpent”) on one side and its Tree of Origin with the impressive waterfall on the other. Although this form of landscape painting remains fundamentally pictographic, that is, it renders toponyms through hieroglyphic signs, the way in which the signs are combined in these cases takes into account the spatial relations between the named

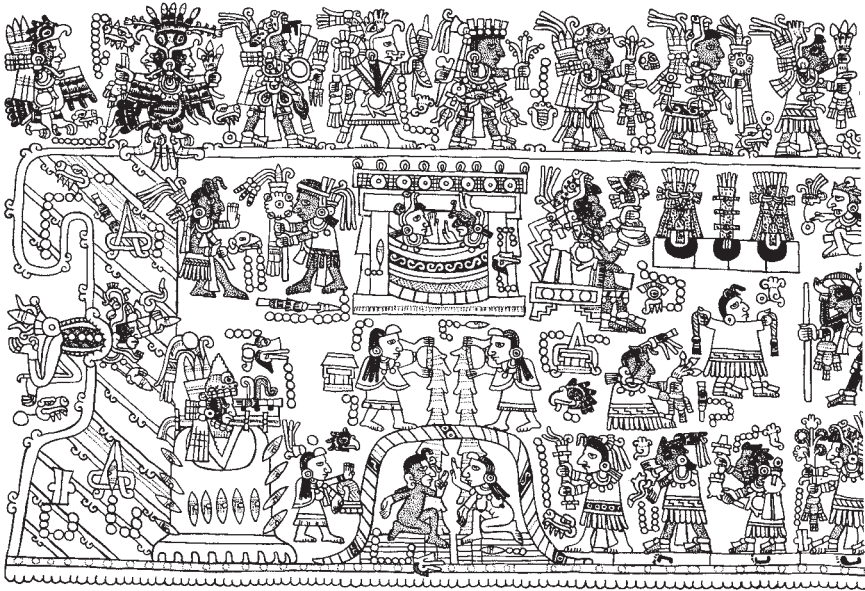


4.3a. Lord 12 Wind arriving at Monte Albán (Codex Tonindeye, 19a).

places and so succeeds in giving the impression of space. The painting permits the coherent visual representation of the landscape, conceived as a structure of toponyms. This concept—also present in the painting of mountain ranges and lists of conquered places or neighboring towns—was the point of departure for developing indigenous cartography, first in the precolonial tradition of the *lienzos* and later in syncretism with the European tradition that resulted in the maps for the *Relaciones Geográficas* and the *títulos*.<sup>6</sup>

### CRISIS CULT *at* MONTE ALBÁN

There, at the foot of the huge acropolis that held the ruined temples and palaces of what had been the capital of the Classic Beni Zaa empire, the local rulers and two priests who had accompanied and assisted Lord 5 Flower and Lady 3 Flint welcomed Lord 12 Wind with respect. At that time the ancient center of Monte Albán appears to have been governed by a dual rulership. The two power holders were Lord 12 Lizard ‘Standing Firm on Big Mountain’ and



4.3b. *The marriage of Lord 12 Wind and Lady 3 Flint at Monte Albán (Codex Tonindeye, 19b).*

Lord 12 Vulture ‘Quetzal Feather from Sun Mountain.’ They are also represented as a couple, Lord 12 Lizard and Lady 12 Vulture, seated on the mat of marriage and rulership and the parents of four sons. That alternative representation of the two as a couple is understandable in view of the title “father-mother” for “shaman” and “authority.”<sup>7</sup> Thus we take the couple with four children as a metaphorical expression for the rulership of two kings assisted by a council of four governors. The sons/governors were Lord 4 House ‘Staff of Strokes,’ Lord 3 Monkey ‘Burner of the Pyramids,’ Lord 10 Alligator ‘Eagle,’ and Lord 10 Eagle ‘Coyote.’<sup>8</sup> The combination of Big Mountain (Monte Albán) and Sun Mountain suggests that the dual government was built on an alliance between these two places or between the lineages associated with them. Wherever located, the Sun Place may have referred back to the First Sunrise. A vague recollection of the Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan and its ideological importance may have still been present in N̄uu Dzauī, as it was among the Aztecs. The reliefs of the South Platform of Monte Albán demonstrate the political-economic-ideological link between Monte Albán and Teotihuacan but, obviously, date from several centuries before the time

referred to in the codices. We wonder if a late echo of that crucial Classic alliance might have been present in the statement that connects Monte Albán with Sun Mountain or in the origin claims of certain dynasties.<sup>9</sup>

Returning to the persons associated with Monte Albán, we notice that they are represented with normal given names and without special ethnic markers. It seems they all belonged to the Ñuu Dzauí people. The archaeological data suggest that at this time, in the tenth century A.D., Monte Albán had already lost its function as the capital of an imperial state dominated by the Beni Zaa. Thus the scenes situated in Monte Albán are to be understood as references to a society in disarray: at Monte Albán there were still people living, and its name echoed memories of a great past, but the imperial structure existed only in name and was rapidly giving way to all kinds of local conflicts.

It was in this confusing time of the demise of Monte Albán that Lord 12 Wind came down from Heaven. He arrived after fulfilling his priesthood in the sanctuary on the Cavua Caa Andevui of Yuta Tnoho, carrying a temple with the Sacred Bundle of the culture hero Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl.’ Given the context, we interpret this action as the introduction of a specific set of rituals related to the tense time of social upheaval, that is, a “millenarian movement” or “crisis cult.”<sup>10</sup>

Lord 12 Wind brought this form of worship and religious experience from the Place of Heaven. In the early period of Ñuu Dzauí history we have seen repeated references to men associated with this important sanctuary. The first example is that of Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ himself; his role—also in view of his cognates in the Nahuatl world—can be interpreted as that of the culture hero, the divine Founder of the devotional community and the political power structure. As a true deity he does not marry but initiates dynasties through instruction and ritual. Lord 5 Wind ‘Rain’ apparently followed in his footsteps; stemming from a classic dynasty of Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá), he went to the Heaven sanctuary in Yuta Tnoho to serve as a priest. Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ instructed him to descend from Heaven and marry a local Lady. Now, much later, Lord 12 Wind repeats this pattern; his black body paint clearly identifies him as a priest, and his name suggests that he was a man of visions. His descent from Heaven is explicitly identified with the original act of Lord 9 Wind, the culture hero. Lord 12 Wind carries the temple, that is, introduces the cult, and his followers carry the sacred symbols of power. He married the daughter of still another man associated with the



Place of Heaven, Lord 5 Flower, and his wife, the numen of the Yuta Tnoho River.

The hypothesis that these events represent the introduction of a crisis cult and the formation of a spiritual community helps us understand the version given by Codex Yuta Tnoho. The origin story in this codex begins with a reference to Heaven and then depicts a large group of individuals, most of whom are important characters in early Ñuu Dzau history, associated with Yuta Tnoho. These primordial personages are qualified as born from the Mother Tree in the Sacred Valley (37–35), presumably in Yuta Tnoho itself, while others participate in an important meeting in that same place (33–32). Several of the personages born from the Sacred Mother Tree, however, do have parents and grandparents in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú. Recall that both Codex Yuta Tnoho and Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú once belonged to the same royal couple of Ñuu Tnoo. This suggests that they are not telling different stories but that they give the same account in different terms. Codex Yuta Tnoho emphasizes religious symbolism and metaphorical statements, whereas Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú gives a straightforward genealogical register.

Seeking a historical reality behind the metaphorical and ideological representation (which lumps together personages from different times and belonging to different noble houses), we get the impression that the codices transmit the notion of a tight group or “spiritual family” of priests and nobles, associated with Yuta Tnoho to such an extent that they became known as “those who were born from the Tree” or “those who came down from Heaven.”

A specific symbol for this alliance or spiritual bond is the knot. It is repeatedly mentioned in a statement that connects the list of the primordial places with the scene in which Lord 9 Wind calls upon the Spirits of Nature to release the First Lords and Ladies from the Tree (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 38). The landscape with its sacred dates becomes an expression of a group’s identity. We read:

This is the thirteen-fold knot of unity,  
that represents the alliance of all the mentioned places:  
the bond of blood and hearts,  
the bond of jade and gold,  
the bond of the four colors—red, white, green and yellow—  
i.e. the bond of the four directions,  
the bond of offerings of rubber and blood on paper,

the bond of the life force (*tonalli*) and the sacred enclosures,  
the bond of the precious mountains and the lordly valleys,  
of all that has the roof of heaven above it  
and earth as its fundament.<sup>11</sup>

“Blood and heart,” *neñe ini*, is one of the metaphors for “child.” The pictorial statement, therefore, refers to the interconnectedness of the generations and the precious link of people to the land and the cosmos, which inspires pious and respectful behavior. Fray Antonio de los Reyes described the “first Lords from Apoala” as *yya* (= *Iya*), “divine Lords,” who were in charge of (*sa ndidzo, sa nai*), had received, and were carrying (*nisai, nisidzo*) the authoritative words, the doctrine, the law (*huidzo sahu*). This formulation confirms our suspicion that we are dealing with a devotional community, connected through ties of religious conviction and ritual. The emphasis on personages coming down from Heaven, carrying a temple, and going to other places to realize foundation rituals suggests that the cult they introduced was a new one, perceived as different from already existing, that is, Classic, practices and concepts. The religious complex is identified by its main element, the Sacred Bundle, which seems to have contained a part of the flint stone from which Lord 9 Wind had been born. If we are correct in relating that sacred story to the ceremonial center of Ñuu Ndecu, we can identify the cult with that of the “*Corazón del Pueblo*,” the “Heart of the Ñuu Dzauí People,” venerated as a jade image of Quetzalcoatl wrapped in a Bundle and kept in a cave in Ñuu Ndecu, from where its oracles directed the ways of the Ñuu Dzauí rulers and their people (Burgoa 1934b, I: 332 ff).

Scenes of the rites for the Sacred Bundle have been preserved in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29–38), which shows shrines very similar to those depicted in Codex Tonindecy (15, 17, 18). The religious complex clearly was visionary and ecstatic in character. The climax was the opening of the Bundle, after bloodletting and other ritual preparations. It contained mysterious divine forces, “night and wind” serpents, capable of engulfing or swallowing the participants, carrying them off, swimming, flying in magic and mystery.

The importance given to this worship in the tenth century—precisely the period of the demise of the Classic metropolitan centers—suggests that it was a response to a widespread social crisis. This religious answer was embraced by the ruling families of Monte Albán itself—the associated year is 7 Rabbit (954). It was logical, therefore, that Monte Albán was selected as the scenario

for the marriage of its main priest and prophet, Lord 12 Wind, once he had given up his priesthood in Heaven, on the day 2 Eagle of the year 10 House (957). Many priests and nobles were present when the bride, Lady 3 Flint, was carried, as custom prescribed, to meet her future husband. The procession started at the big temple on the North Acropolis, now dedicated to the Plumed Serpent and the Sacred Bundle, and went downhill to the foot of the Big Mountain. That was the territory of the White Flint Mountain (Tocuisi = Zaachila or Ñuu Cuisi = Tlalistac?), where the same form of worship had taken root.<sup>12</sup> There was a rock shelter situated in the central gorge on the eastern slopes of Monte Albán, where the small stream originates that runs down toward Xoxo.

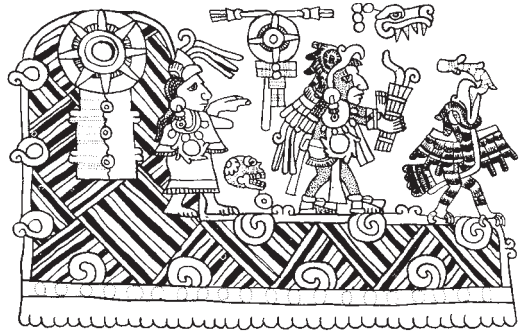
The image of the young couple in the cave reminds us of similar configurations that appear in scenes of the passages from one era or “Sun” to another painted in Codex Vaticanus A, pages 4v–6r (Anders & Jansen 1996: 54 ff). There it is said that after each destruction of the world, one couple survived, hidden in a hollow tree, a stone, or a cave. The composition of the couple in the cavity located centrally on the baseline of the scene is the same in both cases, which makes us suspect that an intertextual relationship exists between them. Perhaps the marriage at Monte Albán is painted this way to evoke the hope of new generations in the passage from one socio-political system to the next, from what we now call the Classic to the Postclassic.

After Lord 12 Wind and Lady 3 Flint were properly bathed in that gorge at the foot of the mountain, they consummated their marriage in the big palace in the center of Monte Albán, known as the Place of Rulership (*Aniñe Iya*). There they became the rulers and parents of the rulers, deified after death, or, as Codex Tonindeye, page 20, formulates it, “of all those that since have entered the earth and have transformed themselves into plants.”

The marriage scene of Lady 3 Flint and Lord 12 Wind is connected with a birth: between the reeds or maize stalks of the toponym Yucu Yoo (Acatepec of Monte Albán) and in front of the main temple (the North Platform), a Lady 1 Death was born. In a continuation of the scene, she was welcomed or greeted by a number of Lords and Ladies in what seems to have been a ritual of acclamation and bestowing of royal status.

According to another version, Lady 1 Death, whose given name was ‘Sun Fan,’ had been born from the sacred *pochote*—the tree is clearly identified by its spines, while its sacredness (*ñuhu*) is expressed by flames (*ñuhu*) painted above it (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 1-V). This Sacred Mother

Tree is probably that of Yuta Tnoho, although it could also be the Tree of the Town of Flames, Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). What is clear now is that Lady 1 Death belonged to the “Yuta Tnoho spiritual family or alliance.” Three year dates are associated with this event, all badly damaged. The first seems to have been a year Reed; the day is



4.4. Lady 1 Death associated with Sun Mountain (Codex Tonindeye, 21).

difficult to distinguish. One would suspect 1 Reed 1 Alligator, the general date of a new beginning, but a vague series of lines and dots may also suggest the day 7 Flower. The second year is House with a large number of dots. If it were 10 House 2 Eagle, it would have referred to the marriage of Lady 3 Flint and Lord 12 Wind. The vague red spot where the day sign must have been is, however, suggestive of the day sign Wind, perhaps 12 Wind, which would also be a reference to Lord 12 Wind. The third date was a year Reed with several dots, possibly 5 Reed (939). This may have represented the birth year of Lady 1 Death or the beginning of a series of events leading to her wedding.

Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse documents that Lady 1 Death was married in the year 6 Flint (940). Chronological calculations for the marriages of her grandchildren suggest that her daughter was born around 960. This would mean Lady 1 Death was fairly young at the time of her marriage; it could even have been an official ceremony of marital alliance when she was still a baby. In any case, Lady 1 Death cannot have been the daughter of Lady 3 Flint and Lord 12 Wind, who reportedly married in the year 10 House (957)—and indeed she is not explicitly connected with that couple. On the other hand, the combination of the marriage with the birth scene seems significant. Without further data, we speculate that Lady 1 Death may have functioned as the “daughter” of Lady 3 Flint and Lord 12 Wind, perhaps as an adopted child or a local princess strongly supported by that couple. In another scene (Codex Tonindeye, 21) she appears associated with Sun Mountain, so she may have been related to Lord/Lady 12 Vulture, one of the two rulers of Monte Albán.

SUMMARY: SEQUENCE OF RULERS AT MONTE ALBÁN

1. Lord 12 Lizard + Lord 12 Vulture (“father-mother”) with four “children”: Lord 4 House, Lord 3 Monkey, Lord 10 Alligator, Lord 10 Eagle
2. Lord 12 Wind (priest from Heaven) + Lady 3 Flint (daughter of Lord 5 Flower and Lady 3 Flint)
3. Lady 1 Death, locally born and acclaimed princess

THE CREATION OF ÑUU DZAUÍ

It was likely shortly after the marriage of Lady 3 Flint to Lord 12 Wind and their entering the palace at Monte Albán that a “province” was created in the Ñuu Dzauí region. The initiative was taken by a council of four, consisting of two Monte Albán governors—Lord 3 Monkey and Lord 10 Eagle—together with two men who belonged to “those born from the Tree,” that is, to the Yuta Tnoho alliance or devotional community: Lord 10 Death and Lord 4 Dog.<sup>13</sup> The associated date was year 1 Reed day 1 Alligator, marking the beginning of a new era.

At more or less the same time, one of these men, Lord 10 Death, married Lady 8 Monkey, who also belonged to the Yuta Tnoho alliance. Lord 7 Flower and Lord 4 Movement, who both belonged to the Yuta Tnoho devotional community, made the arrangements.<sup>14</sup> They were seated at a Sacred Place of the Stone Ball Court, possibly Yuhua Cuchi (Guaxolotitlan) in the Mixteca Baja. From there they gave counsel to Lady 8 Monkey ‘Jade Bowl’ and Lady 7 Wind ‘Green Parrot,’ seated in the market in another sacred place called Long Stone (Ayuú?) in the same area.<sup>15</sup>

The outcome of these consultations was that Lady 8 Monkey married Lord 10 Death, one of the council of four in charge of the new “province.” A great shaman, Lord 2 Dog, sat down before the region’s Patron, the Rain God, asked for permission and blessing, and then led the marriage ceremony. More than simply the Patron, Ñuhu Dzauí was also the God who gave his name to the realm. The old priest Lord 2 Dog performed a ceremonial cleansing and inaugurated Ñuu Dzauí’s extensive territory, establishing Yucuñudahui (*Yucu Ñuhu Dzavui*), “Mountain of the Rain God,” an important site in Late Classic times, as its first place and capital.<sup>16</sup>

The center of the mountain range of the newly founded realm was Black Mountain, which has to be the famous Monte Negro of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo).<sup>17</sup> The fact that Black Mountain (Yucu Tnoo) is referred to

instead of Black Town (Ñuu Tnoo) is archaeologically correct. The site of Ñuu Tnoo (today the center of Tilantongo) seems to be a Postclassic settlement. In earlier times, the temple complex on top of Monte Negro was the most important site.

In that huge landscape, Black Mountain is surrounded by signs that appear to be toponyms but may also represent honorific names or literary descriptions. For example, the Mountain of the Rain God is followed by two mountains that express “looking to both sides,” that is, being wise and alert. The coyote and a jaguar that follow seem to refer to primordial strength and courage.<sup>18</sup> Of course, these toponyms may also refer to real places. The same holds true for Hill of the Precious Jade Mask immediately next to Black Mountain. At first sight it might express the region’s precious and rich character, but later it appears in a historical context.

Behind Black Mountain in the range of glyphs we find—in a somewhat garbled and inverted fashion—the statement “that what is founded in the earth, that what supports the heaven,” a general reference to the created and ordered Earth. At the end of the range, Mountain of the Jaguar and Mountain of the Guacamaya are mentioned as places situated beyond the northwestern frontier of Ñuu Dzauí.<sup>19</sup>

Among the many places within this realm were some close to Ñuu Tnoo, such as the Enclosure of Flames (Ñuu Ndecu, Achiutla?) and House of the Place of Flints (Ñuu Yuchi, Mogote del Cacique). Others were situated farther away in the adjacent Mixteca Baja, including Yucu Ndaa Yee (the Blue Mountain of the Shell, Tequixtepec), Toavui (River of the Seated Lord, Chila), and, even farther away, Yucu Toñaña (Stone of the Jaguar Man, Tehuacan).<sup>20</sup>

In a list that occupies several pages (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 8–7) we also find Flower Hill and Broken Hill, possibly an early reference to Ñuu Cahnu (Teozacualco). Normally this town is represented as a Frieze with Flowers or a Broken Frieze, but it is possible that the same substitution took place here as in the case of Ñuu Tnoo; given the shift of settlements at the end of the Classic, the Postclassic *ñuu* was considered to have been preceded by an earlier *yucu*.

Other places mentioned are Mountain of the Standing Arrows, which has to be Ndaa Nduvua (Miltepec) in the Mixteca Baja, and Valley of the Spiderweb, which we identify as Andua in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan).

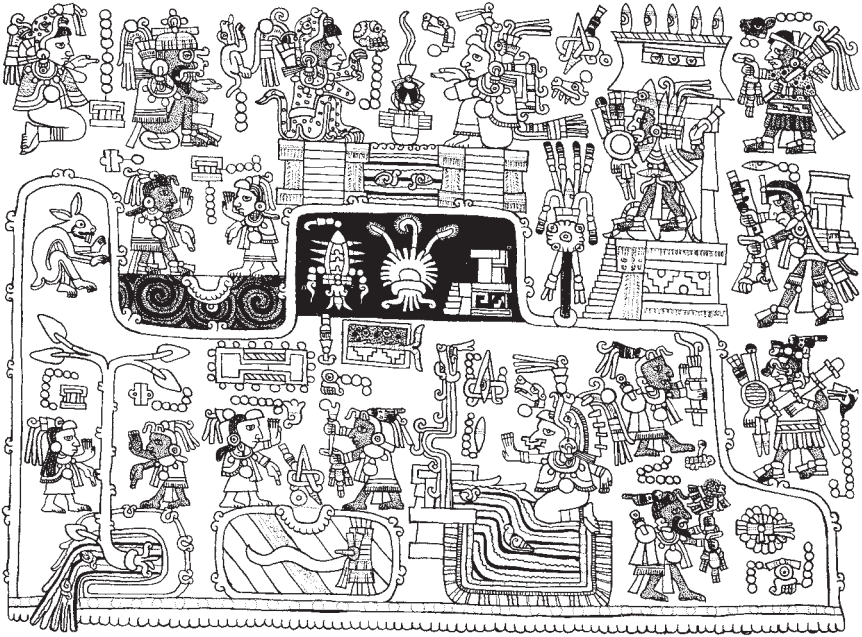
Encompassing at least large parts of the Mixteca Alta and Baja, this realm seems to have been created as an intermediate “buffer” between the

Monte Albán sphere of influence and Central Mexico. The emphasis on Yucuñudahui, indeed an important center in the Late Classic, suggests that that acropolis may even have been the origin of the general name for this area: Ñuu Dzau, the Land of the Rain God.

We interpret these scenes as indications of the Epiclassic formation of a Ñuu Dzau “province” or “realm,” still under the influence of Monte Albán. In this area the ancient mountaintop sites Yucuñudahui (controlling the Valley of Yodzo Cahi, Yanhuitlan) and Monte Negro (controlling the central mountainous area) were of primary importance. That would mean Monte Albán was still considered a site of considerable influence at the time of the Classic-Postclassic transition. Archaeological evidence, however, indicates that the real waning of Monte Albán’s power had set in as early as A.D. 800. This seems not to have been a punctuated collapse, however, but a relatively slow and gradual process in which the site’s ideological importance may have continued for some time. Obviously, the codices refer—in retrospect—to that emblematic value in a general way without chronological precision.

The prominence of Monte Negro in this epoch is also attested by a large scene in Codex Tonindecy (22) in which Lord 12 Wind himself installed the crisis cult in the area of Ñuu Tnoo. The later capital is indicated as an Altar with a Black Frieze, incorporated together with other toponyms in the Black Mountain. The ancient site is portrayed as two pyramids with water between them. The configuration is suggestive of the presence of some sort of reservoir but likely just indicates a sanctuary dedicated to the cult of water. In those days nobles were still residing on top of Monte Negro, where the main constructions date from Late Preclassic and Early Classic times. The local Lord 4 Lizard ‘Rain,’ painted black and seated on a stone as a rain priest, and Lady 8 House ‘Jaguar’ had a son, Lord 7 Death ‘Jaguar.’ The coming of Lord 12 Wind with the Bundle cult seems to have coincided with the marriage of this son to Lady 1 Serpent ‘Plumed Serpent.’ Her name clearly indicates the popularity of the spreading cult. She is shown kneeling in front of a local sanctuary at the spring of the Serpent River. The sign probably refers to the Yute Coo (Yuta Coo according to Alvarado), “Serpent River,” which originates in the lands of Ñuu Tnoo and then flows south through an impressive gorge, passing between Dzandaya (Mitlatongo) and Yahua (Tamazola) to enter the territory of Chiyo Cahnu as the River of Atoco (Nochixtlan).<sup>21</sup>

The sacred date associated with Lady 1 Serpent’s presence at the Serpent’s spring, year 7 Flint day 7 Flint, later became the sacred date of Ñuu Tnoo.



4.5. *The landscape of Monte Negro (Codex Tonindeye, 22).*

Several other couples are distributed in the landscape that later integrated the kingdom of Ñuu Tnoo; they were probably the Ancestors of other noble houses, associated with smaller communities or specific sites.

Lord 12 Wind and his companions, Lord 3 Flint and Lord 6 Dog, arrived in this area with the new form of religious worship and the objects of power (the staffs, the instrument to make the new fire, the Sacred Arrow); they planted the Tnucucua staff in front of Monte Negro, declaring that it was a new sovereign center. A special sanctuary was founded: the Temple of Heaven, dedicated to the Sacred Bundle. The Bundle contained the manifestation of Lord 9 Wind in the form of the Flint from which he had been born. Between the marriage on Monte Negro and the planting of the Tnucucua staff in front of the Temple of Heaven, the general founding date, year 1 Reed day 1 Alligator, is given, indicating that a new order was put in place.

This Temple of Heaven (Huahi Andevui) became the main ceremonial center of Postclassic Ñuu Tnoo. In this context the name is probably derived from the Place of Heaven, where the cult originated, but it was a generic term; there were other Temples of Heaven in different village-states. The central



chapter of Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (especially 33–34) shows that the associated religious practice involved sacrifice and bloodletting to the cosmic forces and visionary experiences when the Sacred Bundle was opened. With this background, we can explain the many references to priests and rituals in early Ñuu Dzaui history. All these scenes tell us that the kingdoms were founded because of the spread of a specific ecstatic cult, namely, that for the Sacred Bundle of Lord 9 Wind, the Plumed Serpent. The planting of the staffs and the drilling of new fire, which symbolize the foundation of a new rule, were connected with the depositing of the Bundle in the main sanctuary of a site that was to become a new capital.

Lord 12 Wind, as spiritual leader or prophet, imitated the ways of Lord 9 Wind. As the God had distributed the seasons to each place in primordial times, his spokesman descended from Heaven and distributed the objects of power among new political units.

This impressive scene is followed in Codex Tonindeye (23) by the genealogy of the dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo, initiated by Lord 10 House and Lady 1 Grass and leading up to the seating of Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull,’ to whom we return later. The context suggests that this dynasty succeeded Lady 1 Serpent and Lord 7 Death, the ancient rulers of Monte Negro.

Lord 12 Wind was not the only important priest in those days. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu reverse (40/36-I) contains specific notes about several of those holy men. The first note is about Lord 5 Wind from Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá).

The second note tells us about Lord 3 Flint, born from the Earth in the Town of the Xipe Bundle, related to the Mountain of the Fire Serpent, a Toltec site. It is tempting to interpret his name ‘Arrow’ as a priestly title ‘Keeper of the Sacred Arrow,’ and indeed this man may have been identical to the Lord 3 Flint who was the main companion of Lord 12 Wind.<sup>22</sup> No date of birth is given, and his parents are not mentioned. The genealogical record apparently was not preserved or was deemed unimportant. After him were born Lady 12 Flower ‘Precious Seed,’ Lord 9 Wind ‘Serpent,’ and Lady 9 Rabbit ‘Jade with Ribbon.’

The next important priest was Lord 10 Rain ‘Jaguar.’ He lived at Mountain of the Turkey and was the son of Lord 7 Flower ‘Quetzal Jewel’ and Lady 5 Flint ‘Flaming Heads from Heaven.’ As we saw earlier, this Lord 10 Rain ‘Jaguar’ intervened in the life of Lady 3 Flint and directed her wedding with Lord 12 Wind. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu clarifies that he had

three sisters and one brother: Lady 12 Movement ‘Jade Alligator,’ Lady 12 Serpent ‘Blood Knife,’ Lord 1 Dog ‘Feather Ornament–Earth,’ and Lady 11 Serpent ‘Who Hits the Maize.’ Of these, Lady 12 Serpent would marry Lord 7 Movement (born in 938 as a descendant of Lord 5 Wind of Yuta Tnoho) and thus found the dynasty of Town of the Xipe Bundle.

The fourth priest mentioned in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu’s notes, Lord 2 Dog, became very important. He came from Altar of the Feathers in the Valley of the Feathers, belonging to the Town of Death, Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo). The associated date is badly damaged: it appears to be a day 2 (?) Dog in a year Reed. Lord 2 Dog’s parents are not mentioned, only his brother and sisters: Lady 2 Jaguar ‘Flower of (Town of) Death,’<sup>23</sup> Lord 4 Rain ‘Quetzal Jaguar,’ Lady 4 House ‘Quetzal Flower Fan,’ and Lady 10 Alligator ‘Jade, Gold.’

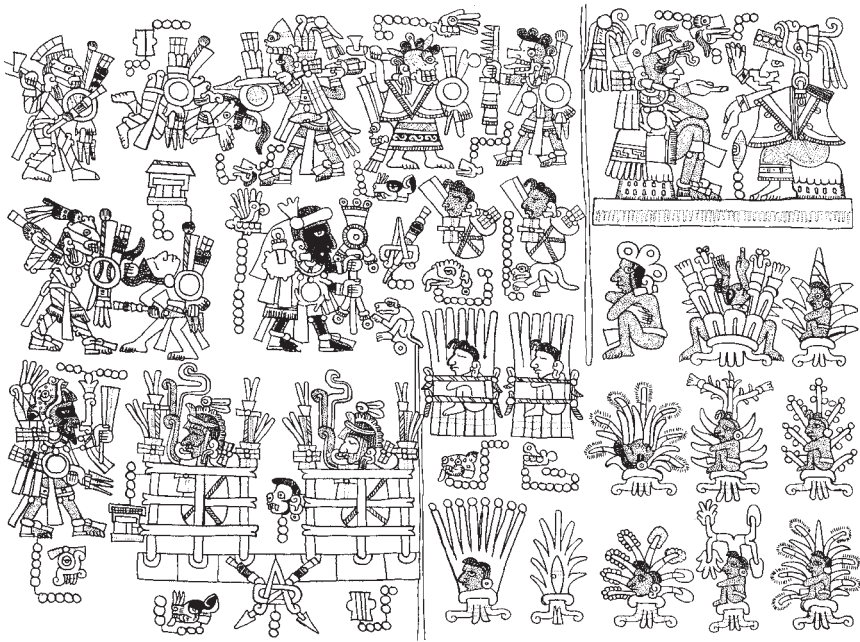
These genealogical notes help us understand that the primordial priests were concrete people, coming from specific places and belonging to specific families, who constituted the elite of those days. Their kin intermarried with future rulers.

#### SUMMARY: PRIMORDIAL PRIESTS

- Lord 5 Wind (Ñuu Niñe, Yuta Tnoho)
- Lord 12 Wind (Sanctuary of Heaven at Yuta Tnoho, later in Monte Albán and Ñuu Tnoo)
- Lord 3 Flint (Town of the Xipe Bundle, companion of Lord 12 Wind)
- Lord 10 Rain (Mountain of the Turkey, present at marriage of Lord 12 Wind)
- Lord 2 Dog (Ñuu Ndaya, Yucuñudahui)

#### THE STONE MEN

The establishment of the crisis-cult prophet Lord 12 Wind in Monte Albán had to have provoked angry reactions among all those who had been part of the Classic ancien régime. The Yuta Tnoho spiritual alliance seemed to have taken over the power structure of the former empire completely. In accordance with Mesoamerican metaphors, the people associated with that earlier socio-political organization and cultural system were represented as the “people of the dark age,” the prehistoric “Stone Men.” Later historiographers knew that



4.6. *The war against the Stone Men (Codex Tonindeye, 20).*

those men were to be turned into stone when the sun of the new era rose for the first time and created the light for the history of the new group in power. The metaphor is very clearly expressed in the *Popol Vuh* but also forms part of *Ñuu Dzau* oral tradition. We already referred to the legend told in Yuta Tnoho about the king who left his wife there and later came back to rescue her, but when the sun rose all protagonists of the story were turned into stone and became *Ñuhu*. Similarly, a big turtle that lived during primordial times in a river in the Mixteca Baja was petrified when the sun rose for the first time. It gave its name to Yutatio, “River of the Turtle(s).” A boulder in the shape of a turtle is still respected there as an emblem of the community.

In *Ñuu Ndeya* this story was told to us:

Ñayiu anahan uan nikayooni,  
ko tu iha Ndikandii,  
chi maa yoo, tu kuu ndijin.

Te nikayuhu shraan ñayiu uan  
ja nikana iha Ndikandii.

In the ancient times there were people  
but not Lord Sun,  
because only the moon (was there),  
no clarity.

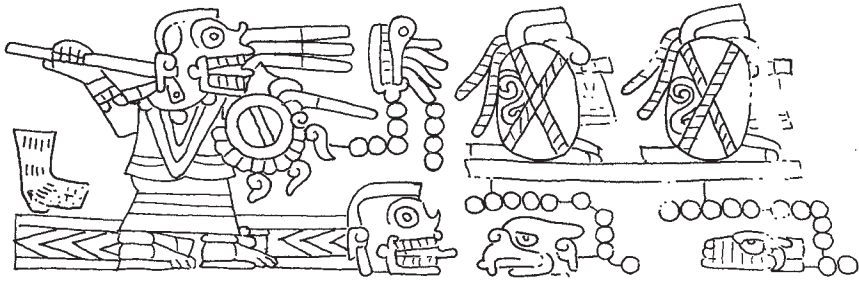
And those people became very afraid  
when Lord Sun came up.

Kuu ja nikajahniiyi maayi, nikajani-ini ja ñuyiu naatu nuu.	They killed themselves, thinking that the world was coming to an end.
Te nikajahni maa ini tunchi,  chii kava, ini shrahva, yaha uan, nikaküu ñayiu,  nikajiniyi nuu iha Ndikandii uan.	They killed themselves, entering in caves, in rocks and cliffs, here and there. they entered there (and turned into stone) when they saw the face of Lord Sun. <sup>24</sup>

This idea may be related to a passage in the prologue of Fray Antonio de los Reyes (1976: ii), which tells us that before the Lords from Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) brought the “laws,” that is, installed the specific social-political organization of the Postclassic kingdoms, other people, also speakers of Dzaha Dzauí, had proceeded from the profound depths of the Earth (Anuhu). Thus the ancient Ñuu Dzauí distinguished between the native “men of the earth” (*tay nuhu, ña nuhu*) and the later Lords of Yuta Tnoho (*iya sa ndizo sa nai, iya nisainsidzo huidzo sabu*). The Dzaha Dzauí terms underline that the men of the first group were considered commoners, *tay*, and those of the second group nobles, *Iya*. The conflict between the two groups occupies a specific chapter in the codices. Logically, the dates associated with the victory over the Stone Men are the same as those of the new fire ceremonies; both acts symbolize the foundation of the new political units, with their ceremonial life and ruling dynasties.

The conflict seems to have been provoked when suddenly, on the day 1 Lizard of the year 3 Reed (963), the two rulers of Monte Albán, Lord 12 Lizard and Lord/Lady 12 Vulture, died. Their attire (with white banners) suggests that they were killed in sacrifice, probably as prisoners of war (Codex Tonindecy, 20). The fact that both died on the same date also indicates that their death was not natural. It is not made clear, however, who killed them. Their mummy bundles were brought to the Cave Temple of Death, the *Huabhi Cahí*, the emblematic place of the South, and put under the protection of Lady 9 Grass, its Spirit Guardian. The priest who brought her the bodies was Lord 9 Wind ‘Skull,’ possibly identical to Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull,’ who later ruled Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>25</sup> Apparently, two children of Lord 12 Wind and Lady 3 Flint died at the same time: Lord 13 Jaguar and Lord 13 Grass.

Upset by the introduction of the new cult and the political influence of the Yuta Tnoho alliance, the Stone Men began to take action. On the day 6



4.7. *Lady 9 Grass and the burial of Lords 12 Lizard and 12 Vulture (Codex Ñuu Tnoo-Ndisi Nuu, 4-III).*

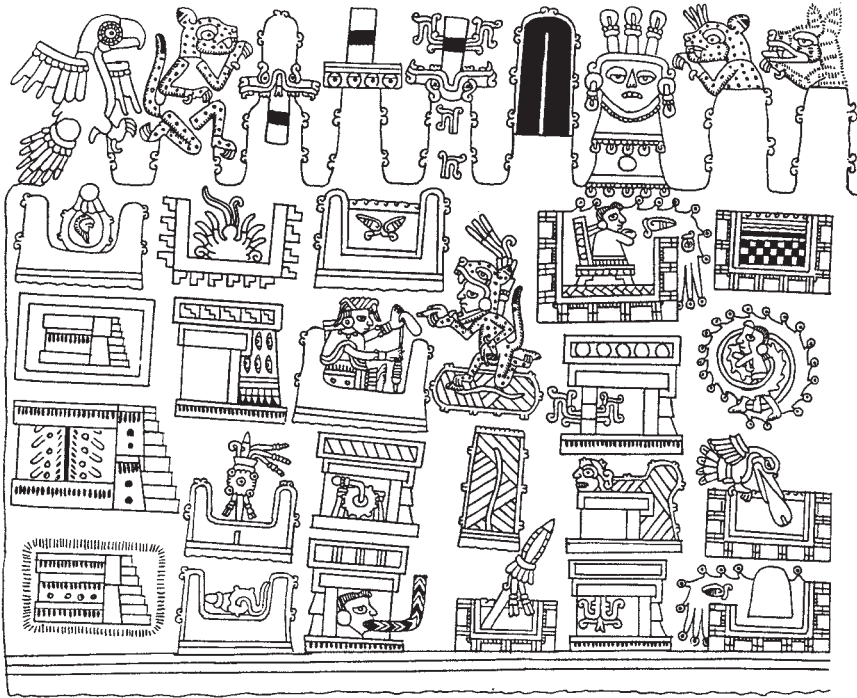
Dog of the year 3 Reed (963), they marched from their base area, the Town of Feet, that is, Ñuu Saha (Icxitlan) in the Mixteca Baja, and launched an attack on the main center of the Ñuu Dzauí province, Yucuñudahui, where Lord 10 Death and Lady 8 Monkey had founded their kingdom and had a son, Lord 5 Flower.

The rebellious Stone Men subdued the ruling Lady 8 Monkey.<sup>26</sup> We do not hear about her husband, Lord 10 Death, or about the other members of the council of four that ruled the province. Likely in commemoration of these events, the son of Lady 8 Monkey, Lord 5 Flower, was given the name ‘Stone Man.’

The retaliation of the Yuta Tnoho alliance followed on the day 8 Movement of that same year, 3 Reed. The followers of the culture hero Lord 9 Wind came forward under his divine leadership in an assault on the Stone Men. Many were wounded, and Lord 4 House and Lord 3 Monkey, two of the Monte Albán governors, were killed.<sup>27</sup> The priests Lord 10 Grass and Lord 10 Rain buried them. Two years later, in the year 5 House (965), the Stone Men attacked Lady 6 Eagle ‘Flower Jewel,’ the great-granddaughter of Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator of Yuta Tnoho. She stood firm and defended herself successfully with the help of the divine Lord 7 Serpent (*Iya Sayo*), who assisted her with his *nahual* powers.

The war raged in a series of towns, which we also find associated with one another in Codex Yuta Tnoho (44–43 and 4–3). Assuming that they are located in the same geographic area, we propose these identifications:

- Mountain of the Jewel and the Quetzal Feather Tail is Yucu Yusi (Acatlan) in the Mixteca Baja.



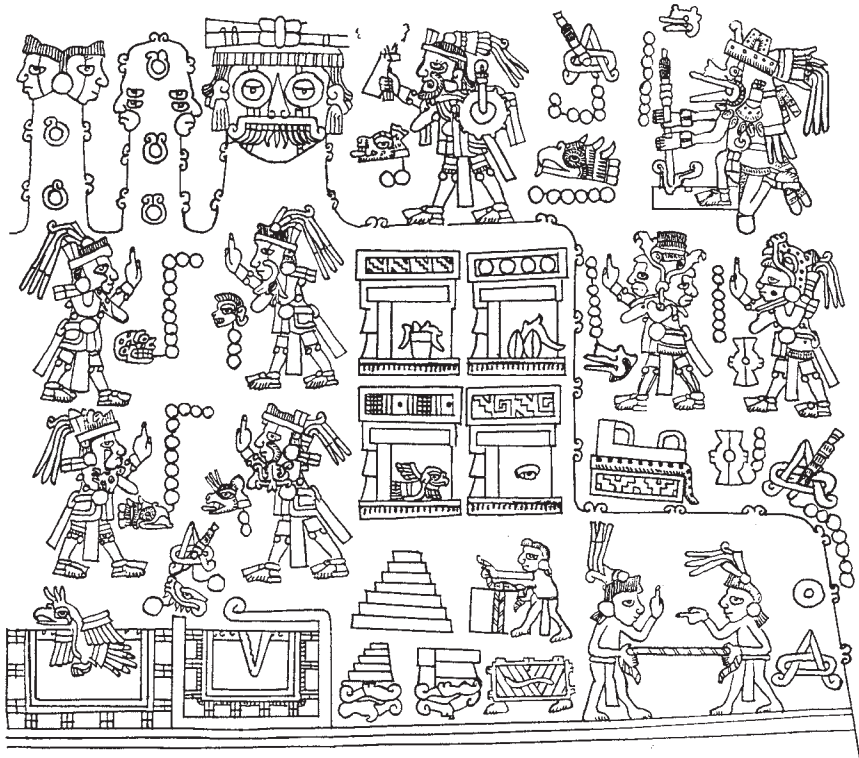
4.8a. The landscape Mountain of the Rain God, with Yucu Tnoo as a central place (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 9–10, left-hand side).

- Next to this is Mountain of the Standing Arrows, that is, Ndaa Nduvua (Miltepec), in combination with Mountain of Fire, probably Yucu Ihni (Tetaltepec).

Other places in this region are:

- Mountain of Blood, Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá)
- Green and White Plain, *Yodzo Cuii Yaa*, which might represent Yodzo Cuiya (Juxtlahuaca)
- Mountain of the Ball Court in Flames and of the Ball Court of Gravel, Yuhua Cuchi (Guaxolotitlan)

Clearly, we are looking at important towns in the Mixteca Baja. This, then, was the main area of conflict between the Stone Men and the Tree-born Lords in Codex Tonindeye (3). The same village-states are represented with prominence at the end of Codex Yuta Tnoho (5–3). Here, too, Stone Circle



4.8b. New Fire ceremony for the landscape of Mountain of the Rain God (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 9–10, right-hand side).

is located, the place associated with the First Sunrise (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 23) and identified by us as Ñuu Dzai (Huajuapán). All these references point to a collective memory of a great ancient civilization in the Mixteca Baja in the time before the Postclassic period treated by the codices. Archaeology shows that this area was indeed particularly important in the Late Classic (600–900); impressive ceremonial centers were built, with characteristic ceramic urns and stone reliefs carved in what is now called the Ñuiñe style.

This was also the area from which Lord 5 Wind, the first priest of Lord 9 Wind in Yuta Tnoho, had come. It was here that the “ancient order” rebelled against the Yuta Tnoho alliance and where it was definitively overcome. The Stone Men were true Ñuu Dzauí people too, earth-born but an early phase of development doomed to disappear; their magnificent ancient civilization would become a mere antecedent of the later splendor of the Postclassic village-states.

In that primordial conflict Lady 8 Deer, the daughter of Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator of Yuta Tnoho, who had gone back to her father's place of origin and now ruled Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá) together with her husband, Lord 7 Wind 'Eagle,' was one of the victorious protagonists.<sup>28</sup>

It must have been in those days that Lord 12 Wind and Lady 3 Flint, who had lost their two sons, appointed Lady 1 Death as a successor to the realm of Monte Albán. Several dates are given in this important scene. We find the year 8 Flint day 8 Movement to be the best historical fit; it would correspond to 968 and be a commemoration of the victory over the Stone Men on the day 8 Movement in the year 3 Reed (963).<sup>29</sup> Among those celebrating the acclamation ceremony we find the pair Lord 1 Alligator and Lord (elsewhere Lady) 13 Flower mentioned twice. They likely represent the emblematic Founding Ancestors of Monte Albán.<sup>30</sup> Such a statement should be understood not as saying that the primordial couple was physically present but as a reference to their "house" of descendants and followers. Among those who greeted and recognized the rights of the girl was Lord 10 Alligator 'Eagle,' one of the "sons," that is, assisting governors, of Lord 12 Lizard and Lord/Lady 12 Vulture. The latter two were not mentioned in this scene, as they had died several years before. Lord 'Double-Headed Eagle' (i.e., 'Eagle that Knows the Past and the Future'), here named 12 Alligator (but in an earlier scene 10 Alligator), who had acted previously as a spiritual guide of Lady 3 Flint, now guided Lord 10 Alligator 'Eagle.'

With the defeat of the Stone Men, devotion to Lord 9 Wind spread definitively over the Ñuu Dzauí region. The main priest in that area was Lord 2 Dog, the great shaman and carrier of the *piciete* gourd. He participated in the inauguration of the new country, with the Mountain of the Rain God as its first and foremost toponym and with Black Mountain (Monte Negro of Ñuu Tnoo) as its central place (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 10 ff). The year 7 Reed with days 4 Movement and 6 Eagle appears as the sacred date; the first day symbolized the beginning of a new era or "Sun," and the second became the day for dynastic marriages in the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty. This was the reconfirmation of the earlier defined realm, which had been set up by two Monte Albán governors together with two members of the Yuta Tnoho alliance. The Great Founder, Lord 9 Wind, was present—at least in spirit—and drilled the new fire, while the old priest, Lord 2 Dog, realized the ceremonial cleansing (*limpia*) of the region. Lord 7 Movement of Yucu Yusi (Acatlán) and Lord 7 Wind of Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá), who had played a major role in the victory over the Stone Men, assisted them.<sup>31</sup>



The war was not yet over, however. In the year 12 Flint (972), Star Warriors came down from Heaven. Throwing stones and darkness, they threatened the world, apparently trying to restore the order of the primordial time, before the sunrise. They explicitly attacked (the cult of) Lord 9 Wind, born from the huge flint. The red-and-white stripes over their bodies give them the appearance of the Venus deity or the Great Hunter Mixcoatl, the “Cloud Serpent.”<sup>32</sup> We therefore can compare them to the *centzon mimixcoa*, the “400 Cloud Serpents” who appear in Mexica sacred history as the beings of primordial darkness, the stars, who were defeated by the tribal God Huitzilopochtli when he rose as the Sun. That would make the Striped Men a conceptual equivalent to the Stone Men: representatives of an earlier order, overcome by the light of history, that is, by the takeover of new historical protagonists. The association with Heaven, however, suggests that the later Star Warriors were different from the earth-born Stone Men and were apparently related to the religious center of the Yuta Tnoho alliance. But they too were subdued. Lord 4 Serpent and Lord 7 Movement, later venerated as Patron deities in Ñuu Tnoo and Yucu Yusi, respectively, took them prisoner and had them sacrificed and decapitated.<sup>33</sup>

Shortly thereafter, in the year 12 Flint (972), on the day 4 Movement, the day of the “new sun” or “new era,” the kings and governors (“sons”) of the realm of Monte Albán were officially buried. Lord 4 House and Lord 3 Monkey, who had been slain in battle, went to the Place of Heaven (*Andevui*), the East, the House of the Sun.<sup>34</sup> The mummy bundle of Lord 10 Eagle was deposited in the River of Ashes (*Yaa Yuta*), the emblematic site of the West. The mummy bundle of Lord 10 Alligator was put to rest in the North (*Yucu Naa*). The remains of Lord 12 Lizard and Lord 12 Vulture were buried in the South (*Andaya*). Thus the burial sites of the members of the ruling family of Monte Albán were qualified as the four directions, an indication that these persons had been associated with different directional provinces of the Monte Albán world. At the same time their remains were buried in symbolic locations as a dedicatory act (*Bauopfer*) to mark the extension of the “new order.” The signs used for the four directions are those specific to the Ñuu Dzau region: Heaven (Cavua Caa Andevui in Yuta Tnoho) is the reference point for the East, Yucu Naa (in the Tepeji area) represents the North, Yaa Yuta (the Nejapan River) marks the western boundary, and the feared *Huabi Cabi*, the Sepulchral Cave of Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), is the emblem of the South. The area of the ancient Monte Albán power structure defined in this way comprises the Mixteca Alta and Baja.<sup>35</sup>

The burials and mortuary celebrations of the last representatives of the Classic political structure reaffirmed the traditional definition of the ancient Ñuu Dzau territory. According to the codices, it was the Stone Men who, in their resistance and aggression, killed the Monte Albán governors and so destroyed the last remnants of Monte Albán regional control. Retaliating against them, the Yuta Tnoho alliance won and brought about a major social change. The new order was a legitimate continuation of the same territorial concept but was guided by a religious revival: the cult of the Sacred Bundle. The four parts of the Ñuu Dzau territory were ritually cleansed, temples were constructed, and dynasties were inaugurated. The ancient imperial province was subdivided into a large number of peer polities, but the notion of a special spiritual bond as the base of ethnic identity was preserved.

### *The FEMALE LINE of DESCENDANTS*

One of the participants in that war of the year 12 Flint (972) was Lord 4 Alligator 'Blood Eagle' (Yaha neñe); he appears together with (the followers of) Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoat' and (the followers of) Lord 1 Alligator (Founder of the Monte Albán dynasty). According to the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), this Lord 4 Alligator had been born from the mountain of Ñuu Tnoo, from the earth itself, that is, as a native of that region. The codices express the same idea, picturing him as born in the Land of the Rain God, Ñuu Dzau.<sup>36</sup>

His parents were Lord 5 Flint 'Jaguar of the Tree' and Lady 7 Flower 'White Flower.' Their names have symbolic aspects: the first is associated with the Earth, the second with the Sun. This couple was born from the Temple of Pearls, the Temple of Earthquakes. As the word "pearl" (*sit*) is homonymous with "grandfather" in Dzaha Dzau, the Temple of Pearls can be read as an "ancestral place." The Temple of Earthquakes may be a symbol for the Earth, as a seat of its interior forces. The temple is associated with year 5 Flint day 7 Flower. This sacred date is the combination of the calendar names.<sup>37</sup> Next to this date we see the opened jaws of an alligator, the sign for "earth," from which comes an umbilical cord connected to the day Alligator. In other words, the day Alligator is born. As it is the first of the twenty day signs and is called *quevui*, "day," in the calendar vocabulary, we can interpret this scene as a reference to "the birth of time." All this leads us to understand that Lord 4 Alligator's "parents" were the primordial forces of the Earth, associated with the beginning of time.

The famous visionary priest and leader of the cult, Lord 12 Wind, had put Lord 4 Alligator in charge of the Sacred Bundle of Lord 9 Wind in the Precinct of the Rain God, that is, Ñuu Dzau, and selected him as a husband for Lady 1 Death ‘Sun Fan,’ the heir princess of Monte Albán, belonging to the Sun dynasty.<sup>38</sup> The marriage was arranged by Lord 4 Alligator ‘Coyote Serpent’ and Lord 11 Alligator ‘Jaguar Serpent’: Lady 1 Death was taken to the Place of Heaven, the shrine on Cavua Caa Andevui. An ax is painted next to the shrine, probably representing the word *caa*, which means “ax” but also “to be” or “to rise,” the verb in the toponym Cavua Caa Andevui. Here was the foundation of Heaven and Earth, symbolized by a column. Here the two houses or families were to be united in an everlasting marital alliance.<sup>39</sup>

The two ambassadors offered precious gifts to a priest of Lord 4 Serpent (*Qhyo*) and Lord 7 Serpent (*Sayo*), the Patrons of Ñuu Tnoo, who in turn spoke to them and gave them tobacco, a priest’s tunic, jade, and quetzal feathers. With this exchange of gifts the marriage was arranged. In the year 5 Reed (939), on the day 6 Alligator, Lord 4 Alligator ‘Coyote Serpent’ and Lord 11 Alligator ‘Jaguar Serpent’ gave their instructions to Lady 1 Death. She should leave the Place of Heaven and marry Lord 4 Alligator, the son of Lord 5 Flint and Lady 7 Flower.<sup>40</sup>

The priest of Lord 4 Serpent and Lord 7 Serpent was acting as marriage ambassador, while Lord 4 Alligator ‘Coyote Serpent’ and Lord 11 Alligator ‘Jaguar Serpent’ functioned as the bride’s tutors or guardians. The marriage took place on the ritual day 7 Eagle of the year 6 Flint (940). The source for this date is Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse (I-3), which receives confirmation from Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu (1-II/III). This seems rather early when compared with the other events in this couple’s lifetime; Lady 1 Death must still have been a young child.

It was likely not until after the war against the Stone Men that Lady 1 Death ‘Sun Staff’ accompanied her husband to live in his hometown, Ñuu Tnoo, where Lord 12 Wind had introduced the veneration of the Sacred Bundle and planted the Tnucucua staff of rulership. It was an area where different noble families lived, each at its own site. The archaeology of the regions confirms this image: many shrines and residences have been found in the immediate vicinity of Ñuu Tnoo. Through the coalition of these families, represented in the codices as Founding Couples, the “mat and throne” or village-state was formed. The interaction of Monte Negro and the Serpent River, both prominent landmarks, was decisive. Here Lady 1 Death and Lord

4 Alligator established themselves. Their daughter, Lady 1 Vulture ‘Cloud Jewel,’ was recognized as their legitimate heir.<sup>41</sup>

The couples from which the different local lineages of Ñuu Tnoo originated are recorded in detail:

- Lord 5 Serpent ‘Who does the Bloodletting Ritual for the Earth’ and Lady 8 Flower ‘Blood of the Town of Darkness’ ruled the Place of Ceremonies in Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo).
- Lord 10 Dog ‘*Nduvua Yecu*’ (“War”) and Lady 8 Grass ‘Cloud of Ñuu Dzau’ ruled the Place where the Sacred Arrow is Kept, a “hand” (*ndaha*) of (Place of) Sand, that is, a tributary settlement of neighboring Añute (Jaltepec),
- Lord 6 Movement ‘Arrow’ and Lady 9 House ‘Sacred Seed of the Cave’ were seated in the Cave of Clouds or the Cave of the Spring and the Tree; its sacred date was year 7 Flint day 9 House.<sup>42</sup>
- Lord 4 Rain ‘Down-ball Quetzal’ and Lady 7 Flower ‘Eagle Wing’ ruled Stone of the Xipe Bundle. Their daughter, Lady 1 Flint ‘Fire Serpent Jewel,’ married the son of Lord 6 Movement and Lady 9 House of Place where the Sacred Arrow is Kept, Lord 5 Reed ‘Born in War (?)’ The daughter of Lord 5 Reed and Lady 1 Flint was Lady 7 Death ‘Fire Fan,’ who married Lord 3 Rain ‘Staff of Marks in the Ball Court,’ ruler of Añute (Jaltepec).<sup>43</sup>
- Lord 10 Flint ‘Skull’ from the ancient Dark Altar married Lady 8 Death ‘Quetzal, Who does the Bloodletting Ritual for the Earth.’<sup>44</sup>
- Lord 7 Flower ‘Jaguar, Mountain Bird’ and Lady 5 Flint ‘Cave Lady’ ruled Temple of the Plant.<sup>45</sup>
- Lord 10 Movement ‘Flower Shield’ and Lady 1 Movement ‘Quetzal’ ruled Valley of Mud (probably present-day *Yuta Ndayu*).
- Lord 4 Lizard ‘Serpent that Carries the Sky’ and Lady 8 House ‘Visible on Earth’ ruled Town of the Drum (*Ñuu Ñuu*). This toponym is homonymous with its cognate in Codex Tonindeye, page 22: Place of Palms (*Ñuu Ñuu*) on Monte Negro. Their son, Lord 7 Death, was the one who married Lady 1 Serpent from the sacred spring of the Serpent River; they ruled at the ancient site on top of Monte Negro of Ñuu Tnoo.

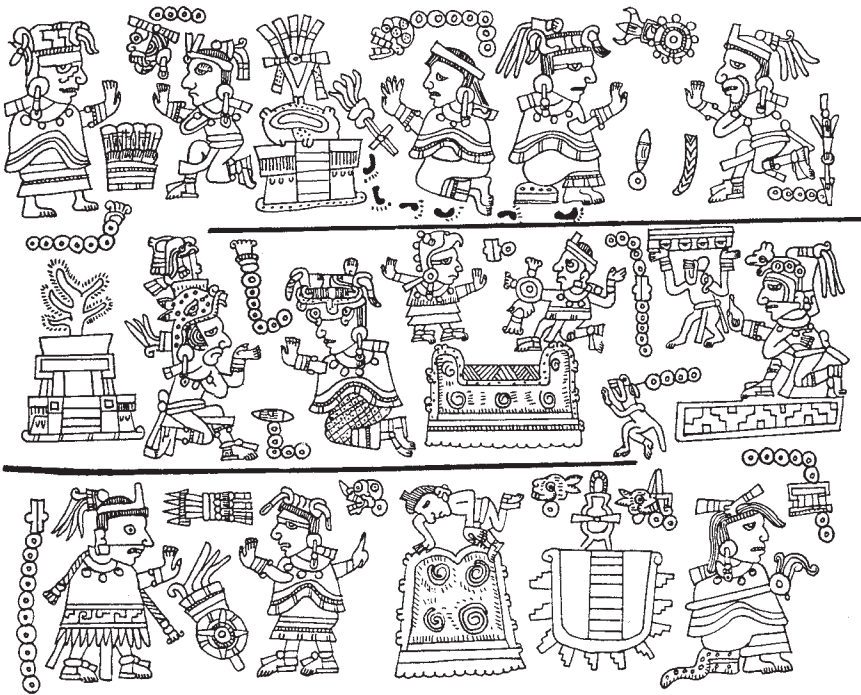
The person who took the initiative for bringing the lineages of these Founding Couples together and integrating the power base of what later became the mat and throne of Ñuu Tnoo was Lord 4 Alligator. His origins are given in metaphorical terms, but he may indeed, as the *Relación Geográfica*



4.9a. *Beginning of the Nuu Tnoo dynasty (Codex Yuta Tnoho, verso, 1).*

suggests, have been of local Nuu Tnoo origin. Without doubt he owed his prestige largely to his wife, who belonged to the Yuta Tnoho alliance and was born in Monte Albán, and to his personal relationship with Lord 12 Wind, the visionary priest of the Sacred Bundle.

Some time after the death of Lord 12 Lizard and Lord/Lady 12 Vulture (963), a new ruling couple had established itself in the ruined ancient acropolis of Monte Albán: Lord 10 Movement ‘Arrow’ and Lady 1 Rabbit ‘Shield.’ Their given names form the *difrasismo* for “valiant warrior,” which suggests that the couple belonged to a military leadership that now controlled the site. They had a son, Lord 4 Rabbit ‘Jaguar, Who Carries 1 Alligator in his Breast.’ The boy’s given name implies that he was dedicated to the veneration of Lord 1 Alligator, who together with his wife, Lady 13 Flower, had been the emblematic Founding Ancestor of the ancient Monte Albán dynasty. This ceremonial reference to the Founder in the prince’s name was probably meant to compensate for the lack of a real dynastic connection. It is also interesting that Lady 1 Rabbit’s calendar name coincides with the sacred date of Monte



4.9b. Beginning of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty (Codex Yuta Tnoho, verso, II).

Albán: year 1 Rabbit day 1 Rabbit. Perhaps the sacred date was modeled on the name of this ruling lady and projected back into the past.<sup>46</sup>

Lord 10 Movement and Lady 1 Rabbit went to see Lady 1 Death (apparently Lord 4 Alligator had already died) to ask for the hand of her daughter, Lady 1 Vulture ‘Cloud Jewel,’ for their son, Lord 4 Rabbit. The mother accepted. The marriage of Lady 1 Vulture and Lord 4 Rabbit was blessed with three daughters: Lady 5 Reed ‘Rain Quechquemil (*Dzico Dzavui*, “Power of the Rain or Virtue of Ñuu Dzau”) from Monte Albán,’ Lady 10 Alligator ‘War Jewel,’ and Lady 4/5 Jaguar ‘Quetzal Fan.’

Recall that until now the narrative has focused on a genealogical sequence of important women: Lady 3 Flint ‘Virtue and Strength of the Plumed Serpent,’ Lady 3 Flint ‘Jade Beauty,’ Lady 1 Death ‘Sun Staff,’ Lady 1 Vulture ‘Cloud Jewel,’ Lady 5 Reed, Lady 10 Alligator, and Lady 4/5 Jaguar. Together they established the bond between the Mixteca Alta and the prestigious ancient Beni Zaa (Zapotec) capital, Monte Albán. The first in the sequence, Lady 3 Flint, had come from Heaven with her husband. Their daughter then

married another priest from Heaven in Monte Albán. The third woman in this line of descent, Lady 1 Death, was born in Monte Albán and married a Ñuu Dzauí prince from the Ñuu Tnoo area, Lord 4 Alligator. Thereby she forged an alliance and a dynasty of enormous political importance. Her daughter, Lady 1 Vulture, married a son of the warrior elite that then controlled Monte Albán.

This pattern appears to indicate that during the late Classic there was an emphasis on the passing of power through the female line. One might interpret this as the presence of a matrilineal structure, similar to what can be observed today in Beni Zaa communities. Another compelling reason for local houses in Ñuu Dzauí to marry princesses from Monte Albán would be the wish to achieve prestige and power by linking themselves to the ancient capital. Marital alliances and the agency of women were crucial to this policy. Also noteworthy is the fact that in the first three cases the husbands seem to have been priests before they married.

The three daughters of Lady 1 Vulture ‘Cloud Jewel’ and Lord 4 Rabbit ‘Jaguar, Who Carries 1 Alligator in his Breast’ would determine the formalization of two important village-states with their corresponding dynasties: Ñuu Tnoo and Town of the Xipe Bundle.

The Town of the Xipe Bundle has not yet been identified, but we suspect it was located in the Valley of Oaxaca. The first reference to it is that of the birth of Lord 3 Flint, who was probably an important priest. Before a dynasty of rulers took power there, this priest celebrated an important ritual in commemoration of the death of the ancient rulers of Monte Albán. In the nine-day period between 1 Lizard and 9 Grass of the year 6 Reed, he made a visit to Lady 9 Grass ‘Cihuacoatl,’ the awe-inspiring Spiritual Guardian of the *Huabí Cabi*, the Cave of Death in Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo). Obviously, these were days especially dedicated to this divine personage.

In the Place of the White Flower, probably a site within the territory of Town of the Xipe Bundle, Lord 3 Flint entered a subterranean passage followed by his next of kin: his sister Lady 12 Flower, his brother Lord 9 Wind, and his sister Lady 9 Rabbit.<sup>47</sup> He was assisted on that occasion by the two other important priests: Lord 10 Rain ‘Jaguar’ from Mountain of the Turkey and Lord 2 Dog from Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), who were also accompanied by members of their families. All came in male-female pairs.

Lord 10 Rain ‘Jaguar’ brought his parents, Lord 7 Flower and Lady 5 Flint, as well as his brother, Lord 1 Dog, and two of his sisters, Lady 12

Movement and Lady 11 Serpent. Similarly, the priest Lord 2 Dog brought his brother, Lord 4 Rain, and two of his sisters, Lady 2 Jaguar and Lady 4 House.<sup>48</sup>

After having passed through the subterranean passage, Lord 3 Flint arrived in front of the mummy bundles of Lord 12 Lizard and Lord/Lady 12 Vulture, venerated on altars. The meaning of this visit is not made explicit, but, given the context, we think he and the other priests sought an oracle for how to continue some form of centralized government in the Valley of Oaxaca after the demise of Monte Albán.

This contextualization depends on the associated dates. The year 6 Reed was a sacred date, associated with Lady 9 Grass (cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, 15), but if we take it as a chronological marker it would correspond to A.D. 979. This would be after the marriage of Lady 12 Serpent ‘Blood Knife,’ sister of the priest Lord 10 Rain ‘Jaguar’ from Mountain of the Turkey, to Lord 7 Movement ‘Earth Face,’ who, through the female line, descended from the son of Lord 5 Wind and Lady 9 Alligator, the ancient couple of Yuta Tnoho.<sup>49</sup>

During this assembly, in front of the mummies of the ancient rulers of Monte Albán, Lady 12 Serpent ‘Blood Knife’ and Lord 7 Movement ‘Face of the Earth’ appear to have been declared the rulers of the Town of the Xipe Bundle. At the same time, marital arrangements may have been made for their son and grandson. As a result, an alliance was forged among their dynasty, that of Monte Albán, and that of Ñuu Tnoo.

The crucial persons in this political project were the three daughters of Lady 1 Vulture ‘Cloud Jewel’ and Lord 4 Rabbit ‘Jaguar, Who Carries 1 Alligator in his Breast,’ established at Tiyuqh Mountain of Monte Albán:

- The firstborn daughter, Lady 5 Reed ‘Rain Quechquemil (“Power of the Rain or Virtue of Ñuu Dzauil”) from Monte Albán,’ was to marry a nobleman from the land of her grandfather. The groom, Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull,’ had been born in the year 8 Rabbit (942) and may have descended from the ancient rulers of Monte Negro.<sup>50</sup> The marriage took place in the year 4 Rabbit (990). Lord 9 Wind and Lady 5 Reed thus became the first rulers of the mat and throne of Ñuu Tnoo, unifying two important local noble houses.
- The second daughter, Lady 10 Alligator ‘War Jewel,’ was sent to the Mountain of Pearls, probably Nuu Siya (Tezoatlan), where she married Lord 9 Deer ‘Jade Bone, Flute,’ the son of Lord 7 Movement



'Face of the Earth' and Lady 12 Serpent 'Blood Knife,' rulers of Town of the Xipe Bundle. Lord 9 Deer's great-grandfather had been ruler of Mountain of Pearls. Because of this bond, Lady 10 Alligator received the honorific title 'Skirt of Pearls' (*Huatu Sii*), that is, 'Grace or Glory of (Mountain of) Pearls.'

- The third daughter, Lady 4/5 Jaguar 'Quetzal Fan,' apparently much younger, was to marry the son of her sister, Lord 12 Lizard 'Nduvua' ('Arrow Feet'), the son of Lady 10 Alligator and Lord 9 Deer. He succeeded his grandparents at the Town of the Xipe Bundle and ruled at the Town of the Quetzal Temple, possibly Ñuu Ndodzo (Huitzo).<sup>51</sup>

The marriage of Lady 4/5 Jaguar and Lord 12 Lizard produced a son, Lord 11 Wind, who would play an important role in the most dramatic episode of Ñuu Dzau history. His birth must have occurred approximately between the years 1025 and 1030.<sup>52</sup>

### SYNTHESIS *and* EVALUATION

The first chapter of Ñuu Dzau historiography deals with the way in which the Whirlwind, the Plumed Serpent, with the calendar name Lord 9 Wind, acted as culture hero and brought the symbols of power to the Earth. The divine Ancestors, Lady 1 Deer and Lord 1 Deer, instructed him in the Place of Heaven, the sanctuary of Cavua Caa Andevui, close to Yuta Tnoho (Apoala). The flint from which he was born later became an object of worship, wrapped in a bundle and venerated in several places. Finally, it became known as the Heart of the Ñuu Dzau people, kept in a cave in Ñuu Ndecu (San Miguel Achiutla). The Plumed Serpent, Lord 9 Wind, brought to each place the water of Heaven and indicated its sacred dates for commemorating ceremonies.

This action prefigures the spread of his cult throughout Ñuu Dzau. The Place of Heaven in Yuta Tnoho seems to have been the center of that spiritual movement. It all began when a priest from Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá), Lord 5 Wind, came to serve there in the mountaintop sanctuary. After his service as a priest was completed, he married a local Lady and founded an important noble house. Later, another priest of the same devotion, Lord 12 Wind, similarly married the daughter of a local Lord and Lady, who had become the *numen* of the River of Yuta Tnoho. Their wedding was celebrated on Monte Albán, where the rulers and nobility received them.

As the introduced religious complex was well received, the priests together with Lords and Ladies from the Ñuu Dzauí region set up a new order. In the codices we see founders of dynasties coming out of rivers, caves, and trees. This seems to indicate their divine origin, intimately related to the Earth, and to convey upon them the status of *Iya*, “Sacred Lords and Ladies.” The participants in the “cult that came from Heaven” became known as the Yuta Tnoho alliance and were represented as having been born from one huge tree (*pochote*) in that Sacred Valley. They were engaged in carrying and venerating the Sacred Bundle, which we identify as an emblem of the *huidzo sabu*, the social and religious order of the Postclassic era.

The spreading of the devotion and its recognition by the rulers of Monte Albán, a ruinous but still very prestigious and magical site, provoked a violent reaction; the partisans of the ancien régime attacked the followers of the Plumed Serpent but were defeated. These Stone Men are presented as an anonymous collective, without given names. The war mainly affected towns in the Mixteca Baja, where the Ñuiñe style had been developed. The victorious *Iya* group, associated with Yuta Tnoho, with the Tree and the Place of Heaven, then took possession of the entire Mixteca Alta and Baja, where they founded kingdoms and dynasties, ceremonially cleansing the places, giving them new names, and kindling a new fire. A new political map of the mats and thrones of Ñuu Dzauí had thus been drawn by A.D. 1000. Problems in the register of these traditions and the presence of many sacred dates make it impossible to provide a secure chronology for the early history before that year.

All of these events—real or symbolic—are commemorated to explain the birth of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty, which had its roots in the ancient nobility of Monte Albán and was founded by priests who were protagonists in the cult of the Sacred Bundle. We interpret this religious movement as a crisis cult, which developed as a result of the demise of Monte Albán. The disintegration of the Classic period empire probably resulted from a complex interaction of several causes, in which a sequence of ecological disasters (e.g., progressive erosion and desertification as a result of the overuse of wood for cooking, lime ovens, and similar factors) may have played a decisive role. Incapable of managing the resulting famine and economic problems, the Classic period aristocracy rapidly lost its prestige and political credibility. This process must have brought about a general feeling of uncertainty and a crisis of values.

In this context, the devotion to the Plumed Serpent, originally centered in the Sacred Valley of Yuta Tnoho, seemed to offer new hope. The deity is known

as Quetzalcoatl in Nahuatl and as *Coo Dzavui*, the “Rain Serpent,” to the Nuu Dzai people. His name symbolizes the whirlwind that distributes water to the communities. As a powerful *nahual*, he is manifest in visionary experiences. As the emblem of nobility and state authority, developed in Teotihuacan, he also stands for order, kingship, and civilization. The codices suggest that the flint from which he was born, wrapped in a Bundle, became the actual object that inspired the ecstatic cult, both among the nobles and their vassals.

The Teotihuacan antecedents of the Quetzalcoatl symbol and the Classic Maya depictions of the Sacred Bundle and the vision serpent demonstrate that this crisis cult was nothing new. On the contrary, it reinvoked profound concepts and ritual practices that were the core of the Mesoamerican religious heritage. The opening scene of the rituals of the Temple of Heaven and the Bundle ceremonies in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29) seems to have an antecedent as old as a Late Preclassic set of ceramic pieces, buried in an adobe offering box under a temple (structure 35) in San José Mogote (Marcus & Flannery 1995). The pieces form a miniature tomb; inside, a noble is kneeling in a bowl. Red pigments on his face and arms may represent blood. The scene is similar to that of the priest doing the bloodletting for the spirit bowl in which the hallucinogenic ointment is prepared in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 29; the tomb corresponds to the Death Temple of Cihuacoatl. On top of the miniature tomb a Beni Zaa version of the *yahui* or fire serpent is represented, flying through the air (as in the stucco reliefs of the Postclassic Tomb I of Zaachila), probably referring to the trance induced by these rituals, like the “night and wind” serpents in Codex Borgia.

A similar scene is depicted on an urn from Tomb 5 of Cerro de las Minas, Nuu Dzai (Huajuapán). The vessel is modeled to show a seated ruler transforming into a *yahui* by using the hallucinogenic *piciete* (cf. Jansen 1998d).

Given these antecedents, it is clear that the spiritual movement of the early Postclassic did not pretend to change the existing cosmivision but aimed at a return to its very roots. The stories about priests moving around with the Sacred Bundle suggest, however, that the crisis cult was much more inclusive than the existing hierarchy. While Classic carved stones and frescoes show only rulers involved in such ceremonies, the Early Postclassic spiritual movement seems to have involved much broader groups of nobles and probably also common people.

As is usual in such situations, a new sense of *communitas* was formed, carried at first by an egalitarian group of believers and participants in the ritu-

als (Turner 1995: 111). Local Lords and priests from the Ñuu Dzau region formed a new alliance, emphasizing their equality and their link to the land as “those born from the Sacred Mother Tree.” That community, obviously, respected the ancient ceremonial centers such as Monte Albán but separated itself radically from Classic history and social structure. The fact that this alliance broke with the traditional ruling lineages is probably the reason the codices do not contain genealogical information about Monte Albán going further back in history. At Monte Albán itself, numerous reliefs with genealogical texts from the Late Classic have been found, but the Ñuu Dzau codices only mention a few persons who seem to have been in power during the period in which this social drama unfolded. In this anti-temporal and anti-structural renewal movement, no attention is given to the genealogical background of those ancient rulers, only to the religious prestige of ancient places.

As the earlier social structure (the Stone Men) was definitively overcome, a new political landscape came into being: that of the Postclassic village-states. Hierarchies were established once more. The participants in the cult, the “First Lords of Yuta Tnoho,” became the founders of future dynasties. A new time was set.



*Chapter Five*

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*The RISE of ÑUU TNOO*

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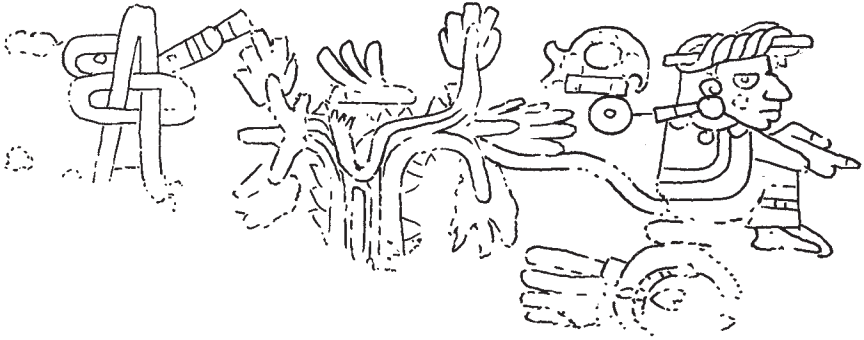
THE HISTORY OF THE LINEAGES BEGINS WITH THE WARMTH AND ENERGY OF THE first rising of Lord Sun (*Iya Ndicandii*), who, with his rays of life-giving power and his call to work and glory, created a human world of knowledge and seeing while the past became a time of darkness and mystery, solid and cold as stone. The *Iya* and *Iyadzebe*, who had their origin in Yuta Tnoho, were children of light and heat; the earlier populations were reduced to immobile rock formations in their new landscape. As it was in the beginning, this process of awakening and coming to life is a daily experience.

Mornings are chilly in the highlands, even in summer, but they are quiet and beautiful. The mighty cloud serpents of the evening before, with their thunder and lightning, have passed by; the big black butterflies of the night that sought our company have disappeared. A soft white layer of clouds has descended on the valley. Floating above it are the eternal dark-green mountain peaks and gray cliffs, at first vague silhouettes in the rosy distance, then

rapidly sharpening. Against the clear sky we distinguish the profile of ancient pyramids on top of a nearby hill. Suddenly the mists tear, and the towers and dome of the town's colonial church become visible in celestial light as in a vision. The golden arrows of Father Sun, slowly penetrating the haze, touch and reveal series of low terraces with intensely green cornfields, separated by rows of magueyes and muddy footpaths among myriad yellow, white, and violet flowers flashing with dew. The twittering of small red-breasted birds, fluttering as flames among the fruit trees, mingles with the familiar sounds of roosters crowing and donkeys braying and the clapping of hands making tortillas. Light blue smoke rises from the huts.

As we advance in the time of light, the contours of persons and places, dates and conflicts become clearer, as well as the ideological statements of rulers and communities about their history. The idea that the native dynasties had a divine origin was a crucial element in the political and moral status of those seated on the mat and throne. Combined with the metaphor of unity and cosmic power, the tree, it resulted in the story of the common descent of the *Iya* from a mysterious Mother Tree that grew in the primordial time of darkness in an important religious center such as Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) or Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). All noble houses based their rights to rule on being a branch of such a Tree of Origin, but not all were considered equal. Ñuu Tnoo had the status of a central place with a dynasty that claimed prominence over all others. Burgoa tells us that its founder was one of the descendants from the Tree of Yuta Tnoho, who had gone out as conquerors to the four corners of the Ñuu Dzauí world. This prince arrived in Ñuu Tnoo and, feeling the heat of the day, understood that the Sun was the ruler of that place. Taking his arrows, he started to fight the Sun, which, as evening fell, set among red clouds above the mountain, leaving its realm to the brave warrior. The victory over the Sun was a popular theme in Ñuu Dzauí art, depicted on coats of arms and painted vessels. Referring to this story, the rulers of Ñuu Tnoo claimed the right to appoint successors to the throne in places where the local dynasty had died out (Burgoa 1934b, I: 369–372).

Descent from a specific hero, who had become the first ruler of Ñuu Tnoo by his victorious encounter with the Sun God, was thus considered a second legitimation for rulership. Clearly, this was a literary theme of great political significance. But how does Burgoa's version relate to what the codices tell us? The Founding Lords of Ñuu Tnoo whom we have met so far do not fit into the story of the *Flechador del Sol*. Neither Lord 4 Alligator 'Blood Eagle'



5.1. The birth of Lady 1 Death from the Sacred Tree (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 1-V).

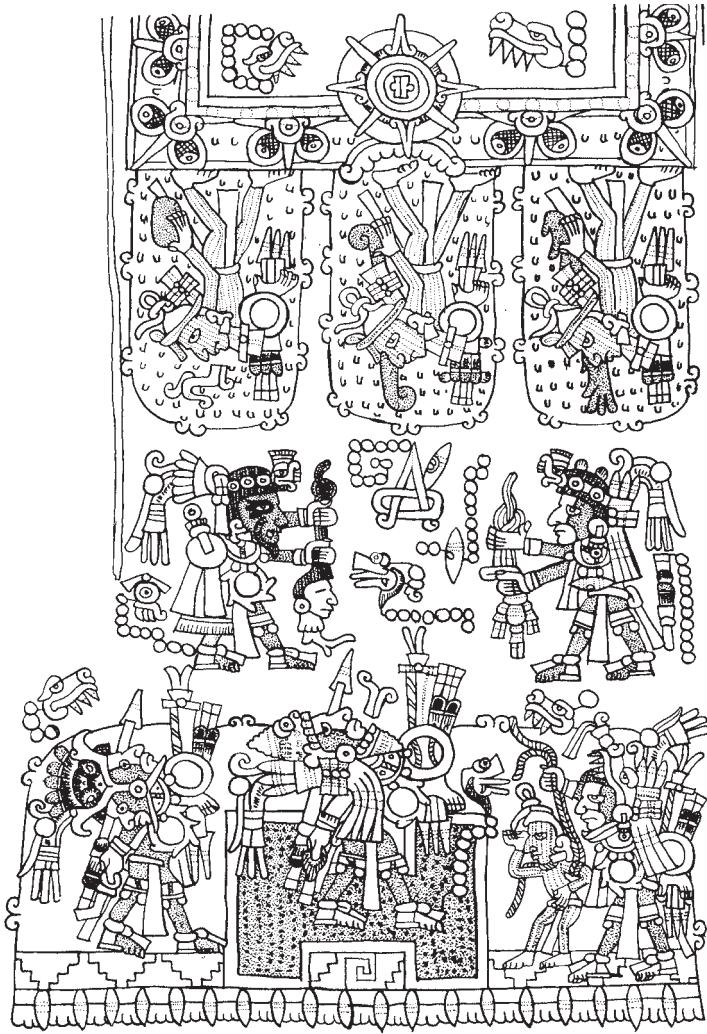
nor Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ is represented as meeting or confronting the Sun God. The participation of Lord 4 Alligator in the fight against the Star Warriors, who descended from Heaven (Codex Tonindeye, 21), comes closest to such an event but still seems a rather different story. We will have to look for this theme in a later period.

### LORD 9 WIND ‘STONE SKULL’

Two strong men emerged in Ñuu Dzauí after the demise of Monte Albán and the war with the Stone Men. First, there was Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ (or ‘Death of the Stone Men’).<sup>1</sup> It is probable that he, too, was a member of the Yuta Tnoho alliance; an individual with the same calendar name was among the offspring of the Sacred Tree, but confirmation of a coinciding given name is lacking, so we cannot be sure.<sup>2</sup> His background is told by different codices: he descended from the primordial couple Lord 10 House ‘Jaguar’ and Lady 1 Grass ‘Puma.’ Codex Tonindeye (22) suggests that this lineage in some way succeeded Lady 1 Serpent, associated with the spring of the Yute Coó, ‘Serpent River,’ in Ñuu Tnoo; she had married a prince from Monte Negro and was installed or confirmed as ruler by the prophet Lord 12 Wind. It is interesting that Lord 10 House and Lady 1 Grass seem to have been venerated as the *numina*, or Patron Deities, of this Serpent River and the lands around it. Their calendar names were combined into a sacred date: year 10 House day 1 Grass.<sup>3</sup>

Their son, Lord 3 Eagle ‘Eagle from the Serpent Place,’ had married Lady 4 Rabbit ‘Quechquemilt (Virtue) of Death Town.’ Her name suggests

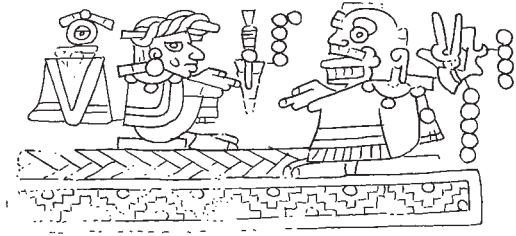




5.2. Lord 4 Alligator fights the Star Warriors (Codex Tonindefe, 21).

that she came from a place called Town of Death, either Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo) or Dzandaya (Mitlatongo). The latter is the most likely because the couple's second son, Lord 1 Monkey, became the Founding Father of the Dzandaya (Mitlatongo) dynasty. The *Relación Geográfica* of that town tells us that the name of the Founder was *Ya co ñooy*, in Nahuatl *Ce Usumaczi*, that is, Lord 1 Monkey, and that he had been born in *Yuhui Yume Yucu Cuii*, in Nahuatl *Xoxotepeque*, "Green Mountain," within the territory of Ñuu Tnoo

(Acuña 1984, II: 237–238). Indeed, in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu we find a Lord 1 Monkey sitting in front of a number of place signs, the first of which is Skull Mountain, which, we conclude, represents Dzandaya.



5.3. The marriage of Lord 9 Wind and Lady 5 Reed (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 4-V).

Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ was Lord 1 Monkey’s elder brother. He first ruled a Mountain of the Green Plant, probably the site of *Yucu Cuii* within the territory of Ñuu Tnoo, mentioned in the earlier-cited *Relación Geográfica* as the origin place of his brother.<sup>4</sup> The given name of Lord 9 Wind seems to recall an epithet of the place of his Ancestors: Serpent River appears in Codex Tonindeye, page 23, as “River where the Stone Man was Defeated.”

Both brothers, Lord 9 Wind and Lord 1 Monkey, were recognized as local rulers. Three priests—Lord 1 Rain, Lord 10 Death ‘Cloud,’ and Lord 4 Dog ‘Serpent-Maguey’—offered them fire, quails, and branches. ‘Cloud’ or ‘Smoke’ occurs as the title of a member of the Supreme Council of four priests, which ruled Ñuu Tnoo. The Dzaha Dzauí word for “cloud” (*huico*) is homonymous with that for “feast” (apart from the tones), while “vapor” or “breath” can be read as *yoco*, a term also used for “spirit” or “deity.” The serpent in combination with the maguey (*yavui*) may represent the fire serpent or *yahui*, the powerful *nahual* that symbolizes shamanic ecstasy.<sup>5</sup>

The fact that the calendar names of these priests were recorded suggests that they were important individuals and played a specific role in history. Indeed, we can identify them with three important lords of earlier days. Lord 1 Rain may be the same as one of the Founding Priests of the neighboring town of Añute. In that context he is paired with Lord 1 Reed. In combination with Lord 7 Rain, he participated in the founding of Quetzal Mountain, Mountain of the Pointed Object, Valley of the Spiderweb, and Rock of the Fly—which we interpret as Ñuu Ndodzo (Huitzo), Yucu Ndeque (Huaucilla), Andua-Chindua, and Yucu Tiyuq (Sayultepec), all relatively close to Añute and Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>6</sup>

Lord 10 Death and Lord 4 Dog appear among the Founding Fathers who were born from the Tree of the Sacred Valley in Apoala. They were present

when the culture hero Lord 9 Wind and the old priest Lord 2 Dog drilled the new fire for the great kingdom of Rain God Mountain (Yucuñudahui), in the time when the “sons” of the rulers of Monte Albán still had control over that area. In that scene it is Lord 4 Dog who has the title ‘Cloud.’<sup>7</sup> Thus it seems that after the death of their two companions (princes and governors of Monte Albán), these two men, together with a priest of neighboring Añute, recognized the rulership of Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull.’

This offering of royalty, then, was done by the main authorities of the Yucuñudahui realm, who had been instituted as part of the Monte Albán rulership before the war with the Stone Men broke out. They functioned as members of a Council of Four, which became the ruling body that assisted the ruler of Ñuu Tnoo.

To confirm his power in kinship terms, Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ married Lady 5 Reed, one of the three princesses of Monte Albán whose life history we explained in Chapter 4. Together they became rulers of Ñuu Tnoo. The year of the marriage was 4 Rabbit (990), when the groom was forty-eight years old.<sup>8</sup>

The couple had three sons. In the year 6 Flint (992), Lord 10 Flower, ‘Jaguar with Burned Face,’ was born; that given name qualifies him as a jaguar warrior who won victories in a war with speakers of Nahuatl (the Toltecs). Later followed Lord 13 Eagle ‘Precious Jaguar’ and Lord 3 Water ‘White Arrow.’

#### SUMMARY: FIRST GENERATIONS OF THE ÑUU TNOO DYNASTY (MALE LINEAGE)

Lord 10 House + Lady 1 Grass (primordial couple, Yute Coo)

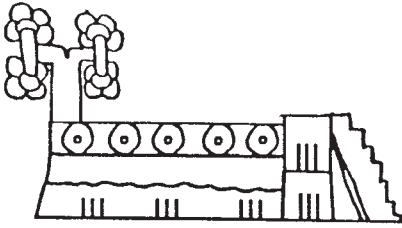
Lord 3 Eagle + Lady 4 Rabbit (from Dzandaya / Mitlatongo)

Lord 9 Wind (b. 942) + Lady 5 Reed (from Monte Albán), married 990

Lord 10 Flower (b. 992)

#### LORD 8 WIND ‘TWENTY EAGLES’

A younger contemporary of Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull,’ and the other strong man who emerged as a prominent political figure out of the conflictive tenth century, was Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ (*iya Nachi ‘Oco Yaha’*), the ruler



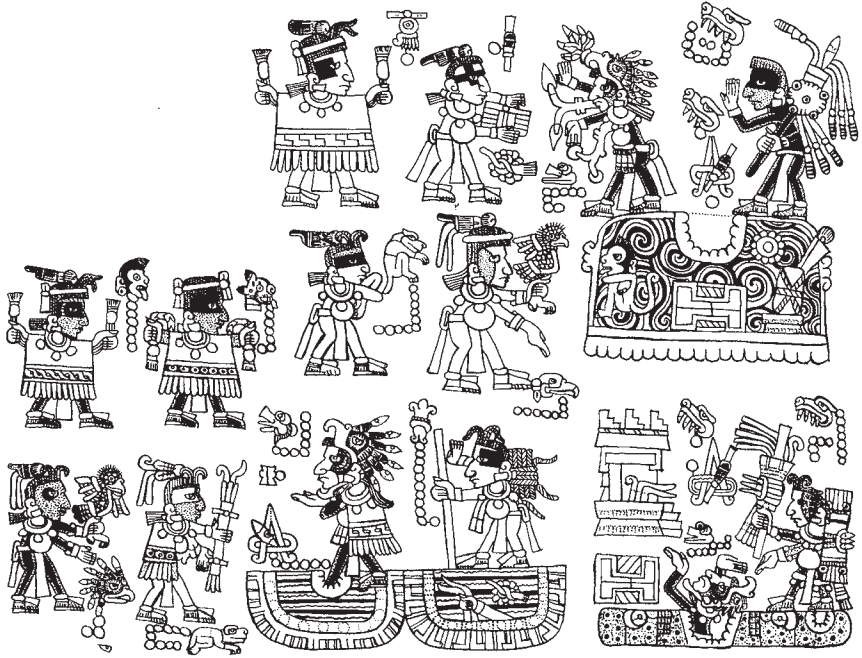
5.4. The sign of *Chiyo Yuhu* (Suchixtlan).

also occurs in Codex N̄nuu Naha with the gloss *Chiyo Yuhu*, the Dzaha Dzau name of Santa María Suchixtlan, which is indeed close to Añute (Smith 1973b). The etymology of the first element of the toponym is clear: *chiyo* means “altar” and is painted as such. The most frequent meaning of the word *yuhu* is “mouth,” but that is clearly not what the glyph expresses. Another translation of *yuhu* is “hidden” or “secret,” leading to an etymology of *Chiyo Yuhu* as “Hidden or Secret Altar.” For painting that abstract quality, the artists seem to have resorted to the word *yubndu*, the first syllable of which (*yuh-*) sounds very similar to *yuhu* in Dzaha Dzau. It occurs in the name of the *yutnu yubndu*, the white flowering strawberry tree (*madroño* in Spanish), which grows in the area. In the Early Postclassic the sign may actually have represented Cerro Jazmín, where a huge Late Classic archaeological site is located, close to the modern town of Suchixtlan.

Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ is shown as having been “born from the earth,” which means he was a real N̄nuu Dzau noble of local origin. The toponymic signs associated with that scene are a stone ball court and a Temple of Flames, possibly a reference to N̄nuu Ndecu (Achiutla), a holy place of origin and pilgrimage, the main ceremonial center and oracle for the Mixteca Alta.<sup>9</sup>

Immediately afterward, Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ is shown as coming out of (originating from) the River that Pulls out Feathers, that is, Yuta Tnoho (Apoala). His relationship with that town is confirmed by his appearance among the primordial princes who were born from the Tree in the Sacred Valley. He clearly belonged to the Yuta Tnoho alliance but did not participate in the events in Monte Albán or in the war against the Stone Men; he was born too late.

By stressing his ideological background in this way, the true origin of Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ is left completely in the dark. Given the importance



5.5a. *The birth of Lord 8 Wind in Yuta Tnoho and the first ceremonial greetings (Codex Tonindeye, 1).*

of Cerro Jazmín in the Late Classic and Lord 8 Wind's young age at the time of his enthronement rituals (discussed later), we suspect that he was related in some way to the nobility of that site. But, like the other participants in the crisis cult, he defined himself as a new political figure for whom genealogical links with former dynasties were of no importance.

In this disjunction he seems to have been more radical than Lord 9 Wind; he did not marry a princess from Monte Albán and does not seem to have sought a particular connection to that old metropolis. Instead, the codices stress his natural sovereignty in the central area of the Mixteca Alta. He was acclaimed as ruler at different occasions.

The first ceremonial greeting and bestowing of royalty took place in Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) itself, where a group of four nobles approached him with the torch, the quail, and the *xicollis* (priestly tunics). Only their calendar names are given, so we cannot be totally sure about the men's identity, but here again it is tempting to take the reference as significant and to identify them as historical personages known from other contexts.

The first noble, Lord 10 Lizard, may have been the ancient priest associated with the origin of the dynasty of Añute (Jaltepec).<sup>10</sup>

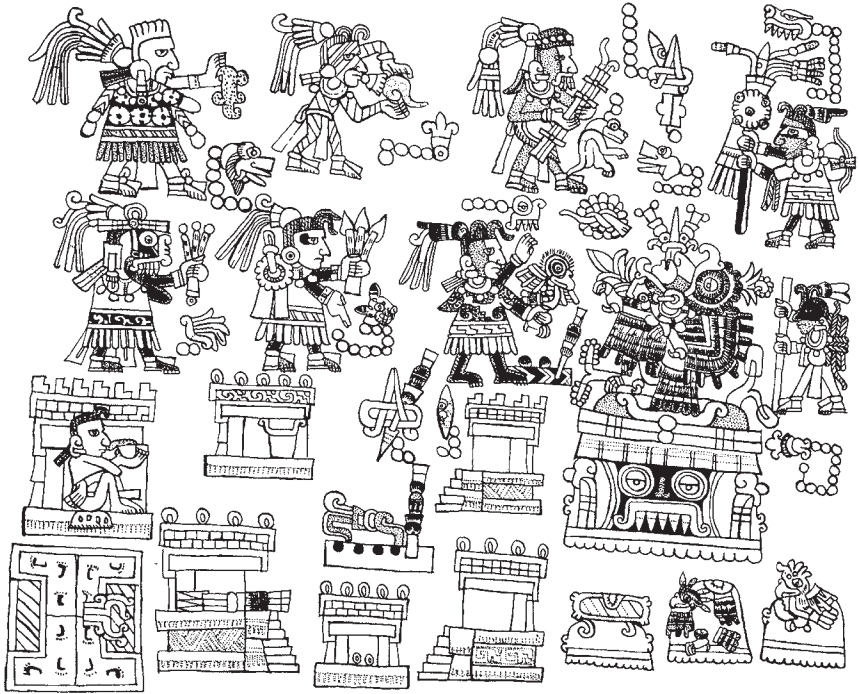
In the second noble we recognize the father of Lord 9 Wind of Ñuu Tnoo, Lord 3 Eagle, son of the primordial couple of Serpent River.

The third position was occupied by Lord 7 Jaguar, who might have been the ruler of Town of the Earth or Cave, who participated in the founding of Añute's dynasty, although not necessarily so.<sup>11</sup>

The last member of the group was Lord 7 Monkey, who is repeated at a later enthronement ritual (discussed later). He is also mentioned as one of the Lords born from the tree at Yuta Tnoho (Apoala), and he participated in the founding of Quetzal Mountain, Mountain of the Pointed Object, Valley of the Spiderweb, and Rock of the Fly (Ñuu Ndodzo or Huitzo, Yucu Ndeque or Huaucilla, Andua-Chindua, and Tiyuq or Sayultepec), towns on the eastern border, and in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan).<sup>12</sup>

The second place at which Lord 8 Wind 'Twenty Eagles' received the ceremonial greeting and offering of royalty was Mountain of the Monkey, which formed part of the Chiyo Yuhu kingdom. This is either a toponym close to Chiyo Yuhu proper or a reference to a twin capital. In the latter case, it may represent Teita.<sup>13</sup> There was a stone ball court and a place of reverence for the dead. Among those who paid their respects on this occasion were two nobles or priests, Lord 1 Reed and Lord 1 Rain, the Founding Fathers of Añute. Lord 1 Rain had also been present at the enthronement of Lord 9 Wind 'Stone Skull' of Ñuu Tnoo. Two personages accompanied them: Lord 8 Vulture, whom we cannot identify, and Lord 10 Lizard, who may be identical to the man of the same name in the first group but may also be the Lord 10 Lizard who, as an old man, became an important priest in Añute and the tutor of Princess 6 Monkey (discussed later).

These first two enthronement ceremonies are not dated in historical time but are accompanied by the year 1 Reed day 1 Alligator, which simply symbolizes a new beginning. Probably, it was after the second ceremony that Lord 8 Wind settled as ruler in Chiyo Yuhu and Mountain of the Monkey. He married three wives, the first of which was Lady 10 Deer 'Jaguar Quechquemil' (i.e., 'Force of a Jaguar'), who may have been the daughter of Lord 3 Rain, a priest from Añute.<sup>14</sup> The marriage of Lord 8 Wind and Lady 10 Deer took place in year 10 House day 1 Eagle (1009).<sup>15</sup> Their first son, Lord 13 Grass, was born in year 2 Rabbit (1014) and became ruler of Arrow-Red Liquid.<sup>16</sup> Second, twins were born, both named Lord 3 Lizard, distinguished only by their given



5.5b. *The New Fire ceremony for Lord 8 Wind in Yucuñudahui (Codex Tonindeye, 2).*

names ‘Precious Long Hair’ and ‘Precious Beard.’ A series of other children followed, of which Lady 2 Serpent ‘Plumed Serpent’ is particularly important to our story.

The third enthronement ritual was at the important Late Classic acropolis of Yucuñudahui–Yucu Tnoo (“Mountain of the Rain God–Black Mountain”), the impressive archaeological remains of which are still seen on the mountain of that name close to Chachoapan in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi–Atoco (Yanhuitlan–Nochixtlan).<sup>17</sup> The date was year 3 Reed day 4 Flint, which, if calculated chronologically, would correspond to A.D. 1015. It was a full fifty-two-year cycle after the Stone Men had attacked this place.<sup>18</sup> The chosen day in the year 3 Reed was the pre-occurrence of the subsequent year bearer (4 Flint).

The calendar names of three of the six attendants who saluted Lord 8 Wind in Yucuñudahui coincide with names of Lords born from the Sacred Mother Tree of Yuta Tnoho: Lord 4 Rain, Lord 10 Jaguar, and Lord 2 Water.

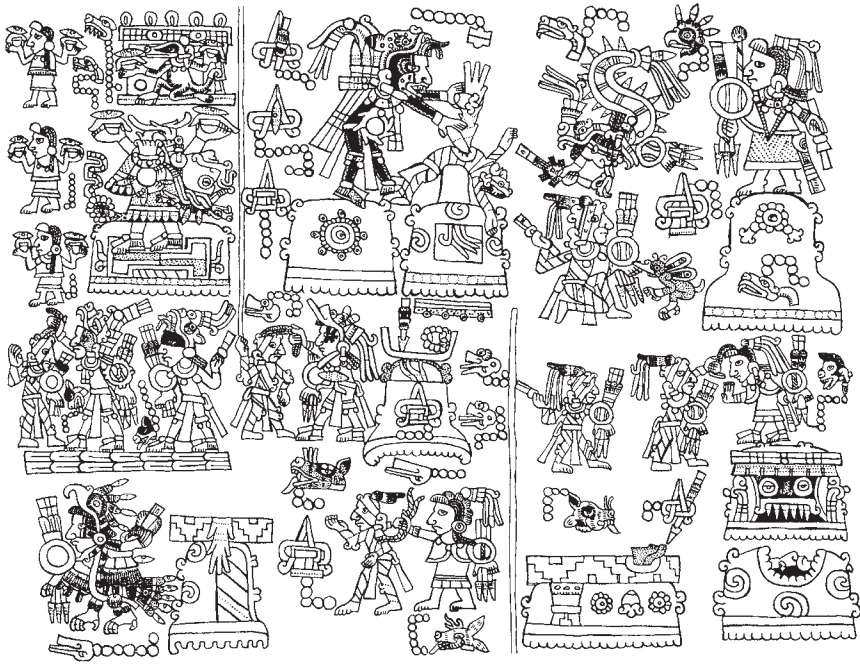
- A Lord 4 Rain appears as Founder of Stone of the Xipe Bundle, one of the communities that integrated the early realm of Ñuu Tnoo but later became part of Chiyo Yuhu. He may have been the same individual as Lord 4 Rain ‘Pheasant Coyote,’ the brother of the archetypical *nahual* priest Lord 2 Dog, born in Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo).<sup>19</sup>
- Lord 10 Jaguar seems to have been one of the attendant priests of that same Lord 2 Dog.<sup>20</sup>
- Lord 2 Water may be the same person as his namesake who founded the dynasty of River of the Drum and the Red Band and was married to Lady 10 Alligator ‘Jade Stone,’ probably the same as Lady 10 Alligator ‘Jade and Gold,’ the sister of Lord 2 Dog.<sup>21</sup> Lord 2 Water and Lady 10 Alligator were the grandparents of Lord 5 Alligator and the great-grandparents of the famous Lord 8 Deer (discussed later).
- Among the other three attendants at the enthronement of Lord 8 Wind in Yucuñudahui we find Lord 5 Flower ‘Stone Man,’ the son of Lord 10 Death and Lady 8 Monkey of Yucuñudahui. After the war he had been recognized as a ruler.<sup>22</sup>
- Lord 2 Lizard, who preceded Lord 5 Flower as an attendant in the enthronement ceremony, may have been his son, who later married a daughter of Lord 8 Wind.
- The identity of the last participant in the ceremony, Lord 7 Wind, is not clear. His green body paint may indicate that he belonged to the *Tocuii*, “Green Lords,” the Ngigua (Chochos).<sup>23</sup>

Two more enthronement ceremonies of Lord 8 Wind followed. At Altar of the Seated Man, he was saluted again by a group of four men.<sup>24</sup> Of these, Lord 2 Dog is probably the same as the old *piciete*-priest so prominent in Codex Yuta Tnoho. Lord 7 Monkey had already participated in the first of these ceremonies. The remaining two men, Lord 6 Water and Lord 6 Death, had functioned as attendants at the marriage of Lord 12 Wind and Lady 3 Flint in Monte Albán, much earlier. Eventually, they became the Founders of the dynasty of Mountain with Face and Tail—at that occasion they are represented as man and wife, probably again a metaphor for dual rulership. The mother of the famous Lord 8 Deer descended from them (discussed later).<sup>25</sup>

Finally, Lord 8 Wind received homage in the Sanctuary of the Rain God, where his *nahual* was strengthened by water the deity poured over him.

The toponyms suggest that Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ controlled a relatively vast kingdom that included most of the Valley of Yodzo Cahi–Atoco





5.6. *The war with the Stone Men (Codex Tonindey, 3).*

(Yanhuitlan-Nochixtlan), a fertile plain of great economic and historical importance in the Mixteca Alta, and that may have extended as far into the mountainous area as Teita and Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla).

SUMMARY: FIRST GENERATION OF THE CHIYO YUHU DYNASTY

Lord 8 Wind + Lady 10 Deer (Añute), married 1009

Lord 3 Lizard (twins)

Lady 2 Serpent

*The MARITAL ALLIANCE between  
ÑUU TNOO and CHIYO YUHU*

Thus, in the beginning of the eleventh century, two men from the Yuta Tnoho alliance, Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ and Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles,’ were firmly established as rulers in Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) and Chiyo Yuhu (Cerro Jazmín, Suchixtlan), respectively. The first village-state was strategically

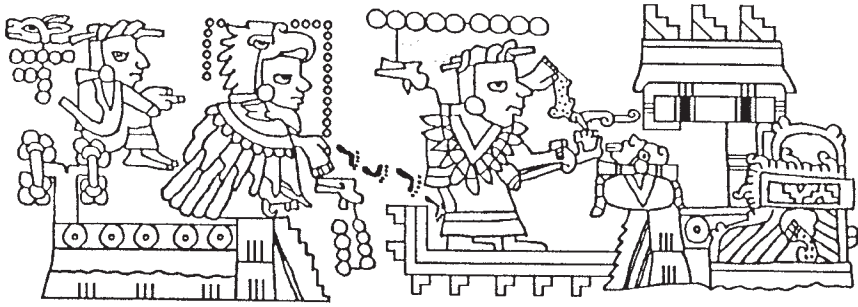
located in the high mountainous area in the center of the Mixteca Alta, while the second lay somewhat more to the north, having the resource-rich Valley of Yodzo Cahi–Atoco at its disposal. The sites Cerro Jazmín of Chiyo Yuhu and Montenegro of Nuu Tnoo already had a long history of habitation; both were Classic acropolises and seem to have continued to be centers of influence and prestige, controlling neighboring areas.

As stated earlier, the identifications of the persons involved as attendants in their enthronement ceremonies are speculative, but if some of them are correct, they would correspond well with this general location of the story. Lord 9 Wind then received power from two members of the Council of Four that had been ruling the vast Nuu Dzauí realm, with its capital Yucuñudahui, a political unit that had been installed by the Monte Albán administration before the war with the Stone Men broke out. Similarly, Lord 8 Wind was declared king in a number of ideologically important places, such as Nuu Ndecu, Yuta Tnoho, and in Yucuñudahui's ceremonial center. His authority was recognized by the son of the Yucuñudahui ruler and even by the father of Lord 9 Wind. The presence of the Founding Priests of Añute makes it clear that he was specifically in control of the eastern part of the Valley of Yodzo Cahi–Atoco, where Añute is located, that is, the strategic passage to the Valley of Oaxaca and to the remains of the ancient hilltop site of Monte Albán.

Clearly, both Lord 9 Wind and Lord 8 Wind were important political figures. The representation of their enthronement ceremonies suggests that both boasted of their prestige, foreshadowing the development of later rivalries. But for the moment both rulers sought to strengthen their power base after the definitive demise of Monte Albán's domination. The way to do that was to forge a marital alliance. In the year 1 House (1013), on the day 1 Eagle, they arranged a marriage for their children—the number 1 symbolically relevant as a marker of a new beginning and both days being dedicated to the



5.7. Lord 8 Wind and Lady 10 Deer with their first son, Lord 13 Grass (Codex Tonindeye, 5).



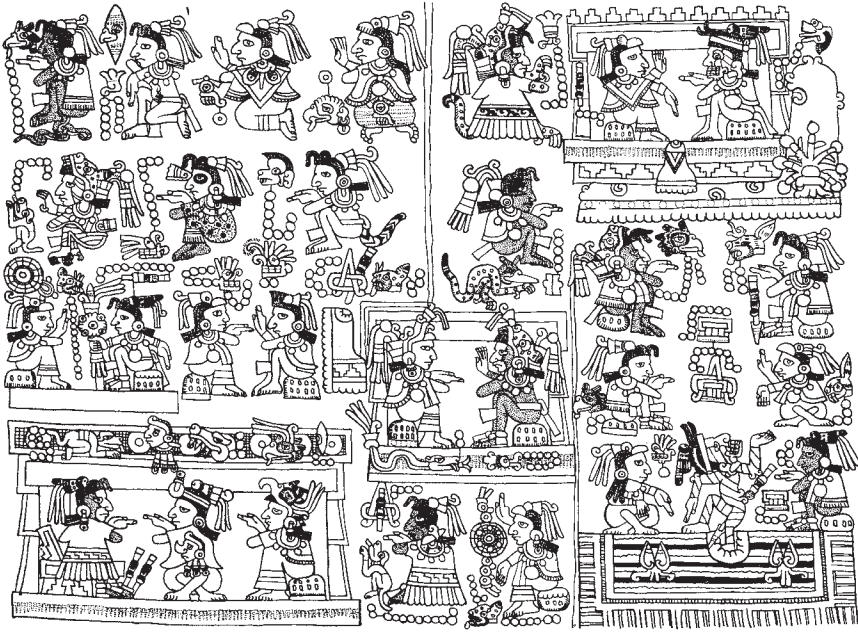
5.8. Lady 9 Wind, coming from Lord 8 Wind and Lady 10 Deer, makes an offering to the Sacred Bundle in Añute (Codex Añute, 5-III).

West, the region of the Grandmother, the old Goddess who governs human procreation and fertility.

At age twenty or twenty-one, Lord 10 Flower, the son of Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ and Lady 5 Reed, was engaged to be married to Lady 2 Serpent ‘Plumed Serpent,’ princess of Chiyo Yuhu, daughter of Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ and Lady 10 Deer. As her parents had married only five years before, Lady 2 Serpent must have been a very young child. She was either born before her brother, Lord 13 Grass, shown as the first child in Codex Tonindeye (5), or she had not even been born, and the year 1 House day 1 Eagle was only the date of the agreement that Lord 9 Wind’s son would marry a daughter of Lord 8 Wind still to be born.

The Ñuu Dzauí custom suggests it was the parents of the man who took the initiative in finding an appropriate bride for their son. Thus it must have been Lord 9 Wind and Lady 5 Reed who tried to arrange a marital alliance with Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles,’ asking him for the hand of his first daughter. This was in the political interest of Ñuu Tnoo’s king; the neighboring village of Dzandaya (Mitlatongo) was ruled by his brother, while through his wife he had ties to Monte Albán and the Town of the Xipe Bundle, which at that time seems to have taken on some of Monte Albán’s ideological importance. These alliances were probably set up to achieve peaceful relationships with the main powers in neighboring areas so the rising village-state of Ñuu Tnoo could consolidate its position.

Eventually, the union of Lord 10 Flower and Lady 2 Serpent was blessed with seven children:<sup>26</sup> Lord 12 Lizard ‘*Nduvua*’ (Arrow Feet); Lord 10 Eagle ‘Stone Jaguar,’ who married Lady 9 Wind ‘Flint Quechquemitl’ (“Power of

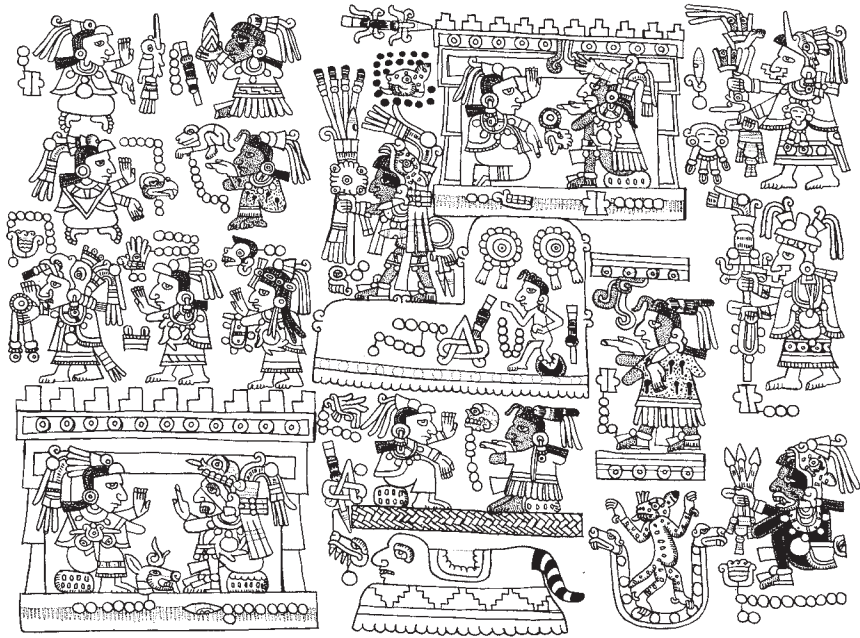


5.9a. First dynasty of Nuu Tnoo, first part (Codex Tonindeye, 23).

Flint Knives”) from Añute; Lady 12 Jaguar ‘Jewelled Spiderweb,’ who married Lord 10 Reed from the Yahua (Tamazola) dynasty and the ruler of Staff Town (probably Yucu Tatnu / Topiltepec); Lady 6 Grass ‘Transparent Butterfly,’ who married Lord 10 Reed ‘Precious Jaguar’ from Torch Mountain (Yucu Quesi / Tataltepec?);<sup>27</sup> Lady 4 Rabbit ‘Precious Quetzal,’ who married Lord 10 Flower ‘Bow Tail’ from Dark Speckled Mountain; Lady 7 Flower ‘Jewel of the Town,’ who apparently did not marry; and Lady 7 Reed ‘Jewel Flower,’ who married Lord 13 Death ‘Setting Sun’ from Head Town.

The firstborn, Lord 12 Lizard ‘*Nduvua*’ (Arrow Feet), married his nieces, Lady 4 Flint ‘Quetzal Feather Face’ and Lady 4 Alligator ‘Jewel Face,’ both daughters of his sister Lady 12 Jaguar ‘Jewelled Spiderweb’ and her husband, Lord 10 Reed, rulers of Staff Town (Yucu Tatnu, Topiltepec?).<sup>28</sup> This family marriage was probably motivated by the wish to bring the divided heritage together and therefore indicates the success of Lord 9 Wind and Lady 5 Reed’s consolidating policy.

The second son, Lord 10 Eagle, married in the year 3 House (1041). His bride, Lady 9 Wind, had the impressive name of ‘Flint Quechquemil’



5.9b. First dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo, second part (Codex Tonindeye, 24).

(*Dzico Yuchi*), that is, ‘Power of Flint Knives,’ a title of the Goddess known as Itzpapalotl by the Mexica. According to Codex Añute (5), she “came from” Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ and his wife, Lady 10 Deer, the rulers of Chiyo Yuhu. This “coming from” probably means she was their daughter, that is, Lady 2 Serpent’s younger sister. In other words, Lady 9 Wind was marrying her elder sister’s son.

If so, Lady 9 Wind must have been a late child of her parents. She is not mentioned in the list of Lord 8 Wind’s children in Codex Tonindeye (5–7). Instead, that codex (1) stresses the primordial submission of Añute to Lord 8 Wind. This part of Codex Tonindeye seems to be copied from a document from the Chiyo Yuhu historiographic tradition. Codex Añute, on the contrary, represents the Añute point of view; it contains no reference to a recognition of Lord 8 Wind but has a suggestive sequence that makes Lady 9 Wind the daughter of that Lord and his wife and at the same time the granddaughter of the earlier Añute ruler. Lady 9 Flint is characterized as “Jewel-Skull of (Lord) 8 Wind”—this title probably specified her position in relation to her father and his kingdom. The hand gestures in this

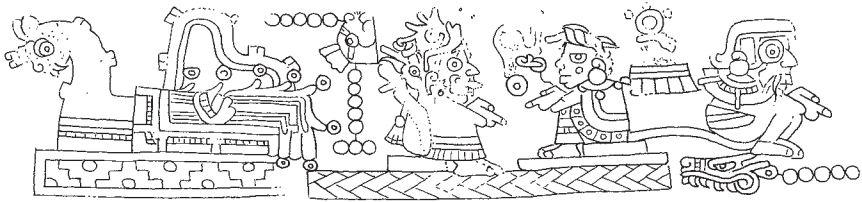
section of Codex Añute (5-III/IV) add meaning to the narrative. Lady 10 Deer is instructing (with pointed finger) Lady 9 Wind to go to Añute. This is logical if she herself, as we suppose, was a noble lady from Añute and was passing on her inheritance. Her husband, Lord 8 Wind, makes the gesture of “giving” or “permitting.” Apparently, it was the queen’s idea (and right) that her daughter would go to Añute, and he could not oppose her. Once sitting on the mat and throne, Lady 9 Wind was clearly in command, pointing her finger at her husband, Lord 10 Eagle from Ñuu Tnoo, who in answer shows his open hand, that is, declares himself at her service. Clearly, the lady holds the right to the throne; her husband is a “prince-consort.” The couple is depicted with the same combination of gestures in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu (6-V).

The marriage of Lord 10 Eagle ‘Stone Jaguar’ and Lady 9 Wind was meant to strengthen the alliance between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu. But at the same time it led to an independent status for Añute, where Lady 9 Wind ‘Flint Quechquemil’ had celebrated rituals for the Sacred Bundle and now went to live with her husband.

It seems that Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ was at first fairly liberal in letting his children and vassals rule places under his influence. The idea was likely that they would act as governors under the central direction of the lineage of his successor at Chiyo Yuhu. Perhaps this was a model that had been customary during Classic times, when the role of Monte Albán had been dominant. But with the lack of such central power, the model no longer functioned; the subject rulers founded dynasties of their own and soon started to exercise their independence. An independent Añute could block Chiyo Yuhu’s access to the Valley of Oaxaca.

#### GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY (ÑUU TNOO LINEAGE)

- Lord 10 Flower (Ñuu Tnoo) + Lady 2 Serpent (Chiyo Yuhu), married 1013
- Lord 12 Lizard + his nieces, Lady 4 Flint and Lady 4 Alligator
- Lord 10 Eagle + Lady 9 Wind (Chiyo Yuhu), married 1041, ruled Añute
- Lady 12 Jaguar + Lord 10 Reed (from Ñuu Ñañu)
- Lady 4 Rabbit + Lord 10 Flower (Dark Speckled Mountain)

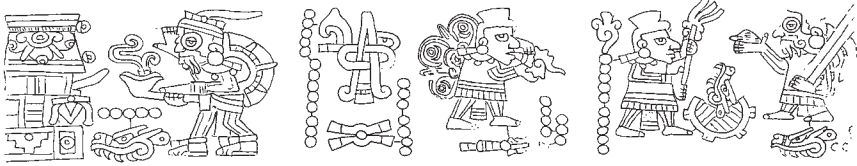


5.10. *The birth of Lord 5 Alligator (Codex Nuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 6-1).*

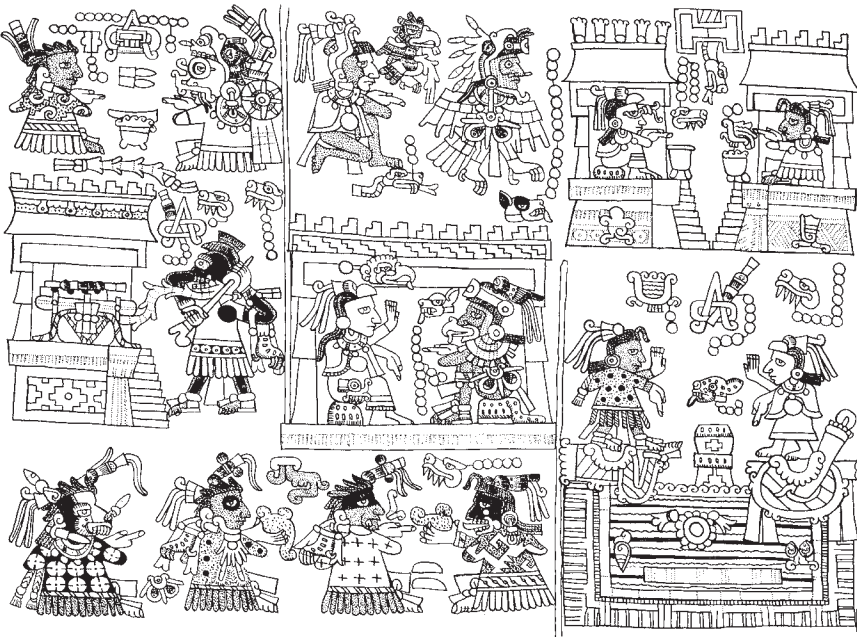
### LORD 5 ALLIGATOR ‘RAIN SUN’

The codices follow the genealogical history of the “first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo)” for two more generations, but to understand the developments in this period from a synchronic perspective, we focus now on what happened in the main ceremonial center of Ñuu Tnoo, the Huahi Andevui, “Temple of Heaven.” Its name indicates its connection with the Place of Heaven as the source of shamanic powers, dynastic origin, and the Ancestors. The Temple of Heaven formed a ceremonial unit with the Temple of Darkness, which was called Tlillan in Nahuatl and became the root of the Nahuatl name of Ñuu Tnoo: Tlillantonco. Such a Temple of Darkness used to be dedicated to the Goddess Cihuacoatl and implied a veneration of the dead Ancestors. The rituals carried out in such a complex included an elaborate Bundle cult, the cyclical drilling of the new fire, and shamanic trances of the priests.<sup>29</sup>

The Huahi Andevui of Ñuu Tnoo was located on a lower slope in front of Monte Negro, on top of which the Classic ruins were situated. It was built as a sanctuary for the Sacred Bundle of the Flint from which the Great Founder, Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoat,’ had been born. The visionary priest Lord 12 Wind had introduced its cult after having received his instructions and power objects in Heaven and after marrying Lady 3 Flint in Monte Albán. It was right in front of this temple that he had planted the Tnucucua staff, his staff of power and authority, in the ground, thereby creating a new coherence of local lineages and defining the realm. This staff was part of an entire series of sacred objects crucial for the foundation of dynasties; the Tnucucua staff goes together with the Sacred Bundle, and they are combined with sacred objects denominated Xipe staff and Xipe Bundle. The Paper Roll (presumably for bloodletting), the Fire Drill instruments, and the Arrow belong in the same group; all were given in Heaven to the Divine Founders and the visionary



5.11. Lord 5 Alligator welcomed by Lord 10 Flower and Lord 7 Reed before entering the temple (Codex Nuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 8-II).

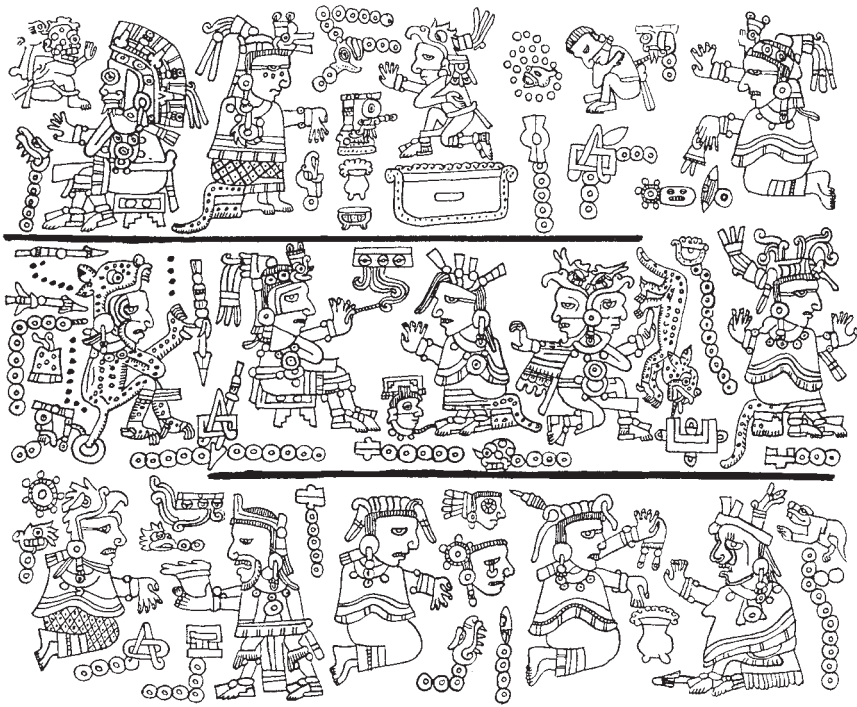


5.12. Nuttall 25 (left) Lord 5 Alligator meeting the council and making a blood offering in the Temple of Heaven.

priests.<sup>30</sup> The Fire Drill is shown as an arrow without a point, to be distinguished from the Sacred Arrow with point, which can be combined with a shield and a Nuhu figure as “Deity of Weapons” or “War Spirit.”<sup>31</sup>

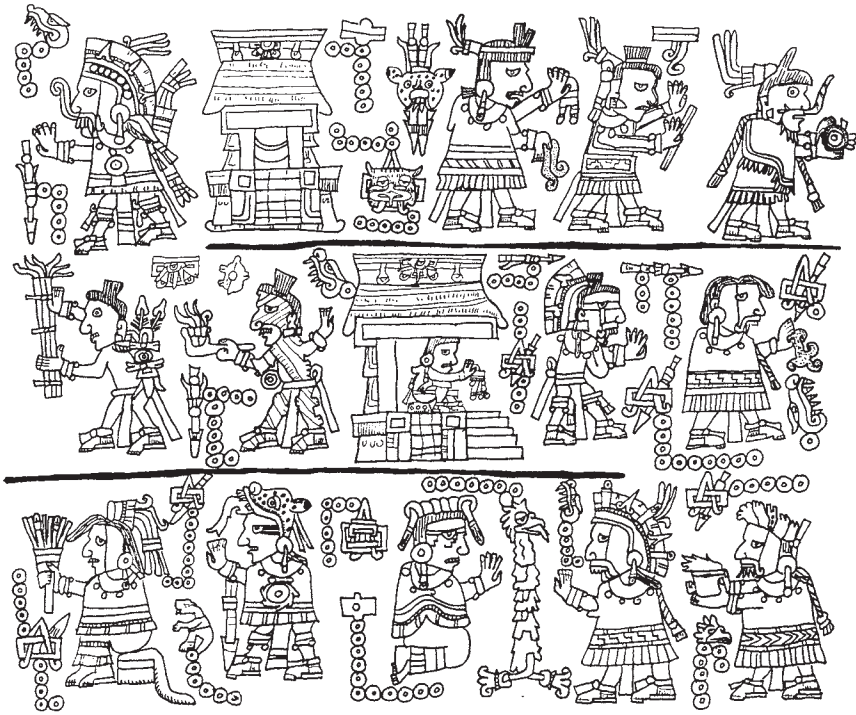
It was in Nuu Tnoo’s Temple of Heaven that the Sacred Bundle was kept, together with the Board and Drill for the new fire ceremonies and the Roll of Paper for bloodletting. It is safe to assume that Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ had dedicated special efforts to enlarge and embellish this sanctuary, and it became the stage for a special ceremony in the year 13 House (1025).





5.13a. Final part of the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo. Presentation of Lord 5 Alligator (Codex Yuta Tnoho, verso, IV; reading boustrophedon, starts at lower right-hand corner).

The ritual started on the day 7 Movement, six days before the day 13 House of the year 13 House (Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse, VI-1). The calendar term 13 House is *simaa* in Dzaha Dzauui, which is also the word for “owl.” This particular year 13 House is painted as ‘13 Owl.’ The day sign ‘Owl’ was present in the Classic Beni Zaa (Zapotec) calendar at Monte Albán. The day 13 Owl occurs on the cornerstone of the main Late Preclassic platform at Yucu Nindavua (Huamelulpan), which suggests that it has an ancient ritual significance. Perhaps its use on this occasion connotes the idea that the ritual was done in ancient style. The year 13 Owl would have been the end of a cycle of 52 years (the *xiuhmolpilli* of the Nahuas) if that cycle had started with the year 1 Rabbit. The codices indeed associate the year 1 Rabbit day 1 Rabbit as a sacred foundation date with the glyph we identify as Monte Albán. This particular occurrence of the year 13 House also commemorated the dramatic war events of the year 12 Flint (972) one cycle earlier, which saw



5.13b. Priestly functions and marriage of Lord 5 Alligator (Codex Yuta Tnoho, verso, V; reading boustrophedon, starts at upper right-hand corner). Notice the year 13 Owl.

the final demise of the Monte Albán order and the foundation of Nuu Tnoo's rise to power. At the same time, the owl announces death; its frontal image, looking straight at us, works as a *memento mori* and thus prepares us for a fatal outcome of the narrative.

The person selected to carry out the important and ancient Owl Year ritual was Lord 5 Alligator, a young man or even a boy at the time. His parents were Lord 13 Dog 'White Eagle-Venus' and Lady 1 Vulture 'Rain Skirt' (i.e., 'Rain Grace' or 'Grace of Nuu Dzau'). Lord 13 Dog was a son of Lord 2 Water, who may have participated in the enthronement ritual of Lord 8 Wind 'Twenty Eagles' in Yucuñudahui, and Lady 10 Alligator, sister of the important priest Lord 2 Dog from Nuu Ndaya (discussed earlier). This couple had founded a noble house at River of the Drum and the Red Band.<sup>32</sup> Lady 1 Vulture 'Rain Skirt' belonged to the dynasty of another neighboring settlement: Nuu Nāñu, the old fortress of Yahua (Tamazola).<sup>33</sup>

Lord 5 Alligator was given the name ‘Rain Sun,’ *Dzavui Ndicandii*, which indicates his charismatic powers and his direct relationship with the main deities. His first activities were associated with the day 10 Flower, that is, the name day of the prince of Ñuu Tnoo, who, born in the year 6 Flint (992), was now thirty-three years old. We suspect that this date is mentioned here because it was chosen for Lord 10 Flower’s succession as ruler of Ñuu Tnoo—his father, Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull,’ would have been eighty-three years old in 1025 and was probably deceased.

Some days before the day 10 Flower of the year 13 House, but in direct preparation for that day, Lord 5 Alligator and his parents had been visited by three priests of the Supreme Council of Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>34</sup> They asked his parents’ permission to take the boy to perform priestly duties in the temple, putting before him a sacrificial knife, together with *piciete* and blankets.

The titles of these officials vary slightly in the different sources. Their main elements are:

1. ‘Smoke’ or ‘Cloud’ (*huico*), which we can read as a representation of *huico*, “feast,” but also as a reference to the ritual fire or shamanic ecstasy.
2. Palm leaves (*ndaha yutnu ñuu*), which allude to the bloodletting rite and to offerings in general.
3. A Sacred Arrow (*Nduvua Ñuhu*), defined as such by a Ñuhu head. The associated priest was probably the keeper of the Sacred Arrow, which may have been the one brought down from Heaven by Lord 9 Wind ‘Plumed Serpent.’<sup>35</sup>

The meaning of the scene becomes clearer when we read the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), which describes a Council of Four whose function it was to assist the ruler with making decisions in matters of government, justice, economy, and cult. One of the four acted as president and determined the waging of war. They wore long, painted capes of cotton (Acuña 1984, II: 233). We think young Lord 5 Alligator ‘Rain Sun’ was asked to become a priest so he could later join the Supreme Council of Four. He was offered the title of Death Priest, that is, the one responsible for contact with the deceased Ancestors and probably the head of the Council, a function similar to that of the *cihuacoatl* among the Mexica.<sup>36</sup>

First, Lord 5 Alligator went to the Mountain of Plants and Flowers to offer a *xicolli* as tribute to Lord 7 Movement, a Rain Spirit and Divine

Ancestor of the dynasty of Town of the Xipe Bundle.<sup>37</sup> The visit was made on the appropriate name day of the Spirit: 7 Movement, which at the same time marked the beginning of the ritual period leading up to day 13 House or Owl. On that same day, Lord 5 Alligator went to the River of the Serpent (Yute Coe), the ancestral place of the ruling dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo, and offered there another *xicollí*. Then he went to the Temple of Heaven in Ñuu Tnoo, where he was welcomed and ceremonially saluted by two priests: Lord 10 Flower ‘Stone Man, born from the Earth’ and Lord 7 Reed ‘White Star,’ who offered him fire and blew the ceremonial conch.<sup>38</sup> Lord 10 Flower was probably the ruler of Ñuu Tnoo at the time.<sup>39</sup> The given names of the two priests on this occasion seem to be titles that recall the two groups of warriors the Lords of Yuta Tnoho had to overcome: the Stone Men and the Celestial warriors (the *Mimixcoa*). We take their presence here as an indication of a cult drama, which included a representation and commemoration of that primordial struggle.

Then, still on the day 7 Movement of the year 13 House (1025), Lord 5 Alligator burned incense for the Sacred Bundle in the Temple of Heaven. He became a priest there and in following years passed through the successive ranks of priesthood, symbolized by different *xicollis* and sacrificial knives he received—the first in the year 6 Reed (1031), the second in the year 10 Reed (1035), and the third in the year 1 Reed (1039). The ritual day to enter a new period of four years’ service was, logically, 1 Alligator, the beginning of the count of 260 days. As the passage to a higher level of priesthood occurred in a year Reed, we can reconstruct the beginning of this ceremonial hierarchy in the year 1 Reed day 1 Alligator.

After an initial period of six years (probably composed of two “preparatory” years and a regular rank period of four years) and then three successive rank periods of four years each, that is, after a total of eighteen years in the Temple of Heaven, he had reached the highest level. The elderly Smoke Priest sent a younger priest to him with a garland of flowers, indicating that he could leave the priesthood and marry. It is safe to assume that Lord 5 Alligator ‘Rain Sun’ by then had become an extremely important figure, with great charisma and political power.

In the year 5 Reed (1043) or the following year 6 Flint (1044), but in any case on the day 7 Eagle, a sacred day for the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty, Lord 5 Alligator married his first wife, Lady 9 Eagle ‘Cacao Flower,’ who belonged to the Beni Zaa dynasty of Zaachila.<sup>40</sup>

Several children were born from this first marriage: (1) in the year 7 House (1045) Lord 12 Movement ‘Blood Jaguar,’ who became keeper of the Sacred War Arrow; (2) in the year 9 Reed (1047) Lady 6 Lizard ‘Jewel Fan,’ who later married Lord 11 Wind from the Town of the Xipe Bundle; (3) in the year 10 Flint (1048) Lord 9 Movement ‘Hummingbird’; and (4) in the year 10 House (1061) Lord 3 Water ‘Heron.’<sup>41</sup>

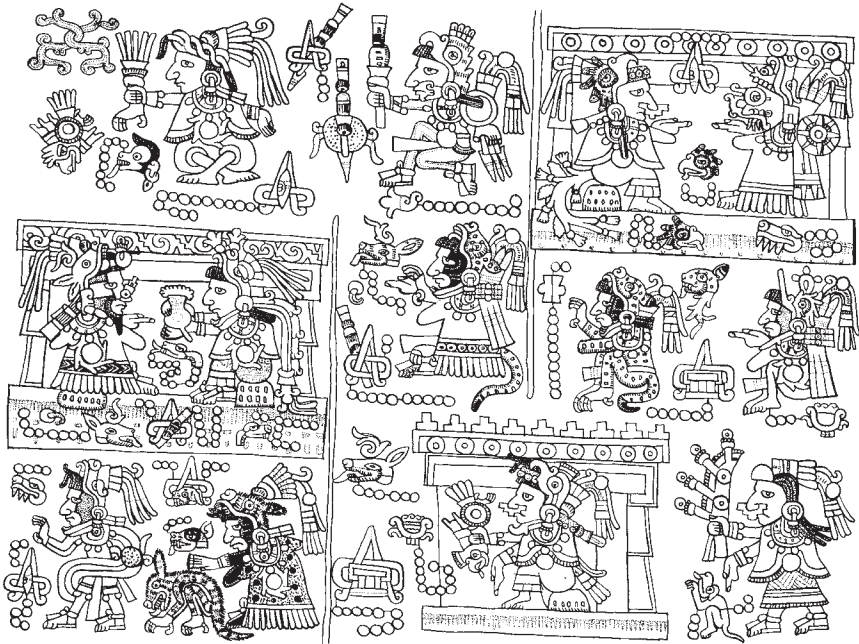
In the year 10 House (1061), Lord 5 Alligator ‘Rain Sun’ married his second wife, Lady 11 Water ‘Blue Parrot,’ a princess from the Mountain of the Eye (Face) and Tail. This place has not been identified. It could be a subject community nearby, such as Ñuu Ndito, “Pueblo de Mirador,” mentioned as *estancia* in the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo, but it could also be a somewhat more distant independent village-state, such as the Beni Zaa town of Quia Loo, “Mountain of the Eye,” in Nahuatl known as Ixtepec (today Mixtepec), south of Zaachila.<sup>42</sup>

The father of the bride, Lord 9 Flint ‘Stone Man Skull,’ was a descendant of Lady 6 Water and Lord 6 Death, who had been attendants at the great marriage ceremony of Lady 3 Flint at Monte Albán and at one of the enthronement ceremonies of Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles.’ He may also have been the same as Lord 9 Flint ‘Skull’ who belonged to the “descendants of the Sacred Mother Tree of Yuta Tnoho” and had acted as a priest in the Temple of Death of Ñuu Ndaya. If so, he was a companion of Lord 9 Wind ‘Wind, Skull,’ who may have been Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ of Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>43</sup>

Lady 11 Water had been married before to Lord 3 Wind ‘Jaguar Warrior–Bird with Fish Tail,’ who came from Town of Stones and was the son of Lady 10 House ‘Quechquemilt of Stone’ (‘Virtue of Town of Stones’). With this man she had a son: Lord 8 Flower ‘Flint-Hair.’<sup>44</sup>

Lord 5 Alligator ‘Rain Sun’ and Lady 11 Water ‘Blue Parrot’ married in the year 10 House (1061) on the day 6 Deer.<sup>45</sup> Their children were Lord 8 Deer ‘Jaguar Claw,’ born in the year 12 Reed (1063); Lord 9 Flower ‘Sacred Arrow,’ born in the year 3 Reed (1067); Lady 9 Monkey ‘Jewel Quetzal,’ born in the year 13 Flint (1064)<sup>46</sup>—she married Lord 8 Alligator ‘Blood Coyote,’ ruler of the great Death Town, Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo); and Lady 12 Grass ‘Hand with Jewel and Fur,’ born in the year 4 House (1081), who married Lord 3 Reed, a visionary priest from Tiyuqh of Monte Albán.<sup>47</sup>

The birth of Lord 8 Deer was marked by several symbolic occurrences, which announced his later importance. The first omen is represented as long plumed grass, which we find glossed as *zacatl* or *acxoyatl* in Nahuatl pictorial



5.14. The marriages and children of Lord 5 Alligator; the birth and marriage of Lord 8 Deer (Codex Tonindeye, 26).

manuscripts. This may simply be an indicator that the grass was extraordinarily high that season or that there was a drought. But grass is also a symbol of poverty and oblivion and may indicate Lord 8 Deer's relatively low birth status.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, grass is used in sacrifices and so may prognosticate ritual bloodshed. Later, the same symbol occurs as the hieroglyph of the place where Lord 8 Deer starts his huge campaign of conquests.

The second omen is represented as the head of the Rain God (Dzavui), emanating colored dots or other faces of the same deity. Perhaps an unexpectedly long period (twenty days?) of heavy rain is meant, an appropriate sign for the birth of someone whose actions would affect all of Nuu Dzau.

As a third sign, an eagle came down from heaven and ate from a series of baskets, possibly an augury of how bravery in war would gain great abundance. It also could be understood as a warning that an eagle might snatch away the good luck.

When we compare these signs with the predictions given for the day 8 Deer in the mantic manuscripts, such as Codex Yoalli Ehecatl (Borgia),

we learn that the day Deer is under the patronage of the Rain God, which implies both destruction (such as inundation and lightning) and prosperity. The day 8 Deer in the 260-day cycle is also associated with images of destruction (a burning, collapsing palace or temple) and prosperity as a consequence of conquests (a warrior rising from a conch with jade beads). The day falls in the fourth *trecena* (13-day period), beginning with 1 Flower, which is dominated by the Old Coyote, God of Tricks and Conflicts. Its mantic symbols are the dancer, war, the fallen man, and the lamenting woman. In other words, the day pairs artistic capacity and astute resourcefulness in warfare with the danger of sudden downfall and painful emotional relationships with women, bringing suffering upon women as well as having painful consequences for the man.<sup>49</sup>

Among Lord 8 Deer's ancestors, there were several links to protagonists of early Ñuu Dzau history. He himself, however, was merely the first son of his father's second wife. The marriages of Lord 5 Alligator and those of his children—probably arranged according to his wishes—tell us something about the political alliances of the High Priest. If we are correct in the identifications of places so far, we can conclude that Lord 5 Alligator's marital policy was rather different from that of the ruling dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo. He sought associations not with Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu but with the Beni Zaa region; his first wife was from the Xipe dynasty that ruled Zaachila, while his second wife may have come from Quia Loo. The wedding of Lady 6 Lizard 'Jewel Fan,' daughter from his first marriage, and Lord 11 Wind from the important Town of the Xipe Bundle, descendant of the primordial Lords of Yuta Tnoho and linked to the ancient rulers of Monte Albán, must have been a very important political event.

Similarly, a daughter from Lord 5 Alligator's second marriage became the wife of a priest associated with the ceremonial center that still functioned at Monte Albán.

It is interesting that Lord 5 Alligator is frequently painted with a skull or skeletal jaw, which indicates his function as a death priest (a parallel to the Mexica *cihuacoatl*). His paternal grandmother had been the sister of the important priest Lord 2 Dog from Death Town (Ñuu Ndaya, Chalcatongo), and he also took a second wife who was the daughter of someone who had a "Skull" name and who may have been a priest in the Temple of Death in that same area. A daughter of this second marriage, Lady 9 Monkey 'Jewel Quetzal,' became the wife of a ruler of the same Death Town (Ñuu Ndaya).

Therefore we believe Lord 5 Alligator played a crucial role in Ancestor worship. His political connections seem to have been with the Beni Zaa area, in particular with what remained of the ancient prestige and religious importance of Monte Albán to the east. He also had connections with Ñuu Ndaya to the south, the place where the Temple of Death was located, the Cave of Lady 9 Grass, where the ancient rulers of Monte Albán had been buried.

#### GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY, LORD 5 ALLIGATOR

Lord 2 Water + Lady 10 Alligator

Lord 13 Dog + Lady 1 Vulture (Ñuu Ñaña / Tamazola)

Lord 5 Alligator (entrance to the temple 1025)

First marriage with Lady 9 Eagle (Zaachila), in 1044

- Lord 12 Movement (b. 1045)
- Lady 6 Lizard (b. 1047) + Lord 11 Wind (Town of the Xipe Bundle)

Second marriage with Lady 11 Water (Quia Loo?), in 1061

- Lord 8 Deer (b. 1063)
- Lord 9 Flower (b. 1067)
- Lady 9 Monkey (b. 1064) + Lord 8 Alligator (Ñuu Ndaya)

#### DYNASTIC DEVELOPMENTS *in* ÑUU TNOO *and* AÑUTE

Meanwhile, another interesting development occurred. The princess 12 Jaguar, daughter of Lord 10 Flower, the ruler of Ñuu Tnoo, had married Lord 10 Reed, the brother of Lady 1 Vulture, Lord 5 Alligator's mother. Then the elder brother of Lady 12 Jaguar, the crown prince Lord 12 Lizard, married the two daughters of that couple, that is, his own nieces and Lord 5 Alligator's full cousins. This marital alliance seems to have been engineered when Lord 5 Alligator was already an important political figure, that is, from 1045 onward. As a consequence, in Ñuu Dzau kinship terminology, Lord 5 Alligator became uncle to Lord 12 Lizard's children, the first of whom, Lord 5 Movement 'Smoke of Heaven,' was heir to the throne of Ñuu Tnoo. The prince would have addressed his uncle (*dzito*), the former High Priest, as *taa*, "father." The given name of the crown prince of Ñuu Tnoo seems to be a reference to the priestly title 'Smoke' or 'Cloud' in combination with a reference to the Temple of Heaven. Perhaps Lord 5 Movement was a member of the Supreme Council during his early years. Lord 12 Lizard's other children



were Lord 12 Water ‘Sky Jaguar,’ Lady 3 Movement ‘Fan of the Earth,’ and Lady 1 Flint ‘Jewel Face.’

The crown prince, Lord 5 Movement, first married a princess of Añute, Lady 4 Death ‘Jewel of the People.’ She belonged to the Ñuu Tnoo royal family through her father, Lord 10 Eagle, the younger brother of the Ñuu Tnoo ruler Lord 10 Flower and consequently an uncle of Lord 12 Lizard. Her mother was Lady 9 Wind, a daughter of Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu. At first sight, the marriage of Lord 5 Movement and Lady 4 Death could be interpreted as a strengthening of the already existing ties between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu. However, in reality it primarily reinforced the alliance between Añute and Ñuu Tnoo, and consequently Añute’s independence, at the expense of Chiyo Yuhu, which had formerly controlled the area. The marriage was a shrewd move, as it did not openly offend Lord 8 Wind but at the same time undermined his power.

The marriage produced no children. Lady 4 Death likely died shortly after the wedding because Lord 5 Movement remarried in the year 9 House (1073) on the day 2 Eagle. This was a tragic year for the Añute dynasty. On the day 8 Vulture, fifty-nine days before Lord 5 Movement’s second wedding, three princes died in sacrifice during a ritual corresponding to the *Tlacaxipehualiztli* of the Mexica. Their bodies were buried in the Death Temple of Ñuu Ndaya. We suspect that Lady 4 Death died during the same series of events.<sup>50</sup> The reason behind the ritual killing and the implied warfare is not explained by the codices, but it may have been an early phase of the conflict that later erupted between Chiyo Yuhu on the one side and Ñuu Tnoo and Añute on the other.

In Ñuu Tnoo, the powerful leader of the Supreme Council, Lord 5 Alligator, had forged alliances with dynasties in the Beni Zaa area, outside the network of Chiyo Yuhu. His sons, especially young Lord 8 Deer, were being trained as warriors. Several battles had taken place in the year 7 Reed (1071). Unfortunately, we do not know for certain where they occurred. Among the conquered places was Rock of the Eagle, which may be the neighboring Ñuu Tiyaha (Tecomatlan) in the Yodzo Cahi–Atoco Valley, possibly within the influence sphere of Chiyo Yuhu.<sup>51</sup>

It is tempting to speculate that at this time the rivalry between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu had developed into open armed conflict. This may have been the context in which the princes of Añute—logical allies of Ñuu Tnoo—had been taken prisoner (supposedly by Chiyo Yuhu troops) and sacrificed. If this

is the case, we are dealing with a radical change in the pattern of alliances. Possibly old Lord 8 Wind and his designated heir had had second thoughts about the different dynastic lines descended from Lord 8 Wind; they had now established themselves in their own communities and were striving for independence. Añute was such a case. Originally, it seems to have been only a sanctuary. Its Founding Fathers were priests who had paid homage to Lord 8 Wind. But now Lady 9 Wind, his own daughter, had set up her mat and throne (kingdom) there and found a strong ally in her husband, brother of the ruler of Ñuu Tnoo. It was in the direct interest of those who wanted to maintain Chiyo Yuhu's power to eliminate the couple's children before they could establish themselves as rulers and confirm Añute's independence.

When those princes were killed, only one daughter was left to the rulers of Añute: Lady 6 Monkey 'Power of the Plumed Serpent.' No year for her birth is given; she may have been born in the same year as the tragedy or some years before. She was put under the protection of the old priest Lord 10 Lizard 'Precious Axe,' a member of the Supreme Council of Añute, which helped her escape the violence against her family. Her very existence now became a matter of political controversy. As we will see, Lord 3 Lizard, son and designated heir of Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu, did not recognize Lady 6 Monkey's right to the kingdom of Añute. This behavioral pattern, in which brothers tend to overrule the rights of their female kin, is very recognizable in modern Ñuu Dzau communities. In this case, the young girl's rights were strongly defended by her father, Lord 10 Eagle, and, by extension, by the ruling family of Ñuu Tnoo.

For the moment, however, Chiyo Yuhu was able to impose its authority, thereby averting further escalation and open confrontation between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu. Ñuu Tnoo's crown prince, Lord 5 Movement 'Smoke of Heaven,' married a princess from Lord 8 Wind's circle, Lady 2 Grass 'Precious Quetzal' from the community of Visible Stones, which belonged to Chiyo Yuhu.<sup>52</sup> Lord 5 Movement did not become a ruler in Ñuu Tnoo. He went to live with his new wife in Valley of the Xipe Bundle, which had become a subject town of Chiyo Yuhu.<sup>53</sup> This resettlement was likely arranged by Lord 8 Wind 'Twenty Eagles' so he could watch the prince's activities very closely.

At the same time, Lord 5 Movement's younger sister, Lady 1 Flint 'Jewel Face,' married Lord 6 Movement 'Precious Bone,' a son of Lord 8 Wind. The old marital alliance between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu seemed to have been reestablished.

GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY

Añute

Lady 10 Deer (Añute) + Lord 8 Wind (Chiyo Yuhu)

Lady 9 Wind + Lord 10 Eagle (son of Lord 10 Flower, Ñuu Tnoo),  
married 1041

- Lady 4 Death + Lord 5 Movement (Ñuu Tnoo)
- three sons (taken prisoner and killed, 1073)
- Lady 6 Monkey

Ñuu Tnoo

Lord 10 Flower (Ñuu Tnoo) + Lady 2 Serpent (Chiyo Yuhu), married  
1013

Lord 12 Lizard + his two nieces

Lord 5 Movement

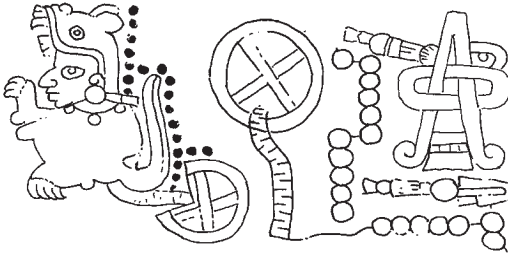
First marriage with Lady 4 Death (Añute)

Second marriage with Lady 2 Grass, 1073

*The BIRTH of LORD 2 RAIN 'OCOÑAÑA'*

In the year 11 Reed (1075), shortly before the birth of Lady 2 Grass's first son, an omen revealed itself. On the day 9 Reed, a vision appeared in an obsidian mirror. An umbilical cord was seen; this was the announcement of the birth of a child. The cord was connected to day sign 9 Reed, the calendrical name of the Goddess called Itzpapalotl-Itzcueye by the Mexica, 'Obsidian Butterfly, She of the Obsidian Skirt,' that is, the Power of the Obsidian Arrow.<sup>54</sup> Thus the vision stated that the child was going to be consecrated to that Goddess, to be under her spell and supervision. This was not a pleasant announcement because the Goddess 9 Reed could bring destruction. Her very name indicated a combination of fatality (symbolized by 9, the number of death) and war or conquest (the sign Reed being actually an arrow).

Six days later the child foreseen in the mirror was born: Lord 2 Rain 'Twenty Jaguars' (Ocoñaña). His given name seems to be modeled after 'Twenty Eagles' but at the same time was slightly different. His birth meant destruction; an arrow in flames, a sign for *nduvua ñuhu*, "arrows, fire," that is, war, hit the palace of his parents in the territory of Chiyo Yuhu. Indeed, it is supposed that they died because no other children are mentioned. The aggression may have been caused by the wrath of Lord 8 Wind, who was extremely



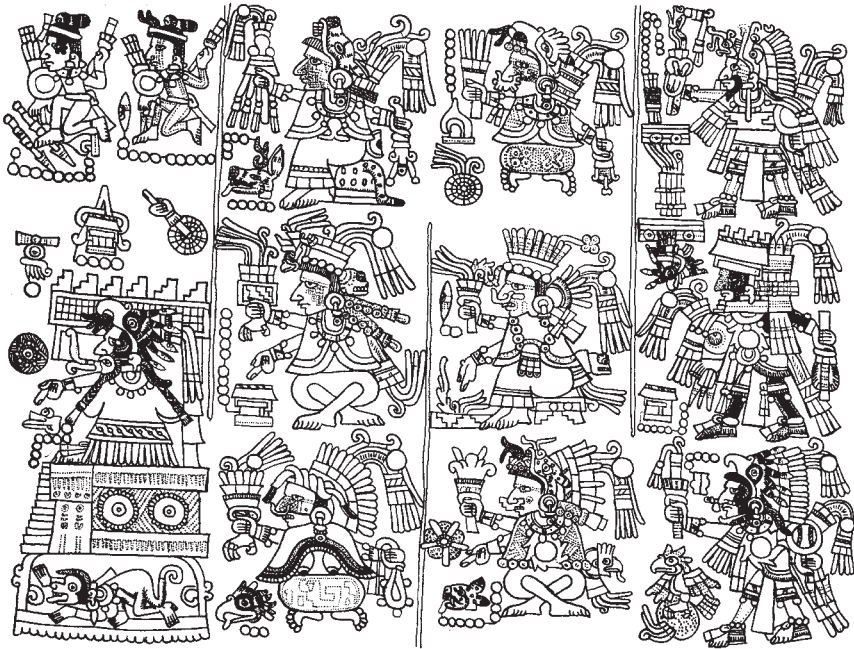
5.15. *The birth of Lord 2 Rain 'Ocoñaña' (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 5-II).*

displeased at the birth of a successor to the throne of his rival. Yet the baby was saved by its faction of followers, and young Lord 2 Rain soon received the offering of royalty.<sup>55</sup> Seven nobles saluted him in the year 12 Flint (1076) on the day 10 Lizard. The date has clear associations with a ritual event during the taking of power in Ñuu Dzau: the days 7 Alligator and 8 Wind of the year 12 Flint are associated with the coming down of the *Mimixcoa*, or Star Spirits, who were taken captive by Founding Lords of the Ñuu Dzau dynasties.<sup>56</sup>

Among the seven nobles who came to pay their respects to young Lord 2 Rain 'Ocoñaña' was Lord 10 Rabbit 'Blood Jaguar.' He was a prince from the Town of Sacrifice and Blood Mountain, where his father, Lord 9 House, son of Lord 8 Wind 'Twenty Eagles,' had founded a dynasty by marrying Lady 11 Alligator, daughter of the Sun God and a local princess.<sup>57</sup> Born in the year 6 Reed (1031), Lord 10 Rabbit 'Blood Jaguar' was forty-five years old, his father's eldest son and heir. Later he played a historical role as an adviser of Lord 2 Rain and an ally of Lord 8 Deer. His participation in offering the crown to young Lord 2 Rain in a time of a delicate rivalry between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu qualifies him as a supporter of the rights of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty and, consequently, as an opponent of the dictates of his paternal grandfather and his uncle, Lord 8 Wind and Lord 3 Lizard, respectively, from Chiyo Yuhu. This opposition may be a result of the same reasons we have seen in the case of Lady 9 Wind setting up her own mat and throne in Añute: the noble house to which Lord 10 Rabbit belonged may also have been interested in gaining independence from the old ruler of Chiyo Yuhu.

### YOUNG LORD 8 DEER 'JAGUAR CLAW'

After the death of Prince 5 Movement, Ñuu Tnoo's political future looked hopeless. Lord 5 Alligator, who must have been around sixty years of age, likely dominated the site, although no information is given about the precise circumstances. We do not know if Lord 5 Movement's father, Lord 12 Lizard,



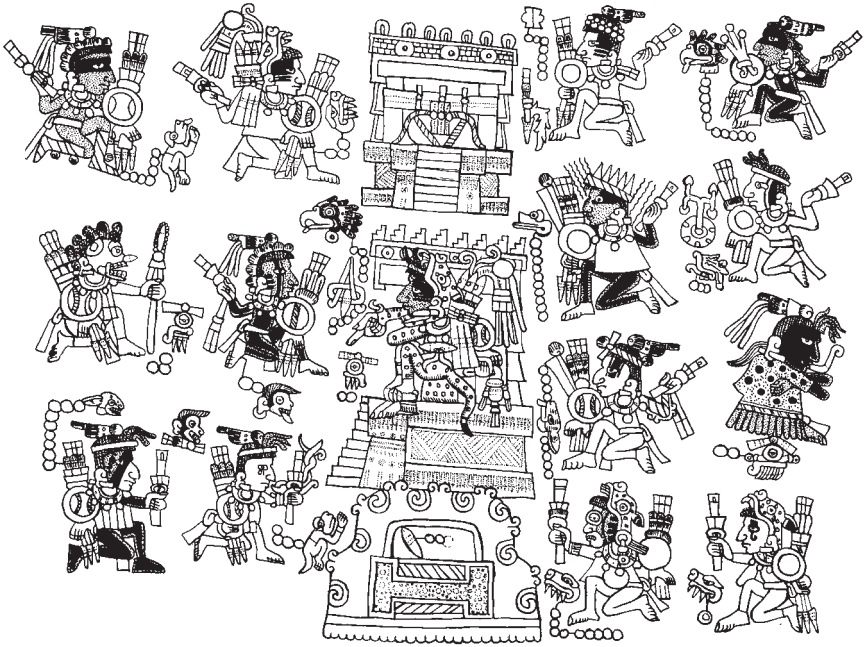
5.16a. After a genealogical section, old Lord 8 Wind is shown in a temple speaking to Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña’ (Codex Tonindeye, 7).

was still alive. Who, then, protected and controlled the young Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña,’ Lord 5 Alligator or Lord 8 Wind? The two old leaders had become open antagonists, and the latter seems to have had the advantage.

It was in these suspenseful days that Lord 8 Deer’s career began. As a son of Lord 5 Alligator’s second marriage, he had only played a marginal role until then. As a youngster he had participated in conquests, probably at the expense of Chiyo Yuhu. Trained as a warrior, he was now sixteen years old.

In the year 2 Reed (1079) on the day 10 Flower, Lord 8 Deer conquered the Valley of the Quetzal Feathers (or Valley of the Nobles). If this is in some way a reference to the Valley of Yodzo Cahi–Atoco (Yanhuitlan-Nochixtlan), with its central location in the Mixteca Alta, he encroached upon the territory of Chiyo Yuhu.<sup>58</sup>

Fifty-nine days after this victory, in the year 3 Flint (1080) on the day 4 Rain, that is, the second day of that year, we see Lord 8 Deer coming out of a cave. He had likely been preparing himself in a retreat, through fasting and bloodletting, for even more important actions. That same day, in another



5.16b. After listening to the words of Lord 8 Wind, Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña’ is seated in a temple, surrounded by warriors (Codex Tonindeye, 8).

cave located at the foot of Big Mountain, a place of visions where dark vapors rose from the ground, he found a treasure, a chest with jewels. It was in the land of Lord 3 Reed, who later married Lord 8 Deer’s younger sister 12 Grass (who was not born until 1081). If Big Mountain here again represents Monte Albán, the found treasure may have been the valuable contents of a Classic tomb. We get the impression that Lord 8 Deer had left the conflict area of the Yodzo Cahi–Atoco Valley and was carrying out his ritual preparations in a safer place.

The next day, 5 Flower, a day of feasts and rejoicing, Lord 8 Deer visited Lady 4 Rabbit ‘Precious Quetzal’ and her husband, Lord 10 Flower ‘Bow Tail,’ in Mouth of Dark Speckled Mountain. This town has not been identified with certainty. The sign contains a mouth, which indicates that the toponym starts with the locative prefix *a-*, a customary convention in the Yodzo Cahi–Atoco region (Smith 1973a: 41–42). The dark speckled material may represent *cuchi*, “gravel.” Acuchi, “Place of Gravel,” is the Dzaha Dzau name of San Jerónimo Sosola.<sup>59</sup>

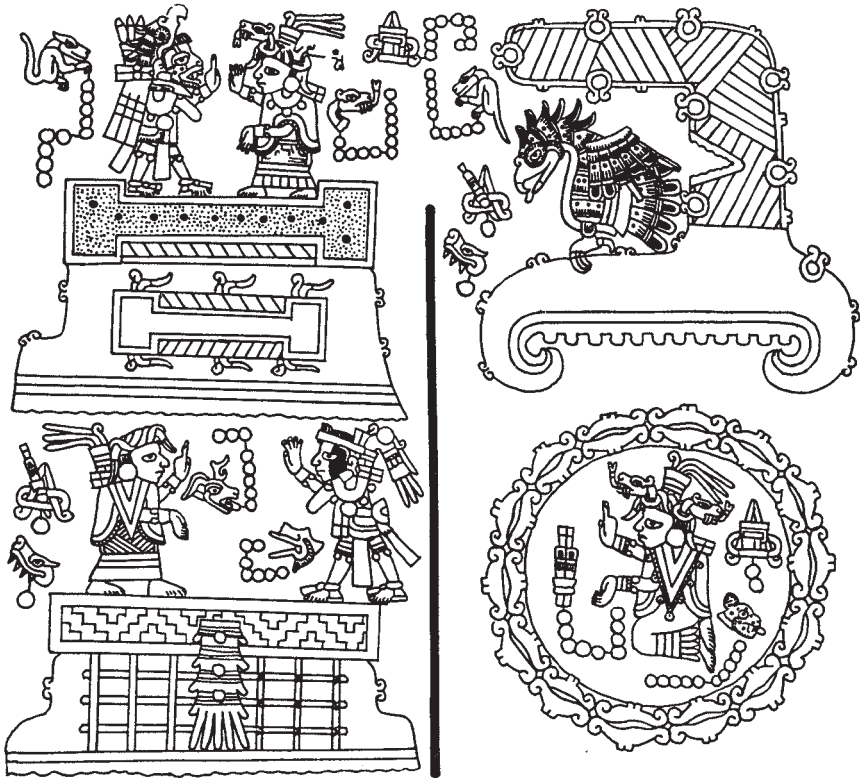
As the sister of both Lord 12 Lizard (ruler of Ñuu Tnoo) and Lord 10 Eagle (ruler of Añute), Lady 4 Rabbit ‘Precious Quetzal’ was an important political personality. It is to her that Lord 8 Deer gave the honorific title “Flower of the Valley of the Quetzal Feathers,” which commemorated his victory over Valley of the Quetzal Feathers one year earlier. Such an action implies that he handed over the right to receive the tributes of the conquered area to Lady 4 Rabbit.<sup>60</sup> This suggests that Lord 12 Lizard had died by then and that the young warrior Lord 8 Deer was therefore turning to the sister of the defunct king, Lady 4 Rabbit, as next in the royal blood line of Ñuu Tnoo. The absence of any reference to the infant Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña’ further suggests that he was still in the custody of Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles.’

On the same day, 5 Flower, Lord 8 Deer retired to still another cave, which was a sanctuary (*dzoco ñuhu*), to venerate the Sacred Bundle, guarded there as in a temple.<sup>61</sup> Afterward, still on the day 5 Flower, Lord 8 Deer paid his respects to the Sacred Bundle in the Temple of Heaven of the nearby Town of the Pointed Objects (Yucu Ndeque, Huaucilla?). This temple was dedicated to 1 Death—the appropriate day for offerings to the Sun God and to the Great Mother of the Dynasty, Lady 1 Death.<sup>62</sup>

The Sun God is generally represented in full and associated with a Precious Jade temple; the Bundle, instead, suggests an ancestral cult. So it is plausible that here Lord 8 Deer is venerating the great-great-grandmother of Lady 4 Rabbit. But at the same time, he seems to have made vows to the Sun God as preparation for the ball game that follows. The day 5 Flower is also dedicated to one of the spirits of the warriors who died in battle or sacrifice (called Tonalque in Nahuatl).<sup>63</sup>

Two persons, dressed in *xicollis*, arrive at the Temple of Heaven, throwing *piciete* (wild tobacco) powder up in the air and in front of them. A person associated with Mountain of a Blood Stream is then shown giving instructions. Unfortunately, the heavy damage makes it impossible to determine precisely what is going on. We suspect that during these ceremonies, Lord 8 Deer established friendly contacts with the princes from Mountain of Blood and Sacrifice who were later going to assist him at several occasions.

The third day of the next year, the day 6 Serpent in the year 4 House (1081), had special significance for Lord 8 Deer, as it functioned as the eve of his name day and was dedicated to a “birthday” ritual (apparently the intermediate 7 Death was not considered a good day for such a celebration). On this occasion, Lord 8 Deer engaged in a ball game. His opponents were

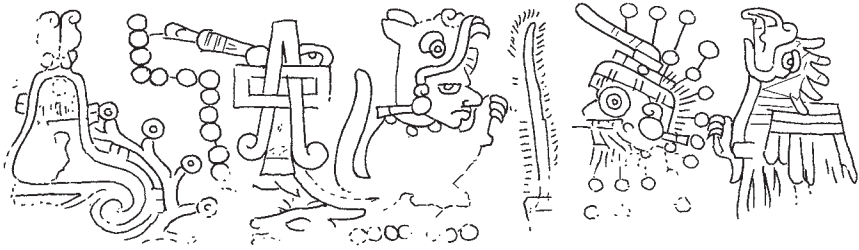


5.17. Neighboring towns of the Mixteca Baja: Nuu Dzauī (Huajuapán), Toavui (Chila), Yuhua Cuchi (Guaxolotitlán), and Nuu Niñe (Tonalá) (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 3).

the Sun God, Lord 1 Death, and the Venus God, Lord 1 Movement, probably represented by human impersonators.<sup>64</sup> The ball court was associated with a river of sacred fish close to Dark Speckled Mountain. The story does not tell us what Lord 8 Deer had bet in this game, but the stakes must have been high, perhaps even involving his life. But he won the ball game, and as a reward, immediately afterward his former opponents helped him conquer the Jewel Stone of Ash River (*Yaa Yuta*, Nejapa), a precious object associated with the West, the realm of the descending Sun and Venus.

As Lord 8 Deer's "conquest" took place on the same day as the ball game (6 Serpent), no trip to the Nejapa River is implied. The action has a symbolic significance. By winning the game, Lord 8 Deer made Sun and Venus, both Patrons of war, his allies. With their help he obtained a stone





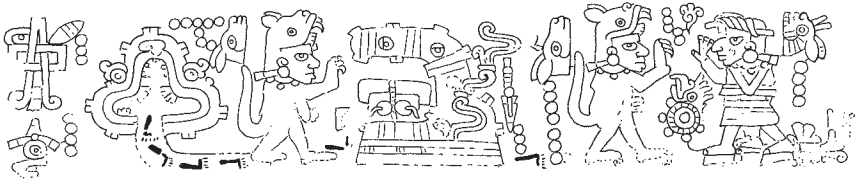
5.18. *The birth scene of Lord 8 Deer (Codex Nuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 7-V).*

that contained the precious power of the West. The Goddess of the West, or the Grandmother of the River (*Sitna Yuta*), the old Lady 1 Grass is associated with fertility and procreation.<sup>65</sup> The precise significance of this precious stone of the West escapes us, but we suppose it was an object of divine, magical power, the possession of which would guarantee victory.

In Chiyo Yuhu thirty-four days later, on the day 1 Rain of the same year 4 House (1081), a day dedicated to the deified Women who died in childbirth (called *Cihuateteo* in Nahuatl), Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ summoned young Lord 2 Rain ‘Twenty Jaguars’ before him. The prince was now six years old and ready to do his first priestly service. He wore the priestly *xicolli* for the occasion and made the gesture of submission, crossing his arms and bowing his head to Lord 8 Wind. We harbor no more doubts about who had control over him. A protruding tooth characterizes Lord 8 Wind ‘Twenty Eagles’ as an old man; indeed, he must have been far into his eighties by then. He spoke an elaborate discourse to the prince, giving him strict orders and a jewel in a cotton ball to attend to.

In reality, this was a coup against his rivals in Ñuu Tnoo and Añute. Lord 8 Wind’s plan was clear: the crown prince of Ñuu Tnoo was to be put away in temple service while an attack was prepared on Añute, the rebellious vassal state. Lord 8 Wind’s son and heir, Lord 3 Lizard, headed the troops, marching toward Añute during the following days and attacking the town on the day 4 Wind (only three days after the day 1 Rain of the meeting between Lord 8 Wind and Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña’). The king, Lord 10 Eagle, however, beat off the attack; he is shown victoriously grabbing the aggressor’s hair and stabbing him with his spear. It is possible that Lord 3 Lizard lost his life during this assault.<sup>66</sup>

This was the violent climax of the long-smoldering rivalry. The scene clearly shows the division between the two parties: on one side Lord 3 Lizard



5.19. Lord 8 Deer coming out of a cave and visiting Lady 5 Flower (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 9-V).

and his father, Lord 8 Wind, as ruler of Chiyo Yuhu and on the other Lord 10 Eagle, prince of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty and ruler of Añute, defending the interests of his wife and daughter against the ambitions of his in-laws. In the background we see the political design of the old high priest Lord 5 Alligator in Ñuu Tnoo, who had never submitted to Lord 8 Wind but had set up a rival network of personal alliances.

In the meantime, Prince 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña’ was confined to a Temple on top of Mountain of the Red Caves and the Red Ball Court, surrounded by the armed warriors of Lord 8 Wind. The ceremonial date associated with that temple was year 10 Flint day 1 Eagle, which is not a moment within the lifespan of Lord 2 Rain but the sacred date of the West, especially dedicated to Lady 1 Eagle, *Sitna Yuta*, “Grandmother of the River,” the Patron Deity of that direction.<sup>67</sup> The fact that he was held in custody by warriors is omitted in Añute historiography. Instead, Codex Añute shows Lord 2 Rain approaching a cave above a river where a jewel was kept, named “Heart of the People of the Rain God.” This is clearly the oracle cave in Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla), where a jade statue of the Plumed Serpent was kept in a Sacred Bundle.<sup>68</sup> We cannot be sure that the two scenes refer to the same place and action. Thus whereas one version stresses that young Lord 2 Rain was put away and limited to priestly duties, as was proper for his age, but was surrounded by warriors, that is, was a prisoner of Lord 8 Wind, the other version gives a more positive picture, suggesting that he merely went to ask for an oracle, that is, to find a way out of the major political crisis of the moment.

The prospects for the Ñuu Tnoo–Añute faction were even more troubled because of the death of their main leader, the high priest Lord 5 Alligator, who died on the day 9 Dog of the year 5 Rabbit (1082). The day had appropriate symbolic connotations: both the sign Dog and the number 9 are related to death and magic.<sup>69</sup>



## Chapter Six

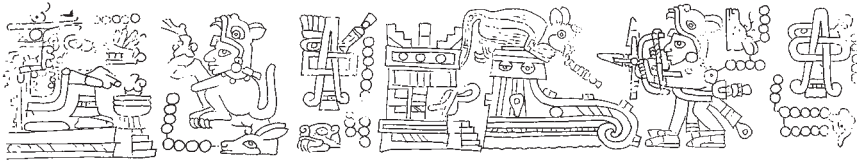
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# LORD *of the* TOLTECS

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ON THE DAY 13 FLOWER, THE SEVENTH DAY OF THE YEAR AFTER THE DEATH of his father, 6 Reed (1083), Lord 8 Deer ‘Jaguar Claw’ went hunting on the Mountain of the Temple of Heaven, where offerings of knotted grass and shells—spondylus and strombus—had been made in preparation for this act. With his arrows he shot a coyote.<sup>1</sup> Lord 8 Deer and his elder half-brother, Lord 12 Movement, both painted black with the hallucinogenic ointments of priests, sacrificed the coyote and a deer for a celestial spirit, Lord 13 Reed, who spoke to them from Heaven. Codex Iya Nacuaa confirms the visionary character of the event, showing that one of the three priests involved was a *yahui* (shaman) and that Lord 13 Reed manifested himself in a *nahualistic* way, coming down as a white eagle. His words foretold war (*tñañu*), implying that Lord 8 Deer would become a great warrior.

As a result of this hunt and sacrifice, a priest ceremonially cleansed Lord 8 Deer and his close relatives: his elder paternal half-brother, Lord 12 Movement



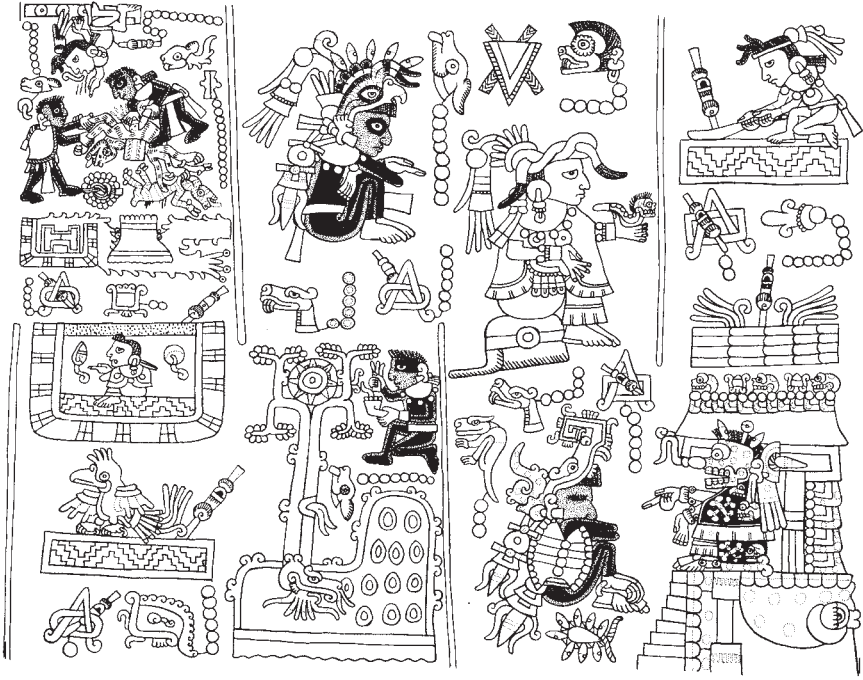
6.1. Lord 8 Deer hunting and visiting the Temple of Death (Codex *Ñuu Tnoo-Ndisi Nuu*, 9- IV).

‘Blood Jaguar’; his younger brother, Lord 9 Flower ‘Sacred Arrow’; and his elder maternal half-brother, Lord 8 Flower ‘Flint.’ The ceremony unified these four men as allies. At the same time, the cleansing may have been a name giving ritual.<sup>2</sup> In that case, Lord 8 Deer would have received his given name ‘Jaguar Claw’ at this time, the sign of which appears prominently before him: a jeweled claw, giving us the reading Teyusi Nāña or Teyusi Cuiñe. In noble speech a “fingernail” or “claw” was called *teyusi*, “small jewel.” Generally, the codices portray Lord 8 Deer with this given name from his birth onward, but that may be a projection of the later name giving ritual back into the past.

The place where the vision was obtained and the cleansing and naming ritual was celebrated became known as Mountain of the Claws. According to Codex Tonindeye the locale was Cut Mountain, situated where a river from the opposite direction joins the river of the earlier-mentioned ball court of Dark Speckled Mountain. We cannot identify the toponyms, but we suppose that Lord 8 Deer was still in the vicinity of Town of the Pointed Objects and Dark Speckled Mountain.

The ball game, the vision quest, and the cleansing ritual were the preparations for a daring adventure. Lord 8 Deer ‘Jaguar Claw’ waited for his special day, 6 Serpent, and then went to see Lady 9 Grass in the Temple of Death, which represented the South. The name for this direction in Alvarado’s dictionary is *Andaya*, “Place of Death,” or *Huahi Cahi*, which is also the word for “cemetery.” Today, the latter term is pronounced *Vehe Kihin*. It no longer refers to the South but to a cave where a dangerous, malignant spirit dwells. The skull-and-bones imagery of the *Huahi Cahi* in the codices suggests that originally it was seen as a liminal place, an entrance to the Underworld, where one could meet the awe-inspiring powers of death.

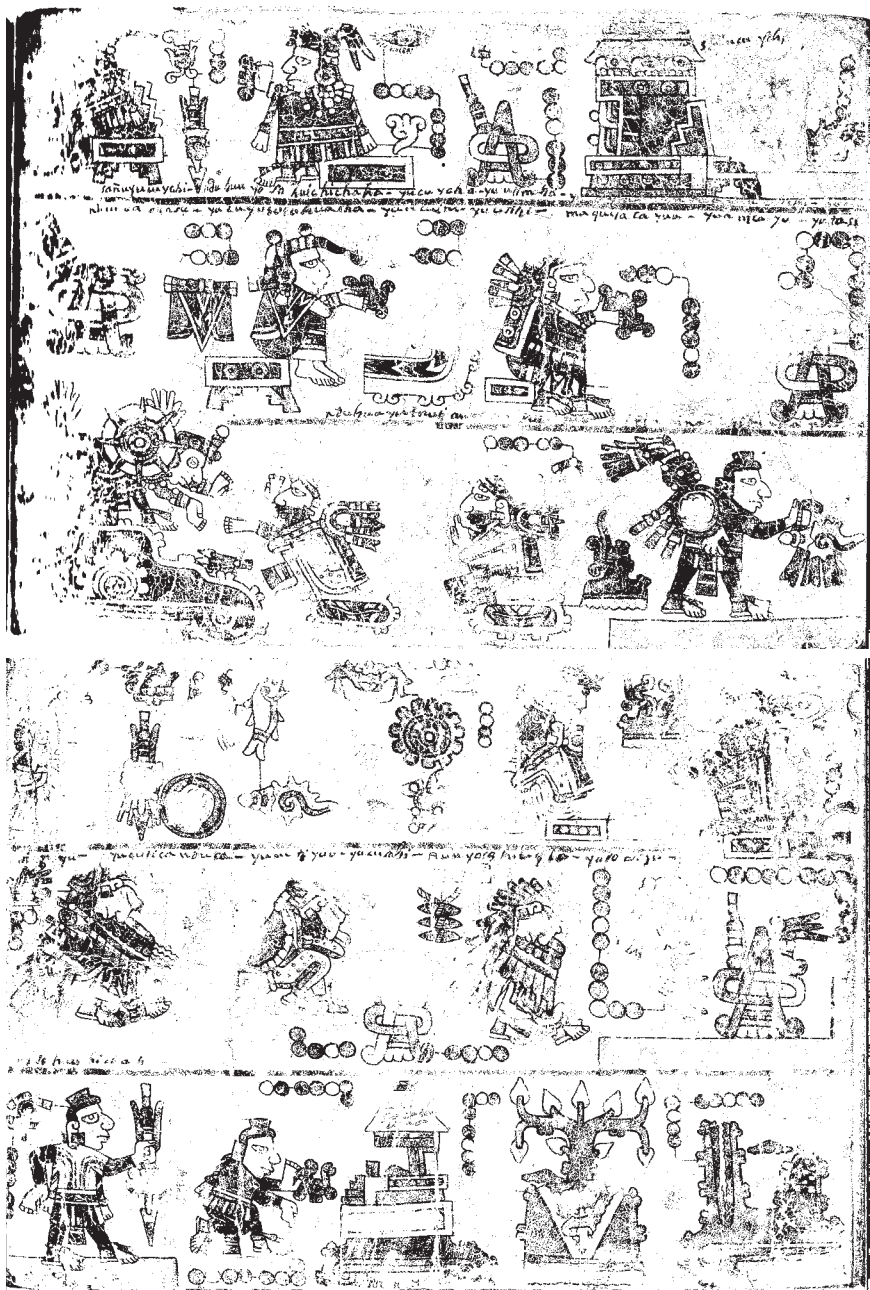
We have identified this sanctuary as the funerary cave where the rulers of the *Ñuu Dzau*i village-states were centrally buried, a site venerated in the entire region and described in detail by Burgoa (1934b, I: 337–341). This



6.2. Lady 6 Monkey and Lord 8 Deer visiting the Temple of Death (Codex Tonindecy, 44).

cave was located on the Mountain of the Deer (Cerro de los Cervatillos) in the ancient kingdom of Ñuu Ndaya, today known as Ñuu Ndeya, Chalcatongo.

Lady 9 Grass (*Qcuañe*) is the Patron of the Temple of Death. Her given name includes a maize flower (*yoco*) drinking blood (*neñe*). This sign may refer to a name mentioned in a legal document of 1596 from Ñuu Ndaya: “the great lord called *tani yoco*, which means ‘devil,’ who abides in the cave.” In this term *yoco* can mean “spirit,” but it is also homonymous with “maize flower.” The word *tani* is difficult to interpret; it may come from a combination of *taa*, “father,” and *nii/nee*, “whole” or *ne(ñe)*, “blood.”<sup>3</sup> The title *taa*, “father,” is adequate for the “great lord” mentioned in the text, apparently a male deity. In the case of Lady 9 Grass we would expect *naa*, “mother,” or *sitna*, “grandmother.” Another onomastic sign consists of a black *quechquemilt* decorated with white S-shaped motifs. In Nahuatl this form is known as *xonecuilli* and is used to indicate a type of tortilla specially made for ritual. The word also designates a particular constellation in the night sky.<sup>4</sup> The black-and-white



6.3a, b. Lady 6 Monkey, Lord 8 Deer, and several priests visiting the Temple of Death: (1) above, Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 3; (2) below, Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 4.

combination is a reference to death. Her name is to be understood both as “Lady of the *Xonecuilli* Constellation” and as “Power of Death,” which makes her a kind of *Omíteotl* (Nahuatl: “Deity of the Bones”). She is comparable to the *Cihuacoatl* of the Mexica, who is the Spirit of the Piciete and the Lady of the Milky Way. She is invoked in Guerrero as *yi’ya si’i yichi, yi’ya si’i ñuu* (in Alvarado’s orthography, *Iyadzehe ichi, Iyadzehe ñuu*), “Lady of the Road, Lady of the Night,” that is, “Lady of the Road of the Night Sky” or “Lady Milky Way,” known to be the “Mother of Tobacco and Pulque.”<sup>5</sup>

Today, the malignant spirit dwelling in the *Vehe Kihin* is considered male. He is called *Ja Uhu* “Pain” (in present-day Ñuu Ndeya), or *Xa Cuina*, “He who assaults and robs” (in the Atoco area), and is identified with *El Gachupín*, “the Spaniard,” that is, “the devil.” People say that certain persons go to such a cave to ask for money, power, or success—which they obtain in exchange for their soul. The modern image is clearly influenced by Spanish notions of making a pact with the devil. The sinister character himself, however, seems to be based on the colonial *encomendero* or *hacendado*, owner of great power and richness, to which indigenous people gain access only by giving up their dignity (soul).

These data enable us to understand the scene in the codices. Although precolonial culture did not have the concept of a “devil,” the cave was a dangerous place, associated with death. Lady 9 Grass must have had the same power to give wealth and success to whoever dared to make a pact with her. Without doubt, such a meeting was considered then, as it is now, a daring encounter, undertaken only in times of great crisis to overcome problems or to realize ambitions otherwise too high. The price for the help of these powers would have been then, as it is now, equally high.

Several caves are considered to be *Vehe Kihin*, widely distributed in Ñuu Dzauí Ñuhu, the Mixteca Alta. A famous example is situated in what is now the territory of Yosondúa (formerly part of the Ñuu Ndaya realm); it is a mysterious and beautiful subterranean labyrinth of stalactites and stalagmites. In the territory of Itundujía (also within the former extension of Ñuu Ndaya) the striking peak of Yuku Kasa (*Yucu Cadza*, probably “Potent Mountain”), approximately 2,500 meters high, which dominates the zone of transition between the Mixteca Alta and the coast, has special significance in this respect. Today it is also known as *Ñuu Anima*, “Place of Souls.” Those who have died are said to gather on its top in a special marketplace of the deceased, a “gateway to Heaven.” Traveling from the town of Itundujía to Yuku Kasa, we



pass through an awe-inspiring “liminal landscape” of capricious rock formations, next to small crater-shaped ponds, between misty pine forests and panoramic views on blue gorges descending steeply to the tropical lowlands of the coast. This is the southern end of the Mixteca Alta. As evening clouds, coming in from the ocean, drift over the gray peaks and surround us, we feel touched by the cold mystery of the Beyond.

*The INTERVENTION of LADY 9 GRASS*

Lord 8 Deer had a special relationship with the ruler of Ñuu Ndaya, Lord 8 Alligator, because his younger sister, Lady 9 Monkey, was married to him. She had been born in the year 13 Flint (1064) and thus was now nineteen years old. Perhaps the marriage had taken place earlier, when she was between thirteen and fifteen, as was not uncommon for Ñuu Dzauí noble Ladies—in that case, the marriage would have basically coincided with the period in which Lord 8 Deer was engaged in ritual activities in the realm of Lady 4 Rabbit and Lord 10 Flower (1079). It is easy to understand, then, why Lord 8 Deer and his companions could move around with such ease in the territory of Ñuu Ndaya. It is also possible, however, that the marriage was arranged precisely during these days so they could obtain permission to enter the *Huahi Cabi*.<sup>6</sup>

Contemporary ideas about the *Vehe Kihin* explain the motive behind Lord 8 Deer’s visit: he went to that fearful place to invoke the help of its Spirit Guardian, Lady 9 Grass. Young, daring, and desperate, he apparently was willing to accept any outcome, even to give up his life and soul, to resolve his predicament. The step was not as strange as it may seem. Recall that Lord 8 Deer’s father had been a Death priest and had recently died. Even today, people go to Yuku Kasa to meet with loved ones who have died shortly before, especially to ask them for information or counsel. Certainly, Lord 8 Deer counted on his father’s spiritual assistance “from the other side” in this dangerous operation. Besides, he did not go alone. He had convinced Lady 6 Monkey, the princess of Añute, to come with him. She was very young at the time, so we understand that the arrangement was not made with her but with her guardian, the priest Lord 10 Lizard. In going together to the Death Cave and sitting together in front of Lady 9 Grass, the young people presented themselves as allies or even more: as a future couple, a young man and girl seeking the arrangement of a marital alliance.

Daughter of the second son of the former Ñuu Tnoo king, Lady 6 Monkey was a logical prospective “leading lady” for the Ñuu Tnoo and Añute faction now that the crown prince, Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña,’ had fallen into enemy hands and the principal line of succession was in danger of being exterminated. Lord 8 Deer was not of royal blood and had no rights to the throne of Ñuu Tnoo, but as an accomplished warrior and son of the region’s most important spiritual and political leader, he had considerable prestige and even greater ambitions. The logical step for him to take to gain the status of leader of the war against Chiyo Yuhu and, ultimately, to become ruler of Ñuu Tnoo was to marry Lady 6 Monkey. The plan may have been instigated by Lady 4 Rabbit, at whose court Lord 8 Deer had passed the preceding years. She was both Lady 6 Monkey’s aunt (her father’s sister) and cousin (her mother’s sister’s daughter). In Dzaha Dzauí the relationship of cousin is qualified with the same term as “sister” (*cuvui*). Lord 8 Deer was twenty years old, a normal age to find a wife. He might even have been in love. A divine confirmation of his plans was obviously what he hoped for as the definitive argument that would overrule all objections people might have to such a union because of his low birth status.

The day for the visit to the *Huabi Cabi* seems to have been chosen because of its mantic significance as the eve of Lord 8 Deer’s birthday and calendar name. The year was probably not chosen but dictated by the political situation. Still, the date had its own symbolic value: it preceded the year bearer year 7 Flint day 7 Flint, the sacred founding date of Ñuu Tnoo. It had played a role in the priestly career of Lord 8 Deer’s father and had earlier been a year of going to the *Huabi Cabi*.<sup>7</sup>

The visit was a profoundly emotional and religious event. It was not a geographic displacement but a spiritual journey. According to Codex Añute (6-III), Lady 6 Monkey went on this journey by herself. Her guardian, the old priest Lord 10 Lizard, who held all four functions of the Supreme Council of Añute, guided her to the entrance of a cave. This seems to be one of the subterranean passages that, according to traditional belief, connected different towns in the Ñuu Dzauí region. Before entering, Lady 6 Monkey conjured the Spirit Guardian of the passage from an old bone she found there. The *Ñuhu*, named 6 Vulture, manifested himself seated on a jaguar pelt throne as the one who held power over the road along which Lady 6 Monkey wanted to travel. He granted permission, and she continued her journey, disappearing into the earth.<sup>8</sup>

According to Codex Tonindeye (44), it was a *yahui*, a *nahual*-priest in mystical ecstasy (with closed eyes), who guided both Lady 6 Monkey and Lord

8 Deer, the latter also qualified as a shamanic priest, a *yaha yahui* (“eagle–fire serpent”) or “nigromancer.”<sup>9</sup> The name of the guiding shaman was Lord 3 Lizard ‘Rope, Knife,’ not to be confused with Lord 3 Lizard, the son of Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu. This was a prince from the Town of Sacrifice at the foot of Blood Mountain, a younger brother of Lord 10 Rabbit ‘Blood Jaguar’ who had participated in the ceremonial salute of Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña.’ Lord 3 Lizard ‘Rope, Knife’ had been born in year 2 Flint (1040) and was now forty-three years old.

Codex Iya Nacuaa I (3/4-II) mentions three *yaha yahui* priests who guided Lady 6 Monkey and whose names can be reconstructed as Lord 10 [Rabbit ‘Blood Jaguar’], Lord [3 Lizard] ‘Rope, Knife,’ and Lord 4 Grass ‘War Eagle.’ Although the latter is unknown, in the first two we recognize the two brothers from Blood Mountain, acting here as confidants and allies of Lord 8 Deer. Each had initiated “the road,” that is, his ritual preparations, several years before: in 11 Reed, 9 [House?], and 13 [House?], respectively, which would correspond to 1075, 1073, and 1077. Furthermore, Lady 6 Monkey was accompanied by another *yaha yahui* priest with his eyes open, Lord 8? [damaged day sign] ‘Great War Fire.’

Presenting themselves to Lady 9 Grass, Lord 8 Deer offered her a heart, while Lady 6 Monkey gave her jewels and ritual garments—she was seated on the jaguar cushion, indicating her royal status. The Spirit of the Death Temple, who made a fear-inspiring appearance with her skeletal jaw and bloodshot eyes, spoke to the princess and commanded her to marry Lord 11 Wind ‘Blood Jaguar’ from Town of the Xipe Bundle, an elderly man who had married the half-sister of Lord 8 Deer, Lady 6 Lizard, in 1061.<sup>10</sup> He was from an ancient noble house and one of the contacts and allies of Lord 5 Alligator. We read nothing about Lady 6 Lizard at this moment; she had likely died. But from her marriage with Lord 11 Wind, three children had been born: Lord 10 Dog ‘Sacred Eagle,’ Lord 6 House ‘Rope, Flints,’ and Lady 13 Serpent ‘Flowered Serpent.’

In giving these orders, Lady 9 Grass renewed the alliance of the Ñuu Tnoo and Añute faction with Town of the Xipe Bundle. This was a strategic move, as it gave Añute robust support from a prestigious neighboring town. We hypothetically locate Town of the Xipe Bundle in the Valley of Oaxaca to the east of Añute. At the same time, the move frustrated Lord 8 Deer’s dreams. Instead, Lady 9 Grass gave him several objects of power: an owl arrow and a skull shield (lethal weapons from the *Huahi Cahí*), a golden fish and a conch

(references to the ocean), a bowl for sacrificed hearts, and a blue stone vessel for blood offerings (*cuauxicalli*). These objects had prophetic significance and were to play a role in significant events of Lord 8 Deer's future life.<sup>11</sup>

The young, ambitious warrior accepted the divine instructions, but the frustration of his plan and the rejection of his desire to marry Lady 6 Monkey must have been a huge blow to his ego. Therefore, Lady 9 Grass's decision fomented hatred in Lord 8 Deer against Lord 11 Wind and his family, a hatred that, in the long run, was detrimental to this renewed alliance.

The visit to the *Huahi Cahi* is a crucial episode, as it influenced the rest of Lord 8 Deer's life and thereby was critical for all subsequent dynastic history. It was a highly dramatic turning point, easily recognized by a Ñuu Dzauí public as the beginning of a story that could not end well, the start of a tragedy of greatness, power, and inevitable death. From now on there was a permanent root of evil in Lord 8 Deer's success: he would get the wealth and the rulership he desired, but in a different way than he had expected. And he would not experience love. There would be violence, and killing, and in the end nothing of what he accumulated would remain.

Coming out of the *Huahi Cahi*, the couple separated. Lord 8 Deer paid his respects to the Tree of Lord Sun, standing there as a complement to the darkness of the Underworld.<sup>12</sup> According to Codex Iya Nacuaa I, pages 4-I and 3-III, Lord 8 Deer was accompanied into the *Huahi Cahi* by Lord 5 Rain 'Smoking Mountain,' who is fairly important in Codex Iya Nacuaa as Lord 8 Deer's ally but who outside that codex is only mentioned once in Codex Tonindeye (58), as one of the many who saluted Lord 8 Deer when he became ruler in Ñuu Tnoo. Therefore, he is seen as a secondary figure who was of primary importance to—likely an ancestor of—the ruler who ordered the Codex Iya Nacuaa to be painted. This consideration and the entire context make it improbable that Lord 5 Rain was actually with Lord 8 Deer in the *Huahi Cahi*. His presence can be explained as a political claim, motivated by his descendant's wish to enhance his prestige with a more spectacular role in the biography of Lord 8 Deer.

The next day, 7 Death, Lord 8 Deer went to a temple in an unidentified town, carrying the power objects of the *Huahi Cahi*.<sup>13</sup> There he purified and sanctified the air through an offering of *piciete* (*Nicotiana rustica*). On the following days he performed a ritual invocation of the trees of the four directions and two other trees, placing offerings of *piciete* before them:

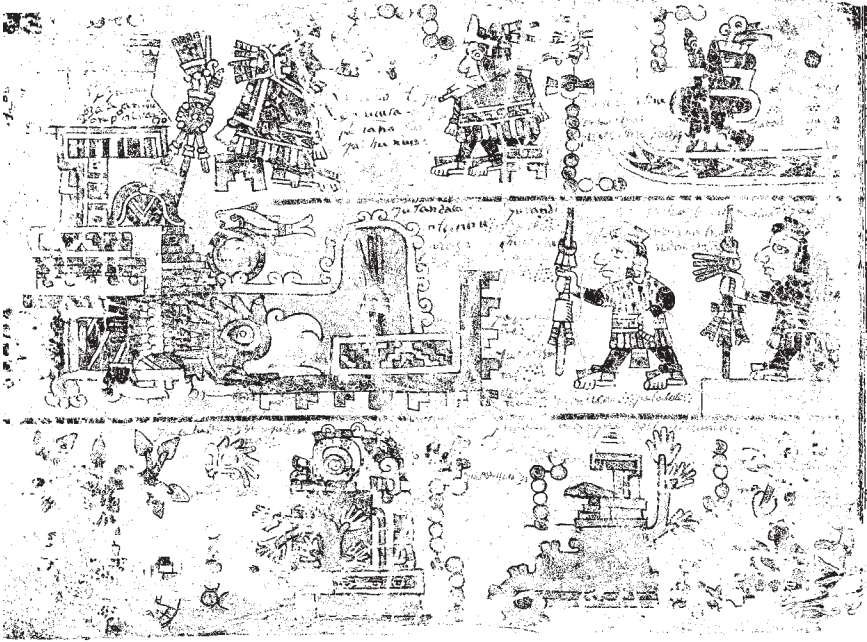
- on the day 8 Deer for the Tree of Where the Ñuhu Rises from the Ground (*nuu nicana ñuhu*), that is, the East
- on the day 9 Rabbit for the Tree of Split Hill–Dark Hill (*Yucu Naa*), that is, the North
- on the day 10 Water for the Tree of Ash River (*Yaa Yuta*), that is, the West
- on the day 11 Dog for the Tree of Death Temple (*Huahi Cahi*), that is, the South
- on the day 12 Monkey for the Tree of hand-like leaves
- on the day 13 Grass for the Tree of the pointed leaves

The sequence of days indicates that the trees were close together, like trees around one specific town, similar to the present-day crosses of the wards.<sup>14</sup>

Having paid his respects to the four corners of the world and the different trees, Lord 8 Deer returned to the Mountain of the Pointed Objects, and on the following day, 1 Reed, he made an offering there in the ball court. At that occasion he again wore the *yaha yahui* outfit of the shamanic priest.

After these preparations he set off on a long trip, together with a group of followers who carried the objects of power, to the village-state of Town of Hand Holding Feathers, which controlled the Mountain of the Bird. The latter is the well-known sign of Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec), located on the Pacific Coast. In the Ñuu Dzau codices it appears as a Mountain or Stone with a Bird's Head, to be read as "Mountain (*yucu*) of the Bird (*dzaa*)." Inside the bird's head the lower part of a human face is sometimes painted, reinforcing the reading through the homonym *dzaa*, "chin." The stone in the sign is explained by the fact that the central mountain in the town is actually called Yucu Yuu Dzaa, "Mountain of the Stone of the Bird." The Town of Hand Holding Feathers is associated with Yucu Dzaa and is apparently an important place in the coastal region. Its main sign is the same as that in the hieroglyph of Yuta Tnoho and must be read as *tnoho*, *tnuhu*, or *toho*. Therefore, the place sign can be identified as Ñuu Sitoho, "Town of the Lords," that is, Juquila, the main town of the Chah Tnio (Chatino) region.<sup>15</sup> Codex Iya Nacuaa focuses on Yucu Dzaa (the place it comes from) and only mentions Ñuu Sitoho in passing. For the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty it was important to remember the king and queen of Ñuu Sitoho; later, a son of Lord 8 Deer would marry their daughter.

Lord 8 Deer established himself in Yucu Dzaa, together with his half-brother, Lord 12 Movement 'Blood Jaguar.' Here, on the central mountain



6.4. Lord 8 Deer becoming ruler in Yucu Dzaa (Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 5).

Yucu Yuu Dzaa itself, they constructed a Temple of Heaven as a copy of the one in Ñuu Tnoo, where their father had served as a high priest. The Sacred Bundle was deposited there, together with the Tnucucua staff of rulership. In front of the temple were placed the golden fish and skull shield Lord 8 Deer had received in the *Huahi Cahí* as signs of his mission. Modern building activity has affected the Yucu Yuu Dzaa, and no remains of ancient constructions can be seen today. But there are the great rocks on top of the mountain, the Protector Spirits, the *Ndoso* (Ndodzo), looking out silently over their lands. It is here that the *Nabuales*, the *ra nduwi*, gather. We hear other intriguing references. The small stream that flows in the direction of the large archaeological site of La Soledad, along which the passage of people over the centuries has carved out a deep path, is called *Yutya Toho*, just like the primordial Yuta Tnoho from which the Founders of the dynasty originally came.

Soon, Lord 8 Deer showed his training as a war leader. First, he presented himself before Lord 1 Death ‘Sun Serpent’ and Lady 11 Serpent ‘Flower–Quetzal Feathers,’ the rulers of Ñuu Sitoho (Juquila). This part of the coast may have been inhabited mainly by Nten Chah Tnio (Chatino), vassals to

the kings of Ñuu Sitoho. After consulting with these rulers, Lord 8 Deer conquered Water of the Rubber Ball, burned the place, and took its ruler, Lord 9 Serpent, prisoner. Given the surroundings, the toponym may refer to an area in or next to the lagoons close to Yucu Dzaa, such as Chacahua or Manialtepec, which are of great economic importance as sources of fish, water birds, and similar wildlife.

This was the beginning of a series of military activities that would subjugate the main towns in the coastal area and thus lay the foundation for the later important realm and influence sphere of Yucu Dzaa.<sup>16</sup> The sequences of conquests, we conclude, represent different campaigns, making it difficult to reconstruct a precise geographic order. Moreover, the codices differ as to the time lapse involved. Codex Iya Nacuaa mentions the year 7 Flint (1084). The area of the first campaign has not yet been identified but must have involved the core of what was to become the powerful village-state of Yucu Dzaa. According to Codex Tonindeye, the campaign ended with several lords coming to offer their valiant warriors (jaguar and eagle), their wealth (gold pieces and ornaments of quetzal feathers), and cacao groves (the cacao bean and the Spirit of the cacao)—a scene very similar to the coming together of local lineage heads for the foundation ritual of the realm.

Lord 8 Deer's two half-brothers died during this time: on the day 8 Death of the year 9 Rabbit (1086), Lord 9 Movement 'Bird' and Lord 3 Water 'Heron' were sacrificed in Quetzal Town at ages thirty-eight and twenty-five, respectively. We do not know how this event was related to the military activities of Lord 8 Deer himself. The place sign normally represents Ñuu Ndozco (Huitzo), which would situate the event in the Mixteca Alta.<sup>17</sup>

During this period, Lord 8 Deer seems to have operated mainly on his own. There is only a brief reference to Lord 12 Movement upon Lord 8 Deer's arrival in Yucu Dzaa; the elder half-brother agreed with the founding of the temple and gave his general support. Interestingly, no mention is made of a marriage. After having been left by Lady 6 Monkey, Lord 8 Deer seems to have remained a bachelor, at least according to the versions registered by the surviving codices.

In the meantime, in the Mixteca Alta, Lady 6 Monkey had married Lord 11 Wind from Town of the Xipe Bundle, as the Spirit Guardian of the *Huabi Cabi* had told her to. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu (36–35) gives a general description of this sequence of events. A messenger, Lord 1 House 'Owl,' had come to Añute to give presents to the rulers, Lord 10 Eagle 'Stone Jaguar'

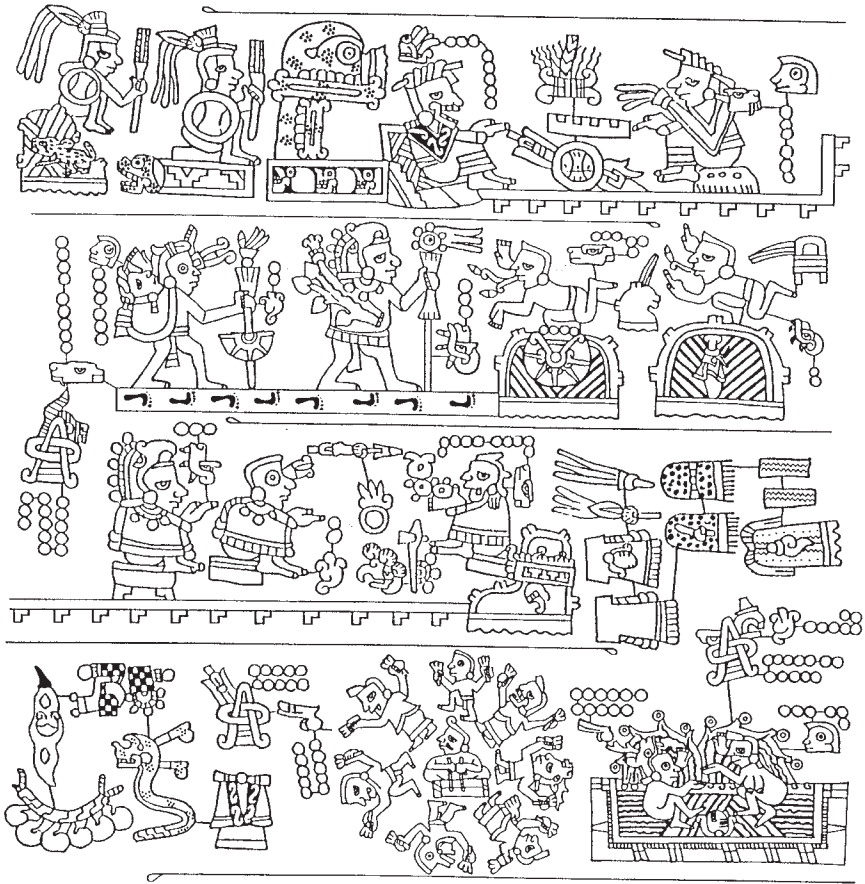
and Lady 9 Wind ‘Flint Quechquemitl’ (‘Power of Knives’), and to ask for Lady 6 Monkey’s hand for his king, Lord 11 Wind. This happened in the year 13 Rabbit (1090) on a day 8 Movement. The messenger’s calendar name may have been chosen for the occasion: the day 1 House is six days after 8 Movement and is dedicated to the Grandmother of the River (*Sitna Yuta*), the Patron of Human Procreation, and is thus ideal for arranging a marriage. Recall, too, the hypothesis that the realm of Lord 11 Wind was located in the Valley of Oaxaca. In the Beni Zaa calendar the day ‘House’ is called ‘Owl.’ Thus a curious prognostic element is brought into the narrative. The given name ‘Owl’ may only have been a rendering of his Beni Zaa calendric name, for which he was chosen to deliver his message. On the other hand, the owl is an omen of death, and this given name, therefore, may have functioned in the narrative as an indication to the public that something tragic was going to happen.

After the messenger had obtained the consent of the bride’s parents, the young couple went to the *Huahi Cabi* to offer precious gifts to Lady 9 Grass—the day has been scratched out. Several of the gifts were clearly related to the infernal atmosphere: jewels representing a skull and a heart, a “bat ball-game” with an “owl ring.” The jewels were explicitly characterized as coming from Sand Mountain, the land of Añute.

Then Lady 6 Monkey took a prisoner, Lord 10 Movement, on the day 10 Death of the year 13 Rabbit (1090), when she conquered Place of Reeds. The additional elements in the place sign are Crossed Legs, which reads *ndisi*, that is, “clearly visible,” and Breasts (*ndodzo*), which indicate that it was situated on top (*ndodzo*) of a mountain. We interpret this Place of Reeds as the Yucu Yoo (Acatepec), a stronghold in the northern part of Monte Albán, overlooking the valley and the commercial route to the rich lands of Xoconochco. The following day, 11 Deer, Lady 6 Monkey married Lord 11 Wind ‘Blood Jaguar.’

Codex Añute (7–8) conserves a fragment of the more detailed hometown version of this tale, in which the dramatic structure of the narrative is more explicit. Here it is told how after Lady 6 Monkey had returned from her trip with Lord 8 Deer to the *Huahi Cabi*, her marriage was prepared. The main elements can still be observed in present-day customs. Ritual dances were carried out around the *teponaztle* drum, with participants waving *ita yedze* herbs (*hierba del borrachito*) in their hands. The couple was guided and blessed in that ceremony by Lord 9 Wind and the divine Patrons of the four

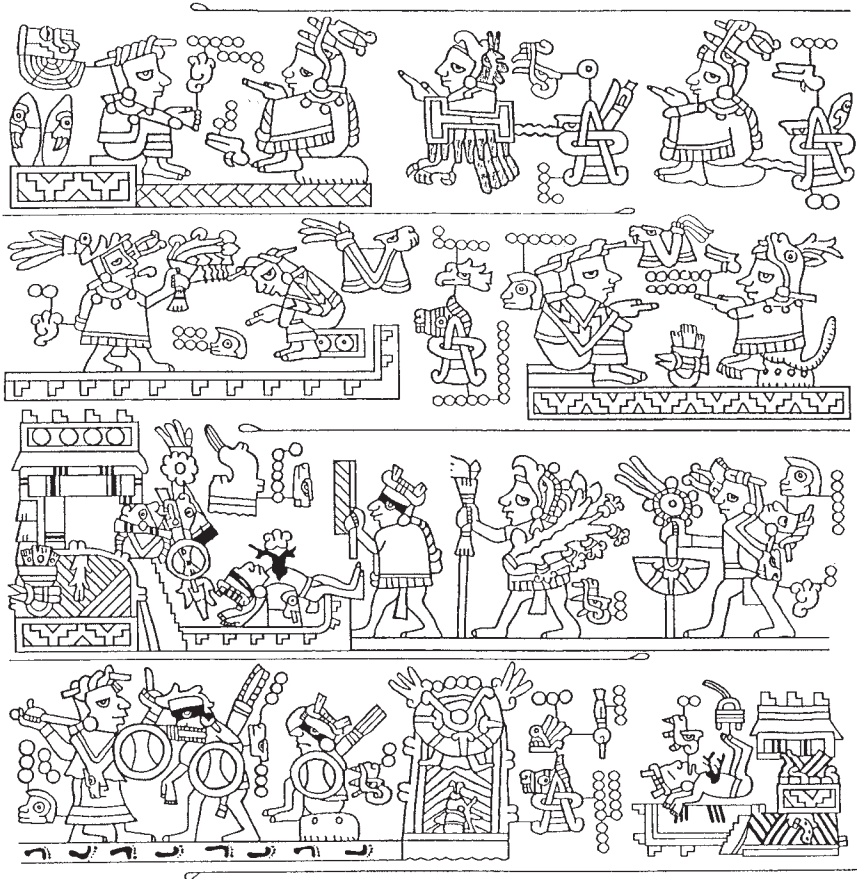




6.5a. Preparations for the marriage of Lady 6 Monkey, including the confrontation with the priests of Zaachila at Monte Albán (Codex Añute, 8).

directions: Grandfather Lord 2 Dog of the North, Grandmother Lady 1 Eagle of the West, Young Lord 7 Flower of the East, and Lady 9 Grass of the South. The betrothed couple took a bath in the river. New clothes were given to them, among which was a precious woman's gown (*huipil*), dyed with purple (*caracol*), and red tuniques (*xicollis*).

Then, in the year 13 Rabbit (1090) on the day 9 Serpent, not her parents but her old tutor, who at the time had all the titles of the Supreme Council of Four, instructed two men to carry Lady 6 Monkey, as a bride, to her husband's town. The two were selected because of their names: 2 Flower and 3 Alligator, two successive days of ritual importance—the two men may even



6.5b. The final part of the marriage of Lady 6 Monkey (Codex Añute, 8).

have been twins. The road on which she was carried passed the Hill of the Moon and the Hill of the Insect, which we identify as a diagnostic combination, referring to the Yucu Yoo and Tiyuqh slopes of Monte Albán (Acatepec and Sayultepec).<sup>18</sup>

There, two men made stopping gestures from above. The common element in their given names is “long hair,” which indicates that they were priests (cf. the Nahuatl term *papabuaque*). This sign is combined with a Bent Mountain and a Carrying Frame, respectively. The latter two elements qualify them as priests of the “Big Mountain of Zaachila”—again, Monte Albán.

Plain of the White Carrying Frame appears associated with the so-called Xipe dynasty in Codex Tonindeye and elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> The carrying frame (called

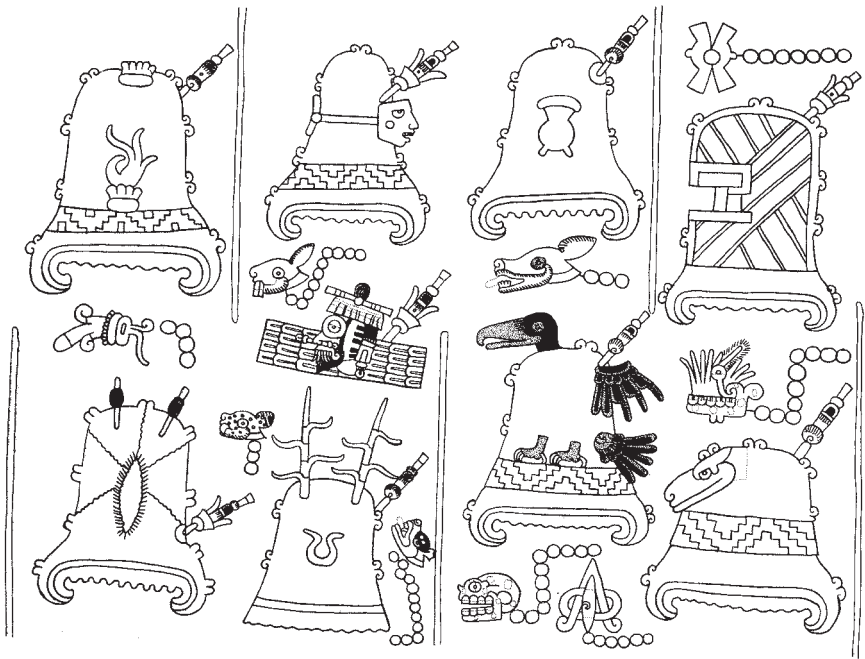
*cacaxtli* in Nahuatl) is *sito* in Dzaha Dzauí, which apparently is used as a homonym to represent the word *sitoho*, *toho*, or *to-*, “Lord.” In combination with the color white (*cuisi*), we obtain the reading *To-cuisi*. We find the same sign also without the color white in contexts that suggest an identification as Zaachila. That is the case here. We saw earlier that Bent Mountain, to be read as *Yucu Cabnu*, “Big Mountain,” in combination with the Hill of the Moon and the Hill of the Insect, represents Monte Albán, the famous Classic archaeological site and the most impressive mountain in the Zaachila area.

The two priests shouted to Lady 6 Monkey *yuchi yuchi*, “thou shall be killed by a knife.” The princess understood this as a common curse or threat in Dzaha Dzauí. Alarmed, she again contacted the Guardian Spirit of the *Huahi Cahi*, who put at her disposal warriors from Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo) and the Hill of the Deer, that is, the Cerro de los Cervatillos where the cave of the *Huahi Cahi* was located. With their help the princess 6 Monkey was able to gain a victory over the two priests and take them prisoner: one was sent back to Añute to be sacrificed, and the other was taken to the Town of the Xipe Bundle, where the groom, Lord 11 Wind, ruled. Because of this interruption the marriage did not take place on the day 11 Deer but on the next favorable day, 6 Eagle.

Thus, while Lord 8 Deer was extending his realm on the coast, Lady 6 Monkey ruled together with Lord 11 Wind in Town of the Xipe Bundle. Two sons were born: Lord 4 Wind ‘*Yabui*’ (‘Fire Serpent’) in the year 2 Flint (1092) and Lord 1 Alligator ‘Eagle of the Ball Court’ in the year 4 Rabbit (1094) or 5 Reed (1095)—according to Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú and Codex Añute, respectively.

In the year 2 Flint (1092), Lord 8 Deer established himself definitively as ruler of Yucu Dzaa. In the following years, 3 House to 6 Flint (1093–1096), he carried out a second military campaign. One of the first events was the conquest of Jade River. The crossing of the Río Verde implies a westward expansion from Yucu Dzaa along the coast. The next two conquests confirm this idea: House of the Stone Mountain and Mountain of the Lizard’s Head correspond to the neighboring towns Yucu Yuu, “Stone Mountain” (Tetepec in Nahuatl), and Dzini Titi, “Head of the Iguana,” that is, Huaxpaltepec, which are in that area.<sup>20</sup>

Shortly thereafter, Codex Tonindeye mentions the conquests of Mountain of the Mask and Mountain of the Jar. According to Codex Yuta Tnoho (14), these two towns were situated within the influence sphere of Ñuu Ndaya

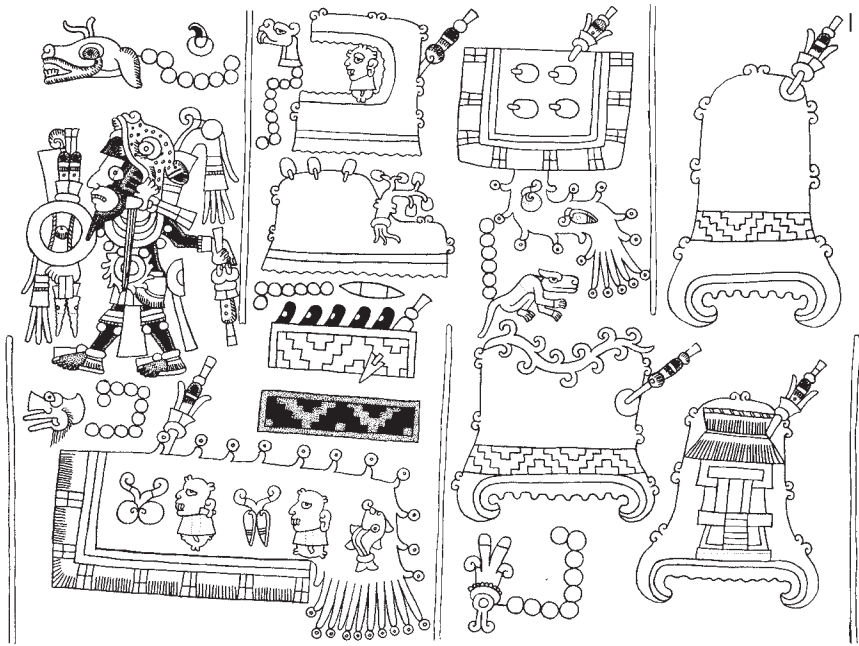


6.6a. *Conquests of Lord 8 Deer in the Mixtec coastal region; in the right-hand column, Yucu Yuu (Tetepec) and Dzini Titi (Huaxpaltepec) (Codex Tonindey, 48).*

(Chalcatongo). Taking into account the statements of both codices, we suggest that the two places are Cuanana (likely derived from Yucu Anana, “Mountain of the Face”) and Yucu Tindoho (“Mountain of the Jar”). This would mean that Lord 8 Deer extended his realm into the southern part of the Mixteca Alta.

The other places are less clear. Mountain of the Reed and the Lunar Nose Ornament is probably Yucu Yoo, “Mountain of the Moon or Reeds,” that is, Santa María Acatepec, northeast of Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec).<sup>21</sup> The Place of Rain might be Nuu Dzavui (Jicayán de Tovar).

Although we have doubts about the precise location of the conquered places, this military activity clearly established an impressive realm. Lord 8 Deer became ruler of Yucu Dzaa, first because of his alliance with the rulers of Ñuu Sitoho (Juquila) but foremost because of his own conquests, extending his kingdom along the coast. The important port of Huatulco to the east was part of this realm, as were Pinotepa and Jicayán to the West (Acuña 1984, I: 131, 189).



6.6b. Following his military success, Lord 8 Deer arrives in Ñuu Tnoo as “Conqueror of the Ocean” (Codex Tonindeye, 49).

Lord 8 Deer closed his military campaign with the conquest of the Town of Beans, the sign normally used for Ñuu Nduchi (Etlá) in the Valley of Oaxaca.<sup>22</sup> After that appears the sign of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo); significantly, it is not listed as a conquest but as a visited place. There, in his hometown, Lord 8 Deer presented himself as a person standing on a conquered place, called “Water with Ñuhu figures in it,” to be read as *Nduta Ñuhu*, that is, the ocean. The days involved are in the year 6 Flint (1096): 7 Flint is given for the conquest of Ñuu Nduchi, and on 11 Wind, four days later, Lord 8 Deer appears as “Conqueror of the Ocean.” We take this to indicate that after conquering the coastal area he moved back into the Mixteca Alta, conquering Ñuu Nduchi (Etlá) and paying a visit to his hometown, where he was honored as “Conqueror of the Ocean” by his elder half-brother (Lord 12 Movement ‘Blood Jaguar’) and his own younger brother (Lord 9 Flower ‘Sacred Arrow’).

The scene continues and shows that Lord 8 Deer, on the day 1 Alligator, directed himself to the Temple of Death, the *Huabi Cabi* of Chalcatongo,

probably to express his thanks to Lady 9 Grass. The day 1 Alligator is a day of beginnings, so we suppose it was chosen as a good day to thank the Guardian Spirit for granting him the foundation of a kingdom. In the same way, twenty-two days earlier, on 4 Flint, he had deposited his arrows, together with the offering of several deer, in the Heaven Temple of Yucu Dzaa. The day 4 Flint was dedicated to one of the Cihuateotl manifestations that is a Patroness of flints and arrowheads, similar to the Goddess Itzpapalotl.<sup>23</sup>

We do not know if Lord 8 Deer went back to Yucu Dzaa or remained in Ñuu Tnoo, or if he played any role in bringing about the suspenseful series of events set in motion in the final days of the year 6 Flint (1096). But his offerings in the Heaven Temple of Yucu Dzaa do suggest that he had contacted the deity that was going to play a crucial role in those events.

### *The DEATH of the CROWN PRINCE*

Meanwhile, in the year 6 Flint (1096) the prince 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña,’ heir to the throne of Ñuu Tnoo, had reached age twenty-one. On 1 Flint, the day before the day of his calendar name, he had an important conversation with Lord 10 Rabbit ‘Blood Jaguar.’ This man, recall, belonged to the dynasty of Town of Sacrifice at the Foot of Blood Mountain and was a grandson of the mighty Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu (presumably deceased by now). As such, he was a second cousin of Lord 2 Rain’s father and would have been respected as an uncle by Lord 2 Rain. Having been born in 1031, he had reached the respectable age of sixty-five. His relationship with Lord 2 Rain went back to 1076 when he had been present at the ceremony in which the young boy had been bestowed with the royal title. Later, in 1083, he and his brother had guided Lord 8 Deer to the *Huahi Cabi*.<sup>24</sup>

The subject of the conversation between Lord 10 Rabbit and Lord 2 Rain is not made explicit, but in view of the two men’s ages and family relationship, the elder man likely gave counsel and instructions to the prince. They spoke together a second time on the day 12 Water.

Then, on the day 7 Movement, the last day of the twenty-day period that had started on 1 Flint, Lord 2 Rain sat down in front of two priests: one in a white *xicolli* with black dots, the other an old man with a red *xicolli*. The first was the priest in charge of the Sacred Arrow, and the second was the one with the title ‘Smoke’ or ‘Cloud.’<sup>25</sup> Both were members of the Supreme Council of Four that assisted the ruler of Ñuu Tnoo.

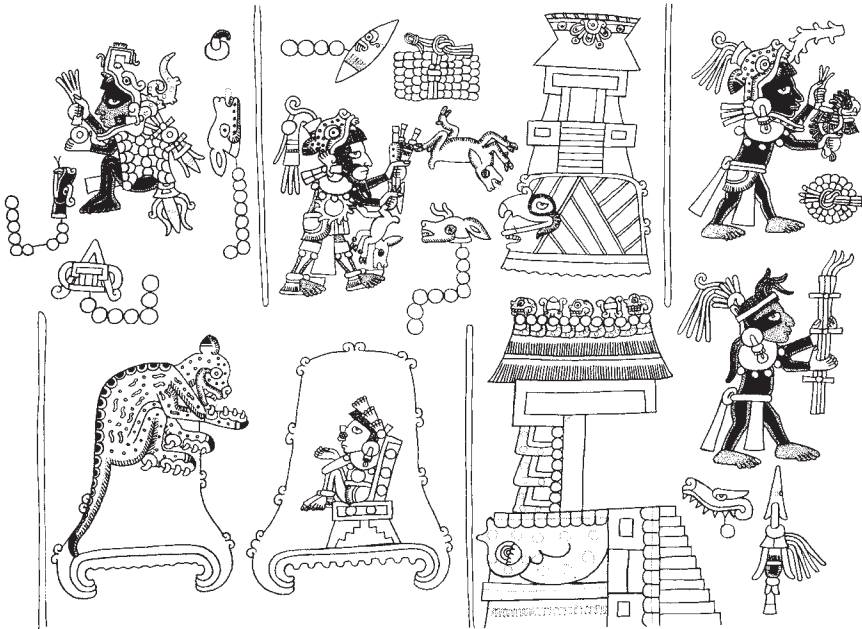
The presence of these priests and the ritual day 7 Movement suggests that Lord 2 Rain was engaged in a ritual-political activity similar to the one Lord 5 Alligator, the father of Lord 8 Deer, had carried out at the beginning of his career. His body is painted black and his eyes are closed; apparently, he had entered the priestly trance. In one hand he holds a perforator for bloodletting, in the other he grasps an arrow, directing the point toward his chest. This is probably the Sacred Arrow, the War Spirit of Ñuu Tnoo. Still in trance, the prince perforated his ear and made a blood offering to the Ñuhu Lord 7 Vulture in Serpent River, the place of the Sacred Tree.

The tree points to the dynastic aspect of the ritual. Ñuhu Lord 7 Vulture was an ancestral figure who, according to Codex Yuta Tnoho (35), had been born from the Sacred Mother Tree. The Serpent River, Yute Coo (Alvarado: Yuta Coo), was an ancestral point of reference for the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty, which had also been visited by Lord 5 Alligator before he initiated his career as High Priest.<sup>26</sup> This, together with the presence of representatives of the Supreme Priestly Council, indicates that Lord 2 Rain's ecstasy and bloodletting were part of a ritual aimed at obtaining an important political function in Ñuu Tnoo. Given his ancestry and birthright, it is logical to suppose that he was trying to obtain effective rulership.

The outcome was different, however. We see the calendar name 2 Rain connected to a "road of knife and star" that leads to Heaven. After that, a red line explicitly ends this chapter. A celestial road with knives and stars is a metaphor for shamanic trance.<sup>27</sup> The fact that it ends Lord 2 Rain's career makes us understand that he went out on an ecstatic voyage but did not return: he died in the trance, leaving the kingdom of Ñuu Tnoo without a legitimate successor.

#### LORD 4 JAGUAR *of* TOLLAN

It was at this critical moment that Lord 8 Deer started a series of actions to capture the throne of Ñuu Tnoo. The political situation in the Mixteca Alta had changed. The former strong men, Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu and the priest Lord 5 Alligator of Ñuu Tnoo, had died. Lord 8 Deer had built up an important realm on the Pacific Coast, whose influence was felt throughout Ñuu Dzauí. The death of Lord 2 Rain 'Ocoñaña' left the throne of Ñuu Tnoo vacant; there were no pretenders who belonged to the royal family, and Lord 8 Deer, because of his achievements, was now considered one of the

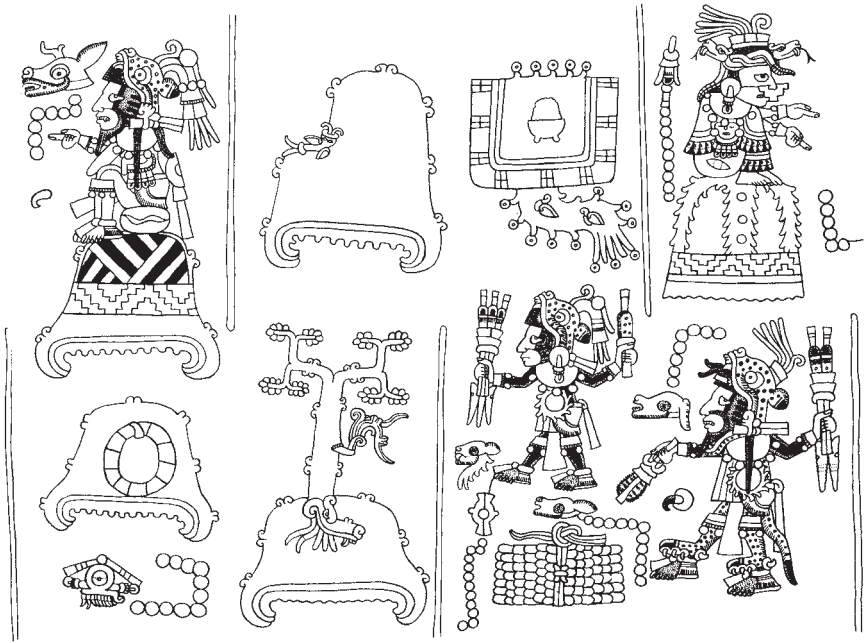


6.7a. After having been welcomed by his brothers (as priests from the Temple of Death), Lord 8 Deer brings offerings to the Temple of Yucu Dzaa and then transforms into a flying ball of fire (Codex Tonindeye, 50).

candidates to become the new ruler in his ancestral town. But to be totally acceptable to all, he needed to obtain true royal status.

First, he went on an ecstatic voyage, as *yaha yahui*, to offer precious gifts to Lady 9 Reed, the Patron Deity of Blood Town, that is, Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá) in the Mixteca Baja. This was on the day 9 Serpent of the year 7 House, the third day of the year, only twenty-eight days after Lord 2 Rain's ritual and death. The fact that Lord 8 Deer made this contact with that particular deity on that specific day is suggestive. The Goddess 9 Reed was the one who had manifested herself in the magic mirror a few days before Lord 2 Rain was born, making it clear that she was to rule his destiny. Her calendar name can be interpreted symbolically as a combination of death (number 9) and an arrow (reed). This symbolism is confirmed by her being a Ñuu Dzau equivalent of the Goddess Itzcueye-Itzpapalotl, the power of the obsidian arrowhead.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, Lord 2 Rain died young because he touched the Sacred Arrow; this, then, seems to have been his destiny, announced in veiled terms before he was born. With such explicit references the story prepares the public





6.7b. Lord 8 Deer meets Lady 9 Reed and starts his journey to the North (Codex Tonindecy, 51).

to accept the end of the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo. Clearly, its destiny had been determined by the Gods, and a new dynasty had to replace it.

Lord 8 Deer chose the day 9 Serpent to make his offerings to the Goddess who had brought all this about. Again, the number 9 symbolizes death and thus refers to the death of the young prince. Serpent is a sign of danger, intrigue, and venom. In combination, it seems a day appropriate to commemorate an intrigue in which venom was used to kill. As such, this offering scene suggests that Lord 8 Deer expressed his respect (cynics would say grateful recognition) to the Deity who had removed the heir to the throne by killing him with a fatal arrow.

At the same time, Lord 8 Deer implored the Goddess 9 Reed of Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá) in the Mixteca Baja to act as an intermediary with the powerful realm to the north, the Toltec empire in Central Mexico. It was in that impressive center of civilization that Lord 8 Deer planned to obtain the necessary prestige and political clout.<sup>29</sup> While ruling in Yucu Dzaa, he had already been in contact with the Toltecs, who must have taken special

interest in the commercial route along the Mixtec coast toward Central America, a route essential for the introduction of metallurgy and copper or gold products.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, Toltec armies had been approaching the Mixteca Alta. They had come as far as the Valley of Coixtlahuaca, where they enthroned a Lord 7 Water as founder of a new dynasty. The name of the Toltec ruler involved was Lord 4 Jaguar. We see him arriving with a *macuahuitl*, a wooden “sword” inlaid with obsidian blades, a favorite weapon of the Toltecs.<sup>31</sup>

He had been engaged in warfare in the region for ten years, between 10 Reed (1087) and 6 Flint (1096). It was in the year 7 House (1097), immediately after these war events, that the contact between Lord 4 Jaguar and Lord 8 Deer occurred. There is a geographical logic to the manner in which the Toltec king expanded his realm from Central Mexico into the Oaxaca region. By setting up his vassal as the local ruler over the Valley of Coixtlahuaca, he could create a power base that would allow him to bring the Mixteca Alta under his control. This brought him in contact with the influence sphere of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo). Seeking an ally to appoint as a ruler over this area, he encountered Lord 8 Deer.

Who was this Lord 4 Jaguar? The Lienzo of Tlapiltepec tells us that his given name was ‘Serpent.’ Codex Tonindeye shows him with the face painting of Quetzalcoatl and the red-and-white striped body paint of Tlauizcalpantecuhтли (Venus) or Mixcoatl (the God of hunting). He is frequently depicted wearing an impressive feather headdress (*apanecayotl*), indicating the Toltec title *Apanecatl*. A peculiar and unique diagnostic is the pimple or tumor on his nose or forehead. Together with the way he functions in the narrative, the combination of these two elements—headdress and tumor—makes it possible to identify him as the famous Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl, who ruled successively at Tula (Tollan) and Cholula (Cholollan).<sup>32</sup> The Dominican chronicler Diego Durán describes an ancient picture of him:

This Topiltzin, who was also called Papa (“priest”), was a very venerated and religious person, held in great esteem and honored and adored as a saint. There is a large story about him. I saw him painted in the way that is reproduced above [in plate 1], on a very old paper, in Mexico City, as a noble personality. He was shown as an elderly man, with a large greyish and red beard, a long nose with some pimples on it, or somewhat eaten, a tall body, long hair . . . when he celebrated his feasts, he put that feather crown on. (Durán 1967, I: 9, 14; cf. plate 1)



6.8. Lord 8 Deer receiving the Toltec ambassadors (Codex *Nuu Tnoo-Ndisi Nuu*, 10-III).

The tumor on Lord 4 Jaguar's nose or forehead in Codex Tonindecy corresponds to the "pimples" on Topiltzin's nose mentioned by Durán. The name Topiltzin means "Our Honored Prince" (*to-pil-tzin*) or "Noble Staff of Office" (*topil-tzin*). Other sources call him Nacxitl, "4 Foot," a calendar name in an archaic calendar system, such as used in Xochicalco.<sup>33</sup> We think 4 Jaguar was the *Nuu* Dzau translation of 4 Foot. Still another calendar name is given for him: Ce Acatl, "1 Reed"; this seems to be the name of the deity he was most associated with (as a priest in Tula and later, after his death): the Venus God.

In colonial sources Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl is described as an archetypal priest: "*castísimo, honestísimo, moderatísimo.*"<sup>34</sup> Originally, he had lived in Tollan Xicocotitlan (Tula Hidalgo) as a pious priest-ruler with a peaceful and prosperous reign, but because of bad omens, intrigues, and real conflicts—interpreted by the sources as influences from demons—Quetzalcoatl had left that capital. The Annals of Cuauhtitlan tell us in metaphoric language that his position had become untenable because he had slept through a ritual vigil. He had invoked "my sister, the mat of quetzal feathers," a designation of the mat in the *nahual* language (ceremonial and shamanic speech).<sup>35</sup> The implication is obvious: he had gone to sleep, a scandalous misstep in Mesoamerican terms. European authors later interpreted this phrasing as a reference to his having committed incest with his sister or another form of adultery, an act that would correspond more to their own concept of unacceptable behavior.

There are some indications that a dual rulership existed in Tula, with one leading figure associated with Quetzalcoatl and the other with Tezcatlipoca.<sup>36</sup> The Central Mexican sources suggest that during the crisis described earlier, those complementary powers openly confronted each other. After leaving Tula, Quetzalcoatl established a new capital in Cholula. In Tula he seems to have been succeeded by Huemac, who was symbolically identified with Tezcatlipoca. For historians of Tula the departure of the priest-king was trau-

matic, the beginning of the end of Tula's dominant position and therefore of Toltec civilization in general. Passing over Quetzalcoatl's rule in Cholula, they seem to have blended several successive events into one, creating the portentous story of a king who left his capital and ultimately went to the Gulf Coast to die. Moreover, this dramatic journey was equated to and merged with the journey of the Creator God Quetzalcoatl (Lord 9 Wind in the Ñuu Dzauí codices), who in his travels gave names to places and founded kingdoms. Historical reality, however, seems to have been more complex. The lamentation that the pious priest king was seduced by war demons suggests to us that in the process of moving to Cholula, Quetzalcoatl changed his position and became a warlord.<sup>37</sup>

Friar Juan de Torquemada explains that he ruled for some time in Cholula and expanded his power from there into the Oaxaca region, specifically into Ñuu Dzauí: “[Quetzalcoatl] left Tula very annoyed and came to Cholula, where he lived many years with his people, several of which he sent from there to the province Oaxaca, to populate it, and to the whole Mixteca Baja and Alta and to the Zapotec regions. And those people, they say, made those big and luxurious roman buildings in Mitla (which signifies ‘Underworld’ in the Mexican language)” (Torquemada 1975–1979, book III: ch. 7; cf. Acuña 1984–1985, I: 129).

In the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec and the Ñuu Dzauí codices we find Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxít Topiltzín Quetzalcoatl’ as an expansionist ruler of Cholula, setting up a vassal kingdom at Coixtlahuaca. The text of the Annals of Cuauhtitlan connects this event with the expansion of the Toltecs toward the Maya area. According to the Tula tradition, just discussed, this expansion is described as part of the downfall, after the priest-king left the original capital Tula.

*Auh in tolteca niman yaque . . . quiçato huehue quauhtitlan.  
oc oncan chixque yn tamazolac catca  
yn oncan tlapiaya yn itoca atonal.  
nyman no tehuan quinhuicac yn imaçebualhuan.  
niman onehuaque yn tolteca. . . .  
aun yn oyaque yn ocallacque altepetl  
ypan çequintin motlallique cholollan  
teohuacan cozcatlan  
nonohualco teotlillan  
coayxtlahuacan tamaçollac  
copilco topillan*

## LORD OF THE TOLTECS

*ayotlan maçatlan*  
*ynic nobuian anabuacatlalli motlallito*  
*yn axcan ompa onoque.*

And the Toltecs went . . . and passed by Old Cuauhtitlan,  
where they waited sometime for a native of Tamazolac,  
who was in charge there, named Atonal.  
He brought his subjects with him.  
Then the Toltecs left. . . .  
Going and entering in the towns,  
some established themselves in Cholula,  
Tehuacan, Cozcatlan,  
Nonohualco, Teotlillan,  
Coixtlahuaca, Tamazolac,  
Copilco, Topillan,  
Ayotlan and Mazatlan,  
until they had settled the whole of Anahuac,  
where they are still living today.

(*Annals of Cuauhtitlan* 1975: § 67; Lehmann 1938: 107–109)

It was during this process that Quetzalcoatl, or Lord 4 Jaguar, came in direct contact with Lord 8 Deer. Both saw it as very convenient to unite their forces.

### *The ALLIANCE*

The Ñuu Dzauí codices differ somewhat from one another as to the exact way in which the alliance came into being. The most detailed story is given in Codex Iya Nacuaa (I, 9–12). It starts in the year 7 House (1097) with a large road that can be read as “far away.” The first mentioned individual is a man, identified by the black painting around his eye as a *tay sahmi nuu*, “man with the burned eye,” that is, a “Mexican” or rather a speaker of Nahuatl.<sup>38</sup> This Toltec lord was engaged in priestly and military functions: he is shown carrying a *piciete* gourd on his back and a lance in his hand. An individual characteristic is his intertwined hair, ending in a double lock on his forehead. His calendar name has been obliterated.

Under the supervision of this Toltec lord, a hunchback, called Lord 10 Wind, performed a series of ritual activities. Hunchbacks were held in special esteem and occupied functions at the royal court of the Toltec capital.<sup>39</sup> The fact that he does not have the burned eye face painting but instead has a

normal calendar name suggests that this particular hunchback was a Ñuu Dzauí man. He performed the bloodletting rite and deposited the perforator and the blood-soaked leaves before a Hill of the Lord's Head. From there the roads of the two men joined. Under the watchful eye of the Toltec lord, the hunchback priest vomited into a river—likely as part of a shaman's cleansing ritual. After that he went into a mountain, that is, a cave, to have a vision. The Toltec lord drew him out. Both men are then shown seated on thrones consulting with each other. The hunchback has laid down his ax before the Toltec lord as a sign of friendship.

These scenes suggest that a Ñuu Dzauí hunchback had achieved significant merit because of his priestly activities and had become the trusted ally and assistant of an important Toltec noble.

Then, the hunchback guided his friend on an important international mission; the Toltec lord is carrying a fan—the attribute of merchants and ambassadors—together with his lance. The hunchback went in front and passed through a river, a natural boundary of the region to be entered. The Toltec lord thus arrived at a Cave of the Descending Ñuhu (“deity”). This image suggests that he was going eastward from the central Toltec area toward Ñuu Dzauí. The Descending Ñuhu is an expression for “west” (*sa yocai ñuhu*) in Dzaha Dzauí and may refer to the Ñuu Dzauí western frontier. At the same time, we should understand this as a statement that the Ñuhu of the cave gave the two men permission to continue their journey into Ñuu Dzauí territory. A day is mentioned: the number is 1, but the sign is obliterated.

The Toltec lord and his assistant, the hunchback, met with a man called 1 Alligator, probably a Ñuu Dzauí noble or king. In the next scene Lord 1 Alligator is shown together with the hunchback guiding the Toltec ambassador, gesturing that he should follow them.<sup>40</sup> The hunchback priest went into a river and washed himself. There Lady 9 Reed manifested herself to him. The Goddess was seated in a cave. This was the same Lady 9 Reed whom Lord 8 Deer had visited in trance to offer a heart and blood, to deposit his weapons before her, and to perform the war ritual, that is, to say thanks for his victories and ask for strength.<sup>41</sup>

The war ritual is indicated through the combination of the sign for speaking to the four directions, the circle of leaves on which offerings were put, and the chevron band (*yecu*) with trembling lines (*tnañu*), meaning “war.” The same signs are found as rock paintings in caves on the Cerro de las Flores in the vicinity of Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá), demonstrating that preparatory rituals

for war campaigns were indeed carried out here. We suspect this was the exact place where Lord 8 Deer presented himself to Lady 9 Reed, performing precisely that ritual. The site forms part of El Boquerón, an impressive canyon through which the Río Salado enters the Valley of Ñuu Niñe.

Tradition attributes the origin of the El Boquerón gorge to a primordial struggle between a Goddess and a huge serpent that had encircled her beloved, the king of Tezoatlan. To liberate him, the Goddess cut off the serpent's head. The blow of her machete created the gorge. The head of the animal is now the Cerro de la Culebra, while the body is the mountainous range on the other side of El Boquerón, to which the Cerro de las Flores belongs. This story throws another light on the serpents in the hair of Lady 9 Reed: she was the Patron Deity (*ndodzo*) of the Cerro de la Culebra.

Climbing the Cerro de las Flores between impressive organ cactuses and gray boulders, we have a dazzling view of the Valley of Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá), with Tiyusi (San Andrés Sabanillos) on the horizon. In the steep cliff are three caves, one above the other, with some distance between them. All contain ancient paintings. Those in the second cave are clearly related to the codex style. Among them we recognize the bands of chevrons, which signify *yecu*, "struggle, war"; the bound volutes, which represent the ritual speech to the four directions (prayer); and the cords of fasting and bloodletting. From this cave a series of painted stylized human figures moves upward along the cliff. Everything indicates that these caves were ceremonial retreats for spiritual preparation and vision quest. In modern folklore this is considered an enchanted or haunted place where the "devil" lives, which confirms the interpretation of this site as an ancient sacred place.<sup>42</sup> The combined evidence of codices, archaeology, and oral tradition suggests that it was dedicated to Lady 9 Reed as the Divine Arrowhead, the Goddess of Life Struggles and War. This, then, must be the cave in which she appears seated in Codex Iya Nacuaa. The river in which the hunchback priest bathed is placed directly in front of this cave. This must be the Boquerón itself.

By order of the Toltec lord, a local priest, Lord 1 Flint, took it upon himself to carry the image of Lady 9 Reed. Together with the hunchback, they returned to the palace of the Toltec king, Lord 4 Jaguar, who in turn performed the war ritual before Lady 9 Reed and accepted her instructions.<sup>43</sup> Both the Goddess and the Toltec lord then spoke to other important personages, probably princes of Jaguar Town, Ñuu Ñaña (Cuyotepeji), in the Mixteca Baja.

Codex Tonindeye (50) puts the sequence in reverse order: the scene of Lord 8 Deer's meeting with Lady 9 Reed is preceded by two toponyms, Mountain of the Throne and Mountain of the Jaguar. Originally, these would have represented the ruler of Ñuu Ñaña, but in the eyes of the Tonindeye painter they became transformed into the place where Lord 8 Deer started the ecstatic voyage toward the Goddess. Perhaps the painter took these signs as representations of the ancient ceremonial plaza of Monte Albán (Yucu Anii and Toto Cuiñe).

Some difference exists as to the names of the ambassadors. In Codex Iya Nacuaa we recognize Lord 1 . . . 'Serpent Ear-Ornament' (*Coanacoch* in Nahuatl) and Lord 3 . . . 'Blood Serpent' (*Ezcoatl*). The first of these is present in the lists of Codices Tonindeye and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú as well. Codex Tonindeye gives his full calendar name as Lord 1 Deer but at the same time indicates that the calendar name of 'Blood Serpent' was 7 Serpent. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú does not give calendar names but has *Coanacoch* accompanied by 'Smoking Shield' (*Chimalpopoca*) and a man whose name seems to have been Hummingbird (*Huitzilin*)—he is holding a bowl with pulque in his hand, while his foot is connected with the fire sign, reading *nduvua ñuhu* ("foot," that is, "arrow," and "fire," meaning "war").

Lord 1 Deer 'Coanacoch' is clearly associated with Jaguar Town, Ñuu Ñaña (Cuyotepeji), in Codex Tonindeye, pages 65–66, where he is accompanied by Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl' and Lord 3 Deer 'Blood Serpent.' We therefore think Lord 3 . . . 'Blood Serpent' in Codex Iya Nacuaa is actually Lord 3 Deer and is related to the same town as Lord 1 Deer.

Lord 1 Deer 'Coanacoch' also appears in Codex Ñuu Ñaña (Egerton), page 1, as the priest who assisted at the birth (inauguration) of the first ruler of Jaguar Town, Ñuu Ñaña (Cuyotepeji), who was drawn up from Jaguar Mountain by an eagle. Jaguar Mountain would be the Yucu Ñaña, where a cave is considered the place of origin of the ancient rulers: Cahua Ndiatu. Its name has been translated as "Cave of the Palate," but the more probable meaning is "Cave of Good Fortune."<sup>44</sup>

This suggests that Lord 1 Deer had been instrumental in establishing a dynasty with Toltec prestige in Ñuu Ñaña. It is interesting that during a lawsuit in 1582, testimony was given that the Ñuu Ñaña had been founded "more than 500 years ago" (Paillés Hernández 1993: 38). The Toltec king, Lord 4 Jaguar, likely chose Lord 1 Deer as one of his confidants because of his prominent activity in the Mixteca Baja. The ambassadors Lord 1 Deer and



Lord 3 Deer traveled toward the court of Lord 8 Deer, guided by priests Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl’ and Lord 7 Vulture ‘Red Beard,’ ancestral deities of the Ñuu Dzauí people. The leader carried a bone flute on his back as a sign of his military prowess and leadership.<sup>45</sup>

The ambassadors marched toward a cave, presumably the same cave of the Descending Ñuhu (West) that was the western frontier of Ñuu Dzauí. Then they made contact with the successful Ñuu Dzauí leader. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú shows how Lord 8 Deer welcomed them with a ceremonial salute. An omen was seen: when Lord 8 Deer decapitated a quail as an offering to his visitors, an eagle came down from Heaven and grasped the quail’s head.<sup>46</sup> The scene recalls a similar omen at Lord 8 Deer’s birth. As is often the case, this sign clearly indicates that divine powers were guiding the events, but what it meant to the beholders is difficult to reconstruct. The eagle stands for bravery in war, as in the heraldic symbol of Tenochtitlan: the eagle with the sign of water and fire (war) in its beak. As such, the eagle is related to the Sun God but also to the frightening Cihuacoatl Quilaztli, the Patron of Women who died in childbirth, the Mexica version of Lady 9 Grass. A positive interpretation of the omen would have been that the solar deity dictated the destiny of the two powers—Toltecs and Ñuu Dzauí—and would have a decisive influence over their alliance, that a great and victorious war campaign would follow, and that bravery was to be shown. A more negative reading would be that Lady 9 Grass of the *Huahi Cahi* reminded Lord 8 Deer that she was in control and was waiting for her payback—his soul. Still another, more mundane preoccupation would be that somebody represented by an eagle would grab whatever was in Lord 8 Deer’s hands and take over the initiative. All these possible interpretations are brought to play in the continuation of the story. For the moment, however, they remained without consequence.

The ambassadors’ first act was to invite Lord 8 Deer to a ball game. This form of physical competition seems to have functioned as a political instrument of the Toltec realm. The ruler Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl is said to have offered his rivals a mosaic of precious stones of different colors put together in the shape of a ball court, divided into four squares, with a ball made out of a carbuncle.<sup>47</sup> The idea is clear: the ball court was a symbol of the quadripartite order of an overarching empire. That political structure had room for local governors, who would make decisions in their own territories, but in international affairs they would act together as allies. This model offered a way of

resolving conflicts and rivalries in a peaceful manner. This precious jewel was now presented to Lord 8 Deer as an invitation to participate in a game and therefore as a proposal to participate in the political alliance that formed the Toltec empire. In this way an armed conflict between Toltecs and Nuu Dzau could be avoided, and Lord 8 Deer was to be recognized as a supreme ruler within his own region.

The codices suggest that an actual ball game was to be played. Lord 8 Deer prepared himself by withdrawing into a cave. There, in trance, he communicated with Lord 7 Vulture 'Red Beard,' the divine Ancestor who had also been invoked by Lord 2 Rain 'Ocoñaña.' The Nuhu showed respect to Lord 8 Deer, crossing his arms, and he gave him advice. Then a rodent brought jaguar claws and deer hoofs into the cave. These may have been understood as lucky charms, but at the same time they hinted at the connection between 'Jaguar Claw' (Lord 8 Deer) and the other people, represented by deer hoofs, the emblem of Mixcoatl, the God of hunting.<sup>48</sup> Lord 8 Deer wore the jaguar claw as a glove for the game, symbolizing the force of his hand. His Toltec opponent used the deer hoofs as an ear ornament—in conformity with the attributes of the Toltec-Chichimec Patron God Mixcoatl.

Apparently, Lord 8 Deer won the game because his Toltec opponent offered him valuable gifts. Afterward they had a meeting during which Lord 8 Deer pledged his support and alliance to the Toltecs. Codex Iya Nacuaa (I, 12-III) shows him with his hand raised as a sign of *ndaha*, "tribute" or "service," in front of a Toltec lord. The latter, seated in a palace, signals with his forefinger, a gesture we read as *yotasi tñuni*, "to give orders." Behind the Toltec lord a Flattened Mountain with Pyramid is mentioned as his place of origin, perhaps representing the other name of Cholula, Nuu Ndiyo, "Town of Stairs," or referring in a general way to a ceremonial center.

Immediately after agreeing to become part of the Toltec imperial structure, Lord 8 Deer made a long journey to the Temple of Death, the *Huahi Cahi*, to consult with Lady 9 Grass and ask for her continuing support. From there he and his half-brother, Lord 12 Movement, set out on a war campaign. They conquered Mountain of the Moon. We interpret this place as the Yucu Yoo (Acatepec) fortress on top of the northern cliffs of Monte Albán. The date for the conquest is the day 2 Movement of the year 7 House (1097). The rulers or persons in charge of the place were taken prisoner: Lord 1 Movement was subdued by Lord 12 Movement, and Lord 3 Alligator was captured by Lord 8 Deer.<sup>49</sup> Recall that seven years earlier, in the year 13 Rabbit (1090),

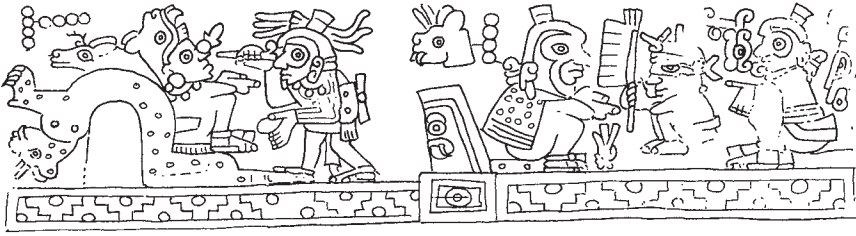
Lady 6 Monkey had conquered this same place. Perhaps Lord 3 Alligator was identical to the man of that name who had accompanied her when she was carried to her husband; as the helper of his queen, he may have been charged with supervision of the conquered site.

After this accomplishment, Lord 8 Deer undertook the long journey to visit the Toltec king, Lord 4 Jaguar, taking his prisoner with him as well as his power objects: the Shield of Death, the Owl Arrow, and the Sacred Bundle. He traveled with Lord 12 Movement, who was fifty-two years old. Their journey started on the day 12 Deer (ten days after the conquest). Among the days mentioned further are 5 Reed and 9 Movement, which are in a logical sequence.<sup>50</sup> Then, on 11 Rain, Lord 8 Deer arrived at the northern frontier of Ñuu Dzauí, the area of Dark Mountain (Yucu Naa). There he camped in Stone Valley, which must correspond with the entrance to the Valley of Puebla.<sup>51</sup>

Descending from the rugged mountains, Lord 8 Deer had entered the spacious and fertile Valley of Cholula. On the following day, 12 Flower, he passed the Snow Topped Volcano and a Mountain Dedicated to the Rain Deity. From there he sent his brother, Lord 9 Flower, ahead as an ambassador to arrange the meeting with the Toltec king. On the next day, 13 Alligator, Lord 8 Deer was welcomed by Lord 4 Jaguar in front of the Sacred Bundle.<sup>52</sup>

One day later still, on 1 Wind, he underwent the ceremony of Toltec rulership. We see Lord 8 Deer reclining on a jaguar throne; a Toltec nobleman, Lord 8 Death 'Eagle Eye' (*Cuauhtlix'*) perforated his septum and placed in his nose the turquoise ornament, the *yacaxiuítl*.

This happened in front of the Temple of the White Disks in the Town of the Cattail Reeds, situated in a big plain. The Town of the Cattail Reeds was called *Ñuu Cohyo* in Dzaha Dzauí and *Tollan* in Nahuatl. Its location in a plain, separated from the Ñuu Dzauí mountains by a snow-topped volcano, is highly suggestive of Cholollan (Cholula).<sup>53</sup> This important Toltec capital was also known as Tollan and had a special relationship with Quetzalcoatl.<sup>54</sup> This was the place where the Toltec royal investiture rites were traditionally celebrated. The exact place of that ritual is identified as a temple decorated with white discs or pearls in its roof and nose ornaments (*yacaxiuítl*) on top.<sup>55</sup> The *Relación Geográfica* of Cholula describes how those who were to inherit a kingdom in the surrounding regions came to this town to pay their respects to Quetzalcoatl, offering precious feathers, blankets, gold, jade, and



6.9. Lord 8 Deer brings his prisoner to Lord 4 Jaguar in Tollan and receives the nose ornament (*Codex Nuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu*, 9-II).

other valuable goods to his statue. Then they were led to a special sanctuary where the two high priests perforated their ears, nose, or lips, according to the kingdom they were to receive (Acuña 1984–1985, II: 130–131). The *Popol Vuh* confirms and illustrates the importance of the link with Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl for Quiché rulers in their quest for legitimation. He was the one who granted the insignia of rulership and confirmed the Founders of local dynasties in their royal powers:

And then they came before the lord named Nacxit, the great lord and sole judge over a populous domain.

And he was the one who gave out the signs of lordship, all the emblems; the signs of the Keeper of the Mat and the Keeper of the Reception House Mat were set forth.

And when the signs of the splendour and lordship of the Keeper of the Mat and the Keeper of the Reception House Mat were set forth, Nacxit gave a complete set of the emblems of lordship.

Here are their names:

Canopy, throne.

Bone flute, bird whistle.

Paint of powdered yellow stone.

Puma's paw, jaguar's paw.

Head and hoof of deer.

Bracelet of rattling snail shells.

Gourd of tobacco.

Nosepiece.

Parrot feathers, heron feathers.

They brought all of these when they came away.

From across the sea, they brought back the writings about Tulan.

(Tedlock 1985: 203–204)<sup>56</sup>

In a similar way, Lord 8 Deer became the ally of the extremely powerful and prestigious Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxilt Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl,’ king of the Toltecs. On the day 4 Serpent, still in the year 7 House (1097), three days after the nose piercing ceremony, the two made offerings together, perhaps because Lord 8 Deer had to leave. Their equal position in the ritual shows that, at least according to the Ñuu Dzau point of view, they were true allies on equal footing.

### *The THRONE of ÑUU TNOO*

Ñuu Dzau recorded history starts in the time the Classic imperial structure of Monte Albán had broken down and a crisis cult spread across the region, giving rise to a new socio-political arrangement, with new families coming to power in the ninth century A.D. The relations—first friendly, then hostile—between the rulers of Chiyo Yuhu (Suchixtlan) and Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) dominated the scene. The move of Añute toward independence led to open war between the two around the middle of the eleventh century; that was the situation when Lord 8 Deer was growing up. As he had to leave the region, he constructed his own power base on the Mixtec Coast, in Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec), which not only permitted him to regain influence in the Mixteca Alta but also made him an interesting partner for the Toltec empire. Thus taking possession of the throne of Ñuu Tnoo, he created a central capital for Ñuu Dzau there.

Lord 8 Deer’s first act in his new status was to start a war campaign. Three days after celebrating his ritual with the Toltec king, he launched an attack, together with his brother Lord 9 Flower, against Town of the Eagle, Mountain of the Eagle, and Cliff with Waterfall.<sup>57</sup> These glyphs may represent centers of resistance within the Ñuu Dzau region. After a quick victory, Lord 8 Deer went back to Ñuu Tnoo and there, in front of the Temple of Heaven, he drilled the new fire, indicating that a new era had begun and that a new dynasty was to be founded.<sup>58</sup> He chose the appropriate day 1 Alligator, associated with beginnings. It was thirty-nine days after the nose piercing ceremony. He also made offerings to the Trees of the Directions, invoking each one on a successive day.

On 2 Wind (the day after 1 Alligator) he prayed to the Tree of the Emerging Ñuhu, that is, the East. On 3 House he prayed to the Tree of the West. On 4 Lizard he did not make an offering. Normally, it would have been

the Tree of the North's turn, but it was probably left out because he had just made an alliance with the Toltecs who were his northern neighbors. On 5 Serpent he invoked the Tree of the South. The days 6 Death and 7 Deer were those of a closing ceremony for all the trees, represented by a tree with hand-like leaves and a tree with pointed leaves.<sup>59</sup>

A sacrifice was made: on the day 4 Movement (eleven days after 6 Death), a bowl with blood and a knife were placed in front of a temple. Three days later, on the day 7 Flower, a *yahui* priest threw an offering of *piciete* into the air for the Spirit of the Weapons. These two days, 4 Movement and 7 Flower, had special religious importance: they were the calendar names of two Divine Ancestors, who apparently had died in battle in primordial times.<sup>60</sup>

Yet another war ritual was carried out. On the day 9 Wind, dedicated to the great Culture Hero, rituals were celebrated for the Sacred Arrow and the Tnucucua staff of power.<sup>61</sup>

Then an enormous gathering was organized in Ñuu Tnoo. Princes from many village-states came to pay their respects to Lord 8 Deer, enthroned by the Toltec rulership, and his half-brother, Lord 12 Movement. The ceremony was a sequel to the offering of royalty to Lord 2 Rain 'Ocoñaña' twenty-two years earlier.<sup>62</sup> It was the day 4 Wind of the year 8 Rabbit (1098).

Lord 8 Deer had arranged for his elder half-brother, Lord 12 Movement, his trusted companion, to sit behind him (or next to him) and participate in the homage offered by so many princes and nobles. Regardless of personal appreciation, he might have had a political motive as well. As the oldest son from his father's first marriage, Lord 12 Movement had inherited a strong and loyal network of lineage heads. As the son of a Beni Zaa princess from Zaachila, he also embodied his father's policy within the Valley of Oaxaca, specifically with the capital that had taken the place of the ancient Monte Albán. Lord 8 Deer, on the other hand, was slowly but surely replacing that old network with a new one of his own, focused on the Toltec empire. By sharing his newly obtained Toltec status with his half-brother, he avoided possible dissent from the lineages loyal to his father's original policy.

Recall that generations earlier Lord 10 Flower, the son of the founders of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty, Lord 9 Wind and Lady 5 Reed from Monte Albán, had received the given name 'Jaguar of the Burned Eyes' or 'Mexican Jaguar.' This name usually commemorates a triumph against Nahuatl speakers. If that interpretation is correct, it would mean that a prince of Ñuu Tnoo had already participated in battles against the expanding Toltecs.

In changing the political alignment, Lord 8 Deer had to move carefully. His good relationship with his elder half-brother was therefore very important. Princes from many places attended the meeting. First mentioned was the *Huahi Cahi*, an ominous reminder of the true origin of Lord 8 Deer's power.<sup>63</sup> Then were members of the aristocracy, among them Lord 13 Jaguar 'War Eagle,' about whom we will hear more, and Lord 5 Rain 'Smoking Mountain,' who plays a special role in Codex Iya Nacuaa.<sup>64</sup> Others represented "the water and the mountain," *yucu nduta*, the *difrasismo* for "community."<sup>65</sup>

After these, a series of specific places is mentioned:

- Town of the Spiderweb: Andua in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan).
- White Town and Cloud Mountain with Face.
- Deep Valley.<sup>66</sup>
- Mountain with Face, the hometown of Lord 8 Deer's mother, possibly Ixtepec (today Mixtepec) near Zaachila.
- Tail Mountain, which belonged to the same political unit as Mountain with Face.
- Mountain of Flints, the place where Ñuu Yuchi, Town of Flints, was later built, the site now known as Mogote del Cacique close to Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>67</sup>
- Cut or Sliced Mountain: Ñuu Ñañu, old Tamazola.
- Hill of the Doubled Long Leaf (?).<sup>68</sup>
- Hill where a Man Crawls Through.<sup>69</sup>
- White Plain with Palace of the White Carrying Frame at the Foot of the Curved (i.e., Big) Mountain with Plants representing Tocuisi (Zaachila). Its two princes show the characteristic face painting of the dynasty, to which Lord 12 Movement's mother also belonged.
- Mountain of the Blanket.<sup>70</sup>
- Mountain of the Sitting Man with Green Twigs might be a reference to Tocuii, "Green Lords," that is, the Coixtlahuaca Valley.
- Town of Feathers then might be Ihuitlan, so important in the history of the Coixtlahuaca area.<sup>71</sup>
- Town of the Lying Arrow: Ndaa Nduvua (Miltepec).<sup>72</sup>
- Mountain of the Seated Ruler, possibly Toavui (Chila) in the Mixteca Baja.<sup>73</sup>

- River of the Fire Serpent, perhaps related to the preceding sign.<sup>74</sup>
- Valley of Gravel.<sup>75</sup>
- Plain of Feathers.<sup>76</sup>
- Town of Blood, Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá).
- Green Plain of Feathers, perhaps Yodzo Cuiya (Juxtlahuaca).<sup>77</sup>
- Town of the Jaguar, Ñuu Ñaña (Cuyotepeji), the village-state that was the home of the important ambassador Lord 1 Deer.
- Town of the Death-Mouth in the Rocky Surface may be Ayuú, “Place of Stone.”<sup>78</sup>
- Mountain of Pearls and a Lord, perhaps Nuu Siya (Tezoatlán).
- Town of Trees, possibly Yucu Tnuyaca, “Place of the *Yaca* tree or Cuezcomate,” that is, Tecamachalco.<sup>79</sup>
- Rock of the Face, which could be Dziñe Yucu (Tepeaca).
- Town of the Cut or Leveled Mountain.

We are not sure about a number of identifications, but there is sufficient evidence to conclude that these places are located partly in the near vicinity of Ñuu Tnoo, partly in the Valley of Oaxaca (Zaachila), and partly in the Mixteca Baja and Southern Puebla—the latter being within the Toltec influence sphere.

After this inauguration ceremony Lord 8 Deer received the pledge of loyalty from his elder half-brother, Lord 12 Movement, his younger brother, Lord 9 Flower, and his maternal half-brother, Lord 8 Flower. As signs of their disposition to support him and be his loyal captains, they placed their shields and spears before him.<sup>80</sup> All this happened on the day 4 Wind.

During the following days Lord 8 Deer, accompanied by Lord 12 Movement, made a journey. They started by taking up the ancient power objects Lord 8 Deer had placed in front of the Temple of Heaven in Ñuu Tnoo: the Sacred Arrow and the Tnucucua staff. Originally, Lord 9 Wind and Lord 12 Wind, who had received these objects in Heaven, had brought them to Ñuu Tnoo.<sup>81</sup> They spoke to the four directions and performed the war ritual with the Death Shield, which Lord 8 Deer had received in the *Huahi Cahi*.<sup>82</sup>

Although Lord 8 Deer appears in the codices as the story's most important protagonist, it seems that he and his elder half-brother shared the rulership status. Priests of Lady 9 Reed and Lady 9 Grass, as well as the carrier of



the Dynastic Bundle, guided them. Their first station, on the day 5 House, was Stone of the Xipe Bundle, one of the founding communities of the Ñuu Tnoo village-state and in recent times the place where Lord 5 Movement (the father of Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña’) had resided, under the supervision of Lord 8 Wind of Chiyo Yuhu. Now this site was formally reincorporated in the Ñuu Tnoo kingdom. Further, they went to the different mountains and rivers, thrones and altars, that is, the different communities, towns, and sanctuaries of the kingdom, to seat the Sacred Bundle and the Xipe Bundle and to perform the war ritual and the royal pulque ritual. Old priests offered *piciete*. This took place on the days 5 House, 6 Lizard, 7 Serpent, 8 Death, and 9 Deer. On the day 10 Rabbit a human sacrifice was made for the Sacred Bundle after valiant warriors had fought one another. Lord 9 Flower ‘Sacred Arrow,’ Lord 8 Deer’s younger brother, directed the ceremony in his function of *yahui* priest.

Then, starting on the day 11 Water, several specific places were visited. We suppose that Lord 8 Deer in this way defined and reaffirmed the frontiers of the realm of Ñuu Tnoo.

The version of Codex Iya Nacuaa I (18-II) begins by showing Lord 8 Deer seated on his throne. Before him a war band (*yecu*) is depicted as the sign that initiates the list of toponyms. This band of chevrons may represent a woven hem of a garment, which would explain its use for edge, border, and frontier lines with enemies. The logical thing for a ruler to do at that moment would be to take possession of his territory.

The versions of Codex Iya Nacuaa and Codex Tonindeye only coincide as to the Mountain of Arrows, which could be Ndaa Nduvua (Miltepec) but also any other similarly named place. The difference might result from the fact that each codex refers to the diagnostic boundary places at a specific moment of redaction, while the precise extension of the village-state changed over time.

In the Tonindeye version, a Stone Shield of the Bird and a Valley of the Column are mentioned, which also occur in Codex Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan), pl. xiii, as frontier markers of the main town.<sup>83</sup> This suggests that these sites represent the boundary between Ñuu Tnoo and Yodzo Cahi.

Another place is Valley of the Flowering Magueyes, which may represent the frontier with Zaachila. The same toponym is mentioned later in the story (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 14-V) as a tributary (*ndaba*, “hand”) of Zaachila.

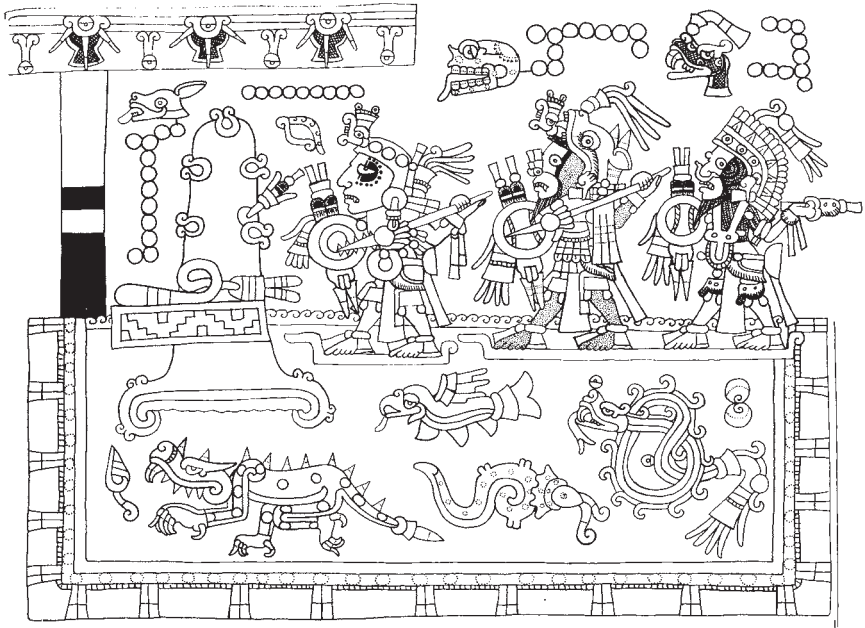
The last sign in the Codex Iya Nacuaa version is a hand with a painting or carving instruments on top of a frieze. It seems to represent the delineation of the *ñuu*, or sovereign community.

Finally, on the day 11 Alligator, Lord 8 Deer again went to Mountain of the Eagle, situated close to White Town at Cloud Mountain and Rock of the Quetzal (Ñuu Ndodzo, Huitzo?), where priests saluted him. This ceremony was probably intended to honor the Divine Ancestors 11 Alligator and 4 Alligator, associated with Heaven.<sup>84</sup> The celebration period took the entire twenty-day period between these two days.

The day 9 Serpent occurred during the next twenty-day period, the day on which Lord 8 Deer had first contacted Lady 9 Reed. He now entered her sanctuary (*dzoco*) again and spoke to her, presumably to express his continued thankfulness for her intervention, which had made the alliance with the Toltecs possible, and to affirm his commitment to serve and honor her with sacrifices. Appropriately, that same day he was visited by the Toltec king Lord 4 Jaguar 'Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl,' who invited him to participate in a military expedition.<sup>85</sup> The men performed a war dance together in Ñuu Tnoo.

### JOURNEY *to the* SUN GOD

The campaign or journey of Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl to the East is also mentioned in the Central Mexican sources. The motivation for this expedition was probably predetermined by the Classic pattern, which, as we saw, can be demonstrated in Early Classic Tikal and Monte Albán. As early as those times, the rulers of a Central Mexican, Toltec empire made incursions into Oaxaca and the Maya lands. The commercial interest in tropical products, united with an ideology of a pan-regional empire, may have been the motivator. Ideologically, the East is also the region of Heaven, the place of origin of shamanic powers. Great fame was to be won by such an enterprise. According to the Central Mexican tradition, Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl used to say that the Sun had called him: "And when the people asked him what he was going to do there, Quetzalcoatl answered that the ruler of those lands, who was the Sun, had called for him. This story was wide-spread among the Mexicans" (Torquemada 1975–1979, book VI: ch. 24). The answer is formulated in the lordly language of metaphors, according to which "going to the realm of the Sun God" means "looking for fame," following the destiny of a warrior.<sup>86</sup>

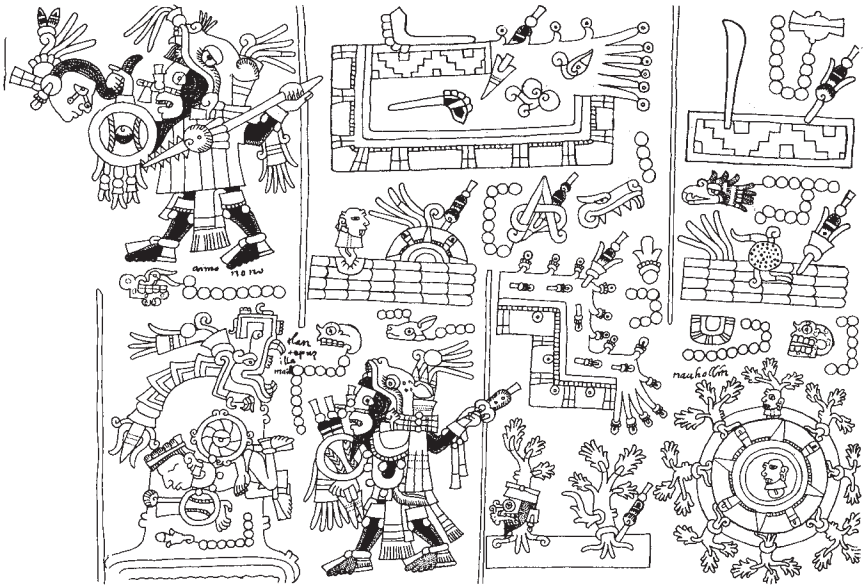


6.10. Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar crossing a large tropical lagoon (Codex Tonindecy, 75).

Lord 8 Deer took up arms and prepared himself through a ritual penis perforation, which permitted him to transform into an eagle and fire serpent (*yaha yahui*) and thus strengthened his magical powers.<sup>87</sup> On the day 2 Movement, thirty-two days after 9 Serpent, he performed further rituals, together with Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Naxtitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl,’ in front of a Pyramid of Quetzal Feathers in a large valley, probably the Tlachiu altepetl in Ñuu Ndiyo, that is, Cholula. Lord 8 Deer put up his right hand, not fully opened as a tributary would be but with only the index and middle finger raised. We interpret this gesture as indicating togetherness (*tnaha*), that is, obeying in friendship and alliance.

Then the *yahui* priest Lord 12 Vulture, the first person who had greeted Lord 8 Deer as ruler of Ñuu Tnoo, offered bowls with the liquid of the sacrificial knives to the mountains from whence the palm leaves for the ritual had been taken.<sup>88</sup> Burying the knives there meant the preparation ceremonies had ended.

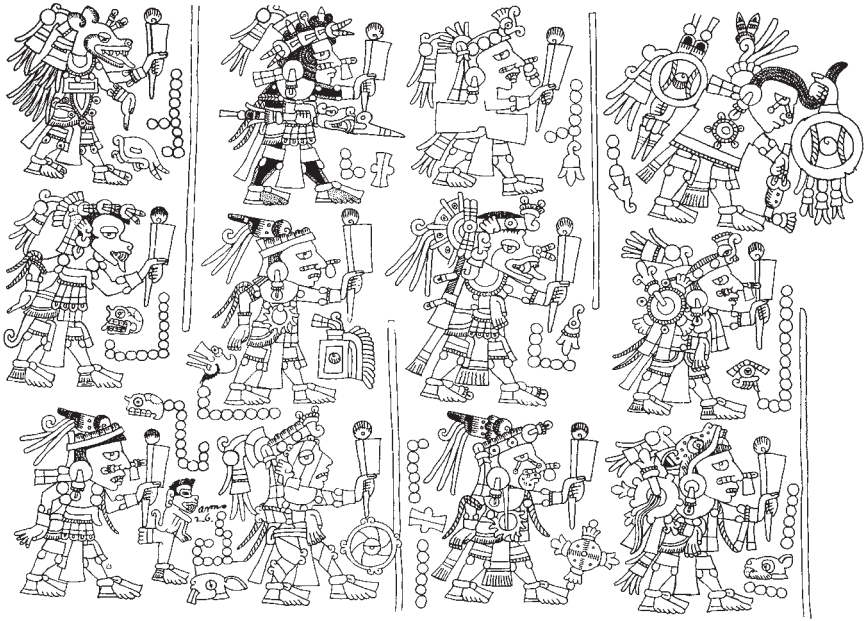
Lord 8 Deer was not going alone on the journey but was accompanied by his elder half-brother, Lord 12 Movement, and his younger brother, Lord



6.11a. Lord 8 Deer entering the nahual world (Codex Tonindeye, 76a).

9 Flower. On the day 8 Eagle, still in the year 8 Rabbit (1098), they began with the conquest of Place of the Plumed Grasses. Here one omen of Lord 8 Deer's birth was fulfilled: the long plumed grass (*zacatl* or *acxoyatl*). The rest of the campaign took place in the following year, 9 Reed (1099), which was under the divine patronage of Lady 9 Reed, who was now guiding the actions of both Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar.

As for the route, the Codices Iya Nacuaa and Tonindeye list a series of conquered places, which do not occur elsewhere in the Nuu Dzau records and thus, presumably, are outside the Nuu Dzau territory. The general direction of the campaign is clear, however, from the Central Mexican and Maya sources. The *Annals of Cuauhtitlan* (Velázquez 1975, § 67) mention Copilco, Topillan, Ayotlan, and Mazatlan. Of these, the first two are probably Copilco-Topilco situated on the Gulf Coast, on the road to Xicalango. The second pair is more difficult to identify with certainty, as it consists of fairly common names. Mazatlan, "Place of Deer," may refer to the province Cehache east of Acalan. But we also find a Mazatlan together with an Ayutla, "Place of the Turtles," in the Xoconochco area, that is, on the route to Guatemala (cf. Codex Mendoza, 47). Those references may proceed from a combination of data from different campaigns. The same may be true for the lists of



6.11b. *The sacrificed warriors (Codex Tonindeye, 76b).*

toponyms given in the Codices Iya Nacuaa and Tonindeye. As we are dealing with pictorial representations of Dzaha Dzahui versions of names in other languages, in sequences that may have been confused because of the lack of precise geographic knowledge, we should be extremely careful in suggesting identifications here. That is even more true where the same toponym occurs in different areas; for example, the House of the Turtle (Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 20-II) may represent the earlier mentioned Ayutla but could also refer to Ayotzintepec in the Chinantla region or some other turtle place elsewhere.

It is clear from the sources that Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl was traveling eastward; he followed the Gulf Coast, moved past Xicalango, crossed the Laguna de Términos, and invaded Yucatan, where he settled in Chichén Itzá and Mayapan.<sup>89</sup> Combining the Central Mexican data with those of the Ñuu Dzahui codices, it becomes clear that the tradition often presents a telescopic image. A single voyage is mentioned in most written sources, as a mixture or combination of what actually must have been fairly distinct voyages: first, the campaign of conquests (because of the taking possession of and giving names to places, often identified with the primordial voyage of the Creator God

Quetzalcoatl; going around on Earth; and founding village-states, dynasties, and cults), and second, a much later voyage when Nacxítl retired to the same area, during which he died.<sup>90</sup>

The latter journey was the true end of the Toltec empire. But we can imagine that in the eyes of the historians of Tula Xicocotitlan, the end had already begun when Nacxítl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl left their city for Cholula. According to their “school,” the two campaigns were just successive phases of the same phenomenon. For us, however, it is important to separate the expansion, led by a strong king at the peak of his power, from his melancholic and dramatic final journey.

Among the places in this liminal area, we can hypothetically identify the River with House as Acalan, “Place of the Water Houses or Canoes,” situated upstream on one of the rivers (probably the Río Candelaria) that flows into the Laguna de Términos.<sup>91</sup> A general name for the Gulf Coast area beyond Xicalango was Tlapallan, “Red or Colored Place.” From representing only a specific place, this term had become generalized as a marker of sacred geography, indicating East and the liminal area between the Mexican and Maya worlds, the Place of Dawn. It is also identified with Tlillan Tlapallan, the Place of the Black and the Colored (paint), where the wise ancient Toltecs from Teotihuacan had gone after the fall of their great capital. In the *interpretatio christiana* it became an equivalent of the Red Sea. Related toponyms are Nonoalco and Teotlixco.<sup>92</sup>

The most impressive scene from this campaign is the one in which the two rulers and those accompanying them cross a huge extension of water, some in canoes, others swimming with gourds bound on their backs. The huge waves and the wide horizon (“where the heaven rests on the waters”) indicate the open sea. The presence of alligators makes it clear that this is a wide lagoon. Codex Iya Nacuaa (I, 22–23) identifies the waters with a place name: the frieze with the step fret motif means *ñuu*, “place,” in combination with a series of rectangles in different colors. We might read this as “Place of Colors,” in Nahuatl, Tlapallan.

Codex Tonindeye (75) describes the voyage as the conquest of the Island of the Red and White Loincloth (a place Codex Iya Nacuaa mentions somewhat later, after the crossing of the waters). A local man leads the way. As is logical in the Ñuu Dzauí version, Lord 8 Deer is in front, but it is Lord 4 Jaguar who throws the spear of conquest and takes possession of the island. The geographic description, compared to the context of the travels of Nacxítl

toward the Maya area, suggests that they are in the Laguna de Términos and that the conquered island is the Isla del Carmen.<sup>93</sup> The conquest is precisely dated: the days 10 Serpent, 11 Death, and 12 Deer of the year 9 Reed (1099).

Among the places conquered after this impressive event we find less precise toponyms but more generalized descriptions, such as “Ancient Town,” “Sacred Valley of the Lords,” “Place where the Sun God rises amidst the trees” (Teotlixco?), “Tree of Blood, Tree of the Rain God,” “Precious River,” and “Plain where the Sun rises, where the Ñuhu rises.”<sup>94</sup> This is appropriate within the context of the campaign becoming increasingly elevated to the level of a religious quest in a sacred landscape. Our heroes have passed the liminal area and are nearing the realm of the Gods.

A series of days is given for these conquests, and they do not seem to be in chronological sequence. However, one clear date stands out: the day 4 Alligator of the year 9 Reed, 174 days after the passage of the Laguna de Términos.<sup>95</sup> This was the day on which the voyage to the Sun God, Lord 1 Death, reached its final phase. The symbolic connotation was appealing to Ñuu Dzauí historians: the days 4 Alligator and 1 Death were the calendar names of the founders of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty.

A Mountain of the Fire Serpent, a *nabual* place, marks the passage to the Other World. Before entering here, a life had to be sacrificed. On the hill we see the extended dead body of a warrior with the given name ‘Stone Shield.’ Under him the day 9 Flower is given; next to the mountain we see the day 12 Death.

If we follow Alfonso Caso and identify 9 Flower as the calendar name of the man who was killed, we can construct a rather fanciful but fascinating hypothesis to explain the scene. That calendar name would make it possible to identify the dead man as Lord 9 Flower ‘Blood Shield,’ the son of Lord 13 Dog, ruler of Mountain of Seven Stones, and Lady 6 Eagle, the daughter of Lord 8 Alligator ‘Blood Coyote’ and Lady 9 Monkey ‘Jewel Quetzal,’ rulers of Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo).<sup>96</sup> The fact that he was a prince of Mountain of Seven Stones would account for the slight differences in the personal names of Lord 9 Flower; he may also have been known as ‘(Blood) Shield of Stones.’ Recall that Lady 6 Eagle was Lord 8 Deer’s niece. Her mother, Lady 9 Monkey, was Lord 8 Deer’s younger sister; she had been born in the year 13 Flint (1064), so she was now thirty-five years old. In ancient Ñuu Dzauí custom, this was enough time for Lady 9 Monkey to have grown up, married, and had a child and for that child to have grown up and married. Indeed, her

daughter, Lady 6 Eagle, had married Lord 13 Dog, the ruler of Mountain of Seven Stones.

During the years of forging the alliance with the Toltecs (1096–1097), Lord 8 Deer had again visited the *Huahi Cahi* in Ñuu Ndaya. It is plausible that at those occasions he had contact with his brother-in-law; he also would have noticed that his niece, Lady 6 Eagle, had grown up. Recall that according to the ancient Ñuu Dzau elite custom, she was a logical marriage partner for him. Uncle-niece marriages were rather common as a strategy to reunite the heritage. Indeed, some years later Lord 8 Deer would marry Lady 6 Eagle, who, therefore, left her husband, Lord 13 Dog.

Given its proximity to Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), this Mountain of Seven Stones, where Lady 6 Eagle lived with her first husband, can be identified as Yuu Usa, today pronounced locally as Yuu Usha, the correct name of Santa Catarina Yuxia.<sup>97</sup> The latter community, pertaining to Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), derives its name from a peculiar rock formation in the center of town, known even today as Yuu Usha, “Stone Seven.” Presumably, this place name has a symbolic meaning, comparable to that of Chicomoztoc (“Seven Caves”) for the Nahuas. Perhaps Yuu Usa was also a place of origin. Local people recall that in ancient times a female *Ndoso* (Divine Ruler) from Ñuu Ndaya married the Lord *Ndoso* of Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec). Consequently, the coast became very rich, it is said; otherwise all that richness would have remained in the Mixteca Alta. The *Ndoso* of Yucu Dzaa is well-known: it is the large boulder on top of Yucu Yuu Dzaa, a hill in the center of modern San Pedro Tututepec. It was here that Lord 8 Deer, coming from Ñuu Tnoo, founded his new Temple of Heaven. As for Lady *Ndoso* of Ñuu Ndaya, the actual site of her birth is pinpointed as a mountain with an important archaeological site, behind the present church of San Felipe Tindacu, a neighboring village of Yuxia and close to the actual Chalcatongo. The name of that mountain in Tindacu is also Yuku Saa, “Hill of the Birds” (Yucu Dzaa in the orthography of Alvarado). The codices only mention one ancient queen from Ñuu Ndaya who married a ruler of Yucu Dzaa: Lady 6 Eagle, the second wife of Lord 8 Deer. One wonders if local lore conserves the memory of a historical event here. We have no way to be sure, but the geographic context is suggestive. A princess of the ruling lineage of Ñuu Ndaya could very well have been born in the ancient site of San Felipe Tindacu, a tributary community, and it would have been perfectly natural for her to marry a nobleman from the neighboring community Yuxia, down the impressive gorge of the



Río Hondo. Farther south, down that same blue gorge, toward the horizon, we see the dominant and mysterious peak of Yuku Kasa, the Entrance to the Other World, still invoked by the elders of Tindacu in ritual prayers directed to the Seven Mountains and the Seven Seas.

How do we explain the unexpected presence and death of Lady 6 Eagle's son at such a crucial moment during Lord 8 Deer's voyage to the Sun God? Given the short time span for the generations of her mother and herself, Lady 6 Eagle can only have been between fifteen and twenty years old at the time of the campaign to Xicalango. Her son, therefore, must have been a very young boy or even a baby at the time. His representation as a warrior must be just a pictorial convention.

Of course, it is possible that the names are just a coincidence and that the Lord 9 Flower who was killed when Lord 8 Deer was about to pass the threshold to the Other World is not related to anybody else we know of through the codices, but we doubt that. We think his death at such a crucial event must have had a special and dramatic meaning for it to be commemorated this way. Thinking further about the incident, we came to this reasoning. Such a small boy was certainly not alone with the warriors on that long campaign; his mother must have accompanied him. But, if so, what was Lady 6 Eagle doing there? It is curious that Lord 8 Deer made that daring journey in the company of his niece, who, as we know, some years later would become his wife. And why is she not mentioned explicitly? Was her husband still alive, was she there with him? The story would have a very dramatic twist if we supposed that she and Lord 8 Deer had already been cultivating a loving relationship long before they actually married, in other words, if she accompanied Lord 8 Deer as his mistress. Building further on this speculation, we can even ask whether Lord 9 Flower was in fact not the son of the ruler of Stone Mountain but Lord 8 Deer's illegitimate child. We stress that there is no evidence whatsoever to back up such a guess; on the other hand, the theme of a father asked to sacrifice his young child to obtain a crucial favor from the deities is well-known from other cultures (e.g., the stories of Isaac and Iphigenia).

The days associated with the killing of Lord 9 Flower are 12 Death and 9 Grass. Both are out of sequence. Possibly, 9 Grass is an esoteric calendar name (*nahualtocaitl*) of the *nahual* mountain and at the same time a reminder of the strong hold the powers of the *Huabi Cahi* had on all this. The most probable date for the event is 9 Death.

After killing Lord 9 Flower from behind, Lord 8 Deer entered the *nabual* world over the fallen body. The Central Mexican histories recall a similar event: “Topiltzin . . . took the road towards the sea and there he opened, just with his word, a big mountain and entered it” (Durán 1967, I: 12). The first sight was horrifying. Warriors and princes who had fallen in battle or been executed as prisoners of war came toward him carrying the banners of sacrifice, their arms still bound by the ropes of captivity, their hearts ripped out, blood streaming from their chests.<sup>98</sup> But Lord 8 Deer did not panic. He stopped their advance and subdued them. The heroes passed by and came to the entrance of the Underworld—its esoteric calendar name was 9 Serpent, a ritually important day, reminiscent of the earlier offerings by Lord 8 Deer to Lady 9 Reed. On the day 10 Deer (corrected from 11 Deer, which is out of sequence), they conquered the Hills of the Ancestors.

The next day, 11 Rabbit, they forced their way into the House of the Sun. Here Lord 8 Deer, Lord 12 Movement, and Lord 4 Jaguar had to confront the divine sentinels: Old Coyote (the trickster) and the God of Death.<sup>99</sup> They did so successfully and then kneeled in the presence of the Sun God, Lord 1 Death, seated in his precious temple. It was the sacred day 7 Movement, which in earlier years had been used for special ceremonies by Lord 5 Alligator and Lord 2 Rain.<sup>100</sup> Our heroes offered gold and jade to the Sun God, who ordered them first to do penitence and bloodletting.

Thirteen days later, on 7 Dog, Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxtil Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl’ drilled the new fire in front of the Sun’s House, the place of origin of all rulership.<sup>101</sup> They then left the *nabual* world through a precious hole in the Mountain of the Fire Serpent. The day was 9 Grass, the esoteric name of that mountain but probably also the day on which the event took place, two days after 7 Dog.<sup>102</sup>

Where did all this happen? Obviously, the description refers to the House of the Sun (*Tonatiuh Ichan* in Nahuatl) as a divine place, the realm of the dead warriors who accompanied the Sun during the first half of his daily journey. On the other hand, this entrance in the Other World is embedded in a geographic context of a voyage that had just passed the Laguna de Términos. From this perspective one would situate the House of the Sun God in Maya land, in Yucatan. This idea is reinforced by several sources that tell us that Nacxtil Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl arrived in Maya land, where he became known as Kukulkan, and established himself at Chichén Itzá, where he is credited with building the famous “Castillo,” or Temple of Kukulkan.

Given the archaeological presence of earlier construction phases, he probably amplified the already existing “old Castillo”:

It is believed among the Indians that with the Itzas who occupied Chichen Itza, there reigned a great lord, named Kukulkan and that the principal building, which is called Kukulkan, shows this to be true. They say that he arrived from the West; but they differ among themselves as to whether he arrived before or after the Itzas or with them. They say that he was favorably disposed, and had no wife or children, and that after his return he was regarded in Mexico as one of their gods and called Quetzalcoatl; and they also considered him a god in Yucatan on account of his being a just statesman; and this is seen in the order which he imposed on Yucatan. (Tozzer 1941: 20–23)

The *Relación Geográfica* of Izamal and Santa María confirms that in the past the great ruler who had his court in Chichén Itzá had received tribute from all of Mexico and Guatemala (de la Garza 1983: 305). Perhaps this is the court referred to by the Popol Vuh and the Título de Tonicapan when they locate the Tollan of Nacxitl in the East, “where the sun rises.” Then the Quiché lords would not have gone to Cholula to get their insignia of royalty together with the art of writing but to Chichén Itzá as a kind of eastern Toltec capital.<sup>103</sup>

In the Temple of the Jaguars in Chichén Itzá, next to the great ball court, reliefs and frescoes describe the battles of a great Lord Plumed Serpent, whose iconography suggests that Kukulkan-Quetzalcoatl is meant. The relief on the lintel of the building shows that Lord Plumed Serpent presents himself before Lord Sun. How all this fits in with the chronology of Chichén Itzá, which is presently under revision, is not yet clear. The temple in question seems to date from an earlier period, but the lintel and frescoes may have been added later.<sup>104</sup>

We take the encounter of Plumed Serpent and Sun as a direct parallel to the scenes in the Codices Tonindec and Iya Nacuaa, where Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl’—together with his ally Lord 8 Deer (crucial to Ñuu Dzauí historiography but irrelevant in other sources)—meets the Sun God. The deity may have been impersonated by the Ah Kin May, the great Sun priest who seems to have been the central religious authority among the Mayas of Yucatan.<sup>105</sup> This is likely the scene remembered as an emblem on Ñuu Dzauí shields and polychrome ceramics: “The victory over the sun is such a common theme in Mixtec heraldry that they paint on their coats of

arms, and even on some cups and bowls of the nobles, a captain in armour, with a feather crown, holding shield, bow and arrows in his hands, and in front of him the sun, going down among grey clouds” (Burgoa 1934b, I: 371). In colonial times this theme was synthesized and transformed into the legend of the *Flechador del Sol*, the prince who shot the Sun and became ruler of Ñuu Tnoo.

As for Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl, his appearance on the stage of Ñuu Dzau history is like a whirlwind, sudden and strong, uprooting and pushing people toward great transformation. Following the example of the divine Lord 9 Wind ‘Quetzalcoatl,’ the creator of human society on earth, he inspired new artistic and political developments by connecting Ñuu Dzau to the mainstream of Mesoamerican culture, the *Toltecatoytl*. His vision had a similar impact all over Mesoamerica. The symbolism of the Plumed Serpent was already important in Preclassic and Classic times, but this extraordinary charismatic leader gave it a new dimension within the context of a rapidly spreading revival and intensification of the Quetzalcoatl cult.<sup>106</sup> Tying history to ritual, the human to the divine, the emblematic figure of Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl had a catalyzing effect on the Toltec realm, on the Maya communities in Yucatan and Guatemala, and, as has become clear, on the Ñuu Dzau.

Our reading of Lord 4 Jaguar’s activities in the codices has important implications for all of Mesoamerican history and archaeology. New questions arise about the precise chronology of the events, the growth and composition of the Toltec realm, and the nature of the interaction among Central Mexico, Oaxaca, and the Maya area in the Early Postclassic (manifest in the development of the Mixteca-Puebla style). These topics merit a much more detailed analysis, which falls outside the scope of this book. Several insightful works have been written about different aspects of the religious symbolism and historical reality of the Quetzalcoatl figure. Still, many mysteries remain.



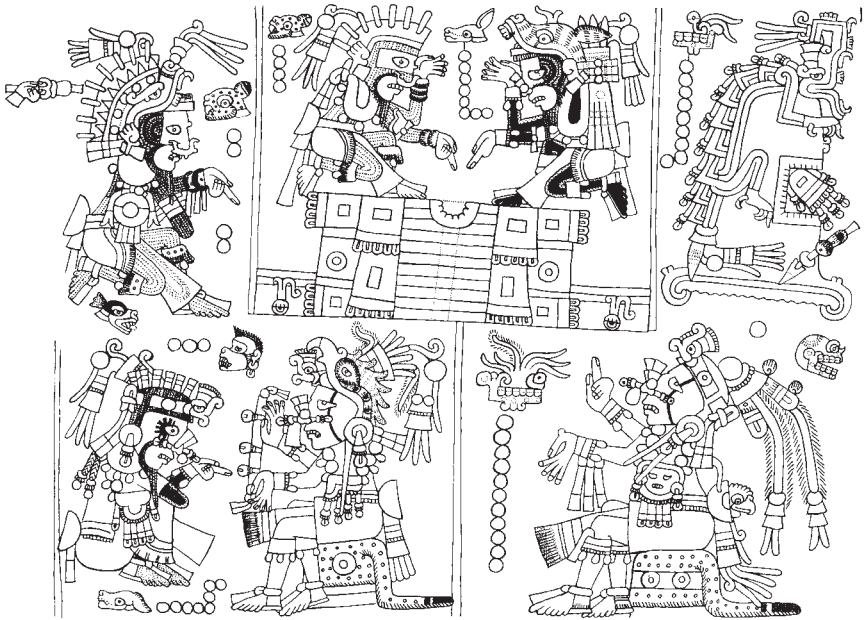
*Chapter Seven*

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TRIUMPH *and* TRAGEDY

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ON THE DAY 11 DEATH, THE SUN GOD (OR HIS HIGH PRIEST) GRANTED Lord 4 Jaguar and Lord 8 Deer a vision.<sup>1</sup> They climbed the impressive and beautifully decorated pyramid that reached into the heavens—it is easy to visualize here the older phase of the Castillo in Chichén Itzá. There the Heaven, place of sacrifice and ecstasy, opened, and they saw three temples or houses. This image probably referred to the idea of a Triple Alliance. Indeed, the first house was that of the Plumed Serpent at Tollan-Cholollan. But facing it were not—as one would have expected—the Heaven Temples of N̄uu Tnoo and Yucu Dzaa. There was no reference to the realm of Lord 8 Deer whatsoever. The second house was that of a Town of Flint, an insignificant place at the time. The third was that of Town of the Pointed Objects, the place we suggest might be Yucu Ndeque (Huaucilla). Was this going to be the Triple Alliance of the future? The idea came as a blow to the two Lords, and they began to lament.



7.1. Lord 1 Death, the Sun God, allows Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar to have a vision on top of the celestial pyramid and gives them precious gifts (Codex Tonindeye, 79).

Then Lord 8 Deer saw his elder half-brother approaching from behind Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxtil Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl.’ For some unknown reason Lord 12 Movement came toward them dressed as a warrior, perhaps alarmed because he saw them lamenting, certainly not with the idea of doing any harm; he had been a consistently loyal and unselfish helper to his younger half-brother. But his appearance, fully armed, likely disturbed Lord 8 Deer as a new omen: Was this man going to take over his position by force of arms, was he the impediment to the alliance between Ñuu Tnoo and Tollan-Cholollan? From that moment on, Lord 8 Deer’s feelings for his elder half-brother were poisoned by distrust, envy, and fear.

This vision, then, is the dramatic turning point in our story. In a tense atmosphere, Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxtil Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl’ finished the rituals. On the days 2 Dog and 3 Monkey they received precious gifts from the Sun God. On the day 6 Jaguar they sat in the great ball court and confirmed their alliance by laying down their weapons and exchanging gifts of jade and gold. Finally, on the day 9 Movement, the last day of the year 9 Reed, they began their return over the sea. Thirty-eight days later, on

the day 8 Eagle of the year 10 Flint (1100), they were back at the place where their campaign had started. Thirteen days after that a huge explosion of a volcano occurred in the area they had conquered.<sup>2</sup>

Fray Diego de Landa confirms that Quetzalcoatl lived for a number of years in Yucatan and then went back to his capital in Central Mexico: "This Kukulcan lived with the lords in that city [Mayapan] for several years; and leaving them in great peace and friendship, he returned by the same way to Mexico, and on the way he stopped at Champoton and, in memory of him and of his departure, he erected a fine building in the sea, like that of Chichen Itza, a long stone's throw from the shore" (Tozzer 1941: 26). Mendieta also documents that Quetzalcoatl arrived in Cholula, coming from Yucatan, and states that he then ruled his capital for twenty years, after which he went back where he came from.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Ñuu Dzauí sources, the two protagonists went their separate ways. Lord 4 Jaguar went to consult with other Toltec lords, whereas Lord 8 Deer dedicated himself to complementary conquests, presumably in the Ñuu Dzauí region. After returning, he tried to locate the place he had seen in his vision and visited a Town of the Pointed Objects, close to Town of the Eagle. Nothing in particular was found there, however.<sup>4</sup>

### MURDER *in the* STEAM BATH

On the day 11 Death of the year 10 Flint (1100), Lord 12 Movement was going to take a sweat bath. This was likely a preliminary ritual in preparation for his "birthday," which was exactly half a *tonalpohualli* (130 days) away. He reached age fifty-five that year. At the same time, the ceremony may have been a commemoration of the events one cycle of 260 days (*tonalpohualli*) earlier, when Lord 8 Deer and the Toltec king had experienced their disturbing vision on the Altar that Rises into Heaven (the Castillo of Chichén Itzá), a vision that had strained the relationship between the two half-brothers. Above the sweat bath a sun is depicted, reinforcing this association with the visit to the Sun God. At the same time, it may be a reference to a feast such as the *Panquetzaliztli* of the Mexica.<sup>5</sup>

The sweat bath had been prepared, probably at a special secluded location, away from the noise and bustle of the capital of the village-state. Lord 12 Movement, off guard, entered with a trusted healer who was going to bathe him and stimulate his life force by hitting him with branches of the *temazcal*



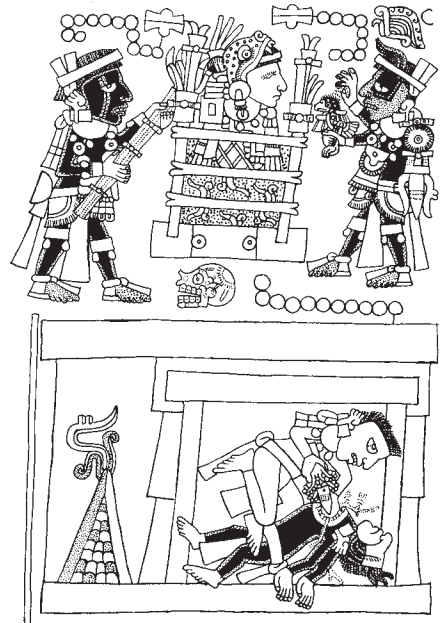
tree. This individual, whose name we do not know, was corrupt and was involved in a dark conspiracy to kill his client. A knife had been hidden in the leaves of branches, and once the anonymous healer was alone with Lord 12 Movement in the dark and steamy interior of the *temazcal*, he assassinated him. They had been alone for this ceremony, so the murderer could easily escape. The body was probably not found until the next day, 12 Deer.<sup>6</sup>

The image of the Sun above the sweat bath connotes the phrase “the Sun was watching,” indicating that divine justice would punish this sacrilegious crime.

A funerary ceremony was initiated on the day 1 Water (three days after 11 Death). The corpse was placed on a scaffold, burned or dried over a low fire, and made into a mummy bundle. Lord 8 Deer was present and helped kindle the fire.<sup>7</sup> The funeral lasted nine days, until 9 Movement (the day before the recurrence of the day that was the year bearer, 10 Flint, now in the position of the 261st day). Several commemoration rituals were celebrated.

On the day 7 Flower, sixty-three days after the nine-day funerary ritual had ended, nobles arrived with offerings. Lord 8 Deer supervised the ritual for the bones and skull of the deceased, together with his brother Lord 9 Flower. Codex Iya Nacuaa stresses the presence of Lord 5 Rain ‘Smoking Mountain.’ Earth was eaten as a sign of respect; the dark beat of the drum mixed with the delicate singing of sacred hymns. A procession was held, in which Lord 8 Deer, Lord 9 Flower, and Lord 5 Rain all participated.

On the day 7 Flower, still in the year 10 Flint, Lord 8 Deer sat down in front of a temple of the Xipe Bundle.<sup>8</sup> The scene in Codex Iya Nacuaa is damaged, but no indication of the local rulers is given. In Codex Tonindeye, the same date is connected to a plain on which two Xipe Bundles are standing.



7.2. The killing of Lord 12 Movement in the sweat bath (Codex Tonindeye, 81).

It is not clear whether these scenes actually refer to the Town of the Xipe Bundle, although, in view of later events, this is highly probable. In that case, it is ominous that Lord 8 Deer was not welcomed by Lord 11 Wind and Lady 6 Monkey, who ruled that place. No communication seems to have taken place at all. In any case, Lord 8 Deer probably sought permission from the sacred object to conquer the town that bore its name and was consecrated to it.

A war ritual was organized, apparently in commemoration of Lord 12 Movement, with a large orchestra playing music; a two-toned drum, *qhu* (*teponaztli* in Nahuatl), and the standing drum *ñuu* (*huehuetl* in Nahuatl), as well as gourd trumpets and gourd rattles were used, and one musician beat a tortoise shell with an antler. One orchestra member was Lord 5 Rain, so important in the tradition that produced Codex Iya Nacuaa. Of the other participants, we can only identify Lady 9 Movement ‘Jewel Flower,’ daughter of the rulers of Ñuu Sitoho (Juquila). Later she would marry one of Lord 8 Deer’s sons. Here she must still have been very young.

Lord 9 Flower, Lord 8 Deer’s younger brother, was an active participant in these events, but Lord 8 Flower, Lord 8 Deer’s maternal half-brother, is conspicuously absent. Perhaps he had died.

Offerings were made to the Sacred Bundle, situated in a large and precious temple. This was likely the sanctuary where Lord 12 Movement was buried. Three toponyms that follow situate the Place where the Faceless Ñuhu Emerges—which we take as a reference to the tomb—between the Mountain of the Moon and the Mountain of the Fire Serpent, which may represent the ceremonial center of Monte Albán; the Yucu Yoo or Mountain of the Moon (Acatepec) was its northern point, and the Mountain of the Fire Serpent seems to have been a name for the southern part.<sup>9</sup> It was the same Yucu Yoo—here painted as a place of songs, a famous place—that Lord 12 Movement had helped conquer three years before.

Day 7 Flower seems to have been the actual burial date. As a ritual day, it connects the death of Lord 12 Movement symbolically with the death of the ancestral figure Lord 7 Flower.<sup>10</sup>

Who was responsible for the murder of Lord 12 Movement? The codices do not tell us. They explicitly leave the matter open for speculation. Consideration of the circumstantial evidence—basically interest and motive—points to Lord 8 Deer, not as the actual killer but as the intellectual author behind the conspiracy.

This is a tragic twist in the events. Lord 12 Movement had always been loyal to his younger half-brother, always respectful and supportive, but because of his genealogical position, he posed a long-term threat to Lord 8 Deer. As the firstborn son, he was the main inheritor of their father's power and status, the head of their noble house, and also the head of the faction their father had formed in Ñuu Tnoo. Lord 12 Movement was a structural competitor for Lord 8 Deer's power, although nothing indicates that he ever tried to make use of that position. In fact, we do not fully understand his position; no marriage is mentioned, and no social function is indicated. We can speculate that he was not married because of a priestly office, that of guardian of the Sacred Arrow, similar in importance to the function of his father, Lord 5 Alligator. In that case he would only become a dynastic competitor if he left that celibate office and prepared for matrimony. The *temazcal* ritual may have been indicative of such a transition, but we have no way to be certain.

The pointing toward Lord 8 Deer as the intellectual author behind the murder of his half-brother fits the overall interpretation of his biography as the literary drama of a tragic hero, in which this would be a second turning point. On the other hand, admirers and followers of this great ruler would oppose such a suggestion without proof. To please both factions and not offend anybody, the painters chose to leave the question open and in a state of suspense.

### *The* DEATH of LADY 6 MONKEY

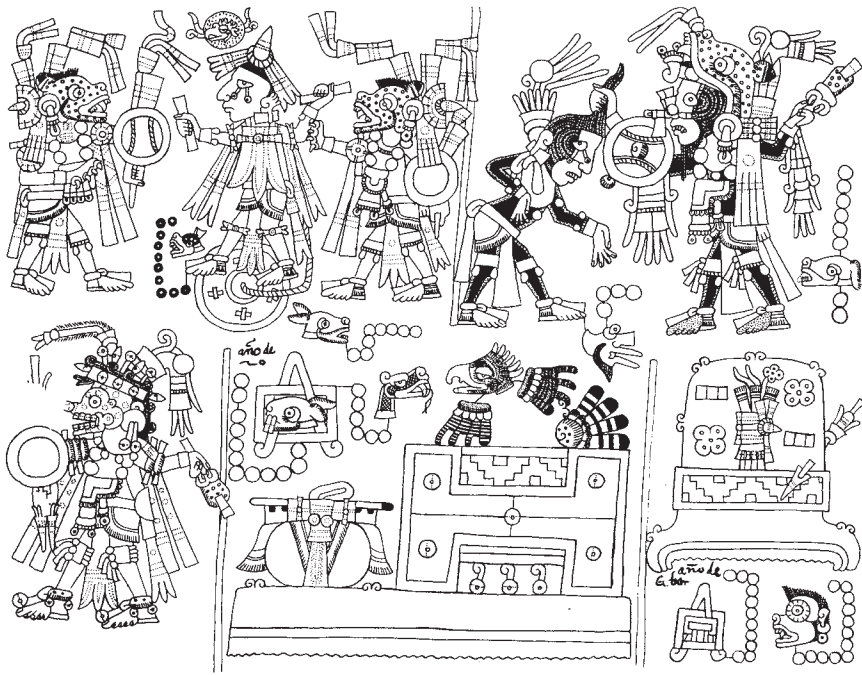
Lord 8 Deer was eager to avoid accusations of complicity by playing a prominent role in the funerary ceremony, which was performed with great pomp and circumstance. Priests observed the nine days of vigil and mourning, beheading quails, throwing powdered tobacco (*piciete*) into the air, and drying the corpse over a fire. Other important priests, dressed in *xicollis* and crowned with flowers, arrived with chocolate, pulque, and flower garlands. Rich spoils from the wars were deposited with the dead body. Jewels in the form of butterflies, which symbolized rebirth in eternal life, were consecrated to the four directions.<sup>11</sup> But Lord 8 Deer went further: so nobody would doubt his innocence, a culprit had to be found and severely punished. Ironically, among the ceremonial attendants were "men with bloody hands," that is, those who had carried out the assassination; they would now assist him in executing the scapegoats.

The *temazcal* where Lord 12 Movement had been killed was probably located in the area of Town of the Xipe Bundle. That would explain the references to this town in the funerary ceremonies. Lord 11 Wind and Lady 6 Monkey ruled this important ancient village-state. In the year 10 House (1061), Lord 11 Wind had married Lord 8 Deer's elder half-sister, Lady 6 Lizard, a younger sister of Lord 12 Movement. With her, he had fathered three children: Lord 10 Dog 'Sacred Eagle,' Lord 6 House 'Rope, Flints,' and Lady 13 Serpent 'Flowered Serpent.' Later, in the year 13 Rabbit (1090), recall that he had married again, this time Lady 6 Monkey, seven years after she had gone to the *Huahi Cahi* with Lord 8 Deer. They had two children: Lord 4 Wind 'Fire Serpent' and Lord 1 Alligator 'Eagle of the Ball Court,' born in the years 2 Flint (1092) and 4 Rabbit (1094) or 5 Reed (1095), respectively.<sup>12</sup>

In 1100, when the murder of Lord 12 Movement occurred, the children of the first marriage were adults. Lady 13 Serpent had married a Lord 8 Wind 'Fire Serpent' in Place of the Owl, with whom she had a small child, Lord 1 Alligator.<sup>13</sup>

Through their father, these three children were descendants of a Monte Albán princess, sister of the Founding Mother of the first Ñuu Tnoo dynasty. Through their mother, they were descended from the first marriage of Lord 5 Alligator and a princess from Zaachila. Their stepmother, Lady 6 Monkey, was the princess of Añute, also a descendant of the first Ñuu Tnoo dynasty, the woman Lord 8 Deer had once planned to marry. Obviously, these children were important political figures with high prestige and, as such, possible future competitors for power in Ñuu Dzau.

It seems that Lord 8 Deer blamed Lord 10 Dog 'Sacred Eagle' and Lord 6 House 'Rope, Flints' for the murder of Lord 12 Movement. On the day 12 Monkey of the year 11 House (1101), exactly 365 days after the murder in the *temazcal*, he attacked and quickly conquered the Town of the Xipe Bundle, taking its royal family prisoner. There the triumphant warrior, affected by ambition, distrust, and the corruption of power, reencountered for the first time in eighteen years the woman he had once intended to marry, Lady 6 Monkey. The codices do not speak explicitly about the protagonists' feelings, but the fact that Lord 8 Deer had never married in all his years as a ruler of Yucu Dzaa and Ñuu Tnoo suggests that he had not given up his young man's dream. Now he had become a calculating, power-thirsty monarch, in whose heart jealousy had overcome love. In full armor he made her, her husband,



7.3. Lord 8 Deer takes Lord 4 Wind prisoner and executes Lord 10 Dog (Codex Tonindecy, 83).

and children march with white banners as a sign that they were going to be killed. Immediately thereafter, Lady 6 Monkey, at age twenty-eight or a few years older, was sacrificed, along with her husband.<sup>14</sup>

Here, then, the prophecy the old priests of Zaachila had shouted to her from their high sanctuary on Monte Albán years before, *yuchi yuchi*, “knife, knife, thou wilt be killed by a knife,” was fulfilled. Far from a curse or a threat, it had been a warning the young princess had been unable to understand—in a case of tragic irony, she had killed those who tried to save her.

Lord 4 Wind, a young boy of seven, was crying when he was taken prisoner by Lord 8 Deer, but he soon managed to escape and hide in a cave. In Dzaha Dzau a hideout was called *yavui yuhu*, “cave to hide,” which might produce a word play with *yahui*, “fire serpent.” If the toponym was actually Cave of the Fire Serpent, it would suggest that this was a place of *nahual* activity, probably known for that intimate reason by Lord 4 Wind, as his given name, ‘Fire Serpent,’ suggests that his *nahual* was that ball of light-

ning. At the same time, the toponym Rock of the Fire Serpent can be identified with the southern part of Monte Albán.<sup>15</sup> From this place young Lord 4 Wind had to watch as Lord 8 Deer led away his elder half-brothers, Lord 10 Dog ‘Sacred Eagle’ and Lord 6 House ‘Rope, Flints,’ as prisoners.

Four days later, on the day 3 Eagle, he went to consult Lady 9 Grass, not at the *Huahi Cahi* in Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo) but in another oracle place. Many days later, as the commemoration of the burial of Lord 12 Movement on the day 7 Flower approached, Lord 4 Wind consulted with the Ancestral Spirit Lord 7 Flower, still in the year 11 House (1101) on the day 4 Movement (also the name of an Ancestral Spirit, companion to Lord 7 Flower). But all this was of no avail.

On the day 7 Flower of the year 12 Rabbit (1102), Lord 8 Deer visited Place of the Pointed Objects. He had likely chosen that place because of his vision in Chichén Itzá. First, he appointed himself the new ruler there, celebrating the ritual of drinking the new pulque as the foundation of a prosperous reign. His trusted noble, Lord 13 Jaguar ‘War Eagle,’ was there to salute him, perhaps so he could become the acting governor of the place.<sup>16</sup>

Lord 8 Deer deposited the Sacred Bundle in front of Mountain of the Eagle and waited twenty-five days for his special day, 6 Serpent in the year 12 Rabbit (1102). That was the day he had chosen for the ritual execution of his two half-nephews—only six days before the *tonalpohualli* commemoration of the conquest of Town of the Xipe Bundle. Appropriately in view of their dynastic background, a Xipe festival was organized to kill both princes. One was tied to a round stone (*temalacatl*) and had to defend himself with sticks against fully armed jaguar warriors. On the ninth day of the Xipe ritual, 1 Reed, the other prince was tied to a rack and shot with darts, thrown by experienced warriors dedicated to the Venus God. His blood flew onto the round blue stone that had been given to Lord 8 Deer in the *Huahi Cahi*. Both princes died weeping. The executioners’ faces were concealed behind terrifying masks in the form of jaguar heads and skulls. Lord 8 Deer participated in the killing.<sup>17</sup>

It was exactly nineteen years after Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey had gone to the *Huahi Cahi* (on the day 6 Serpent of the year 6 Reed). Perhaps the now omnipotent king thought the blood of all these killings, consecrated in sacrifice to commemorate that ominous visit, would in some way redeem him from the grip of Death, personified in Lady 9 Grass. Of course, that was an illusion.

*The* SURVIVORS

After the attack on Town of the Xipe Bundle, Lord 4 Wind, who had been living there with his parents, became a fugitive. The second son of Lady 6 Monkey was Lord 1 Alligator ‘Eagle of the Ball Court,’ now six or seven years old. Apparently, he was in Añute at the time of the attack and was not persecuted. He was the appropriate age to enter into temple service, and we see him performing rituals for the Sacred Bundle in his mother’s town in the year 12 Rabbit on the day 6 Dog, that is, sixty-five days after the execution of his half-brothers. At the same time, this ritual was the preparation for his becoming ruler of Añute as his mother’s heir and successor.

Lord 8 Deer did not oppose this development but concentrated on his own affairs in N̄uu Tnoo. After additional rituals, on the days 9 Wind and 2 Vulture, he walked the sacred road and sat down in a large temple to drink pulque—commemorating again the burial of Lord 12 Movement—on the day 7 Flower of the year 13 Reed (1103).<sup>18</sup> Among those present—all clad in ceremonial tunics (*xicolli*)—were several men “with blood on their hands,” that is, participants in the killing of Lord 12 Movement and his kin. The scene shows the ruler’s cynical disregard of ritual purity and family values.

Soon afterward, forty-five days later, he married Lady 13 Serpent, his half-niece, the sister of the two princes of Town of the Xipe Bundle whom he had just executed. She became his first official wife. Her earlier marriage to Lord 8 Wind of Owl Place was apparently dissolved. The day chosen for the marriage was her name day, 13 Serpent in the year 13 Reed (1103).<sup>19</sup>

This marital alliance was prescribed by political considerations. Lord 8 Deer had taken an enormous risk by attacking the prestigious descendants of his father’s first marriage. By eliminating them as possible competitors for power, he had at the same time offended their political faction, allies, and related lineages. To soothe the protests and resentments, he now married the woman who was the only descendant of this family. In this way his huge realm and political power would pass on to their son, who would unite the descent and heritage from both the first and second marriages of high priest Lord 5 Alligator.

For Lady 13 Serpent this must have been quite an ordeal: she became the queen of an important realm, a vassal province of the prestigious Toltec empire, and the wife of the man who had killed her innocent brothers, father, and stepmother. Heavily traumatized, she did not bear children in the period that followed.

In the meantime, Lord 4 Wind tried to accommodate himself to the new reality. First, in the year 2 House (1105), on the appropriate day 1 Death, he laid down his weapons for the Sun God on Mountain of the Sun—likely a general reference to a sanctuary in the mountains, dedicated to the solar deity. Through the intervention of this deity, the next day, 2 Deer, again a day of symbolic importance, Lord 4 Wind, thirteen years old, could establish himself at Large Stone of the Fire Serpent.<sup>20</sup> Apparently, this was a place under Toltec control because two Nahuatl-speaking priests—Lord 5 Flower and Lord 5 Vulture—received him and offered him a bow and a *xicolli*, that is, took it upon themselves to educate him in the art of hunting and the ritual obligations of priesthood.<sup>21</sup>

Lord 8 Deer did not oppose this arrangement; in fact, he held no grudge against Lord 4 Wind, who was a child at the time, a son of Lady 6 Monkey of Añute, and irrelevant to his dynastic schemes.

### INTRIGUES *at the* COURT

As things were settling down, but as he was still childless, Lord 8 Deer decided to enter into other marriages. Thus, on the day 3 Deer of the year 2 House (1105) he wed his niece Lady 6 Eagle ‘Jaguar Spiderweb,’ the daughter of his sister, Lady 9 Monkey, who had married Lord 8 Alligator, the ruler of Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo). We saw earlier that Lady 6 Eagle had been married before to the ruler of Yuu Usa and had given birth to a son, who was probably killed by Lord 8 Deer when he entered the Other World.<sup>22</sup> If our suspicions are right, this marriage validated a relationship that had been going on for some time.

Then, in the same year 2 House (1105), Lord 8 Deer married Lady 10 Vulture ‘Brilliant Quechquemitl,’ that is, ‘Beauty of Jade.’ Again, this was an important dynastic event. She was the daughter of Lady 7 Reed ‘Flower-Jewel,’ the sister of Lord 12 Lizard of Ñuu Tnoo, who had married Lord 13 Death of Head Town.<sup>23</sup> Because of this ancestry, Lady 10 Vulture was now one of the few inheritors of the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo. Logically, the chosen date was the favorite marriage day of Ñuu Tnoo rulers: 7 Eagle.

The marriage had been arranged in a peculiar way. Thirteen days earlier, on 6 Alligator, Lady 10 Vulture had come from the village-state of her parents to River of Flames—probably the river of the ceremonial center Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). There she had made a human sacrifice and received a vision. In



that vision Lord 9 Flower ‘Sacred Arrow,’ Lord 8 Deer’s younger brother, manifested himself as a serpent. This indicates that Lord 9 Flower (born thirty-eight years earlier) had died. Speaking from the Other World, he instructed Lady 10 Vulture to marry his brother. The guidance by this vision strengthened the importance of this marital alliance, which united Lord 8 Deer directly with the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo.

These three marriages were carefully calculated and brought Lord 8 Deer the loyalty of three important factions with which he had to deal. His first wife (Lady 13 Serpent) linked him to the faction around the descendants of the first marriage of his father, Lord 5 Alligator, and to those who favored the alliance with Town of the Xipe Bundle. His second wife (Lady 6 Eagle) satisfied his own faction, as she was also a descendant of his father’s second marriage. At the same time, the bond with the village-state where the *Huahi Cabi* was located was reaffirmed. His third wife (Lady 10 Vulture) connected him to the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo, that is, the original legitimate ruling lineage founded by Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ and the princess from Monte Albán.

Ironically, each of the three wives had her own reasons to despise Lord 8 Deer: Lady 13 Serpent because of the killing of her brothers, father, and stepmother; Lady 6 Eagle because of the killing of her baby son (at least if our interpretation is right); and Lady 10 Vulture because her house had lost control over Ñuu Tnoo and because of the unclear circumstances under which its latest prince, her grandnephew Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña,’ had lost his life (circumstances that could implicate Lord 8 Deer).

The contradictory emotions of resentment against the powerful husband and the wives’ ambition to obtain a major piece of his heritage for their children created, we imagine, an atmosphere of tension and intrigue at the royal court of Ñuu Tnoo. Insecurity must also have existed about the political future of Ñuu Dzau as a whole. In the past the region had been divided into distinct village-states, with some, like Chiyo Yuhu, more powerful than others. Now the alliance with the Toltecs had introduced the notion of centralized rule. Ñuu Dzau, at least the Mixteca Alta, was becoming a vassal province, with Ñuu Tnoo as its regional center and Cholula as the empire’s capital. The different noble houses and factions speculated on what would happen after Lord 8 Deer died: Were they to keep or get back their local tribute rights and other privileges?

Thus, ironically, while Lord 8 Deer had arrived at the zenith of his power and had unified the Ñuu Dzau lands, his realm was already falling apart

under him because of the intrigues of his court and family. The crucial issue, of course, would be the installation of his own lineage, the appointment of a strong heir to the throne. No children had yet been born, however, so Lord 8 Deer married again. His fourth wife was Lady 11 Serpent 'White Flower (*Oceloxochitl*), Teeth Inlaid with Turquoise.' She was from a noble Toltechose, as is spelled out in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú. Her parents were Lord 5 Eagle and Lady 9 Serpent, rulers of Place of Bird with Arrow–Pointed Beak, probably Totomihuacan near Cholula.<sup>24</sup> This Lady 9 Serpent, in turn, was the daughter of a couple who had ruled in the great Tollan, that is, Cholula: Lady 11 Serpent 'Jewel Mouth' and Lord 1 Lizard 'Serpent–Decorated Shield.' The latter was the son of Lord 5 Dog 'Plumed Jaguar Serpent' and Lady 2 Death 'Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood,' from Red Temazcal, that is, Ñuu Niñe (Tonalá). This marriage brought a connection—although somewhat indirectly—with the Toltec nobility and the house of Ñuu Niñe, the place under the patronage of Lady 9 Reed and also the place from where one of the first Lords of Ñuu Dzauí history had originally come.

Lord 8 Deer's fifth wife was Lady 6 Wind 'Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood' from Ñuu Naña (Cuyotepeji). She must have been related to Lord 1 Deer 'Coanacoch,' who had founded the dynasty in that place and had functioned as an ambassador of Lord 4 Jaguar 'Nacxítl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl' to Lord 8 Deer. This marriage provided another link with an important vassal lineage of the Toltec influence sphere.

The first child to be born was a son by the second wife, Lady 6 Eagle: Lord 6 House 'Jaguar that came down from Heaven.' His birth in the year 6 House (1109) created a dynastic problem. Lord 8 Deer had married Lady 13 Serpent as his first wife, with the idea that her son would inherit his realm and reunite the descent lines of both the first and second marriages of Lord 5 Alligator, thereby pacifying both factions. But Lady 13 Serpent did not have a son, and the second wife could now claim the inheritance for her child, the firstborn. To solve this predicament, Lord 8 Deer resorted to a trick. He asked the couple Lady 1 Grass 'Flower' and Lord 9 Rabbit 'Plumed Sun,' assisted by the priest Lord 4 Water, to take care of the boy. Only eight days later, on 1 Monkey, they had hidden him safely in the Sun Cave, where Lady 1 Grass attended him as a mother. It was not until three years later, in the year 9 Flint (1112), that his birth was made publicly known.<sup>25</sup> The place where he was kept in secret during those years must have been somewhat remote. Lord 9 Rabbit 'Plumed Sun' may be identical with a nobleman of

that name who was present at Lord 8 Deer's enthronement and came from Rock with Death Mouth, which, as suggested earlier, could represent Ayuu in the Mixteca Baja.

In the meantime, Lord 8 Deer tried to find a remedy for his first wife's sterility. The ritually important day 4 Movement of the year 6 House was chosen for a pilgrimage: the ruler and Lady 13 Serpent went to a temple in Valley of the River with a Tree to make offerings of copal and *piciete*. There they had a vision; a huge dark serpent with an alligator head manifested himself to them. The vision cured Lady 13 Serpent; she became pregnant, and 273 days later, in the year 7 Rabbit (1110), she gave birth to a son: Lord 4 Dog 'Coyote Catcher.'

In the following years several other children were born to Lady 13 Serpent: (1) Lady 10 Flower 'Spiderweb of the Rain God' in the year 8 Reed (1111); (2) Lord 4 Alligator 'Sacred Serpent' in the year 9 Flint (1112), the same year Lord 6 House's birth was made public; (3) Lady 6 Wind 'Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood'; and (4) Lady 6 Flint 'Precious Fire Serpent.'<sup>26</sup>

During these years the third wife, Lady 10 Vulture, also gave birth to a son, Lord 12 Dog 'Knife,' and a daughter, Lady 5 Wind 'Ornament of Fur and Jade.' The fourth wife, Lady 11 Serpent, bore two children: Lord 10 Movement 'Quetzal Owl' and Lady 2 Grass 'Sacred Jade.' They were taken to Cholula at an early age to be instructed in the temple cult; there they married each other and had two daughters: Lady 13 Rain 'War Jewel of Tollan,' who married Lord 7 Flint 'Cloud Serpent,' and Lady 1 Flower 'Quetzal, Jewel of Tollan,' who married a prince from Temazcal (Ñuu Niñe, Tonalá), Lord 8 Deer 'Plumed Serpent.'<sup>27</sup>

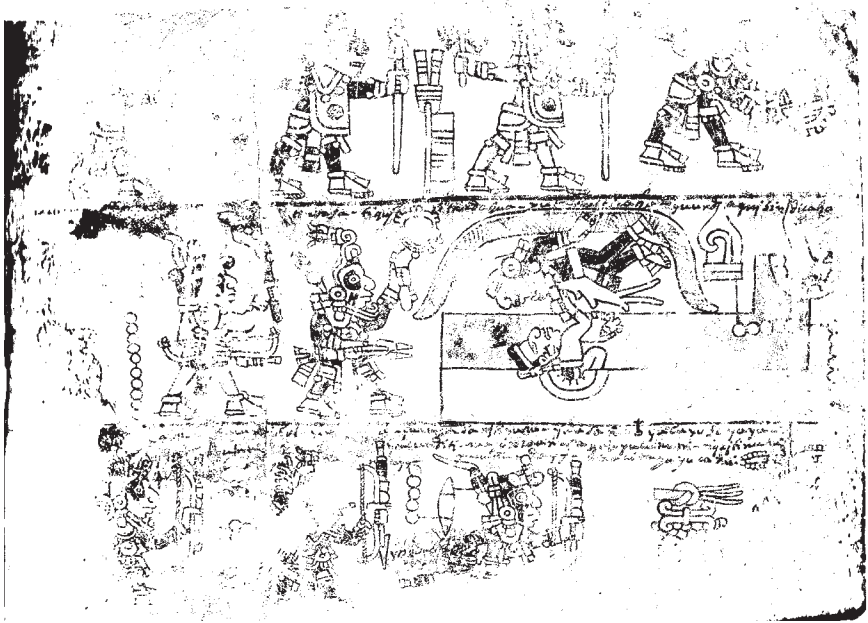
## FINAL CURTAIN

In the year 10 House (1113), the great ruler of Ñuu Tnoo, Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw,' realized various conquests and visited, among other places, Mountain of Spikes and Dark Speckled Mountain. It was probably on this occasion that he brought his two children by his fourth wife to Town of the Pointed Objects to have them carried from there to Cholula, where they were to be married.<sup>28</sup> By taking possession of that town and sending his children from there to Cholula, Lord 8 Deer may have tried to make reality fit the vision he had seen in Heaven (Chichén Itzá), which had announced an alliance between Town of the Pointed Objects and the Toltec capital.

It was at that time that Lord 4 Wind, now twenty-one years old, began to plot against Lord 8 Deer. We imagine that he felt the blood of the ancient royal family of Monte Albán flowing through his veins and was motivated by the wish to take revenge for the death of his father, mother, and half-brothers and to regain the important position that was his legacy as the son of a king of Town of Xipe Bundle and a queen of Añute, related to the original Ñuu Tnoo dynasty. Thus on the day 5 House of the year 12 Reed (1115), he met with a few trusted men in a spot called Place of Flints, situated between Añute and Ñuu Tnoo. Lord 10 Jaguar ‘Plant Carrier with Twisted Hair’ and another Lord (of whose name only five dots are still visible) both recommended Lord 5 Flint as an apt “hand holding a knife,” that is, someone prepared to kill as a service.<sup>29</sup>

Now it was only a question of finding an opportunity. We suspect that Lord 4 Wind pretended to be loyal and friendly to Lord 8 Deer, recognizing him as the ruler of Ñuu Dzauí. The latter, in turn, had never disliked Lord 4 Wind; he might have even felt a paternal sympathy for the boy raised by Toltecs, who was the son of the woman he had once planned to marry. In the year 12 Reed (1115), Lord 8 Deer would turn fifty-two, but his own children were still very young. Lord 4 Wind was the age and had the education a king would wish for his son and heir. The births of all Lord Deer’s children after a long wait must have given him some comfort and directed his attention toward the future. He had to make decisions about the structure of the kingdom. Supported by the great Nacxítl Topiltzín Quetzalcoatl, he could work to consolidate his power and create a unified realm. He also had to decide which inheritance would be given to which child.

Lady 6 Eagle, on the other hand, must have felt great concern. Only recently, in the year 9 Flint (1112), had the birth of her son, Lord 6 House, been recognized. She wanted him to receive his share as the firstborn prince, that is, to inherit the core of the realm, the village-state of Ñuu Tnoo, but she saw her ambition obstructed by the children of the other wives. First, preference was given to young Lord 4 Dog, the son of Lord 8 Deer’s first wife. Then, the fact that Lord 8 Deer had sent his fourth wife’s two children to be raised and educated in Ñuu Ndiyo (Cholula) must have been a strong indication that those children were going to be the future rulers of Ñuu Dzauí as a Toltec vassal state. How could this be stopped, and how could the succession in Ñuu Tnoo be secured for her son? The answer was obvious: the traditional situation of different noble houses having specific rights to tributes and succession



7.4. *The killing of Lord 8 Deer (Codex Iya Nacua I, 16).*

in separate village-states would continue only if Lord 8 Deer were to die soon, before he could consolidate a centralized rule for all of N̄uu Dzauī and appoint the son of a Toltec woman as his universal heir and successor. According to Toltec custom, a ruler indicated his successor when he reached age fifty-two, so the protagonists felt an increasing sense of urgency.<sup>30</sup>

We do not know if any contact occurred between Lord 4 Wind and Lady 6 Eagle—the codices are absolutely silent on this point—but we suspect the two started plotting at the same time. Having common interests, they may have formed a secret pact. It may have been Lady 6 Eagle, then, who provided the circumstances for an attempt on her husband's life, by suggesting to Lord 8 Deer that he take a leave from the heavy obligations of the court, go to the countryside, and shoot some precious birds for her in the trees along the river. Why not invite Lord 4 Wind to come along? The Toltecs had trained the young man as a hunter, and he had behaved very well lately, so it was time to show him some goodwill.<sup>31</sup>

Thus it happened that Lord 8 Deer, accompanied by Lord 4 Wind, Lord 5 Flint, and probably several others, started out to hunt birds on the day 1

Grass in the year 12 Reed (1115), 115 days before his birthday. They reached the Plain of the Magueyes, a frontier area at the foot of a mountain that belonged to the tributary region of Zaachila.<sup>32</sup> An ambush had been planned. During the night, Lord 8 Deer was sleeping under a blanket when suddenly a man emerged and stabbed him to death with his knife. Codex Iya Nacuaa does not give the assailant's name, although the context suggests that the killer was Lord 5 Flint. But he did not operate alone. Lord 4 Wind and Lord 10 Jaguar were standing close by, the first raising "stick and stone" and the second a *macana* (club), probably as a signal to their accomplice to kill the king and as a sign of their own active involvement. "Stick and stone" is a sign for "punishment"; here it makes it explicit that Lord 4 Wind was taking revenge.<sup>33</sup> It was the night of 12 House, which followed the day 11 Wind: obviously, the murder was planned as vengeance for the killing of Lord 4 Wind's father, Lord 11 Wind of Town of the Xipe Bundle.

This was the end of the ambitious project Lord 8 Deer had started long ago with his visit to the *Huahi Cahi*. The invocation of the powers of death had frustrated his plan to marry Lady 6 Monkey and had brought him great glory, but in the end he could not resist the corruption of power and ultimately was forced to kill the woman who had accompanied him to the cave of doom. As a consequence, he called upon himself the revenge of her son.

The original story, which we can now reconstruct from the different codices, portrays Lord 8 Deer as a complex and tragic personality. Starting out as an unprivileged young warrior in a time of crisis, he sacrificed himself for his ambitions. As a result, he indeed achieved great success but at the same time remained unfulfilled. In the center of the kingdom he had constructed, even surrounded by kinsmen, courtiers, and flatterers, he was lonely. The wish to unify his country led him to kill his loyal half-brother and the "girl of his youth." To foster alliances and pacify the different factions, he married many wives whom he did not love and who did not love him. As his children were born, new intrigues arose over their heritage. No real successor was in sight. The one young man who did have the capacity to succeed him was the son of his original female companion, who hated him for killing his parents.

The body of Lord 8 Deer was made into a mortuary bundle and decorated with an *apanecayotl*, a large feather crown, a sign of his status as a Toltec ruler. The bundle was placed in a tomb, a dark sanctuary, with flowers to honor the deceased. Lord 8 Alligator 'Blood Coyote,' the father of Lady 6 Eagle and

ruler of Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), supervised the burial rites.<sup>34</sup> His presence suggests that the ruler's burial place was the collective sepulcher of the Ñuu Dzauí kings, the large *Huabí Cabi* cave on the Cerro de los Cervatillos in Ñuu Ndaya. There the soul of Lord 8 Deer would serve eternally as the slave of Lady 9 Grass, to fulfill the promises he had made to her at his first visit.

The presence of Lord 8 Alligator also had a political implication: by making the funerary arrangements, he manifested himself as the deceased ruler's closest kin and paved the way for his daughter, Lady 6 Eagle, to obtain a leading position in the realm as regent for her son, Lord 6 House.

This dramatic denouement probably contributed to the fact that the cave of Ñuu Ndaya became the central sepulcher for the Ñuu Dzauí kings, most of whom were descendants of Lord 8 Deer. That custom, in turn, lent actuality to the story told and reenacted during royal rituals. Although the colonizers destroyed that cave and many other shrines, documents, and traditions, the memory of the ancient sovereigns, the Ndodzo and the Ñuhu, has been kept alive in many localities.

In the border zone between the hot lowlands of the Mixteca Baja and the impressive scenery of the high, cloud-covered mountains of Ñuu Dzauí Ñuhu, following the lead of a local elder we descend a narrow path, zigzagging down along a steep cliff. Suddenly, we find ourselves entering a huge cavern, a natural dome. Torches have blackened the rock ceiling above us; bones, feathers, and the remnants of sacrificed chickens lie dispersed on the ground. It is the delicate resting place of Ancestors. In a niche stands an ancient statue with arms crossed as if in eternal respect, looking out toward the Mountain of Ribs right in front of the cave. His head has been cut off, but his power is undiminished. On the wall behind him a black cloth is painted, covered with the white crosses of the Temple of Death. All kinds of offerings, money, and cigars cover the image. People still come here today to say the prayer handed down through the generations. The past and present of Ñuu Dzauí take hold of our hearts, silence our voices. We burn tobacco to honor the dead and to purify our relations.

### *The* TOLTEC REACTION

After having seen his parents' murderer killed, Lord 4 Wind went immediately to Town of the Pointed Objects to perform bloodletting before the Sacred Bundle in the temple there. In return, he was recognized as a person

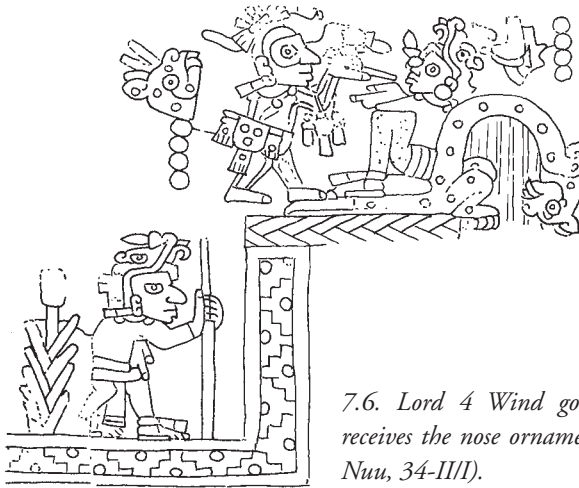


7.5. *The Sun God mediating between Lord 4 Wind and Lord 4 Jaguar (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 33-II).*

of high prestige. Then he went to Blue Mountain of the Fire Serpent, where he installed his throne.<sup>35</sup> This may be the same place as Stone of the Fire Serpent, where he had been ruling under Toltec protection. Invested with this new status, Lord 4 Wind conversed with Lady 6 Wind ‘Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood,’ the fifth and probably the youngest wife of the late Lord 8 Deer. She had not borne any children; consequently, she had little to gain in the power struggle raging in the court at Ñuu Tnoo. She likely had no allies. Her interest was to find a new husband and some safety within the changing political arena. Perhaps it was with this in mind that she contacted Lord 4 Wind. He was not interested in her as a marriage partner, as she had no link to the noble houses in power, but he did appreciate her position. He did not need her as an ally in the royal court at Ñuu Tnoo because she had little influence there and he may already have had contact with Lady 6 Eagle, but Lady 6 Wind was useful as an intermediary with the Toltecs. She came from Jaguar Town, Ñuu Ñaña (Cuyotepeji), in the Mixteca Baja, home to one of the principal ambassadors—Lord 1 Deer ‘Coanacoch’—who had established the contact between Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl.’

Later, Lady 6 Wind ‘Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood’ married a Lord 5 Dog ‘Coyote.’ Their daughter later became the wife of Lord 4 Dog, Lord 8 Deer’s son with his first wife.<sup>36</sup> Lord 5 Dog ‘Coyote’ was a noninheriting (second?) son of the king (Lord 12 Wind) who had been put on the throne of Jaguar Town (Ñuu Ñaña) by Lord 1 Deer ‘Coanacoch.’ So both Lady 6 Wind and her husband came from Jaguar Town (Ñuu Ñaña), but apparently she was not a daughter of the first ruling couple. We do not know the





7.6. Lord 4 Wind goes to Tollan-Cholollan and receives the nose ornament (Codex *Ñuu Tnoo-Ndisi Nuu*, 34-III).

names of her parents, but we speculate that she was the daughter of Lord 1 Deer ‘Coanacoch,’ who seems to have been the Toltec governor of *Ñuu Ñaña* and the one who later installed a local dynasty. This hypothesis would explain both why she was an eligible marriage partner for Lord 8 Deer (as the daughter of an ambassador to whom he owed his contact with the Toltec rulership) and why she could intervene on behalf of Lord 4 Wind.

As the outcome of their meeting, an ambassador went to *Ñuu Ndiyo* (Cholula) to talk to Lord 4 Jaguar Nacxtil and ask him to support Lord 4 Wind. This did not have the desired effect, however. Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxtil Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl’ organized a large punitive expedition to the area where Lord 4 Wind had established himself.<sup>37</sup> The expedition arrived in *Ñuu Dzau* on the day 6 Monkey of the year 2 Rabbit (1118).

Lord 4 Jaguar, as Lord of the Banners, that is, supreme military commander, immediately captured several persons—including, it seems, the main culprits, Lord 5 Flint and Lord 10 Jaguar. He also persecuted Lord 4 Wind, who escaped by hiding first in a *temazcal*, then behind Black Rock, land of the Ancestor Lord 4 Reed ‘Rain.’ There he hid, like a lizard, difficult to catch, making fun of his persecutors.<sup>38</sup> According to Codex Iya Nacuaa (II, 16), it was here that Lord 4 Jaguar paid his respects to the *Ñuhu* of the place and invoked the Sun God. Consequently, he was able to catch the fugitive. But during the next days, 7 Grass and 8 Reed, Lord 4 Wind escaped again, either by climbing a tree as a lizard would, again making fun of his persecu-

tors, or simply by going into hiding amid the bushes and palm leaves. This game of hide-and-seek went on until the Sun God, Lord 1 Death, decided to stop it. He (i.e., a priest of the Sun God) arranged a meeting at which Lord 4 Jaguar arrived without arms as an ambassador, with a fan in his hand. The God took both adversaries by the hand and made them reconcile.

Apparently, a reference to this scene was contained in a now lost pictorial manuscript with sixteenth-century glosses, of which only a reading by Mariano López Ruiz has come to us.<sup>39</sup> At that time the knowledge of how to analyze such manuscripts was still very limited, so today it is difficult guesswork to try to reconstruct the images López Ruiz transcribed and interpreted. Still, there is a clear indication that the original codex contained a scene in which Lady 6 Wind spoke to the Sun Deity on behalf of Lord 4 Wind. The text mentions a Lord *Ñucumé*, “born in”—that is, associated with—Heaven: he may be *Ñuhu Camaa*, God 1 Death, that is, the Sun Deity or his impersonator. López Ruiz then speaks of a marriage scene: apparently, God 1 Death was seated in front of “*Januchi* in the Valley of Blood,” that is, Lady 6 Wind (*iya Ñuchi*) ‘Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood.’ A third individual is named as their son: *Yaqchi coyavuiy* (*iya Qhchi Coo Yahui*), Lord 4 Wind ‘Fire Serpent.’ We take this to mean that he appeared immediately after Lady 6 Wind as the beneficiary of the meeting. A date is given, “year *Cquecui*, day *Cunoo*,” which we can interpret as year 3 Reed (*cohuiyo*) day 2 Monkey (*coñuu*).

Lord 4 Jaguar had become tired of chasing Lord 4 Wind and had seen that a dangerous power vacuum was developing in the *Ñuu Dzau* area; nobody actually had the influence or capacity to take Lord 8 Deer’s place. Although at first he had been offended by the murder of his ally, he now saw another solution: simply to accept the murderer as the new strongman in the region. We understand that Lord 4 Jaguar’s politics were moved not by any personal sympathy toward Lord 8 Deer but entirely by political considerations. To explain and sanction this Machiavellian change of attitude, a representative of the Sun God—whom Lord 4 Jaguar and Lord 8 Deer had visited in the East—was invoked.<sup>40</sup>

On the day 10 Rain of the year 3 Reed (1119), Lord 4 Wind, accompanied by a Toltec ambassador, set out for Cholula. The next day, 11 Flower, has been added. Leaving the *Ñuu Dzau* region, Lord 4 Wind paid homage to the memory of Lord 5 Alligator, whose ritual acts had initiated the historical period in which he now found himself a protagonist.

Thirteen days later, on 11 Reed, he crossed the Yuta Ndeyoho or Huitzilapan, the river that gave its name to Puebla, and arrived in the Toltec capital. There he underwent the nose piercing ritual, seated on the jaguar throne in Tollan-Cholollan, on the first day of the next *trecena*, 1 Vulture. Lord 4 Jaguar himself directed the ceremony and placed the turquoise ornament.<sup>41</sup> The power Lord 4 Wind received was expressed in a series of titles:

- He who received shield and lance, symbols of military prowess and valor
- He who holds the sacrificial knife<sup>42</sup>
- He who holds the Tnucucua staff, that is, the staff of authority, an emblem of rulership over Ñuu Tnoo
- Lord of the Feathered Banner, that is, supreme war commander
- Head of sticks and stones, that is, the one in charge of punishment
- Jaguar head, that is, head of the jaguars, leader of the jaguar warriors
- He in charge of the bag with *piciete* powder for fasting and visionary rituals
- Keeper of the flowered arrow, possibly the one who held the power to declare flower war and realize arrow sacrifice<sup>43</sup>
- He who has access to the white flower, probably the hallucinogenic *datura*
- Eagle head, that is, head of the eagle warriors
- Keeper of the eagle feathers for warrior rituals
- He who carries the lizard bag, which contains the eagle down for sacrifice
- He who controls the black ointment for priestly functions
- He in charge of the war brazier
- He in charge of the round stone altar (*temalacatl*) to execute prisoners of war<sup>44</sup>

Three days later, on the day 4 Rain of the year 3 Reed (1119), Lord 4 Wind, carrying the Tnucucua staff of authority, began his return journey. A priest went ahead announcing his arrival by blowing a conch and sanctifying the air with incense and guiding him to a cave of water, the entrance to Ñuu Dzau.<sup>45</sup>

The new ruler was accompanied by a long procession. In front walked five Toltec ambassadors with fans and staffs. They were important warlords: the first carried a rattle, the second carried a flute and had a parrot in his

hand, the third carried a *piciete* bag and was whistling, the fourth carried the drum (*huehuetl*), and the fifth carried a banner.<sup>46</sup>

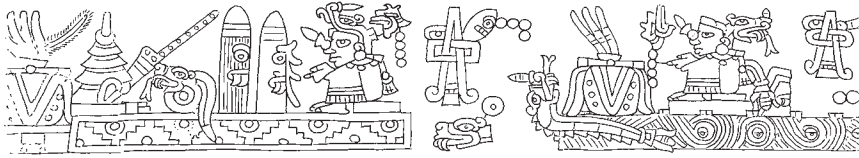
Immediately after these fierce captains came Lord 10 Jaguar ‘Plant Carrier with Twisted Hair,’ with a knife in his hand. This latter attribute identifies him as one of the main participants in the killing of Lord 8 Deer. It must have been a provocative act to have him march in the procession in such a place of honor. He was followed directly by Lord 10 Flower ‘Dark Mouth, Bow Tail’ from Dark Speckled Mountain. It is interesting to find this man here as one of the major allies of Lord 4 Wind. He was the one who, together with his wife, Lady 4 Rabbit (who belonged to the first Ñuu Tnoo dynasty), had received Lord 8 Deer in their land thirty-nine years earlier, when he was just starting out on his ambitious road to power. Through this prominent actuation in the enthronement, Lord 10 Flower now manifested himself as one of Lord 4 Wind’s closest allies, walking next to the murderer of Lord 8 Deer. We saw that the Place of the Pointed Objects was probably located in his territory, so here is the fulfillment of the vision Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar had seen in Heaven: Place of the Pointed Objects was part of a new Triple Alliance that was coming into existence, sharing power with Cholula and, as we will see, Town of Flints, the new capital of Lord 4 Wind.

The other participants in the enthronement rituals constituted a diverse group. Among them we see several kinds of priests:

- a carrier of the bundle of grass for sacrifice (*zacatapayolli*)
- a carrier of the smoking brazier
- a carrier of the Sacred Bundle, with a precious vessel
- a priest who swayed *zacate* or *acxoyatl* branches, preparing the sacrificial rites<sup>47</sup>

Others seem to have been participants in a ritual performance that recalled the story of origin of the Ñuu Dzaui royal families:

- a dancer with gourd rattles
- Jaguar Serpent and Coyote Serpent from Heaven, Ñuhu Serpent, and another Lord Serpent, probably representing the ancient *nabual* lords<sup>48</sup>
- Stone Man and Rock Man, weeping, representing the original population of the region, which had been overcome by the Yuta Tnoho alliance
- To Ina (Xolotl), the jade carrier, the God of wealth, and Monkey Man, the jewel carrier, emblem of richness and art<sup>49</sup>



7.7. Lord 4 Wind becomes ruler of Ñuu Yuchi (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 31- III).

- a priest of Death
- the Rain God in a death aspect, possibly a priest in charge of the rites of devotion to the ancient Ñuu Dzauí Lords and Ladies from whom Lord 4 Wind descended

Logical participants were men whose names or titles suggest important military functions: War Lord and Double-Headed Eagle.<sup>50</sup>

In accordance with the provocative tone set by the prominent presence of Lord 10 Jaguar, we find in this noble company two Owl Men (*teñumi ñaha*), demonical magicians, one of them amid streams of blood, that is, involved in murder. These fear-inspiring characters demonstrate that evil powers had helped Lord 4 Wind kill Lord 8 Deer. Still another man with a bloody knife is identified: Lord 8 Vulture. The procession closed with a man with blood on his hands and another with a knife, flanking a jaguar characterized by a skull. Given the context, we suspect these three were performing a theatrical representation of the dead Lord 8 Deer ‘Jaguar Claw’ and his assassins.

Making these explicit references to murder (blood, knives) and evil magicians (Owl Men) in his enthronement ritual, Lord 4 Wind followed the example of Lord 8 Deer, who had also included men with blood on their hands in the pulque ritual in which he manifested his total power over Ñuu Dzauí. By doing so on a large scale, Lord 4 Wind not only proclaimed openly the killing of his predecessor as one of the bases of his power, but also made all participants in the extensive ritual manifest publicly their acceptance of this fact.

On the day 2 House (twenty-four days after 4 Rain) in the year 3 Reed (1119), Lord 4 Wind put down the Sacred Bundle in Large Stone of the Fire Serpent as a sign of taking power and acceding to the throne. This was a ritual date for the Añute dynasty, the lineage of Lord 4 Wind’s mother.<sup>51</sup> The place was the town where Toltec priests had raised him.

On the day 9 Grass of the year 3 Reed (1119), Lord 4 Wind honored Lady 9 Grass in the *Huahi Cahi*, offering her *xicollis* and flowers that repre-

mented the jaguar and the eagle, that is, he consecrated to her the lives of his warriors.

## A NEW RULE

After these ritual preparations, on the day 1 Serpent of the year 4 Flint (1120), Lord 4 Wind performed the Bundle ritual in Flint Town, Ñnuu Yuchi, a place of serpents and old huts—the sign of a house (*huahi*) with a digging stick (*yata*) in it is to be read *huahi yata*, “old house” in Dzaha Dzau. This would mean that at the time it was not a town but a barely inhabited, forgotten place, located between Añute and Ñnuu Tnoo. It was here that Lord 4 Wind had stayed before and conspired to kill Lord 8 Deer, so here he would build his own new capital. Perhaps he had even made a vow to do so. In that case the name “Town of Flints” or “Town of Knives” has the connotation of “place where the knife to kill Lord 8 Deer was prepared.” The founding of a “disembodied capital” also shows that he wanted to escape from the tragic and bloody Ñnuu Tnoo–Xipe Bundle conflict and make a fresh start. Flint Town only appears in the codices as a capital during the reign of Lord 4 Wind, but it was long remembered as “Place of the Toltec Ruler.” Now it is an important archaeological site, known as Mogote del Cacique.<sup>52</sup>

In Flint Town, Lord 4 Wind was saluted by the priests Lord 12 Serpent ‘Bowl of Blood’ and Lord 5 Rabbit ‘Guacamaya Serpent.’<sup>53</sup>

The version in Codex Iya Nacuaa is more detailed than the short statement in Codex Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu. Lord 4 Wind, accompanied by a Toltec ambassador, arrived in a temple, presumably in Flint Town. There he sat as a ruler and was saluted by three *yahui* priests. The first was Lord 12 [Serpent] ‘Bowl [of Blood],’ who offered him a quail. The name of the second priest, holding a torch, is beyond recognition; he may have been Lord 5 Rabbit ‘Guacamaya Serpent.’ The third man in this group is Lord White Venus, who was blowing a conch. The latter’s name and activity are the same as those of a priest who welcomed Lord 5 Alligator when he went to serve in the Heaven Temple of Ñnuu Tnoo. We take this as a priestly title and therefore, by extension, think these individuals who salute Lord 4 Wind are again members of the Supreme Council. They may have been the priests of Ñnuu Tnoo who now recognized and confirmed his rule.<sup>54</sup>

In all of this we see, then, the fulfillment of Lord 8 Deer’s vision: the alliance between Tollan-Cholollan and Town of Flint, supported by Place

of the Pointed Objects (represented by Lord 10 Flower ‘Dark Mouth, Bow Tail’).

The choice of the new capital by Lord 4 Wind overshadowed the nearby traditional center of Ñuu Tnoo. Clearly, Ñuu Yuchi overtook the role of Ñuu Tnoo, not only as a regional capital but also as the center of a specific village-state. This was contrary to the interests of Lady 6 Eagle and her son, Lord 6 House. If indeed Lady 6 Eagle had plotted with Lord 4 Wind against her husband, she now saw that he followed his own agenda. Honoring the main part of the “deal” between them, if indeed there had been one, he let her and her son keep their prestigious estate in Ñuu Tnoo, but in practice the power of that house was soon severely diminished. Lord 4 Wind’s loyalty, in fact, was not to Lady 6 Eagle but to her original rival, Lady 13 Serpent, Lord 8 Deer’s first wife and his own half-sister.

### *Toward* RECONCILIATION

Through his nose piercing ceremony in Cholula, Lord 4 Wind had become Lord 8 Deer’s official successor in the Ñuu Dzau region, with the status of a vassal king of the Toltec empire, exercising enormous regional power. His first challenge, however, was to deal with the different noble houses and factions that had to accept him. That was difficult because it was generally known that he had been involved in the murder of his predecessor, Lord 8 Deer, who, although all factions may not have loved him equally, still had a large group of loyal supporters.

In confronting this predicament, Lord 4 Wind imitated Lord 8 Deer’s policies by arranging a marital alliance that would win him the support of his opponents. He slowly and carefully began a series of ritual preparations in that direction, right after the enthronement in his new capital, Ñuu Yuchi.

Still in the year 4 Flint (1120) on the day 7 Flower, Lord 4 Wind went to pay his respects to Lord 7 Flower, a deified Ancestor and a solar deity, in Mountain of the Turkey.<sup>55</sup> He offered cacao, *xicollis*, and flowered ornaments to the deity.

The next year, 5 House (1121), on the day 13 Movement, Lord 4 Wind made offerings to Lord 13 Movement, probably another deified Founding Father.

In the year 6 Rabbit (1122) on the day 9 Reed, Lord 4 Wind presented cacao, *xicollis*, quetzal feathers, and flowered ornaments to Lady 9 Reed, the

Goddess who had helped Lord 8 Deer establish his alliance with the Toltecs. She resided in the Cacao-Blood temple of Ndisi Nuú (Tlaxiaco), not yet the important mat and throne it was to become, but still a sanctuary.<sup>56</sup>

On the days 2 Flower and 3 Alligator of the same year, Lord 4 Wind made offerings at the Temple of Flowers and celebrated the ritual of new pulque, putting a flower crown on his head. He was assisted by two priests, both with the calendar name 6 Death (probably twins), and Lord 10 Rain, who was in charge of the rites for the Sacred Bundle in the Temple of the Fallen Bird in Ñuu Yuchi.<sup>57</sup>

These rituals and festivities were probably conducted in preparation for the marriages that were to follow. As a tryout, Lord 4 Wind arranged the marriage of his brother, Lord 1 Alligator 'Eagle of the Ball Court,' to Lady 6 Wind 'Quetzal Fan, Jade Hair' and Lady 6 Flint 'Precious Fire Serpent,' who must have been girls seven to nine years old. They were the two youngest daughters of Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw' and his first wife, Lady 13 Serpent 'Flowered Serpent.'<sup>58</sup> The ceremony took place on the day 5 Deer of the year 6 Rabbit (1122).

Actually, the codices only mention this marriage without referring to Lord 4 Wind's mediation. But given his great power and the political importance of this matrimonial alliance, it is safe to assume that he played a crucial role in its planning and arrangement. With it he also confirmed his younger brother as a ruler of Añute. At the same time, the marriage shows the political alertness of Lady 13 Serpent, the widowed queen who was Lord 4 Wind's elder half-sister. She had likely observed his rise to power with great satisfaction and was now trying to secure her position.

Having made this successful first connection between his own lineage and that of his great predecessor, Lord 4 Wind went a decisive step further. In the year 7 Reed (1123) on the day 9 Reed, dedicated to Goddess 9 Reed, Lord 4 Wind again had a conversation with Lord 10 Rain, after which he performed the bloodletting ceremony—presumably to honor and invoke Lady 9 Reed—in the temple of Ndisi Nuú (Tlaxiaco).

In the following year, 8 Flint (1124), Lord 4 Wind 'Fire Serpent' married Lady 10 Flower 'Spiderweb of the Rain God' (*iyadzehe Sihuaco 'Dzinduhua Dzavui'*), the oldest daughter of Lady 13 Serpent 'Flowered Serpent' and Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw.' The day chosen for the ceremony was 7 Eagle, the favorite day for marriages in the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty. Lord 4 Wind was thirty-two years old and Lady 10 Flower only thirteen, having been born in the



year 8 Reed (A.D. 1111).<sup>59</sup> She was an extremely important bride because she united the descent lines of both marriages of the high priest Lord 5 Alligator, with the added prestige of the great conqueror and Toltec-made-king Lord 8 Deer. This union at the same time reconciled Lord 8 Deer's faction and the usurpation of his legacy.

### *The DISAPPEARANCE of QUETZALCOATL*

Lord 4 Wind was now officially in control of the huge realm Lord 8 Deer had constructed, and he could start thinking about its future. After his nose piercing ritual, no further mention is made of Lord 4 Jaguar; contacts with the Toltecs seem to have become less important. The Lienzo of Tlapiltepec indicates that Lord 4 Jaguar 'Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl' had been active as a mature war leader at least ten years before his alliance with Lord 8 Deer, that is, since  $\pm 1087$ . Therefore, we suppose that his death occurred a few years after 1119.

Mendieta dates his fatal last journey to Tlapallan twenty years after he had arrived (according to our analysis, returned) from that place (Tlapallan) in Cholula.<sup>60</sup> On that journey he died and became immortal. As a God and a star, his abode is Heaven: "Quetzalcoatl, they say, arrived walking at the Red Sea, painted here, called Tlapallan by them; he entered in it and was not seen again, they do not know what happened to him, but say that when he entered, he told them to be strong and to await his return, which would be in due time, and so they are waiting till now. . . . [T]hey were convinced that he ascended to heaven and is the star which is seen at sunset and daybreak, i.e. the planet Venus, and so they depicted him" (Codex Vaticanus A, 9v).

The dramatic and mysterious end of his life is told in more detail in the Annals of Cuauhtitlan. Quetzalcoatl is said to have arrived at the seashore in Tlillan Tlapallan; there he prepared himself and arranged his precious attributes, his *apanecayotl* headdress and turquoise mask (*xiuhxayacatl*). Then he entered the fire in Tlatlayan, the Place of Burning. His ashes blew into the air, and many precious birds appeared. Then, it is said, the heart of the quetzal bird went into Heaven and became the "star in the house of dawn." Thus Quetzalcoatl became known as the Morning Star. This apotheosis and entering the Heavens as a manifestation of Venus can be understood as a description of the same "road to Heaven" that characterized the death of Lord 2 Rain Ocoñaña. We take it to mean that the ancient ruler died in a state of

shamanic trance. The references to whirling ashes and precious birds recall the description of the visionary experience at opening the Sacred Bundle.<sup>61</sup>

### LORD 4 WIND'S POLICIES

As becomes clear in the Central Mexican sources, Quetzalcoatl's death contributed to a fatal crisis for the Toltec empire, which had started earlier with internal conflicts and Chichimec invasions from the North. This crisis was probably not a momentary event but rather a process spread out over several decades. In the record of marital alliances we see that the Toltecs still played a role during the remainder of Lord 4 Wind's life. The son and daughter of Lord 8 Deer and his fourth wife, the Toltec Lady 11 Serpent, had been sent to Cholollan, where they married each other and had two daughters, Lady 13 Rain and Lady 1 Flower, who in turn married Toltec noblemen. One daughter of Lady 1 Flower married into the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty and had a son in the year 8 Rabbit (1150). More Toltec-Ñuu Dzauí dynastic intermarriage took place in subsequent years.<sup>62</sup>

Lord 4 Wind did not die until the year 9 Flint (1164), which means he did not have to face the total collapse of friendly power. But we can assume that as time progressed, he had to reconsider his status as ruler of a Toltec vassal state. The invasions that raged over the Central Mexican valleys did not reach into the mountainous lands of Ñuu Dzauí, but the process of fission and lineage conflicts that finally destroyed Nacxitl's legacy was a serious threat that must have caused unrest in the Ñuu Dzauí region as well.

Slowly but surely, Lord 4 Wind had to redefine his power on a more regional basis and therefore had to resort to the old policy of lineage alliances. The clearest example is his political arrangement with the factions around Lord 8 Deer's first and third wives, whose allegiance he gained by marrying their daughters. In recognizing the prominent political position of Lady 10 Flower 'Spiderweb of the Rain God,' the daughter of his own half-sister and Lord 8 Deer, Lord 4 Wind cleverly promoted a general reconciliation with those loyal to his great predecessor. Two years after that marriage, in the year 10 Rabbit (1126), a daughter was born: Lady 13 Flower 'Precious Bird.' The mother was fifteen years old at the time.

Before this child was born, Lord 4 Wind had married a second wife, Lady 5 Lizard 'Zacate-Pulque Vessel.' She came from Town in the Deep Valley and was the daughter of its rulers, Lord 12 Dog 'Eagle' and Lady 5 Lizard

‘Zacate–Pulque Vessel.’<sup>63</sup> The date of this marriage, so soon after the first, was the day 3 Deer of the year 9 House (A.D. 1125).

Then Lord 4 Wind established a marital alliance with the faction of Lord 8 Deer’s third wife, Lady 10 Vulture ‘Brilliant Quechquemtl,’ by marrying her daughter, Lady 5 Wind ‘Ornament of Fur and Jade.’<sup>64</sup> We do not hear of any descendants.

Lord 8 Deer’s second wife, Lady 6 Eagle, who, we suspect, plotted with Lord 4 Wind against Lord 8 Deer, obtained what she had been hoping for: her son, Lord 6 House, was to be the successor in Ñuu Tnoo. To avoid jealous opposition from the camp of Lord 8 Deer’s first and official wife, a special kingdom was created for Lady 13 Serpent’s son, Prince 4 Dog: he would become the ruler of Chiyo Cahnu—a decision clearly stated in the Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco).

We can follow Lord 4 Wind’s careful lineage politics by looking at the marital arrangements he made for his children and grandchildren, meant to create a complex web of relationships all over the Mixteca Alta. At the same time, he exploited his status as a Toltec king. Local nobles came to him to ask for legitimation of their position in specific village-states. Two cases are relatively well documented.

The first is the Lienzo of Yucu Satuta (Zacatepec), which starts with a reference to the enthronement of Lord 4 Wind in the year 4 Flint (1120) day 1 Serpent. Several elements are combined in that image. The kingdom is represented by the glyphs of the capital, Ñuu Yuchi, with two important shrines: the Temple of Ndisi Nuu (Tlaxiaco) and the Temple of the Fallen Bird.<sup>65</sup> Lord 4 Wind was seated together with Lady 10 Flower. According to Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, she became his lawful wife four years later, in the year 8 Flint (1124). Her presence at the enthronement scene in the Lienzo of Yucu Satuta can be interpreted as a projection backward; at the same time, it indicates that she was a crucial figure in the legitimation of Lord 4 Wind’s power.

The royal couple was visited by Lord 11 Jaguar ‘Fire of Ñuu Dzau’ (*iya Sihuidzu Ñuhu Ñuu Dzau’i*), who had laid down his weapons, that is, was offering himself as a vassal, and listened to the instructions of the royal pair.<sup>66</sup> He was accompanied by several men, four of whom receive special attention. The first two are characterized by the carrying frame (*sito*) that can be read as “noble” or “principal” (*sitoho, toho*), and the second pair is seated on the *yodzo* sign, a mat of large feathers, which may also indicate nobility. This

group probably represents his assistants, organized as a Council of Four. Also present at the occasion were four men from Ñuu Yuchi: Lord 4 Serpent, Lord 1 Reed, Lord 5 Dog, and Lord 10 Alligator, perhaps members of the Supreme Council or other officials of the new realm. More calendar names are mentioned in a separate list: they belong to men and women who accompanied Lord 11 Jaguar and later became local nobles of Yucu Satuta.

After having assisted at the enthronement ceremony of Lord 4 Wind, Lord 11 Jaguar 'Fire of Ñuu Dzau' traveled to different communities. The first is Mountain of Fire-Wood and Moon (Yucu Iti–Nuu Yoo). This sign is situated next to Town of Death, Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), the northern neighbor of Yucu Satuta. Lord 11 Jaguar appears seated on a throne of jaguar skin, backed by a temple dedicated to the Sacred Bundles of two Founding Ancestors, Lord 7 Deer and Lord 9 Movement.<sup>67</sup> The throne and his position indicate that he was ruling Mountain of Fire-Wood and Moon (Yucu Iti–Nuu Yoo). The associated year is 5 House (1121). After this scene he passed to a second town in the year 9 House (1125) and to a third one in the year 2 Reed (1131). In the following year, 3 Flint (1132), he participated in a *voladores* ritual there, probably in preparation for his accession to the throne.<sup>68</sup>

In the year 2 Flint (1144) he entered the lands that later became the village-state of Yucu Satuta (Zacatepec). Shortly thereafter, in the year 4 Rabbit (1146), he was seated in River of 11 Wind, a place connected to Ndisi Nuu, where he spoke to a group of nobles.<sup>69</sup> Lord 4 Serpent and Lord 1 Reed, who, as we have seen, were officials of the governing body of Ñuu Yuchi, accompanied him on this occasion, holding a torch and an incense burner. Apparently, this was the ceremony of bestowing royal status on Lord 11 Jaguar. Thus Lord 11 Jaguar could establish himself at a place called Seven Pines, where he married Lady 11 Monkey 'Jewel Heart' (*iyadzehe Siñuu 'Ini Yusi'*). The year has been corrected and therefore is now difficult to interpret. There are two signs, House and Flint, with a row of five dots and a row of two dots. In view of the sequence, we think the painter vacillated between the year 6 Flint (1148) and 7 House (1149). Later, Lord 11 Jaguar's son moved to Yucu Satuta, making it the capital of the village-state. In both settlements the Ndisi Nuu temple, with its rites for the Sacred Bundles of the Ancestral Lords 9 Movement and 7 Deer, was reproduced.<sup>70</sup>

Before establishing himself in Seven Pines, Lord 11 Jaguar was seated as ruler in different places, associated with different years. This suggests

that before being acclaimed as king, he occupied temporal functions as “governor” in service of the central power in N̄nuu Yuchi. Possibly, Lord 4 Wind employed a system of subaltern office holders to govern for some years the distinct village-states that formed part of his realm. It is not unlikely that this structure tried to imitate the political administration of the Toltec empire. With the disintegration of central power, many local nobles may have tried to obtain independence as *Iya toniñe* and found their own village-states, referring back to the fact that originally the great central ruler had appointed them and given them legitimacy. Thus the dynastic history of Yucu Satuta started with the instructions of Lord 4 Wind. From this we can conclude that Lord 4 Wind, at least in the beginning of his reign, was well in control of the southern part of the Mixteca Alta (the Ndisi Nuu region) and of the adjacent coast, where Yucu Satuta (Zacatepec) is located.

A second example of the extension of Lord 4 Wind’s power is found in the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec. Lord 2 Flower was the second generation after Lord 7 Water (Atonal I), who had been put on the throne of Coixtlahuaca by Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxiti Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl.’ Lord 2 Flower went to see Lord 4 Wind in the years 7 House and 8 Rabbit (1149 and 1150).<sup>71</sup> The year 8 Rabbit (1150) is also given in the Lienzo Coixtlahuaca II (Seler II) as the year of Lord 2 Flower’s enthronement as a Toltec ruler—he is defined as such by the prominent nose ornament. This makes us conclude that Lord 2 Flower received Toltec status from Lord 4 Wind at a time when Cholula’s brilliance and power were already waning.

## A DISEMBEDDED CAPITAL

Dissident voices were silenced with military power. In the year 11 Reed (1127) on the day 7 Deer, Lord 4 Wind captured Lord 4 Serpent ‘Blood Serpent,’ who seems to have headed an alliance composed of Spiderweb Town, Bent Red Mountain, Valley of the Mouth, the River of Xolotl, Mountain of the Conch, and Mountain of the Standing Flowers. All these places were conquered and subdued. We are not sure about their identification, as they may have been situated far apart. Spiderweb Town may be Andua, an important town in the Valley of Yanhuitlan; Bent Red Mountain may be Cahua Cuaha in the region of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco), and Mountain of the Conch may be Tequixtepec. If these identifications are correct, it would have been a widespread uprising, a dangerous threat to Lord 4 Wind’s rule. But he seems to

have survived the conflict with little difficulty. It remained the only case in which Lord 4 Wind resorted to war to secure his power as king.<sup>72</sup>

In the following years, most of the Postclassic residence at Ñuu Yuchi must have been built. The site, now known as Mogote del Cacique, forms part of the Agencia San José Tres Lagunas of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) and is located on a ridge of reddish earth with gray rocky outcrops above an impressive gorge.<sup>73</sup> In the center of a large area of scattered ceramics and other archaeological remains, which indicates a dense population in former times, a few mounds rise, ancient temple pyramids overlooking plazas, low platforms, and terraces. They offer an impressive view. Standing in the plaza in front of the main pyramid, we see somewhat to the left (northwest) the town of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), where a church dedicated to Santiago has replaced the ancient Temple of Heaven, with the dark slopes of the huge primordial Yucu Tnoo (Monte Negro) in the background. Farther to the right (northeast) we see the characteristic solitary sacred Mountain of Añute. It is as if Lord 4 Wind deliberately chose to construct his new capital so he would have a commanding view over the two main locales of his personal history: the village-state of his predecessor, Lord 8 Deer, and the hometown of his mother, Lady 6 Monkey. Nearby were three lakes; today, only one is left. The quiet extensions of water, with their cattail reeds, herons, and other waterbirds, may have seemed like small replicas of the emblematic Ñuu Cohyo, Tollan.

The site had been occupied during the Classic period, but Ñuu Yuchi does not seem to have been an important center until Lord 4 Wind established his residence there. After Lord 4 Wind's reign, it quickly fell into oblivion. This circumstance provides a solid historical context and dating for the construction or renovation of the main buildings.

At the end of the 1970s, a precious stone slab with relief carving was found on the main pyramid. It contains a pictorial statement that begins on the day 4 Vulture of the year sign 13 Owl. The year sign is given an anthropomorphic form, with a face and a hand that points toward a figurative scene of a *yabui* priest diving into Flint Mountain. The year 13 Owl, as we saw when we discussed the priestly activities of Lord 8 Deer's father, is an archaic equivalent of the year 13 House. Its position suggests that it commemorates an important founding event of the temple. Supposing that the slab was carved during the florescence of Ñuu Yuchi, we can identify the year as 1129. This date inspired and required a specific ritual action: a *nahual* priest entered a



7.8. *The carved stone of Ñuu Yuchi (Jansen & Winter 1980).*

cave in search of a vision.<sup>74</sup> The protagonist may have been Lord 4 Wind, whose given name was *Yahui*, ‘Fire Serpent.’ This would explain why the monument was carved: to mark an inauguration ritual done by the ruler in the construction phase of his new ceremonial center after having subdued the last resistance to his rule. Four rosette-like circles, which surround the *yahui* priest, may represent four periods of twenty days each.<sup>75</sup> Counting them from the day 4 Vulture forward would bring us to the day 7 Movement. In other words, the relief marks a ritual period (of trance and vision) of eighty days before the recurrence of the date 13 Owl 7 Movement, the day on which, 104 years before, Lord 5 Alligator had entered the Temple of Heaven in Ñuu Tnoo. In fact, we think this stone slab in Lord 4 Wind’s main temple refers

back to that act as the beginning of the dramatic history of Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey.

In Dzaha Dzau we read the pictographic scene as follows:

Nuu quevui Qhcuii	On the day 4 Vulture
Nuu cuiya Simaa,	Of the Owl-year 13 House
Nisaniya ninditoya,	The Lord considered it, looked after it, <sup>76</sup>
Nitasi tnuniya.	And gave his orders:
Nisahaya, nisanuya siteya.	He went, bowing his knee in reverence, <sup>77</sup>
Ninduvuiya Iya yaha,	He became the Lord Eagle,
Ninduvuiya Iya yahui.	He became the Lord Fire Serpent,
Nindevuiya ini yavui,	He entered the cave,
Nicayya quahaya chisi ñuhu	And went down into the depth of the Earth
Tinduu Ñuu Yuchi,	Into the Mountain of Town of Flint,
Nisaha iniya	He entered in ecstasy <sup>78</sup>
Ndehe qmi ndico quevui.	During four times twenty days.
Ica saha nidzacayya	And that is why he placed
Yuu saha yaha,	This foot stone, <sup>79</sup>
Nidzamaya chiyo huahi ñuhu.	And put the fundament for this sanctuary. <sup>80</sup>

An era had ended and would now become a theme of epic literature, reflexive commemoration, and narrative identity.





## Chapter Eight

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# FLUTE *of the* DIVINE

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THE PICTORIAL MANUSCRIPTS OF ÑUU DZAUÍ GIVE DETAILED AND IMPORTANT information on the nature of rulership in the ancient society that produced them. In general, political agency involves different sources of power: “*Objective* sources include wealth and factors of production, while *symbolic* sources include elements of a cognitive code, including religion and ritual” (Blanton et al. 1996: 3).

The symbolic source, with its cognitive code, is crucial in assigning and explaining (“legitimizing”) the power of the noble houses that ruled the precolonial village-states. We clearly see this in the way the contents of these chronicles are organized along three main thematic lines: (1) the divine origin of the dynasty, symbolized by the Sacred Mother Tree of Yuta Tnoho (Apoala); (2) the descent from a specific hero, Lord 8 Deer, who had become a great ruler of Ñuu Tnoo through his victorious encounter with the Sun God; and (3) the line of descent, accompanied by observance of the cult of the Sacred Bundles of the Ancestors.

Each of these themes has its own structure and central symbols. The story of the origins has a strong vertical aspect in the interaction between Heaven and Earth. On the horizontal plane it moves from the center to the periphery, bringing light to the four directions. We might compare the structure of the story to that of a growing tree. The Sacred Mother Tree became codified as a concrete portable symbol, the royal Tnucucua staff. Similarly, the First Sunrise was symbolized by the Fire Drill. We suppose these items were present during the ritual performances.

The story of Lord 8 Deer has a clear dramatic plot, determined by a chain of causes and effects. This gives it the tragic flavor of a story about a hero and a heroine who cannot escape their fate. The story develops mostly on the horizontal plane, with references to the key directional sites South (*Huahi Cahi*), West and North (the Toltec realm), and East (the abode of the Sun God). Clearly, Lord 8 Deer's ambitions were concentrated on Ñuu Tnoo, which thus became a "throne of blood." An important symbol here is the arrow or dart: we find it in the Sacred Arrow that caused the death of Lord 2 Rain 'Ocoñaña' but also in the many arrows of conquest. In a flight of fancy, we can compare the structure of the plot to such a missile, which, once thrown with the *atlatl*, cannot change its course. The first turning point of the drama, the visit to the *Huahi Cahi*, cannot be undone but determines a fatal ending and therefore fills the beholder of the spectacle with a continuous and fundamental feeling of destiny and doom.

### *The* EARLY PERIOD *in the* CODICES

The period of history treated in the codices can be placed within a chronological framework derived from archaeology. From that viewpoint, the codices start their story in the end of the Classic period, around A.D. 900. Pictography seems to have been introduced into Ñuu Dzau from Central Mexico, where it has antecedents in the frescoes of Teotihuacan. Several chronicles indeed attribute this art to the Toltecs, that is, the cultural tradition of Teotihuacan, inherited and carried further by Tula and Cholula. Seen in this light, the First Sunrise of Ñuu Dzau historiography symbolizes an intellectual event: the introduction of a new way of seeing, knowing, representing, and registering in painted scenes. The theme is reminiscent of the creation of light in Teotihuacan, the model for Mesoamerican civilization, the *Toltecayotl*.

On the other hand, the Classic to Postclassic transition, concretely the demise of the central power of Monte Albán, probably starting in the eighth and continuing in the ninth century A.D., brought important social and cultural transformations. For the first time the progress of Ñuu Dzauí society, which had been growing in prosperity and scale, entered into a huge regional crisis. The causes of that crisis—related to similar phenomena in other parts of Mesoamerica—are not well understood; they seem to have consisted of a complex interaction between adverse ecological factors and socio-political conflicts. A long-term exhaustion of soils and other natural resources—such as wood for making fire, burning chalk, and the like—led to erosion, which may have been aggravated through a combination of incidental disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes, fires) and political inadequacies. The intriguing fact is that Ñuu Dzauí society was able to recover and reach a new zenith of cultural development in the Postclassic, again connecting to the Central Mexican (Toltec) thrust in Mesoamerican civilization. From a Mesoamerican point of view, the cause of this success was religious devotion to the Sacred Bundle of Lord 9 Wind ‘Plumed Serpent.’ In this period the archaeological record shows an intensification of contacts and exchange throughout Mesoamerica. This interregional and interethnic communication, involving the spread of pictography, seems to have played an important role in giving new impetus to cultural creativity.

One would expect that in Classic times the *Iya* had participated in a cultural and political interaction sphere dominated by Monte Albán, bound together by trade or exchange networks and marital alliances. Although there clearly were Classic centers in Ñuu Dzauí, none of them could have mounted a significant resistance to the hegemony of Monte Albán in its period of florescence. From the perspective of Monte Albán itself, situated in an extremely rich valley, the mountainous and considerably less fertile and less inhabited areas of Ñuu Dzauí and the Sierra Zapoteca must have been seen as a periphery of relatively undeveloped, small-scale polities ruled by unsophisticated warlords. Still, the overall cultural presence of the centralized state created an interaction sphere in which those local big men were more or less aligned. The demise of Monte Albán was part of the earlier-mentioned crisis of Classic society as a result of the complex interaction of different causes. We suppose that the weakness of the center led to a progressive atomization of the peer polity network on the periphery. At the same time, the notion of a Ñuu Dzauí political and ethnic identity gained strength.

The way this process is reflected in the painted records is fascinating. The first focus is on Yuta Tnoho (Apoala), which must have been a Late Classic religious center of pan-regional importance, dedicated to the Plumed Serpent. An archaeological marker of that status is the relief of a guardian warrior in the steep rock under the cave of Kaua Laki that overlooks the village. During the Classic, the Mixteca Baja had been a crucial area of cultural development, leaving numerous archaeological remains in the so-called Ñuiñe style. It was the place of origin of Lord 5 Wind, the first important priest to serve in Yuta Tnoho's sanctuary whose name is recorded. Perhaps because of this circumstance and its particular interest in the most primordial times, Codex Yuta Tnoho gives special attention to places in the Mixteca Baja, situating the First Sunrise in Ñuu Dzai (Huajuapán) and a special new fire ritual in Yuhua Cuchi (Guaxolotlán).

It was from the shrine of Yuta Tnoho that the spiritual inspiration for the new social order came: the ecstatic veneration of the Sacred Bundle of Lord 9 Wind, the "Heart of the People." Those who embraced this devotion formed a new *communitas* (alliance) as "those born from the same Sacred Tree." Generally, such crisis cult communities or millenarianist movements cut through existing social status distinctions, at least in their initial phase; later, they usually form a new establishment with a new hierarchical structure. This egalitarian ethos is very similar to the *communitas* created in rites of passage, which take individual neophytes out of the normal world and its status markers into a liminal sphere, where they are "reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new station in life" (Turner 1995: ch. 3). The ritual participation takes place in a "time out of time." The cultic bond has an antitemporal, antistructural character, which lends itself to a mental breach with history.<sup>1</sup> Indeed the Yuta Tnoho spiritual community—egalitarian and messianic in character—broke radically with the established royal families of the Classic period. Logically, the Mixteca Baja with its important Classic polities was the main area of conflict. As a movement of renewal, the Yuta Tnoho group was credited in retrospect with the construction of specific ceremonial centers and the setting of a new era, connecting places with sacred dates in nondurational time.

Nevertheless, in reality, dynastic prestige was still derived from Monte Albán, both as a paramount ceremonial center of *nabual* power and as a high-status residence. Concrete family ties were sought and established with descendants of the Classic nobility, especially through the female line. It was

the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty that came to the foreground. Its origins are situated in the nature of the town itself. First, Lord 4 Alligator is said to have been born out of the local mountain. His wife, the Founding Mother Lady 1 Death, was a princess from Monte Albán, related to the Sun family and part of the Sacred Community of Yuta Tnoho. Their marriage coincided with the (re)introduction of devotion to the Sacred Bundle of 9 Wind. Their daughter married a prince from Monte Albán. In the next generation, the granddaughter of that Founding Couple, still strongly related to Monte Albán, married a prince of Ñuu Tnoo, who was descended from the local Spirits of the Serpent River. His calendar name was the same as that of the culture hero 9 Wind, while his given name recalled the victory over the representatives of the ancien régime, those who had turned into stone when the Sun of the new era had risen. He also belonged to the group of the Sacred Mother Tree of Yuta Tnoho and was hailed as king by the surviving Lords of the Ñuu Dzauí province of the Monte Albán realm.

At the same time, around A.D. 1000, the status of the Epiclassic site of Cerro Jazmín rose to that of a regional capital, Chiyo Yuhu. It dominated the largest valley of the Mixteca Alta, that of Yodzo Cahi–Atoco (Yanhuitlan-Nochixtlan), and maintained a “corridor” to the Valley of Oaxaca. Its ruler, Lord 8 Wind, celebrated his enthronement on the nearby Yucuñudahui, Rain God Mountain, another Epiclassic site undoubtedly of great religious importance in the region. The distribution of specific towns as tributaries among his descendants led to a disintegration of Lord 8 Wind’s realm. When his daughter began celebrating rituals for the *Ñuhu* bundle in Añute (Jaltepec), strategically located as the dominant place in the mentioned corridor, she de facto claimed independence from her father’s realm, thereby obstructing Chiyo Yuhu’s contact with the Valley of Oaxaca. In the resulting conflict, Añute allied with Ñuu Tnoo in the inaccessible high mountainous area to the south. The codices emphasize that Ñuu Tnoo and Añute were each constituted as mat and throne (*yuvui tayu*) by a group of lineage heads (*iya*), who controlled the participating or neighboring communities and consented in appointing a central *Iya toniñe*, “Lord of Blood,” for good order in matters of warfare and communal life.

The stories, as preserved, focus on elements that clearly lend themselves to dramatic reenactment. The structure of such a performance would have been similar to that of a ritual: the foundation of a new cult as a breach with the past, the takeover of Monte Albán as the escalation of the crisis, the war

with the Stone Men as redressive action, and the new foundation of kingdoms as the social reintegration (cf. Turner 1990: 38). It is possible that the codices functioned in the context of ritual reenactments of these foundation stories, for example, during enthronement ceremonies.

Status—generally in terms of relationships with important religious places or with the prestigious remnants of Monte Albán—was a crucial factor in this process of recognition and political renuclearization. The newly appointed supreme *caciques*, or *Iya toniñe*, of the larger, richer, and more prestigious polities largely became the determinant protagonists of Ñuu Dzau Postclassic history, but at the same time they had to manage a large number of other *Iya* and *toho* (*principales*) from semiautonomous lineages either in the tribute area of the *Iya toniñe* itself (“subject towns” and “wards”) or in its immediate surroundings (“satellites”). Ideally, they were the *ndaha saha*, “hands and feet,” that is, assistants of the main authority. These local lords probably had their own small-scale tribute networks as well as opinions and personal loyalties. Marital alliances and redistribution of precious goods (often procured by long-distance trade or exchange) were two of the most important strategies the *Iya toniñe* had to employ to bind them and keep the balance of power under their control. Thus permanent tension existed between the forces of integration into a larger political unit and those that aimed at preservation of local independence. This tension coincided with the rivalry between two overarching political models, which we might qualify as “centralism” versus “feudalism.”

### *The EPIC of LORD 8 DEER*

It is against the background outlined earlier that we must analyze the life of the famous *Iya Nacuaa Teyusi Ñaña*, Lord 8 Deer ‘Jaguar Claw.’ His actions turned out to be determinant in shaping the geopolitical reality of the Postclassic. He was a special personage in many ways. His relatively humble birth made it possible for lower nobles and even commoners to identify with him. His association with the emblematic ruler of the Toltecs, Lord 4 Jaguar ‘Nacxiti Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl,’ connected Ñuu Dzau with the mainstream history of Mesoamerica, its great ideals of civilization, its power and symbolism. All this led to a conceptualization of Lord 8 Deer’s biography in terms of a historical and social drama. It was taken as a point of departure for a reflection on power itself and for its effects on the human condition.

Historical accident was transformed into literary legend, very much as Abraham Castellanos understood it intuitively in his *Iukano*. From the different codices we reconstruct an overall dramatic structure that has all the characteristics of the result of conscious composition. We can analyze this story using the well-known tripartite scheme of setup-treatment-denouement. Often used in narratives in the European tradition, right up to Hollywood movies, this scheme is also interculturally recognizable.

The setup is the introduction of the protagonist as a skilled young warrior, the son of the second marriage of the high priest, confronted with grave political conflicts. The first turning point is the visit to the *Huahi Cahi*, together with *Iyadzehe Nuñuu Dzico Coo Ndodzo*, Lady 6 Monkey ‘Quechquemitl (Power) of the Plumed Serpent.’ This was also a liminal event; the codices emphasize that the entrance into this subterranean realm of dark powers was brought about by visionary (shamanic) rituals. This ambitious act sets the tragedy into motion but also throws a strange light on Lord 8 Deer’s later career: it was all made possible by the intervention of Lady 9 Grass from the Other World.

The treatment explains Lord 8 Deer’s adventurous rise to success and power of unbelievable and awe-inspiring dimensions: the establishment of the kingdom of Yucu Dzaa by conquest, the alliance with the Toltecs—specifically with that other legendary personage, the historical Quetzalcoatl—then the participation in the great campaign to the Maya area, and finally to the House of the Sun God. Both encounters—that with the Plumed Serpent and that with the Sun—took Lord 8 Deer over the threshold of daily experience. The first was brought about by the intermediation of the Goddess 9 Reed, the second followed the entrance into a *nahual* mountain. In both cases and in that of the earlier visit to the *Huahi Cahi*, a form of “rebounding violence” followed the liminal experience.<sup>2</sup> The mystical enhancement of life force the hero brought back from the Other Side into the context of daily life was misunderstood in terms of political force and violence. The result was a series of conquests or killings. Thus a “ritual logic” seems to underlie Lord 8 Deer’s acts.

The second turning point, then, is the murder of Lord 12 Movement, his half-brother, and, directly related, the execution of Lady 6 Monkey, her husband, and his sons from an earlier marriage with Lord 8 Deer’s half-sister. It is interesting that both the first and second turning points focus on the relationship between Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey; clearly, they were the



protagonists of the original version of this dramatic composition. Confirming his power as a mighty conqueror and—we suspect—compensating the earlier frustration of his passion for Lady 6 Monkey, Lord 8 Deer in rapid sequence married several women. The rebounding violence, however, provoked other violence as a reaction and thereby the denouement of the tragedy: the revenge of Lady 6 Monkey's son, *Iya Qchi* 'Coo Yahui,' Lord 4 Wind 'Fire Serpent,' who used the intrigues of the court to bring about Lord 8 Deer's violent death.

Also, the other personages are portrayed in a dramatic way. Lady 6 Monkey is a victim of tragic irony: priests warned her during the wedding procession, but she had them executed. Lord 4 Wind's escape after the murder of Lord 8 Deer and his reconciliation with the Toltec ruler Quetzalcoatl, attributed to the intervention of the Sun God, also seem to have been related in a sensational manner. Finally, the marriage of Lord 4 Wind and Lady 10 Flower 'Spiderweb of the Rain God' (*iyadzehe Sihuaco 'Dzinduhua Dzavui'*), the daughter of Lord 8 Deer and his own sister, brings the different lines together in a reconciliatory ending.

On several occasions the narrative structure reminds us of that of a ritual, especially a ritual of passage in which the protagonist is separated from his original daily context, enters into contact with the Other World, and then reenters society with new vigor. On the other hand, the dramatization was clearly based on historical events. The process of literary creation can be dated with some accuracy. The biographies of Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey contain a wealth of dates and precise details, which seem an awkward burden for oral transmission over a long period. This indicates that the story was written down (painted) shortly after its end, that is, soon after Lord 8 Deer's death (1115) or, rather, Lord 4 Wind's enthronement (1120). That would coincide with the introduction or first florescence of Ñuu Dzauí pictography (in an early form of the Mixteca Puebla style), a development we attribute to the contact with the Toltecs, who had inherited such a system from the civilization of Teotihuacan.

The literary theme, which is about kings, their impressive deeds, and their destiny, seems a typical product of court life. Its focalization is that of the ruling line, in accordance with its concern to legitimize its tribute rights through a historical-cosmological explanation of the existing order. The vision of the protagonist is not simply triumphal but rather an ambiguous blend of admiration and moral condemnation. The drama becomes even more complex through the crucial role of Lady 6 Monkey.

All these considerations point to the ambience of the court of Lord 4 Wind and Lady 10 Flower in Ñuu Yuchi in the early 1120s. Lord 4 Wind, the firstborn son of Lady 6 Monkey, was the killer of Lord 8 Deer; however, he was appointed the great ruler's successor by Lord 8 Deer's Toltec ally. Lady 10 Flower, his wife, was Lord 8 Deer's daughter. This complex political situation precluded a simple vision of Lord 8 Deer as the protagonist of past events. Strong viewpoints of different factions had to be reconciled. The *Huahi Cabi* episode was used as a narrative device, both to enhance the suspense and explain the rise to power of Lord 8 Deer and to explain or justify his murder. The reference to the powers of the Underworld positioned all protagonists in an overarching fatal scheme. So the dramatic aspect of the story was emphasized, with, as we might call it today, considerable psychological depth. This was how the extraordinary vision of Lord 8 Deer as a tragic hero, both visionary and villain, victor and victim, may have taken form. We imagine it having been composed by a gifted storyteller—who may have participated in some of the events—and presented as a *sabu* at the dynastic ceremonies of Lord 4 Wind and Lady 10 Flower in Ñuu Yuchi. The scenery still inspires awe and suspense today. From the ridge where the pyramids and plazas of Ñuu Yuchi (Mogote del Cacique) are located, we have a splendid view of both rivals, Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) to the northwest and Añute (Jaltepec) to the northeast, as a permanent stage for the ritual reenactment of this drama.

Supposedly, during the following centuries the story passed through a process of selection, elaboration, and resignification. Some details were preserved and highlighted insofar as they contributed to the totality of the epic, that is, made sense in terms of the narrative structure (the internal significance)—for example, because they contributed to understanding the underlying causality and dramatic effect of the events. Other details were included as references to well-known elements outside the story, such as famous or spectacular locations for key events. The importance of such external elements allows us to find references to them in different sources.

The fact that the drama focuses on the royal preoccupation with power and that its structure recalls a rite of passage suggests that it was meant to function within the context of rituals related to royal life, such as enthronement and marriage rituals. Many rulers derived their power from the Toltec-inspired reigns of Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Wind; the reenactment of the drama would have provided both a reaffirmation of their own historical legitimacy and an emotional contemplation of the dark sides of power. This

is the context in which we suppose the codices were put to use: as materialized statements of the past that were the point of departure for a formal oral performance (storytelling) and ritual enactments.

In the concrete testimonies of this tradition, we find the distorting and disarticulating effects of the particular biases (focuses) of distinct noble houses and courts, each with its own interests and vision. On the other hand, clear intertextuality exists among the different products of the genre, which permits the reconstruction, at least in outline, of an original dramatic plot. It is extremely interesting that the surviving fragments contain distinct points of view, telling the story from the angles of different protagonists. Taking that reconstruction and multivocality as our point of reference, we can define the position of each work.

Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu obverse omits any reference to Lord 8 Deer’s involvement in the tragedy of Lady 6 Monkey—she is not mentioned in the *Huahi Cahi* scene—and focuses instead on his link with Lord 4 Jaguar and on his marriages. The birth of Lord 8 Deer’s son, Lord 6 House, is mentioned first because he was the descendant most interesting to the codex audience, as he was to continue what was considered the most important lineage—that of Ñuu Tnoo. In other words, we can qualify Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu obverse as the vision of Lord 6 House’s faction, the dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo proper. In this perspective, Lord 8 Deer was a politically successful ruler who was unjustly killed. In accordance with this point of view, the ritual importance of Lord 5 Alligator is emphasized, as he was the father of Lord 8 Deer and the grandfather of Lord 6 House, but an explanation is also given for the death of Lord 2 Rain ‘Ocoñaña,’ the last representative of the earlier Ñuu Tnoo dynasty. Thus the reasons Lord 8 Deer became ruler of Ñuu Tnoo are well clarified. The legitimation of Lord 8 Deer (and his descendants) through his alliance with the Toltecs is given due attention, but the killings of Lord 12 Movement and the Xipe Bundle family are not mentioned, probably because they were considered detrimental to Lord 8 Deer’s reputation. Lord 4 Wind is simply left out of the codex. In this view, the reference to Lady 6 Eagle (Lord 6 House’s mother) in the scene before Lord 8 Deer’s death was likely not meant as an accusation but as an indication of her importance: Lord 8 Deer was doing the hunting for her. Nothing bad was to be said about that part of the family.

Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse essentially follows Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu obverse, but without reference to the narrative’s tragic structure. Only

one element receives special attention: the ritual activities of Lord 5 Alligator, which serve as an explanation of Lord 8 Deer's background. This emphasis links the codex to the point of view of the high priest of N̄nu Tnoo. In fact, that harmonizes well with the profile we would reconstruct of the person in charge of the obverse side, Codex Yuta Tnoho.

Codex N̄nu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu reverse focuses on Lord 4 Wind, follows his children, and essentially gives us the point of view of the Ndisi Nu and N̄nu Ndecu dynasties. Lady 6 Monkey and Lord 11 Wind are portrayed as the parents of Lord 4 Wind, but not in tragic detail. Only one indirect reference survives: the Owl messenger. It is this couple that went to the *Huabhi Cabi*, but in another context and without Lord 8 Deer being mentioned at that occasion. Lord 11 Wind is not killed by Lord 8 Deer but dies of natural causes. The death of Lady 6 Monkey is not mentioned, only the fact that Lord 4 Wind's half-brothers were taken prisoner. We hear about Lord 4 Wind's escape, survival, and alliance with the Toltec king. His involvement in the murder of Lord 8 Deer is passed over in silence, even though that leaves the entire scene of the Toltecs persecuting him unexplained.

Codex Añute gives some dramatic moments from the life of Lady 6 Monkey, but the tragic end is left out; thus these elements do not point anywhere, as they only make sense within the full context of the tragedy. The result of this selection is that we hear about the princess's heroic deeds in isolation, as a triumphal statement. No references are made to Lord 8 Deer as the cause of her death or to other persons surrounding him (Lord 12 Movement and so on). Even Lord 4 Wind's involvement in his murder is ignored; perhaps it was a delicate topic that could have revived the ancient rivalry with N̄nu Tnoo. Instead, his marriage to Lord 8 Deer's daughters is emphasized. In other words, Lord 8 Deer is simply used as a legitimization figure for the Añute dynasty. No reference is made to Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl, which is logical, as Codex Añute does not follow the line of Lord 4 Wind but focuses on that of his younger brother, who had nothing to do with the Toltecs. As for the earlier period, the conflict that developed between Añute and Chiyo Yuhu is dealt with in some detail; it was of obvious importance in the story of Añute's independence.

Codex Iya Nacuaa gives a clue to the dramatic story: it describes the relationships between Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey (both go to the *Huabhi Cabi*), between Lord 8 Deer and Lord 12 Movement (although the murderer is not identified), and between Lord 8 Deer and Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl

(with details like the vision in Heaven). Lord 8 Deer's killing of Lady 6 Monkey, her husband, and the children of his first marriage is presented in detail, as is the revenge Lord 4 Wind took for his father. Without doubt the Codex Iya Nacuaa version is the most dramatic and therefore probably the closest to the original composition. A unique detail is the importance of Lord 5 Rain 'Smoking Mountain,' presented as a friend but not a relative of Lord 8 Deer. Perhaps there was intermarriage between his descendants and the royal family of Yucu Dzaa, for which the codex was produced. The relative distance of that dynasty to affairs in the Mixteca Alta probably promoted conservation of the dramatic composition as a whole. There was no need to adapt the tradition to local bias.

Codex Tonindeye reverse is fairly similar to Codex Iya Nacuaa and may even be an earlier version of the latter, but it leaves out the 5 Rain figure. Much attention is given to the international character of Lord 8 Deer's rulership (e.g., through the attendance of many nobles at his enthronement). By using the characteristic face painting, it shows that Lord 5 Alligator's first wife belonged to the Zaachila dynasty. This connects with the importance given to the links between Zaachila and Chiyo Cahnu on the later painted "obverse" of the same codex, which motivated us to postulate that this part was painted in Chiyo Cahnu. We might conclude from this specific point of interest that the painter actually came from Chiyo Cahnu, worked on the Lord 8 Deer story on the coast, and then went back to his place of origin. Anyway, he seems to have traveled widely because his style is "international" in character. His paintings of Yuta Tnoho (36) and Monte Albán (19) suggest that he knew both places from personal observation.

None of these pictorial chronicles really favors the centralized power structure Lord 8 Deer was constructing. We are dealing here with products of a lineage historiography, committed to the concept of the coexistence of small sovereign communities or village-states, a landscape of mats and thrones. The epic we have reconstructed should explain to the Ñuu Dzauí audience that the ambition to form a single large state was a great and glorious one but ultimately dangerous or even, we would say, evil, inspired as it was by the forces of death, which would destroy the humans who tried to realize such a dream. One of the messages of the story of Lord 8 Deer is that political unity of all of Ñuu Dzauí was not to be. It had once been a reality, in a strange moment in time when a specific ambitious warrior, guided by the Gods, had made an alliance with the greatest Mesoamerican king of all time; there the founda-

tions of all power and glory were laid. But such an ambition was too great for a man. One should not strive for such ideals but should stick to one's position within the lineage and the tribute system, doing the rituals for the Ancestors and following a careful policy of marital alliances.

Lord 8 Deer's story is also that of an outsider who tries to enter into the "family of the *Iya*" on his own terms, actively pursuing the achievement of status instead of having acquired it by inheritance. He put himself at the service of the expanding Toltec empire and its ideology of hegemonic centralism, promoted by one who, like himself, was an outsider and a highly charismatic ruler. As an ally and a vassal of that tremendous outside power, in a success story so inexplicable it was attributed to the influence of the *Huahi Cahi*, Lord 8 Deer was able to impose himself on the many existing noble houses as the new ruler of Ñuu Tnoo and the strongman who was unifying Ñuu Dzau as a large incipient state of its own. After his alliance with the Toltecs and the blessing of Quetzalcoatl, which made him *Iya toniñe* in Ñuu Tnoo, Lord 8 Deer confirmed his right to the throne by marrying a princess of the prestigious leading noble house of that town on the specific holy day used by members of this lineage for marriage ceremonies. Intrigues and sinister acts of violence accompanied Lord 8 Deer's "coup d'état" and provoked equally violent reactions, resulting in the unprecedented murder of the man who was a heroic empire builder to some and a cruel usurper to others. The lineages resulting from his different marriages would divide and dispute the heritage.

These events, already full of suspense, gave the *Iya* much food for thought and became the obligatory reflexive "literature" for political rituals. Here the ruler's actions and status were interpreted in terms of divine influences. The contradictory nature of ambition and power was highlighted: forces that could both elevate the human being to unsuspected performance and corrupt him deeply and totally give both legitimacy and warning to future rulers to be conscious of their place and their limitations.

At the same time, the idea of a common Sacred Mother Tree and a common dramatic history in the drama of Lady 6 Monkey and Lord 8 Deer, as well as common rituals and common points within a sacred landscape, contributed to the vision of a specific heritage, a "Ñuu Dzau narrative identity," transcending the particular community and related to the Toltec ideal of a multicomunity empire and a multi-ethnic civilization. The codices must have played a crucial role in the spread of this ideal and identity.

*The* POLICIES of POWER

Although Ñuu Dzauí was never again united under one ruler, the idea of real or fictitious kinship bonds within the “great family of kings and queens” subsisted as the conceptual basis for a well-calculated marital alliance policy, aimed at enhancing the prestige of each noble house and keeping its *cacicazgo* (and corresponding tribute rights) united. As we have seen, the dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo retained the status of the “central lineage,” with the privilege of appointing new rulers in *cacicazgos* where the local dynasty had died out. This concept seems to echo the Toltec ideal of a centralized, metropolitan rule.

After the death of Lord 8 Deer, the policies of the noble houses passed through successive phases of expansion and reduction in a pageantry of fluid political formations. Through felicitous alliances, heritage strategies, and occasional conquests, a few major village-states obtained overall importance in the Mixteca Alta: they included the ancient Ñuu Tnoo, its southern neighbor Chiyo Cahnu, Ndisi Nuú, and Ñuu Ndecu. Originally, all four of these village-states seem to have formed one single territory. Their dynasties frequently intermarried, in a continual process of fission and fusion of heritages. It is difficult to determine the exact range to which their power extended.

Around these centers existed a number of smaller polities with their own ruling families. They were supposedly independent, but one wonders how real and viable that independence was. Affirming their relationships, the noble houses of these various polities exchanged goods with one another. It is difficult, however, to establish the difference between the tribute goods given by a vassal-*iya* to the *Iya toniñe* and then redistributed by the latter and the presents exchanged between equal *Iya* as good neighbors who respected one another. This fluid sphere, dominated by the central concept of reciprocity between humans and Gods (expressed in offerings) and between subjects and rulers (expressed in tribute), was what the Spanish conquerors encountered and interpreted in terms of European feudalism.

Given that strong social hierarchy, a continuous legitimation aspect permeates the Ñuu Dzauí historiography. But there is more. This agrarian society was not yet victimized by class struggle. The protagonists rivaled each other in prestige; precious objects were emblematic of that relative equality. But, in a nonmonetary economy, the accumulation of material wealth was not an aim in itself. Theirs was a gift-giving society, with a strong reciprocal ethos still found in Native American communities. The rulers were

the receivers of tribute, which enabled them to create networks of ritualized exchange between persons and groups. Their power was always subject to the divine forces of Nature. This concept is expressed in the Nahuatl metaphorical description of the ruler as a flute of the deity. On the day of accession, the high priest Quetzalcoatl reminded the new Mexica *tlatoani* of this mystical and moral vision of power:

Put forward all thy effort, give all, put forth all thy spirit.  
Sigh, be sad, call out in sadness to our Lord,  
to the Lord of the Near, of the Nigh.  
He is not perchance seen as a man,  
for he is the night, the wind.  
Submit thyself to them, weep, sigh.  
And may there be peace, calm,  
on the reed mat, on the reed seat,  
on the place of honor of the Lord of the Near, of the Nigh. . . .  
Thou art the replacement, thou art the image  
of the Lord of the Near, of the Nigh.  
Thou art the backrest, thou art the flute;  
he speaketh within thee;  
he maketh thee his lips, he maketh thee his jaw,  
he maketh thee his ears. . . .  
Perhaps just for a little while thou dreamest, thou seest in dreams.  
Perhaps he just passeth his glory, his honor before thy face.  
And perhaps just causeth thee to smell  
—perhaps he just passeth before thy lips—  
his freshness, his tenderness, his sweetness, his fragrance,  
his heat, his warmth, which come from him,  
the wealth of him by whom we live.

(Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 10)

According to this ideal, for the rulers authority means carrying the *cargo*, the staff, the bundle. Glory is a dream; the realm itself is just a loan, a slippery place where one might fall and be hit by sticks and stones. The exploits, experiences, and relationships of these rulers and heroes, in turn, constitute the history of the primordial or real protagonist, the community, founded in a specific place and associated with a specific sacred date under the aegis of a particular Divine Patron.

An illustrative example is the round Sacrificial Stone of the Aztec Emperor Tizoc. The reliefs carved around it show a series of conquests: the Mexica ruler,



represented as a Toltec warrior with the attributes of Tezcatlipoca, the God of royal power, subdues a number of kings accompanied by the glyphic signs of their communities and also dressed as the Patron Deities of those towns. The list far exceeds the number of conquests generally attributed to Tizoc. It goes back to the first conquests of the Mexica: Colhuacan and Tenayuca (also mentioned as such in Codex Mendoza). Looking more closely, we see that Tizoc is actually identified only once by his onomastic glyph (the perforated leg), namely during the conquest of the land of the Matlatzinca (represented by *matlatl*, a net); in all other cases the conqueror is just an anonymous form of Tezcatlipoca. Seeing Tizoc as the principal actor, many scholars take his appearance as conqueror of the Matlatzinca as the first scene and interpret the addition of other scenes as an act of propaganda, a claim to conquests he never made (Marcus 1992: 368–371). A more logical reading of the sequence would be to start with the conquest of Colhuacan by Tezcatlipoca, with Tizoc at the end subduing the land of the Matlatzinca and three other village-states. This is confirmed by a very similar sacrificial stone, found more recently, associated with the reign of an earlier Mexica ruler, Moctezuma Ilhuicamina. It shows the same conquest scenes without those that in our reading would belong to Tizoc (cf. Solís 1992). No false claims to glory, then, were intended. On the contrary, Tizoc simply inserted himself into a historical sequence as the most recent manifestation of Tezcatlipoca, who was the “True Conqueror” and true builder of the Mexica empire. Far from exhibiting propagandistic personal pride, the monument reflects humble devotion to higher powers. At the same time, it expresses the connection between the place and its Patron Deity as crucial within the historical consciousness.

By being commemorated and communicated within the community, often in a ritual context, this history of particular individuals becomes a story of the people. The shared experience of hearing that story, participating in its emotion, and being conscious of its dignity creates the feeling of *communitas* and shapes group identity. The marriage between the *Iya* and *Iyadzehe* not only defines their rights and those of their descendants to receive tribute but above all establishes a relationship between communities or factions. The memorable deeds and experiences of such emblematic persons in the past, dealing with difficult situations and political perils, become precious words of counsel for all, preserved by venerable elders such as the one described by Burgoa—not so much to please but to teach and to remind us of our human condition.

The *sahu* is first and foremost a moral message. Ultimately, it is about identification with the tragic heroes of the past, about respect for the Ancestors and the cosmic forces, about commitment to a just social order, about what people should and should not do. Beyond the tributary interests and the coercion of rulers there is a moral power in everyone, an ability to fuse the experience of daily life with the realm of the Sacred. This is a power connected with respect, a vital force (*sa ndai sa ndatnu*) meant to heal and strengthen the community. Tragedy occurs when this spiritual power of the *nahual* is misunderstood in a hegemonic way as a form of rebounding violence, a capacity for conquering, oppressing, and killing.

Speaking at a Black Hills Survival Gathering, Native American poet and activist John Trudell reflected:

There is no such thing as military power. There is only military terrorism. There is no such thing as economic power. There is only the economic within these illusions so we will believe they hold power in their hands. But they do not. All they know how to do is act in a repressive, brutal way.

The power. We are a natural part of the earth. We are an extension of the earth; we are not separated from it. We are part of it. The earth is our mother. The earth is a spirit, and we are an extension of that spirit. We are spirit. We are power. . . .

When I go around America and I see the bulk of the white people, they do not feel oppressed. They feel powerless. When I go amongst my own people, we do not feel powerless. We feel oppressed. (quoted in Churchill 1988–1989: ii–iii)

It is in accordance with this reflection that we read the Ñuu Dzaui codices. Originally, power does not come from military or economic means but from Earth, that is, Nature, and the Gods that represent and inhabit Earth. Power is experienced as a personal visionary life force, a moral power to confront challenges and crises and to realize our creative potential in the context of the common good. Still, it is to be assumed that in the institutional life of the village-state, this power became more and more an emblem of daily administrative routines and social hierarchy. The metaphor of birth out of trees, rivers, caves, or earth can be interpreted in terms of the direct bond between the dynasty and Earth, that is, Nature, providing legitimation for the ruler on the community level. In a parallel way, the focus of Mesoamerican dynastic historiography on the single charismatic personality of Quetzalcoatl as the ultimate provider of royal status can be interpreted as the influence of a centralist

ideology, according to which many distinct aristocracies (all with their own circumstances and privileges) were connected with the overall imperial reign of the Toltecs and therefore with the concept of a supreme “king of kings.”

Ironically, it was this supra-local ideology that Hernán Cortés—identified directly or indirectly with the same Quetzalcoatl—used to legitimate his power. Similarly, the colonial *cacique* no longer referred to the divine origin of his dynasty or to the legendary Quetzalcoatl but situated his ideological fundament in the meeting of his direct ancestor with “El Marqués,” Hernán Cortés, considered emblematic of the new order. Accordingly, many elements in the colonial pictorial manuscripts indicate that the *cacicazgo* had become part of the Christian culture and the Spanish empire. At the same time, they reflect a conceptual continuity. Just as the beginning of Mesoamerican history had been marked by the First Sunrise, now *la luz del evangelio* meant the birth of a new Sun or era. Christian Saints were the new forms and names of the age-old Patron Deities of the villages, of the days of the calendar, and of the people themselves. Crosses were put on the boundaries. Churches, with their own cult acts such as baptism and Mass, substituted and absorbed the ancient ritual cycle of the temple-pyramids. Constituting new ceremonial centers, they appear painted on top of the toponymic signs. The message remained the same: they symbolize the special relationship of the community with its divine Patron.

Thus, while the colonizers took the stubborn ambitions of a Genovese sailor and the ruthless tactics of the conquistadors as the point of departure for writing their triumphant history, the Mesoamerican mind saw in that violent encounter between civilizations the dazzling mockeries and mysterious designs of the Plumed Serpent.

Local lore conserves traumatic images of the struggle against the invaders: double-headed eagles—dangerous *nahuales* in the form of the Habsburgers’ totem—attacked the village to kidnap and kill the children. The spiritual confrontation between the two cosmovisions is often reflected in stories about the arrival of the Cross, the Virgin, or the Patron Saint. In San Antonio Sinicahua it is said that the cross now adored in the town’s church was found in the forest on the mountaintop.<sup>3</sup> Originally, it had four equal branches. When the people wanted to place it in the church, it could not pass the entrance. It was left outside the church, and the people went to sleep. The next day they discovered that the cross had disappeared: it had gone to the sacred mountaintop above the village where the Rain lives (a place locally

called *Ñuu Sau*, equivalent of *Huahi Dzavui*). The priest had it brought back from there and, to allow it to enter the church, had two branches trimmed. Thus it got its present vertical shape, with its arms shorter than its head and feet. The cross did not disappear again, but it was annoyed because of the pain inflicted on it when its arms were shortened. One year there were terrible rains, and the harvest was lost. Shortly thereafter, the priest died. Since then, each May 1 the inhabitants of the village take the cross from the church up to the mountaintop (*Ñuu Sau*) and bring it back the next day. This is part of the feast of the Santa Cruz (May 3), which is generally associated with the solicitation of rain at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the sowing time. A twin of the original cross still exists; it remained in the forest on the mountaintop (*Ñuu Sau*). When people try to get close to it, it disappears underground.

This story is a beautiful philosophical reflection on the interaction between two religious traditions. The cross, representing the power of faith, was originally situated in Nature, in a shape that symbolizes the force of the four winds and the equality of the four cosmic and social divisions. With the introduction of Christianity it was subjected to an institutionalized cult, the church, but its shape had to be adapted; it became more vertical, hierarchical, at the same time losing much of its strength (its arms). To reconnect the cross with its original power, the community carries it back to its true place, at the same time reenacting the story of the Son of Man who was sacrificed to save humanity.<sup>4</sup>

There are stories and rituals such as this that connect experience and moral conviction to the landscape. As we saw earlier, the human community is situated within a wider context of mountains, rivers, caves, and valleys, which are the seat of divine powers: the intimate rock shelters that are the “houses of the Rain God” (*huahi Dzavui, vehe Sau*); the green ponds where the Plumed Rain Serpent dwells; the diverse cliffs and caves that are the houses of the Earth Spirit (*Ñuhu*), the ancient rulers (*Ndodzo*), and the Lord of the Mountain (*Tova Yucu*); and mysterious places of origin (*Dzoco Usa*) or awe-inspiring entrances to the Realm of Death (*Huahi Cahi*). The landscape is further marked by human constructions of temples, churches, and chapels (all: *huahi Ñuhu*) or sweatshouses (*ñehe*) consecrated to the Grandmother (*Sitna, Nanañuu*).

It is on this natural and cultural landscape that the stories told in the codices are inscribed. By living in that landscape, we experience it and connect

individual and collective memories to it, make it the scenery of our stories. In deciphering the pictographic record, we resignify the surrounding space. When we look again to the mountaintops of Ñuu Dzaui, with the remains of ancient sanctuaries and gray *Ndodzo* rocks rising above the valleys of drifting clouds, the red eroded slopes, the cliffs with dark and misty pine forests, into the blue light of dawn, we connect them in our mind to human experience, a familiar dimension of actors, ideas, and passions:

Human activities become inscribed within a landscape such that every cliff, large tree, stream, swampy area becomes a familiar place. Daily passages through the landscape become biographic encounters for individuals, recalling traces of past activities and previous events and the reading of signs—a split log here, a marker stone there. All locales and landscapes are therefore embedded in the social and individual times of memory. (Tilley 1994: 27)

Such a meaningful universe inspires power, giving its inhabitants a sense of belonging and social identity in spite of poverty and pain. A telling example of this worldview is the representation of the Yuta Tnoho valley, with its cave, rivers, and cascade, as the body of the Plumed Serpent (Codex Tonindefe, 36). The story-landscape nurtures our identity as peoples: “Our desires are that which evades us in the very act of propelling us forth, leaving as the only indicator of *who* we are, the traces of *where* we have already been—that is to say, of what we have already ceased to be. Identity is a retrospective notion” (Braidotti 1994: 14).

It is this memory and this identity, so strongly present in the codices, that the colonial enterprise of the Spanish empire and the Mexican republic has tried to erase, together with the whole notion of a cultural landscape as a moral value. The original “creature feeling” was replaced by the use and misuse of nature as a mute resource. Today an ever more rapacious exploitation is rapidly swallowing our physical and social environment, leaving it barren and contaminated. The ancient Ñuu Dzaui belief that fright (*susto*), hunger, and sickness will befall those who do not respect the *Ñuhu* regains validity and forces itself upon us.

## Chapter Nine

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# *The* CROWN of MOTECUHZOMA

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A concern for the archaeology of a region is a concern for the environment of that region, and not just a physical environment but a *peopled* environment, given cultural values and meanings. Peoples around the world use archaeology to help maintain their pasts in the face of the universalising and dominating processes of westernisation and western science. The physical archaeological remains help people to maintain, reform, or even form a new identity or culture in the face of multinational encroachment, outside powers, or centralised governments.

Ian Hodder 1995: 194

**T**HE ICON OF THE TOLTEC RULER AS MANIFESTATION (*IXIPTLA*) OF THE PLUMED Serpent is the impressive feather headdress, the *quetzalapanecayotl*. It appears in the Ñuu Dzaui codices as a diagnostic attribute of Lord 4 Jaguar. Lord 8 Deer was considered worthy to wear it in death; his mummy bundle was adorned with it when laid to rest in the dark and sacred cave. At several

occasions Mexica emperors, such as the triumphant Tizoc, distinguished themselves in this manner. Motecuhzoma sent one such headdress to Cortés upon his arrival, together with the turquoise serpent mask of Quetzalcoatl and other divine attributes. It has been speculated that this was the same headdress as the unique specimen now in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Vienna. Over time it became known as the “Crown of Montezuma,” and, consequently, it is now an emblematic object to which some attribute the symbolic importance a crown used to have for nationalist movements.<sup>1</sup>

In front of the museum we see Mexican dancers in ancient Mexica outfits, performing rituals to demand the return of the crown to Mexico. Similar “Aztec” revival groups (*concheros*) are active close to the ancient Templo Mayor in Mexico City. A major attraction for visiting tourists, they are captured on camera as icons of native resistance.

Here we encounter an example of the contradictory consequences of colonialism. On one hand, the outfit of the *concheros* bears testimony to a process of romanticization and folklorization of the Native American past, with nostalgia for Mexica imperial glory. The reason people prefer folklore and symbolic objects, such as crowns, over painful actualities may be a consequence of internalized nationalism, illustrating the fact that, in general, “the revitalization movement is largely an elite or middle-class phenomenon” (Eriksen 1993: 110).

On the other hand, many people feel a strong need to reconnect to cultural values. In terms of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), passed by the U.S. Congress in 1990, the crown is clearly part of Nahua “cultural patrimony, which shall mean an object having ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group or culture itself, rather than property owned by an individual Native American, and which, therefore, cannot be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by any individual.” Thus, regardless of scholarly debates over whether the object in question is really the “crown” of Motecuhzoma and whether it came to Vienna in an incorrect way, we support the principle that foreign and national institutions should repatriate to indigenous peoples the physical remains and important cultural items that have been taken away from them in the context of colonization or otherwise without their informed consent. Many crucial and sacred objects have become dislocated in the process of European expansion and are now part of outsiders’ collections. Under the guise of archaeological interest, spoliation campaigns are still

going on in indigenous lands. We feel strongly, for example, that the ancient manuscript that was stolen from the town of San Martín Huamelulpan and smuggled out of Mexico in the first half of the twentieth century and which is now in the library of Tulane University in New Orleans should return to Ñuu Dzauí. We also think, as postulated in NAGPRA, the UN draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994), and similar international guidelines, that Mesoamerican burials and sacred sites should be fully respected as such, the human remains should be repatriated, and the associated monuments and artifacts should be in the care and control of the inheriting indigenous communities.

The protection of this heritage is a common responsibility of all, but it is first and foremost the moral authority of the specific people who have been colonized and suffer the consequences of that history today. Too often all kinds of interest groups refer to or speak for the true inheritors, the contemporary indigenous peoples, to foster their own particular interests or political motives. A cultural heritage should be preserved and honored, not as propaganda or as a pretext to divert attention from burning problems such as discrimination, exploitation, hunger, and other violations of human rights but as an orientation point for living together in dignity.

A world history unites us; it is a common story of failures, pain, and injustice but also of challenges and creation and love, the story of a wonderful adventure: that of the human spirit. Far from having reached its end, it is just beginning. Within a global perspective we have the more particular histories of groups or peoples we belong to, places where we have lived or where our roots are. Descent, loyalty, love, and other forms of sharing and shifting identifications connect us to multiple histories, many of which we barely know. Our realities and relationships today, as well as our models for the future, are to some extent determined and haunted by those histories, with their many unfinished chapters and open files.

Therefore, taking into account this dimension of our common world, the interpretation of the ancient artifacts and texts involves not only the values of the past but also the problems of the present. The history and heritage of Ñuu Dzauí's communities have been alienated and obscured, just as the people have been marginalized and made invisible. The burning of the ancient books and deities, the destruction of the collective memory of a people, was part of setting up a colonial society. The *conquista* was the beginning of a huge process of domination, exploitation, and discrimination that still defines the



condition of “indigenous peoples.” The concept of “indigenous” reminds us that colonial structures and mentalities are still very much present among us. The encounter with that reality also generates a project of political reflection and emancipation.

In our study of the pictorial manuscripts, we have focused on elements that are important constituents and markers of what is often called the “identity” of a people or a nation. In connecting the ancient themes of the codices to the cultural tradition that is alive today, we seek to give the past a dignified place in the present and to contribute to a responsible and respectful treatment of that tradition and of the people who inherited it. Although many social and cultural changes have taken place during the past centuries, there is also a profound continuity, evident as much in the language and the landscape as in multiple details of worldview and *habitus*. The successive consultations of the Founder, Lord 9 Wind, with different Spirits, for example, reflect the important social role of the assembly, still the crucial mechanism of decision-making in Mesoamerican communities. Rain, Sun, and Earth remain pivotal in native thought, as well as the symbolism of the four directions and the conviction that true power is derived from Nature and connected to devotion and morality.

Underlying precolonial historiography is the articulation between autonomous polities (mats and thrones) and the pan-regional identity of the Ñuu Dzaui people, an issue that is still at the heart of belonging and loyalty. The vision of Iya Nacuaa ‘Teyusi Ñaña’ to unify the People of the Rain God in one realm, “the bond of blood and hearts,” rediscovered in our reading of the ancient texts, may today be a singular motivating force in our common quest for justice and dignity. However, it should not be reinterpreted in an essentialist manner and even less in a neo-nationalistic sense. Here we have to sail the troubled waters between the Scylla of hegemonic racism and the Charybdis of counterhegemonic ethno-fundamentalism. The focus on ethnic or cultural identity as the basis for rights may result in severe contradictions, especially when this identity is seen not as a dynamic process of relationships but as a static and monolithic “commodity” that can be owned and manipulated.

The predicament of internally colonized peoples is complex and involves all of society. The theoretical analysis in terms of a polarization between “class” and “ethnicity,” between economic and cultural development, is misleading. The sound point of departure is a full and sincere understanding of the

dramatic reality of the people concerned and of the distorted, traumatic relationships among the peoples of our planet. The recognition of indigenous peoples as such, as peoples, the full realization of sovereignty and control over land and resources, should go hand in hand with the improvement of life conditions, full access to the benefits of technological progress, and positive participation in the world economy in accordance with their own aspirations. Truly contributing to the creation of a just society means deconstructing and demolishing the historical myths and structures of subjugation and at the same time fighting the problems of poverty and inequality. It means aiming at a general decolonization and democratization, at a fundamental economic, political, and mental change. It means working toward emancipatory, anti-racist scholarship and education. It means reconciliation and healing.

A unique strength of indigenous communities is their strong collective bond and communal solidarity. Generally, the inhabitants of the ancestral lands, and also the migrants, feel committed to contribute to their community in a way that resembles the group spirit of a people at war or of a country under foreign occupation. This group identity is shaped by the feeling of a common threat, by the shared experience of being humiliated, harassed, and hurt. Those negative circumstances bring out a noble social ethos in people, stimulating self-sacrifice for collective survival.

In the process of social emancipation, starting from here, historical consciousness can be a crucial factor: not to go back to the past and remain stuck in it but to become aware of having a past and of having the right to create a future. In itself the past is just the past; however painful, it cannot be undone, and however glorious and impressive, it cannot be kept frozen as a norm for the present. Identity is not a fence around us but an inclusive, interactive, and expanding network of relationships and responsibilities. It is a dynamic process of—in the terms of Deleuze and Braidotti—“multiple becomings.” Seen this way, history, connected to a concrete landscape of experiences, may provide us with a sense of belonging and direction. This identity may remind us of our common human values and our bond with Nature, it may inspire a struggle for freedom, and, above all, it may develop into a moral power.

Ingrid Washinawatok, to whom we dedicate this book, has said:

I travel a lot, and in communities across the country, I see women in leadership roles. There's a recognition that women are powerful, but it's not authority in western terms. There is a balance between young and old,

between men and women. There's a recognition that power comes from within. It comes from having knowledge and vision. The sun has power. The wind has power. We have the power to bring forth and nurture new life. That's the power Mother Earth has. There's the power of love. If you raise your children to be good people, then the future is theirs. That's more important than being president of a corporation. How can you not be fulfilled if you teach your children to be loving, honest, thinking people? (quoted in Katz 1995: 95–96)

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# NOTES

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## NOTES *to* CHAPTER 1

1. Eschmann 1976 and López Austin 1980 have discussed this topic in depth. The shamanistic aspect of incipient rulership is well documented for the chiefdoms in the Caribbean area (e.g., Hoogland 1996, Oliver 1998) and for the Olmec culture in early Mesoamerica (e.g., Köhler 1985 and Coe et al. 1996). See also Jansen 2004b.

2. The four dresses are described in detail in the chronicle of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (1950–1978, book XII: ch. 4) and illustrated in Codex Magliabechi, page 89 (Anders et al. 1996; cf. Nowotny 1960). For a critical study of Cortés's report, see Frankl 1966.

3. Compare the enthronement speeches registered by Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: chapters 4–16.

4. For the ancient history and archaeology of Mesoamerica, see, for example, Evans 2004 and Joyce & Hendon 2003, while Carmack, Gasco & Gossen 1996 and Florescano 1997 offer an overview of the development of its culture to the present.

The Classic-Postclassic transition is specifically dealt with in Carrasco, Jones & Sessions 2000, while Smith & Berdan 2003 focus on the Postclassic period.

5. See the Codex Vaticanus 3738, or “Vaticanus A” (Anders & Jansen 1996: 54 ff), the Legend of the Suns (Lehmann 1938), and the central image of the famous Calendar Stone in the Museo Nacional de Antropología. The Mexica used the word *tzontli*, “(head with) hair,” to designate each era. As the same term was used for the number 400, confusion arose, which resulted in attributing very long durations to each *tzontli* (see Jansen 1997b: 25).

6. A general description of the Mexica concept of *Toltecatoytl* as the awareness of a specific cultural heritage is provided by León-Portilla 1987. On references to Teotihuacan as Place of Cattail Reeds (*pu*) in Maya inscriptions, see the articles by William Fash & Barbara Fash and by David Stuart in the work edited by Carrasco, Jones & Sessions (2000: 433–513).

7. These are only a few of the traits in the complex development of warfare in Mesoamerica, as documented and reconstructed by Hassig 1992. For an introduction to the ideological aspects and general theory, see Conrad & Demarest 1984.

8. For the concept of peer polities, see Renfrew & Cherry 1986. Recall, however, that in many cases the Mesoamerican polities were not true peers. Therefore the concept of “city-state culture,” as proposed by Hansen 2000, is often more adequate.

9. For a discussion of the various strategies that may have played a role in these different political environments, see Blanton et al. 1996.

10. We cite the work of Braidotti and Loomba because of their clarifying insights into the fundamental correspondence between the historical oppression of women and the colonization process.

11. The aspect of time-space distancing through the invention of writing and its consequences for state formation has been commented upon by Giddens (see Kaspersen 2000: ch. 3). See also the bundle with case studies edited by Gledhill, Bender & Larsen 1988, as well as the works of Ong 1982 and Goody (e.g., 2000).

12. Through intensive and large-scale investigations since the mid-1970s, the Maya hieroglyphs have been deciphered to a large extent. The history of this accomplishment is synthesized by Coe 1992 and put in proper perspective by Westphal 1991. The resulting insights contribute to a deeper understanding of texts from other parts of Mesoamerica. For the hieroglyphic system of the Classic Beni Zaa or Zapotecs (in Oaxaca), see Urcid 2001.

13. An overview of the pictographic and other historical sources for Mesoamerica is presented in the Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, in vols. 12–15 of the *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Cline 1975). Classical monographs have been published by Nowotny 1961a and Smith 1973a, which constitute the basis for more recent works such as Anders & Jansen 1988, Marcus 1992, Boone & Mignolo 1994, and

Arellano Hoffmann & Schmidt 1998. In a recent overview of Central Mexican and Ñuu Dzauí pictography, Boone 2000 includes a synthesis of the contents of the main manuscripts according to existing interpretations.

14. With justification, Robicsek and Hales 1981, therefore, called their publication describing Classic Maya funerary vases *The Maya Book of the Dead. The Ceramic Codex*. A parallel exists between the history of the pictorial manuscripts and that of similar precious objects, such as feather mosaics (see Anders 1975, 1978, and Castelló Yturbide 1993).

15. The fascinating history of the collection and interpretation of ancient Mexican codices has been traced and contextualized in several general works on the history of Mesoamerican studies, such as Keen 1971. For a detailed essay with extensive bibliographical notes, see Anders 1999.

16. For a full discussion of the problems involved in determining the place where these screen-folds were painted, see Anders, Jansen & van der Loo 1994.

17. See the facsimile editions with commentaries published by the Fondo de Cultura Económica (Anders, Jansen & Reyes García 1993; Anders & Jansen 1993; Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1994; Anders & Jansen 1994; Anders, Jansen & van der Loo 1994). The religious section of the Codex Yada (Tututepetongo) is discussed together with Codex Mictlan / Laud in Anders & Jansen 1994, while the historical part is analyzed by Van Doesburg in his dissertation (1996). For the Codex Yecu or Fonds Mexicain 20/21, see Jansen 1998c.

18. We refer to these editions: Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992a (Yuta Tnoho); Caso 1960 and Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2005 (Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú); Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992b (Tonindeye); Caso 1964 (Añiute; see also the commentary by Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000); León-Portilla 1996 (Iya Nacua; see also the commentary by Troike 1974b). In proposing these new names for the pictorial manuscripts, we follow a reasoning similar to Brotherston 1995, who called Codex Bodley the “Tilantongo Annals,” Codex Nuttall the “Teozacoalco Annals,” Codex Colombino-Becker the “Tututepec Annals,” and Codex Selden the “Xaltepec Annals.” Our main difference is that we prefer names in Dzaha Dzauí. Brotherston’s theory that Codex Vindobonensis comes from Tepeji and could be called the “Tepexic Annals” is too speculative, however.

19. For an early synthesis of these sources, see Dahlgren 1954. The social structure and the role of the *caciques* have been extensively studied by Spores 1967, 1984. The colonization process, with its acculturation and syncretism, is the central theme in a monograph by Romero Frizzi 1996; see also Terraciano 2001.

20. Codex Yuta Tnoho contains a list of towns with their sacred founding dates. The date for Ñuu Tnoo is year 7 Flint day 7 Flint (cf. Codex Tonindeye, 22). In Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuú this date is connected with the scene in which the Founding Father of the dynasty, Lord 4 Alligator ‘Blood Eagle,’ is born from the

earth. The date of Añute is year 8 Rabbit day 2 Grass. In Codex Añute these two components are the calendar names of the dynasty's Founding Mother and Father.

21. See Eschmann's analysis (1976) of the interrelatedness of history and cosmology among the Mexica.

22. Smith 1973b identified the sign. Flying balls of fire, able to perforate rocks, are still known as powerful and vampire-like *nabuales* in Ñuu Dzauí. They are called *yahua* in Yutsa Tohon, *sucun yuu* in Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo). The latter term corresponds to *dzuq yuhu*, translated as "hechicero" by Alvarado.

23. Codices Yuta Tnoho reverse, I-1, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 13-V.

24. Compare the similar title of kings among the Maya: *k'uhul ajaw*; its glyph seems to contain signs of blood and preciousness (Freidel in Demarest & Conrad 1992).

25. Fray Antonio de los Reyes 1976: i documents the wordplay among *toho*, "noble lord," *tnuhu*, "word, lineage," and *tnoho*, "to pluck (feathers)."

26. The *Relación Geográfica* of Yodzo Cuiya (Juxtlahuaca) documents an association of this title with the Sun God: "adoraban al sol los guerreros valientes, que llamaban en su lengua mixteca *Taandozo* y que cuando andaban en las guerras, si mataban algún indio estos guerreros, luego le sacaban el corazón y lo ofrecían al sol" (Acuña 1984, I: 284–285).

27. A similar observation on the aspect of reciprocity as the cornerstone of this worldview is made by Anders & Jansen 1988, 1994.

## NOTES to CHAPTER 2

1. In ritual texts from Cahua Tachi in Guerrero, the title is given as (*ta*)-*yiwua* (*ta*)-*si'i* (Schultze Jena 1933–1938, III: 86); in Yutsa Tohon (Apoala) it is *ta de'e* (López García 1998: 108). The same expression occurs among the Maya and elsewhere in Mesoamerica. See also Jansen 1998c.

2. See, for example, the informative monographs by Pasqualino 1989 and Croce 1999.

3. "The Deleuzian becoming is the affirmation of the positivity of difference, meant as a multiple and constant process of transformation. Both teleological order and fixed identities are relinquished in favor of a flux of multiple becomings" (Braidotti 1994: 111).

4. See the analysis of liturgical time and locale by Jonathan Smith 1987.

5. Much of our discussion of ritual follows the monumental work of Rappaport 1999. On the use of the concepts "syntagmatic" and "paradigmatic," see Leach 1976. We thank anthropologist Sabine Luning (Centre of Non-Western Studies, Leiden) for her inspiring classes and orientations. Broda & Báez-Jorge 2001 present several aspects of Central Mexican religion. Symbolic territories are the central topic in the

bundle *Diálogos con el Territorio* (Barabas 2003; cf. our section “Hablar con la Tierra” in Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1994).

6. See Jansen 1997b. The concepts “liminality,” “*communitas*,” and “social drama,” used in this analysis, were coined by Turner 1990, 1995. An example of a recent theoretical reflection on the role of power in different types of societies is Wolf 1999.

7. For the first metaphor, see Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 43, and Codex Telleriano-Remensis, page 19; for the second, see Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 43, and Codex Telleriano Remensis, page 11v.

8. Cf. the *Historia de los Mexicanos por sus pinturas* (Garibay 1979: 32). The Aztec *Tezcacuahuitl* parallels the “mirror tree” *Wakah Chan*, represented on the famous lid of the sarcophagus of Lord Pakal (A.D. 603–683) of the Maya city-state of Palenque (see Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: ch. VI).

9. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, pages 49–53, and Codex Tezcatlipoca, page 1. In Nahuatl the primordial tree is called *Tonacacuahuitl*, “the tree of our sustenance, that is, of maize,” adored first by the Toltec divine ruler Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl and later identified with the Christian cross—cf. the references by Mendieta 1971: 309, Codex Vaticanus A (3v, Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 21, Ixtlilxochitl 1975–1977, II: 8). In the early colonial period several authors identified the Toltec ruler Quetzalcoatl with a Christian apostle (see Lafaye 1976 and Stenzel 1980).

10. The First Ruler, born from a tree, is implicitly compared to the Maize God born from the Earth, represented as an alligator in Central Mexico and as a turtle by the Maya (cf. Freidel, Schele & Parker 1993: 66).

11. So it is said explicitly about the founder of the dynasty of Yodzo Yaha (Tecomaxtla huaca) in the codex, or *tira*, of the same name (see Jansen 1994).

12. The technical term for the offering or sacrifice made at the occasion of building a house, shrine, or other important structure is taken from the German language: *Bauopfer*. Similar bowls are associated with Cihuacoatl in the temple rituals depicted in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, pages 29–31; cf. Jansen 1998d and Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: ch. VI.

13. Compare the scene in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, page 53, where the Gods Quetzalcoatl and Macuixochitl offer their blood to the earth deity Cihuacoatl so that the tree of maize can grow from her.

14. The vision serpent is important in Maya iconography too (Freidel, Schele & Parker 1993). Motolinía 1969: 20 tells how the priests became “drunk” from eating mushrooms and saw many visions, “especially of serpents.” Another chronicler, Nuñez de la Vega, described in 1702 the shamanic experience of being swallowed by a huge dragon-like snake (Aguirre Beltrán 1963: 283). Until today this concept has been part of the visionary wisdom of the Mazatec *curanderos* (healers) (Boege 1988: 178 ff). See also our commentary on Codex Añute (Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: ch. VI).



## NOTES

15. For an in-depth analysis of sacred architecture, see Carmichael et al. 1994 and Jones 2000.

16. Several authors have tried to explain this building's deviant orientation in terms of astronomical alignments. These theories remain unconvincing. A general problem with archaeo-astronomical arguments is that with a plurality of architectural elements there are many sight lines that can be traced to some points at the horizon where, given the enormous richness of the universe, some siderical or planetary presence will occur. With so many chances for coincidence, the question is whether the "orientation" we can now observe was actually significant and consciously constructed in the ancient civilization or totally unrelated to astronomical observations. Often, and also in the case of Mound J, the postulated sight line is not self-evident, and concrete data about the suggested religious value (cult, symbolism) of the specific celestial phenomena to which such a line is supposed to point are conspicuously absent.

17. Compare the interpretation given by Köhler 1985 and Coe et al. 1996. This convention is also present in the frescoes of Teotihuacan. The dictionary of Alvarado contains several terms for "*hechicero, embaidor que decía se volvía en tigre*" and "*brujo que engaña en decir que se vuelve león.*"

18. For an overview, see the article by Rodríguez Cano, Rivera Guzmán & Martínez Ramírez 1996–1999. The first monograph on Nuiñe reliefs was published by Moser 1977. In her thesis, Rodríguez Cano 1996 presents an updated and systematic catalog of all known monuments.

19. Such a name or title is also documented in Monte Albán, on steles (cf. Winter et al. 1994: 70), and on the famous Lápida de Bazán (Winter et al.: 72).

20. Tequixtepec Stone 19; Cerro de los Soles Stone 1 (Rodríguez Cano 1996).

21. Tequixtepec Stone 17 and Cerro de la Caja Stone 2, respectively (Rodríguez Cano 1996; Rivera Guzmán 2002). See also Jansen 2004a.

22. Stone 1 in the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Cologne, and Huajuapán Stone 1 (Rodríguez Cano 1996).

23. See Winter 1994: 34 and Jansen 1997a, 1998d, 2004b.

24. Examples are found in Caso & Bernal 1952: figs. 16, 151, 159, 161, 241, 328, 363.

## NOTES to CHAPTER 3

1. Burgoa 1934b, I: 406.

2. See Jansen's analysis of Mesoamerican religion in the commentary on Codex Mictlan / Laud (Anders & Jansen 1994).

3. Sahagún's translation is: "decían que antes que hubiese día en el mundo que se juntaron los dioses en aquel lugar que se llama Teotihuacan, que es el pueblo de

San Juan . . . dijeron los unos a los otros dioses: ‘¿Quién tendrá cargo de alumbrar el mundo?’” It is interesting that this model was also used among humans to establish a social structure: “entraron en consulta, donde trataron lo siguiente diciendo: ‘Vendrá tiempo cuando hay luz para el regimiento de esta república’” (Sahagún 1950–1978, book X: ch. 19 § 12).

4. Compare the unified image of the Death God and Quetzalcoatl as archetypal priest in the Teoamoxtli Group (Codex Yoalli Ehecatl, 56, 73).

5. For a detailed analysis of this map and the identification of Monte Albán in the Ñuu Dzauí codices, see Jansen 1998b.

6. According to the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo: “los dioses a quien adoraban eran ídolos de madera y piedras, los cuales ídolos llamaron en su lengua mixteca *Qhyo Sayo* y en mexicano *teul*, que en castellano quiere decir dios” (Acuña 1984, II: 232–233).

7. Later in Codex Añute (6-II) we find a reference to a cave where the Heart of Ñuu Dzauí is located, clearly a reference to the oracle cave of Ñuu Ndecu described by Burgoa. The heart is accompanied by a jewel or jade sign, which again suggests that Place of Jade (Jewel) was one of the ancient names of Ñuu Ndecu, surviving as the name of one of the wards that integrated the village-state. Town of Jade, also called Valley of Opening Jade or Chipped Jade, where the divine beings (*Ñubhu*) were born and the sanctuary of the nobility (quetzal feathers) stood, is repeated later in Codex Yuta Tnoho (45). There it initiates a list of places that mark the four directions, a position that suggests that Town of Jade actually represents the center. This suggestion is further confirmed on page 12 of the same codex where Maize Maiden, the daughter of Lord 8 Alligator and Lady 4 Dog, is associated with Heart of the Earth, that is, the Center. These references coincide nicely with the information on a cult for the Heart of the People in Ñuu Ndecu.

8. The *teicpalli* is mentioned in the *Historia Tolteca Chichimeca* (Kirchhoff, Odena Güemes & Reyes García 1976: 138).

9. The Sacred Bundle of Lord 9 Wind ‘Flint-born Quetzalcoatl’ is depicted in Codex Tonindeye, pages 15, 21–22, 42.

10. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 48. For the concept of *Do Asean*, see Boege 1988: 174–183. The shamanic flight is discussed by Furst and Anguiano 1977, Furst 1978: 113, and Jansen 1982: 147–148.

11. Compare the signs of these months in the Codex Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan) as part of the sequence of the four tribute periods (Sepúlveda y Herrera 1994: pl. X–XI).

12. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 47. For the reading in Dzaha Dzauí, see Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992a. The Mountain of Pulque in this context is probably a cognate of the Pozonaltepetl of Nahuatl cosmivision (Sahagún 1950–1978, book X: ch. 29).

13. Cf. Codices Añute, page 2, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 1-V. The same tree is depicted on incised bones found in Tomb 7 of Monte Albán. The form of the tree in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 37, is also diagnostic of a *ceiba* or *pochote*.

14. The day 7 Eagle occurs as a preferential marriage day for Ñuu Tnoo rulers (e.g., Codices Yuta Tnoho reverse, I-3; Tonindeye, 42; Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 12-III and 29-IV). The day 7 Rain is the calendar name of Xipe as Patron deity of Zaachila (Tonindeye, 33) but is also associated with the cult of the Bundle of Lord 9 Wind (Tonindeye, 15-II). The combination of the days 7 Eagle and 7 Rain echoes the possible reference to Ñuu Tnoo and Zaachila as the first mentioned towns in Codex Yuta Tnoho (52).

15. Compare the account by Muñoz Camargo, who describes how the Patron Deity sends his people to their “place of dawn”: “*uncan tonaz, oncan tlahuiz, oncan yazque ayamo nican*, ‘adelante habéis de ir, que no es aquí aún donde adonde ha de amanecer y hacer sol y resplandecer con su propios y fulgentes rayos’” (in Acuña 1984–1985, I: 144).

16. As stated by Fray Antonio de los Reyes in his prologue (1976: i): “En especial era tradición antigua que los dichos señores que salieron de Apoala se habían hecho cuatro partes y se dividieron de tal suerte que se apoderaron de toda la Mixteca.”

17. See Jansen 1982 and 1998c. The Nguigua (Popoloca) of the State of Puebla still consider Tepeji the place of the North (Michael Swanton, pers. comm.).

18. For the *Yoayan* (*yobuayan*) concept, see Sahagún 1950–1978, book III appendix: ch. 4; for Chicomoztoc, the *Historia Tolteca Chichimeca*, f 16r, and Ruiz de Alarcón 1953, *Tratado* VI: ch. 18. The Ñuu Dzauí version of Chicomoztoc is Soko Usha (*Dzoco Usa* in Alvarado’s orthography), “Hole 7” or “Well 7,” considered the origin place by inhabitants of Nuu Yoo (Monaghan 1995: 210). In the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec (A/B–1/2 in the publication of Caso 1961) Chicomoztoc is combined with a River of Necklace and Quetzal-feathers, which recalls the Nahuatl metaphor *in cozcatl in quetzalli* for a baby (Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 24). Another expression of this symbolism is the manifestation of the tribal God Huitzilopochtli on Coatepec, the Serpent Mountain, as light after a period of darkness (Codex Azcatitlan, pl. VI; see the commentary by Castañeda de la Paz 1997).

19. A frieze that stands for *ñuu*, “town,” on top of which a cradle (*dzoco*) is placed. Pictorially the cradle suggests “origin”; on the other hand, it can be read phonetically as the verb *yodzoco*, “to offer, to dedicate or consecrate” (as in *yodzoco huahi ñuhu*, “to dedicate a church”).

20. The origin tree with eye appears in Codex Añute, page 2-I. Later the same element characterizes a Sacred Bundle (3-I). A Temple of the Eye stood in Ndisi Nuu (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 28-I, 32-IV).

21. Such a temple stood in Ñuu Yuchi, Mogote del Cacique (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 29-V).

22. A Temple of the Bowl with Blood appears in the ceremonial center of Yucuñudahui (Codex Tonindeye, 2).

23. See the rituals described by Boege 1988: 146, 156, 165, 167, 178 (cf. Van Doesburg & Carrera González 1996: 193 ff). The temple is documented in Chiyo Cahnu by the map that accompanies the *Relación Geográfica* of that town (Acuña 1984, II); it seems to be paired with the Heaven Temple in Ñuu Tnoo (cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 13-I), in Ndisi Nu, and on Mountain of the Precious Mask (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 30-V, 22-I).

24. See the discussion of this couple in the commentary on Codex Cihuacoatl / Borbonicus (Anders, Jansen & Reyes García 1991: 181–185) and the Cipactonal imagery in the temple scenes of Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (Anders, Jansen & Reyes García 1993: 175 ff).

25. See Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 21, and Codex Yada (Tututepetongo), page 33. In our commentary on Codex Añute (2000) we discuss the representation of these two priests on the famous vessel of Nochixtlan. Lord 2 Dog was aptly called the “archetypical shaman” by Peter Furst. It is curious that he became associated with the North, but he apparently was born in Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), an emblematic place of the South (Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 36-I).

26. See Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 35. The same two couples are mentioned in Codex Tonindeye, page 36, placed in the context of the Sacred Landscape of the valley of Yuta Tnoho.

27. Another toponymic reference to two rivers follows, but their names are illegible.

28. In Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 35, it was Lord 9 Wind who acted as ambassador; therefore it is also possible that he is the second person in this damaged scene. On the other hand, Lord 4 Alligator and Lord 11 Alligator constitute a well-known pair, associated with the Place of Heaven near Yuta Tnoho (cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, 51, 13). Their role is similar to that of Lord 4 Serpent and Lord 7 Serpent (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 2-V).

29. As such, it occurs in Codex Ñuu Ñaña, page 15 (König 1979). The association of the Carrying Frame–Sweat-bath place with Lady 8 Deer in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu is paralleled by an association of the same lady (and her husband, Lord 7 Wind) with the Town of Blood and Wooden Fence in the Codices Tonindeye (3) and Yuta Tnoho (3), suggesting that the latter toponym is closely related to, if not identical with, that of Carrying Frame–Sweat-bath. As “blood” is *neñe* or *niñe*, it is very probable that Town of Blood is indeed an alternative sign for Ñuu Niñe, “Town of Heat” (Tonalá). The incorporated Wooden Fence (*nduyu*) has to be the sign of Ñuu Nduyu (Silacayoapan), an important subject town of Ñuu Niñe (cf. Gerhard 1972: 128–132).

30. Only six dots of the man’s name are still visible; we reconstruct eight because we suspect there was a significant symbolic sequence of successive day names here: 7 Flower–8 Alligator–9 Wind.

31. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu mentions the year 7 House before the marriage scene. This would correspond to 837, but it does not fit the sequence. We propose that this year should be corrected and read as 8 House, the year before 9 Rabbit, that is, a reference to the preparation for the marriage. Then a year 4 or 5 Reed is mentioned. The day has either become invisible or was never painted. As 5 Reed (835) it could again be the birth year of Lord 5 Wind (cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 39-1). Obviously, all this is a speculative reconstruction. The dates in this time period often function as ritual, sacred dates. An additional problem is that these dates are all in the Late Classic period; it is possible, even probable, that in the break between the Classic and the Postclassic changes occurred in the way of counting the years, leading to chronological confusion.

32. Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 34–33, shows a similar offering in a parallel context; there the jewel is clearly part of the offering, and the river is the Yuta Tnoho.

33. The two rain personages are invoked as Spirits in a ritual in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 27. The feather ornament is known in Nahuatl as *quecholli*.

34. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 37/38-III. It may also be that a general reference to a “Place of the Elders” is made. Thus we find a “pile of pearls” designating the name of a temple in Cholula (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 12-V). The occurrence of the Mountain of Pearls with Face, however, is limited to this context, which suggests that it was not one of the important *cacicazgos* of the Mixteca Alta. The jade and pearls also occur in an elaborate glyph in Codex Yuta Tnoho (44-III) surrounded by places in the Mixteca Baja, a context highly suggestive of Tezoatlan.

35. We can compare this statement with the reliefs on the sarcophagus of Lord Pakal in the Temple of the Inscriptions in Palenque, where the deceased Royal Ancestors are identified with the plants and fruits. Another parallel would be the mantic symbolism that accompanies certain couples in the chapter on marriage prediction in the Books of Wisdom (Anders & Jansen 1994: 171 ff). Similar elements are found in marriage scenes on Late Classic dynastic slabs from Monte Albán.

36. In Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 32-III, 27-I, and 1-II, we also find a Lady 6 Eagle, but she has another given name.

37. Possibly, this is the same place where Lord 8 Wind later received the ceremonial salute (Codex Tonindeye, 5).

38. See the interesting text of Suárez de Peralta 1949: 86. One is reminded of Hercules fighting the Stymphalian birds. A similar scene occurs in Tomb 1 of Jaltepetongo (Matadamas 1997)—this suggests that we are dealing here with a literary theme with symbolic implications. A similar theme occurs in painted scenes on Maya vessels related to the Popol Vuh (Tedlock 1985: 89 ff), as well as on vessels from Teotihuacan (Langley, in Berrin & Pasztory 1993). Compare also the bird hunt with bow and arrow, carried out by Lord 8 Deer shortly before his death (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 14-V).

39. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 38-III/IV; cf. Codex Añute, page 1, where an arrow thrown by Lord Sun and Lord Venus causes the birth of the Founding Father of the dynasty of Añute (Jaltepec).

40. The year 5 House would be significant in view of other historical events of that period, but the number of the year bearer is badly damaged; it could also be 6 House (953) or a higher number. The day Alligator is not normal for a Ñuu Dzauí wedding—generally, the days Deer and Eagle were preferred. Perhaps it was a reference to the sacred day of the place (cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 38-V).

41. An example is given in Codex Añute (1), where two priests visit the couple before bringing about the birth of the forefather of the Añute dynasty from a mysterious and powerful tree in Ñuu Ndecu.

42. The composition of the valley as body of the Plumed Serpent recalls the representation of the Plumed Serpent in the reliefs of the Temple of Quetzalcoatl at Xochicalco. Observe the reference to the same divine being in the given name of Lady 9 Alligator (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 27-I).

43. “Un anciano apoaleño me refirió la siguiente leyenda que transcribo, expurgada de muchos detalles inverosímiles. Hace muchos siglos de la parte donde sale el sol arribó a las montañas azules un anciano venerable, muy distinto de los habitantes de estas regiones. Era de una estatura y complejión regulares: su cabeza ligeramente inclinada sobre el pecho estaba poblada de una hermosa cabellera blanca como la nieve, su frente espaciosa dejaba ver sus venas azules que resaltaban en su cutis blanco-rosado, sus ojos sombreados por largas pestañas despedían miradas penetrantes, la forma de su rostro era ovalada y estaba adornado por una hermosa barba castaña emblanquecida por las canas, su traje consistía en una túnica blanca que le cubría desde los hombros hasta los tobillos, andaba descalzo y con nada se cubría la cabeza. Cuando andaba, el paso era lento y seguro y nunca caminaba con precipitación. El eco de su voz era dulce y persuasivo y cuando hablaba lo hacía con donosura y modestia. Nadie supo con qué se alimentaba y todos vieron que era incansable su misión. Vivió con estas tribus durante algún tiempo y durante él les refirió que había caminado por muchas regiones y que en varias partes había dejado señales imborrables de su paso. Aquí comenzó a enseñarles los fundamentos principales de su religión, las máximas de la moral y las bases de su legislación. Les enseñó a cultivar las artes y las ciencias, y después de ocupar muchos años en este trabajo mandó reunir a todos los moradores y sus inmediaciones, les predicó un hermoso sermón y se introdujo en la Gruta, diciéndoles que se iba a descansar de sus fatigas y que nadie penetrara a ese lugar porque moriría irremisiblemente. Nadie se atrevió a profanar esa cueva y dicen los apoaleños que ese personaje es el Obispo uniformado. Esta leyenda, si tiene algo de cierto, coincide con la aparición del Quetzalcoatl de los mexicanos” (Mariano López Ruiz, in Manuel Martínez Gracida, *Obra Inédita*, vol. 29).

44. This development is found as early as the work of sixteenth-century chroniclers such as Mendieta. See the classic studies by Phelan 1970 and Lafaye 1976 and, for the general context, the introductory chapters of Anders et al. 1996.

45. For the whole story, see Jansen 1982: appendix 4.

46. For Qhyo Sayo, see the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo (Acuña 1984, II: 232). Lord 1 Rain and Lord 7 Rain are also mentioned as rulers or Patrons of Town of Paper (Andutu, Amatlan?) on page 17 of Codex Tonindeye; also, other protagonists of this section are repeated there.

47. Andua was likely an important political center. Its close neighbor Chindua (Tocanzacuala) appears prominently as Spiderweb Altar, *Chi(yo) Nduhua*, at the beginning of the Añute dynasty (Codex Añute, I-II). Chindua and Andua are very close and difficult to distinguish. The latter can be written as Mouth-Spiderweb (*a-nduhua*); as such, it appears as the seat of Lord 3 Monkey, mentioned by Herrera as the Lord of Yanhuitlan who fought the Aztecs (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 17-II). An alternative sign is Mouth-Arrow (*a-nduvua*), mentioned among the towns that participate in the foundation of the kingdom of Añute (Codex Añute, 4-I).

48. Burgoa 1934b, I: 278. The pointed object has not yet been identified; it occurs in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 18, lying on a storage or cooking vessel. Its shape is that of an *acocote*, a gourd used to extract the juice of the maguey.

49. Many rulers of the associated dynasty (40–41) have different black markings around their eyes, which could be explained as variants of the characteristic convention used to indicate speakers of Nahuatl (Smith 1973a: 203). The black-and-white band might represent *naa*, “dark,” just like the checkerboard motif used as the emblem of the North. The curved black-and-white band with a pointed end (or hairy texture) also appears as a tail, which is *dzuma* in Dzaha Dzau (compare Codex Tonindeye, 24-II). In view of a possible link to the Valley of Cholula, it is interesting that one of the names for speakers of Nahuatl (“*mexicano*”) is Ñuu Dzuma, “People of the Tail” or “Scorpion People”—the scorpion is called a “tail animal,” *te-dzuma*, in Dzaha Dzau, but is conspicuously absent here. So far these associations and speculations have not led to any convincing identification.

50. A similar combination is found in Codex Dehesa, a pictorial manuscript that has been studied by Cathalijne van Oort (unpublished M.A. thesis, Leiden University, 1999).

51. See Burland and Kutscher 1955. The scene is a clear parallel to Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 48.

52. The blackened eyes are to be read as *sahmi nuu*, “burned eyes,” a term given by Alvarado for those who speak Nahuatl (“*mexicano*”), that is, the Toltecs (Smith 1973a: 203).

53. “La razón por que [se] le puso este nombre dicen que es porque, en un cerro que está al día de hoy a[d]junto al asiento del d[ic]ho pu[eb]lo, moraba antiguan[en]te

una culebra de tan increíble grandor, que dicen que con su cuerpo rodeaba todo el cerro, y sobraba mucho cuerpo más, que se enroscaba uno sobre otro. Y esta culebra tenía el cuerpo pintado a forma de estera y, por eso, la llamaban ‘culebra de estera, o esterada’; la cual culebra cuentan que era velocísima y, [por]que se comía [a] cuantas personas veía, que tenía despoblada toda la comarca y nadie osaba a pasar por allí, siendo camino r[ea]l. Y, según las pinturas de los d[ic]hos indios de Petlalcingo, dicen que un hombre valeroso y gran guerrero, que había discurrido muchas provincias, vino con gente de guerra con gana de poblar este asiento de Petlalcingo, y se puso en celada, aguardando a que esta culebra saliese de su cueva. Y, desde un cerro que está frontero del d[ic]ho cerro donde la culebra vivía, casi [a] un cuarto de legua, la apuntó con su arco y flechas, y la mató. Y pobló allí con la gente que traía y, del nombre de la d[ic]ha culebra, que era petlalcoatl, llamó a su población Petlalcingo” (Acuña 1984–1985, II: 48).

54. See the description of the Tlachihualtepetl in Codex Vaticano A (Anders & Jansen 1996: 90–93). The Quetzal Mountain of Cholula is mentioned in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 39, in combination with a female breast, to guarantee the reading *ndodzo* (“breast,” “quetzal”). Possibly *tlachiual-*, “manmade” was understood as *chichiual-*, “breast” (Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: 75).

55. The serpents are analogous to those that express the mysterious character and magic powers of the Tree of Origin in Codex Añute, page 2 (see the commentary by Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000).

56. Van Doesburg and Van Buren 1997 have identified this spring as Omeapan.

57. This crown was shaped in the form of the head of the Rain God, with aspects of the primordial alligator representing Earth. On the Plumed Serpent in Teotihuacan and on his Postclassic iconography, see the contributions of Sugiyama and Nicholson to the excellent book edited by Carrasco, Jones & Sessions 2000, as well as the thought-provoking article by Ringle, Gallerta & Bey 1999.

58. Sahagún 1950–1978, book XI: ch. 3, describes both shells. See also the representation of the Rain God walking over the waters in Codex Mictlan / Laud, page 23; the Earth appears as a precious alligator floating in the sea between the strombus and spondylus molluscs. The fact that the same combination occurs in Andean iconography, already in Chavín reliefs, suggests that we are dealing with a widespread and very old concept. See also Davidson 1982.

59. See, for example, Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch 1; compare the interpretation of the Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia by Anders, Jansen & Reyes García 1993 and the article on these scenes by Jansen 1998d.



## NOTES to CHAPTER 4

1. Cf. Codex Vaticanus A, f 8r, and Sahagún 1950–1978, book I: ch. 15. The opposition between Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca (Huemac) in Tula Xicocotitlan is well-known (Van Zantwijk 1986).

2. The evidence for identifying the Xipe dynasty as that of Zaachila was presented by Jansen at a symposium in Leiden (Jansen & Leyenaar 1982; see also Jansen 1989, 1998b; Oudijk & Jansen 2000). The implications for understanding Beni Zaa historiography have been examined by Oudijk 2000.

3. The same couple is repeated in the representation of Heaven in Codex Tonindecy, page 21. Among Lord 12 Wind's companions are Lord 7 Eagle and Lord 9 Movement. Persons with these calendar names are also associated with the Tree of Origin in Codex Yuta Tnoho (37-II, 36-IV), but it is not clear if we are dealing with the same individuals. Similarly, a Lord 12 Wind appears among the descendants of the Tree and among the attendants of Lady 9 Death, the Spirit Guardian of the Cave of Death, which is the emblem of the South (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 36-II, 14-I).

4. This identification is based on a comparison of this scene in Codex Tonindecy (19) with the Map of Xoxocotlan (Smith 1973a: 202 ff). The diagnostic toponyms "Insect" and "Reeds" can be found as elements that name different slopes of Monte Albán: *Tiyuq̄h*, "Fly" or "Lice" (Sayultepec in Nahuatl), and *Yucu yoo*, "Hill of the Reeds" or "Hill of the Moon" (Acatepec in Nahuatl). We interpret "Curved Hill" as a variant of "Mountain that Opens" (or rather "that is torn open"), reading *Yucu Cabnu*, "Big Mountain" in Dzaha Dzauí, because both "torn" and "bent" are *cabnu*, which in turn is a homonym of *cabnu*, "big" (apart from the tones). For a full argumentation, see Jansen 1998b.

5. A similar visionary cult in a cave is documented on a stone relief from Ñuu Yuchi, Mogote del Cacique (Jansen & Winter 1980; Jansen 1997a).

6. Cf. Smith 1973a; Mundy 1996. No precolonial cartographic documents have survived, but a beautiful example of what such maps may have looked like is the early colonial Lienzo of Tlapiltepec (Parmenter 1982; Jansen 1992).

7. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 3–4. For the modern use of the "father-mother" title, see Schultze Jena 1933–1938, III: 67, 87, and López García 1998. Cf. Jansen 1998c, 2004b.

8. It is interesting that a Lady 12 Vulture appears with a Lord 12 Alligator (error for 12 Lizard?) among the descendants of the Sacred Mother Tree in Codex Yuta Tnoho (37-III). In another group of persons, also associated with Yuta Tnoho (Apoala), we again find a Lady 12 Vulture, now paired with a Lord 7 Rain 'Xipe' (in another context, the Patron of Zaachila). In a third scene this latter Lady 12 Vulture is depicted as a man and receives the name 'Night Eagle, Night Jaguar' (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 29-II). Also, a Lord 10 Eagle, a Lord 3 Monkey, and a Lord 4 House

are among the Tree's descendants, although not combined as a group (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 37-II, 36-I, 36-III).

9. Carrasco, Jones & Sessions 2000; cf. Marcus 1992; Urcid 2001. There are several "candidates" for Sun Mountain. Its inclusion in Codex Yuta Tnoho (17) suggests that it was somewhere in Ñuu Dzau territory. We have been considering Yucunchii (Tonaltepec), but no evidence yet exists for attributing such special importance to that town. Also a specific sun temple may have been meant, like the one in Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). Closer to Monte Albán, one might consider Teotitlan del Valle.

10. For this concept, see Turner 1995: 111–112; Barabas 1989. See also Jansen 2004a. Various other contributions to the third Round Table of Monte Albán (Robles García 2004) also deal with the Classic to Postclassic transition.

11. For the column that sustains the Heaven and is founded in the Earth, see also Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 47, 38 (Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992a: 95). In the Dzaha Dzau translation of Fray Jerónimo Taix's *Rosario* we find the expression *sa isi ini andevui, sii sa caa ñoho ñayehui*, literally "what stands in heaven and is contained in the earth," for "universe" (Jansen 1998a).

12. The calendrical sign Flint (*cusi*) may have served as a phonetic complement—and semantic association—to express "white" (*cuisi*). The normal word for "flint" or "flint knife" is *yuchi*.

13. The codex calls the last individual 2 Dog, but we think 4 Dog is meant; both Lord 4 Dog and Lord 10 Death appear among the First Lords born from the Tree of the Sacred Valley (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 37). Lord 10 Death is also associated with the Old Shaman, Lord 2 Dog, in his function of Lord of the North (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 21).

14. Codex Yuta Tnoho (37-II, 36-I) mentions a Lord 10 Death and a Lady 8 Death among those who descended from the Sacred Mother Tree. Their marriage is registered by Codex Tonindeye, page 4. The analysis of events and dates on this page suggests that the reading order, at least on the left-hand side, is contrary to the general reading order of the codex; this section was likely copied from another document. Lord 7 Flower was not the father of the priest Lord 10 Rain 'Jaguar,' who played an important role in the marriage of Lord 12 Wind and Lady 3 Flint in Monte Albán (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 38-I). The given name of Lord 4 Movement is quite different from that of his namesake, the ruler of Ñuu Niñe, who was the father of Lord 5 Wind and seems to have lived much earlier (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 40-I).

15. Codex Tonindeye, page 4. The ball court is similar to that on Codex Tonindeye, page 3, which in turn is the same as the place of Lady 11 Serpent in Codex Tonindeye, page 3. Long Stone appears in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 4, together with Long Jewelled Stone, which, on the basis of a gloss in Codex Ñuu Ñaña, page 31, can

be identified as Tiyusi, that is, probably San Andrés Sabanillos in the Mixteca Baja (cf. Smith 1973a: 61–62; Jansen 1994: 117 ff, 191). The way the text has now been integrated in Codex Tonindeye would result in the statement that the dead Lords 4 Movement and 7 Flower were venerated in the Sacred Ball Courts, while the dead Ladies 8 Monkey and 7 Wind were venerated at the Sacred Stones in the market-places. Compare the Ball Court in the Sacred Plain in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 20.

16. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 10 ff. The reference to the Rain God on Codex Tonindeye, page 4, and Lady 8 Monkey's association with Rain God Mountain in Codex Tonindeye, page 3, echo the earlier presentation of that place on Codex Tonindeye, page 2, where it appears in combination with a black hill—in this case probably the Yucu Noo (Yucu Tnoo) “Black Hill,” which forms part of the same archaeological zone (Jansen 1982: 269).

17. Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 10–9. Compare Codex Tonindeye, page 22. The twin hill of Yucuñudahui is also called Yucu Tnoo, “Black Mountain” (cf. Codex Tonindeye, 3), but in the scene of Codex Yuta Tnoho (10–9) the Black Mountain is clearly represented as fairly distant from Rain God Mountain.

18. They are the *nahuales* of the primordial couple in the text of Fray Gregorio García and in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 47. The emblematic use of both animals is also seen in the battle scene of Codex Tonindeye, page 69.

19. These are mentioned as two of the three places passed by groups before entering the Ñuu Dzau region, crossing the frontier indicated by places that represent and mark the North and the West (Roll of the New Fire, Lienzo of Tlapiltepec).

20. Most of these places also appear in Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 44–45 (cf. Jansen 1982: 270–272). The sign of Toavui (Chila) occurs in the beginning of the roll found in Yucu Nindavua (Huamelulpan) and has been deciphered by Smith (in Smith & Parmenter 1991: 30–33), discussed later. The Dzaha Dzau name of Tehuacan is given by Antonio de los Reyes as Yucu Toñaña, “Mountain of the Jaguar Man.” The syllable *to-* is a contraction of *tobo*, “principal, lord, person of respect.” In Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 39-IV, we find a Mountain of the Man combined with Mountain of the Jaguar close to Huahi Yaha, “Eagle House,” that is, Cuauhtinchan.

21. Fidelio Cruz Miguel from Ñuu Tnoo identified the spring as *Ndute Ndee Coo*, “Water of the Standing Serpent.” A relief of a serpent is located there. The unpublished work of Martínez Gracida (vol. 33: 80) contains a legend from Ñuu Tnoo, according to which the relief was sculpted in memory of a prince who had been bitten there by a snake (Jansen 1982: 494).

22. Codex Tonindeye, page 18, however, attributes this given name or title to another companion of Lord 12 Wind: Lord 5 Dog.

23. Lord 2 Dog and Lady 2 Jaguar are also mentioned in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 22. Her given name seems to include a toponymic reference to their place of origin, Ñuu Ndaya.

24. Compare the story registered in nearby Ñuu Kahnu (San Miguel el Grande) by Dyk 1959: 3–5, 17.

25. Codex Yuta Tnoho lists Lord 9 Wind ‘Death Wind’ among the descendants of the Tree, as a close companion of a Lord 12 Wind (36-II) and other Death priests, and related to Lady 9 Grass of the Death Temple (cf. 15–14). For Lord 9 Wind ‘Stone Skull’ (e.g., Codex Tonindeye, 23), see Chapter 5 in this volume.

26. Codex Tonindeye, page 3. The reading order of the first scene seems to be *boustrophedon*.

27. Codex Tonindeye, page 20. The year 3 Reed became part of the sacred founding date of Añute (Codex Añute, 1) and was commemorated as a ceremonial year in Yucuñudahui (Codex Tonindeye, 2).

28. If our dating of the marriage of her parents in 878 is correct, Lady 8 Deer in the year 5 House (965) would have been approximately eighty years old. She and her husband appear in this scene as emblematic founders of the local dynasty (see also their representation in Codex Yuta Tnoho, 3).

29. Codex Tonindeye, page 19; cf. page 20. Another associated date is year 5 Reed (939), day 12 Alligator, which, if part of the chronological sequence, would have been the year before the marriage of Lady 1 Death in 6 Flint (Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse, 1).

30. Codex Tonindeye, page 19. The same combination of persons and place is found in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 1, where 13 Flower is a woman. We can explain this sex change in the same way as that of Lord/Lady 12 Vulture. In this case, the symbolic nature of the calendar names (first and last days of the 260-day cycle) is obvious.

31. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 10; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 3. For Lord 7 Movement see the *Relación Geográfica* of Yucu Yusi (Acatlan), published by Acuña 1984–1985, II: 27 ff.

32. The same body paint characterizes the first generation of primordial people mentioned in Codex Yuta Tnoho (51).

33. This was done in a specific ritual, also referred to in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, pages 18, 32.

34. See Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 3-III. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 13, shows Lord 4 House together with Lord 4 Rain making offerings for Lord 4 Alligator and Lord 11 Alligator in Heaven (see also 36-II/III). Lord 4 Rain may be identical with one of the attendants of Lord 8 Wind (Codex Tonindeye, 2).

35. The *Huahi Cahi* cave in Ñuu Ndaya became the common sepulcher of the Ñuu Dzau rulers (Burgoa 1934b, I: 337–341). The cult of the dead and the Ancestors in this place was associated with the period 1 Lizard–12 Eagle in the year 6 Reed (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 4-III), the sequence of days in which the day 9 Grass also falls, the name day of the spiritual Owner or Guardian of the Cave.

36. The story is told in the codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 2/3-IV, Yuta Tnoho reverse, pages I/II, and Tonindeye, pages 21–22.

37. It is also possible that the date was first and that it became personified as a pair of parents. Note that the day 7 Flower is two days after the day 5 Flint. The same combination is found in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 38-I. The first date mentioned in Codex Yuta Tnoho (50) is year 5 Flint day 5 Flint. The Temple of Pearls may also be related to the Mountain of Pearls, mentioned in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 37-III, which may represent Nuu Siya (Tezoatlan). The Temple of Earthquakes appears in the Roll of the New Fire as a ceremonial center, where the primordial priests go to receive the Sacred Bundle. Compare the importance of the volcanic elements in Codex Tonindeye, page 15, and Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 50.

38. Codex Tonindeye, page 21 (note the reference to Lord 4 House and Lady 5 Serpent in Heaven, also mentioned on page 18). Lady 1 Death's given name consists of a staff with quetzal feathers and a solar disk—we can read it as 'Sun Fan,' 'Sun Staff,' or 'Quetzal Feathers (Noble) of Sun [Place].' The name is similar to that of Lord/Lady 12 Vulture, who ruled before Lady 1 Death's birth in Monte Albán. The association with the Sun is determined by the calendar name 1 Death, which is also the name of the Sun God, and at the same time by the association with Sun Mountain.

39. Compare the sign of the column that sustains the Heaven in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 47 (Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992a: 95). Our reconstruction is based on an integrated reading of Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 1/2, Yuta Tnoho reverse, pages I/II, and Tonindeye, page 21.

40. If we are correct in our reconstruction, this is the year before the marriage, fourteen days before the pre-occurrence of the marriage day 7 Eagle.

41. In retrospect, we can interpret the listing of these Founding Couples as a founding ceremony in which Lady 1 Vulture was acclaimed as the future queen. Cf. Codex Añute, pages 3–4.

42. The day of the sacred date is the calendar name of the Lady; the year bearer is the day after that of her husband.

43. The same couple appears in Codex Añute, page 5-II, but there another origin is given for the Lady.

44. The Dark Altar may be identical with the Black Altar on the Monte Negro in Codex Tonindeye, page 22. The sign is combined with a small male figure that makes a signaling gesture with his hand; we read it as the verb *naha*, a possible phonetic writing of *naha*, "ancient."

45. They may be identical with the couple of the same names in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 38/37-I, 37-IV, who ruled—among others—Mountain of the Plant and became the parents of the priest 10 Rain 'Jaguar' and of Lady 12 Serpent who later married Lord 7 (?) Movement 'Earth Face.'

46. The day 1 Alligator is the beginning of the 260-day cycle, so it is a logical symbolic designation of a Founding Father. As such it also appears in Postclassic Zapotec manuscripts (cf. Oudijk's study of the genealogy of Quiavini, in Jansen, Kröfges & Oudijk 1998: 123, and see Oudijk 2000, where it is linked with Tabaa).

47. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 38-I, 36/34-I. The representation reminds us of a story about an underground passage that leads from ancient Yucu Yata (Huitepec) to the sacred mountain of Yucu Casa, a “Gateway to Heaven,” where one can consult dead ancestors or other deceased family members (Juan Julian Cabballero, pers. comm.).

48. We miss Lady 12 Serpent (sister of Lord 1 Rain) and Lady 10 Alligator (sister of Lord 2 Dog), who were mentioned in earlier pages.

49. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 40–37. Much earlier, Lord 10 Rain had played an important role during the wedding ceremony of Lady 3 Flint and Lord 12 Wind in Monte Albán in the year 10 House (957), and Lord 2 Dog had been instrumental in founding the realm of Yucuñudahui.

50. Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse, page IV-1. The given name ‘Stone Skull’ may derive from his mother, a princess of Death Place (Dzandaya), but can also be understood as a commemorative name, referring to the ‘Death of the Stone Men.’

51. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 36/35-IV, 3/4-I/II. The given name of Lord 12 Lizard, ‘Arrow Feet,’ is a double writing of the word *Nduvua*, which means “arrow” in normal Dzaha Dzaui and is a metaphor for “foot” in the language of the *Iya*. The given name of Lady 5 Jaguar, ‘Quetzal Fan,’ may be related to the Town of the Quetzal Temple, with which her husband was associated (Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 35-IV). Codex Añute, page 16-IV, also suggests a connection between Town of the Xipe Bundle and Mountain of the Quetzal.

52. Lord 11 Wind married in the year 10 House (1061) and married again in the year 13 Rabbit (1090). Children were born during both marriages (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 36/34). According to Codex Iya Nacuaa (II, 11) he died as late as the year 11 House (1101).

## NOTES to CHAPTER 5

1. We follow the story as given in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 4-IV ff. See also the parallel scenes in Codices Yuta Tnoho reverse, page IV-1, and Tonindeye, page 23.

2. According to Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 36-II, the given name of the Lord 9 Wind who was born from the Sacred Tree was ‘Death Wind.’ See also Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 29-I, where his given name seems to be ‘Skull–Blood Eagle.’ The same individual appears associated with Lady 9 Grass in Codex Tonindeye, page 20.

3. Note how the founders of this lineage have the same *nabuales* as Lord 1 Deer and Lady 1 Deer in the origin story of Gregorio García. Describing the archaeological remains along the Yute Coo River, Byland and Pohl make a strong identification of the site (1994: 104, 116).

4. Codex Tonindeye, page 23.

5. See also Codex Tonindeye, page 25, where ‘Cloud’ appears together with ‘Chin with Palm Leaves.’ The latter, in turn, belongs to the “chin- or collar-titles” in Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 50-II, 10. The elements in those titles (white paper, precious jewels, palm leaves) seem to symbolize specific offices or statuses. Paper and palm leaves are used in offerings and bloodletting. As “wearing as a collar” (*ñoho dzuq*) contains the word *dzuq*, “neck,” we can speculate that the dignitaries in question were called *tay dzuq yuhu*, a term that can be interpreted as “men of neck and mouth” but also as a combination of the words for “mysterious” (*yuhu*) and “giant” or “person of magic powers” (*tay dzuq*). Today in Ñuu Ndeya the corresponding term *sucun yuu* designates *nabual* balls of lightning, called *yahui* in the ancient sources.

6. Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 37, 1-II; Codex Tonindeye, pages 37–39 (cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, 42-I/II).

7. Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 37, 10.

8. His birth date, year 8 Rabbit, is given by Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse, page IV-1.

9. The information on Lord 8 Wind is found in Codex Tonindeye, pages 1–7. Cf. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 6-V, Añute, page 5-III, and Yuta Tnoho, page 35. The stone ball court can also be read as a fortress, as in Dzaha Dzauí the same word (*yuhua*) is used for both.

10. Codices Tonindeye, page 1, and Añute, page 1-III.

11. Codex Añute, page 4-II.

12. Codices Yuta Tnoho, page 36-I, and Tonindeye, pages 37–39 (cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, 42-I/II).

13. The Place of the Monkey or Stone of the Monkey with Flowers appears in later segments of Ñuu Dzauí history as a village-state whose ruling family intermarries with Ñuu Tnoo and Añute (e.g., Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 13-III; Añute, 18-III). In a letter written in Dzaha Dzauí (Archivo General de la Nación [Mexico] Tierras 44:1, f 195), the complete name of San Juan Teita is given as *yuhui tayu Ticodzo Teita*, “the mat and throne of Monkey, Flower.”

14. The genealogical sequence in Codex Añute, page 5-III, suggests that Lady 10 Deer was the daughter of Lord 3 Rain, who earlier had celebrated the Bundle ritual at Añute, and of Lady 7 Death from Black Mountain–Spring (Tiltepec?).

15. Codex Tonindeye, page 5, actually gives year 9 House (which would be 969 or 1021), but the context suggests that this is an error.

16. The sacred date of this place is year 2 Reed day 2 Reed. The same day occurs with a place sign consisting of a mountain with red liquid and feet in the form of

Xipe Bundles (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 41-I). Possibly, arrow and foot are equivalent writings for *nduvua*, which means “arrow” in Dzaha Dzau and “foot” in the reverential language used in reference to nobles. In both cases we may be dealing with a phonetic (“rebus”) writing of *nduhua*, “valley.” The red liquid may be blood, red paint, or cochineal. Taking into account the geographic context, one might speculate that Nduhua Nduq or Anduq (original name of Atoco), “Valley or Place of Cochineal,” is meant, that is, Nochixtlan. On the other hand, a Mountain of Blood is directly associated with the Town of Red and White Bundle (e.g., Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 37-V, and Codex Añute, 8-II). Further research is necessary.

17. For a summary description see Spores 1967: 32–35.

18. The disconnection between page 2 and page 3 of Codex Tonindeye can be explained as a result of the information having been copied from a lienzo. The connecting element is the same place, Yucufñudahui. After describing moments of the biography of Lord 8 Wind, the painter registered events that must have occurred much earlier there.

19. Stone of the Xipe Bundle originally belonged to Ñuu Tnoo, according to Codices Yuta Tnoho, page 42-II, and Tonindeye, page 22. Later it appears annexed to Chiyo Yuhu (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 17/18-I). Lord 4 Rain, the ruler of that place, had the given name ‘Quetzal Down’ (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 1/2-II), while his namesake, the brother of Lord 2 Dog, was called ‘Pheasant Coyote’ (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 36-I).

20. Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 37, 21. Notice the black marking of his eye, which is also present on page 2 of Codex Tonindeye.

21. Codices Tonindeye, page 25, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 36-I. A Lord 2 Water is also mentioned among the descendants of the Tree (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 36-II).

22. A Lord 5 Flower appears as the Founder of Seven Hills–Stream–Temple of Quetzal Feathers in Codex Tonindeye, page 10, but at that occasion he is not painted as a Stone Man. The name of his son was Lord 2 Lizard, who married Lady 9 Monkey, daughter of Lord 8 Wind (Codex Tonindeye, 6-III). The family background of Lord 1 Wind, who headed the acclamation ceremony of Lord 5 Flower (Codex Tonindeye, 4), is given on page 11 of Codex Tonindeye.

23. There is a Lord 7 Wind, the Founder of Dark Stone Mountain among the Clouds (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 33-III, 2-I), but the given names do not coincide. Tocuii was the Dzaha Dzau name for the Nguihua (Chochos), according to the grammar of Fray Antonio de los Reyes (1976: i).

24. This place is probably located in the Valley of Atoco (Nochixtlan), as its ruler participated in the founding of Añute (Codex Añute, 4-II).

25. See Codex Tonindeye, pages 19, 24.

26. See Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 5-V ff, Yuta Tnoho reverse, page IV-2 ff, and Tonindeye, pages 23–24.



27. In Codex Ñuu Naha a given name appears similar to that of the Lady; a gloss reads it as *Tecuvua dzisi Andevui*, “Butterfly that filters the sky.” Yucu Quesi (Tataltepec) is represented as Mountain of Flames in the Codex Tlacotepec / Tlaçultepec (Smith 1973a: 237).

28. Codex Tonindeye, page 23, places the year 5 Reed (1043) next to this Lord 12 Lizard, but this seems very late for his birth, even if we consider that his mother officially married in 1013 but still needed to grow to maturity. A birth year of 6 Reed (1031) would be more plausible. It is also possible that 5 Reed was originally given in another context where it referred to his marriage or to his taking up specific ritual or political duties.

29. For the cult, see Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, pages 29–38 (cf. Codex Cihuacoatl / Borbonicus, 34). The Huahi Andevui remained important until early colonial times and is also mentioned in the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo). See Acuña 1984, II: 284.

30. Codex Tonindeye, pages 22, 25; cf. Codices Yuta Tnoho, page 48, and Tonindeye, pages 18–19.

31. Cf. Codex Añute, page 3-IV. There may have been a conflation of the Fire Drill with the Sacred Arrow or Spirit of War, however, as *nduvua ñuhu* can mean “arrow of the deity,” “sun ray,” “arrow of fire” (fire drill?), and “war.” Buildings in the shape of arrowheads (e.g., Mound J in the plaza of Monte Albán) are suggestive of a cult for the Sacred Arrow.

32. Codex Tonindeye, page 25 (cf. page 2). In Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 6-I, this toponym is painted as “Mouth of the River, Black Mountain, Curved Jaguar Mountain.” This place does not occur as an important village-state; it was likely a lesser settlement in an area under the influence of Chiyo Yuhu and Ñuu Tnoo. Byland and Pohl 1994: 133 suggest that Ayuta, the reading of the “Mouth-River” part, is Atoyaquillo, mentioned as a neighboring town in the *Relación Geográfica* of Ñuu Tnoo or Tilantongo (Acuña 1984, II: 230). The drum could also be a reference to Añuu (Soyaltepec) or to a different place; a Drum Town, for example, appears among the founding communities of Ñuu Tnoo (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 1/2-I).

33. See Codex Tonindeye, page 23 (cf. Jansen 1982: 275). The Founding Couple of the Ñuu Ñañu dynasty is mentioned in the *Relación Geográfica* of Yahua or Tamazola (Acuña 1984, II: 244).

34. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 7/8-I; cf. Codices Yuta Tnoho, page VI-1, and Tonindeye, page 25.

35. Cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 48. The copyist who painted Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse (VI-1) mistook the head of the Ñuhu (a figure possibly unfamiliar to him) for that of a jaguar.

36. This was a high priest who acted as the second in command in the empire (cf. Anders, Jansen & Reyes García 1991).

37. Cf. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 38-II, and Yuta Tnoho, page 27.

38. Codex Tonindeye (25) merges this meeting and the earlier one with the three priests, replacing the keeper of the Arrow with a Xolotl Venus priest wearing a black *xicolli* with white crosses, which among the Mexica characterize the Tlillan, the black temple of Cihuacoatl (cf. Codices Mendoza, 18, 46, 65, and Cihuacoatl / Borbonicus, 34, as well as Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 37, 43). We encountered this motif (white crosses on a black square) painted on the wall of a niche in a funerary cave, still used for ceremonies in the Mixteca Baja.

39. Lord 7 Reed may be identical with the Lord of that name who belonged to the dynasty of Yucu Ñuu Yuhua (Icpantepec Nieves). He seems to have been the uncle of Lord 7 Monkey who was ceremonially greeted by Lord 3 Flower, Lord 8 Serpent, Lady 12 Jaguar, and Lady 2 Flower (Codex Tonindeye, 11). Of these attendants, Lady 12 Jaguar was the daughter of Lord 10 Flower of Ñuu Tnoo. These relationships imply that Lord 10 Flower and Lord 7 Reed of Yucu Ñuu Yuhua were contemporaneous.

40. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 7-III. Here both Codex Yuta Tnoho reverse and Codex Tonindeye (obverse and reverse) contradict Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu. We follow the version of these other two codices, which means we have to invert the sequence of the two wives as given in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu. In Codex Tonindeye, page 42, Lady 9 Eagle is painted with the diagnostic colors of the Xipe dynasty of Zaachila, so she came from the Beni Zaa (Zapotec) area. According to Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu her parents were Lord 8 Rain ‘War Eagle’ and Lady 12 Flint ‘Quetzal Feathers,’ rulers of Island of Stone in the Water. Looking for a place that would fit the sign and the general location, we find Mini Yuu, “Lake with Stone,” that is, Teiticpac in the Valley of Oaxaca, as a possibility. Without a clear connection to other toponyms, however, this is only a guess.

41. His given name is mentioned in Codex Tonindeye, page 42. If his birth year were corrected to 11 House (1049), he would have been born directly after his two elder brothers. It is possible, however, that he was a “Benjamin.” If the birth year of 10 House is correct, it seems that Lady 9 Eagle died shortly thereafter—perhaps even in childbirth—as Lord 5 Alligator remarried that same year.

42. It appears as a separate place next to Mountain of the Tail in the list of places whose rulers acclaim Lady 11 Water’s son, Lord 8 Deer (Codex Tonindeye, 60). For its *Relación Geográfica*, see Acuña 1984, II: 269–275.

43. Codex Tonindeye, page 24, explains the ancestry of Lady 11 Water. For Lord 9 Flint, see Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 36-II, 14.

44. He may be identical to the Lord 8 Flower ‘White Coyote Skin,’ associated with Mountain of the Eye (Codex Tonindeye, 59).

45. See Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 8-III, and Tonindeye, pages 26, 42–43.

46. In Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu the year is badly damaged, but in Codices Tonindeye, page 26, and Yuta Tnoho reverse, page VII-2, it is quite clear. This detail illustrates that children are not always given in their chronological order of birth.

47. The place sign is Insect Hill and may as well refer to the nearby Tiyuqh (Sayultepec) in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan). The given name ‘Smoke Eye,’ however, relates the man to visionary priests, such as Lord 12 Wind (Codex Tonindeye, 18–19), and points to a ceremonial center like that of Monte Albán.

48. The Dzaha Dzau expression *nuu ita nuu cubu*, “among the weeds,” is a metaphor for “poverty.” In Codex Xolotl the ancient ruins of Teotihuacan and other ceremonial centers are shown as overgrown with these grasses.

49. Cf. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, pages 12, 8, and 64, respectively (see also the commentary by Anders, Jansen & Reyes García 1993).

50. Codex Añute, pages 5/6. For the reconstruction of relations between the different protagonists, see also Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 5/6, Yuta Tnoho reverse, page V, and Tonindeye, pages 24, 5, 7/8.

51. According to Codex Tonindeye, page 2, Rock of the Eagle formed part of the kingdom of Yucuñudahui when Lord 8 Wind was recognized as a ruler there. Ñuu Tiyaha, “Town of Tecomates,” may have been understood as Yuu Tiyaha, “Stone of the Eagle” (cf. Codex Añute, 13-IV). A similar wordplay occurs in the representation of the toponym Yodzo Yaha (Tecomaxtlahuaca); see Jansen 1994: 37, 212.

52. A similar toponym (Stone–Crossed Legs) is mentioned in Codex Añute, page 10-I, as a place ruled by a dynasty with which Añute contracts a marital alliance. It is located in the direct vicinity, in the Yodzo Cahi–Atoco Valley. There may be a connection with Stone with Eye, a toponym connected with Ñuu Nduchi (Erla); cf. Codex Añute, page 10-III.

53. The white flowers on its slopes indicate that Valley of the Xipe Bundle was part of Chiyo Yuhu. We conclude that it is a variant of Stone of the Xipe Bundle, one of the founding communities of Ñuu Tnoo (Codices Yuta Tnoho, 42- II, and Tonindeye, 22), but that it later became a subject settlement of Chiyo Yuhu (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 18-I). N.B. Stone or Valley of the Xipe Bundle is clearly distinct from Town of the Xipe Bundle.

54. Cf. Codices Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 47, and Tonindeye, page 51, as well as Ruiz de Alarcón 1953, II: ch. 9. In Codex Tezcatlipoca / Fejérváry-Mayer, page 17, the day 9 Reed is dedicated to a Tlazolteotl-like Goddess. In the mirror connected to the boy’s first birth scene a sign of crossed beams is placed, to be read as *ndisi*, “to lay crosswise” and “to become visible.” One is reminded of the use of magic mirrors (*nahualtezcatl*) among the Nahuas for divining purposes (Ruiz de Alarcón 1953, V: chs. 2 and 3; cf. González Obregón 1912: 180, Garibay 1979: 114–115, and Sahagún 1950–1978, book XII: ch. 1).

55. Codex Tonindeye, page 24, shows the birth of Lord 2 Rain in Chiyo Yuhu and the fire arrow destroying the house of his parents. The ceremonial salute is mentioned in the Map of Teozacualco, where we see him sitting on the mat as the successor to his parents in the Ñnuu Tnoo dynasty. A relatively extensive description of his birth and death is given in Codex Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 5-II/I (cf. Codices Añute, 6-II, and Tonindeye, 8).

56. See Codex Tonindeye, pages 4, 21. In retrospective, the day 8 Wind may have been seen as announcing the rule of Lord 8 Wind.

57. Codex Tonindeye, page 13. This place is different from the Town of Blood, which we identify as Ñnuu Niñe (Tonalá), in Tonindeye, page 3. The Town of Sacrifice is similar to the Stone of Sacrifice in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 49, which we think is a reference to Ñnuu Ndecu (Achiutla). If this connection is correct, we would be dealing here with a prince of the lineage of one of the temples or settlements (apparently dedicated to the cult of the Sun God) later integrated in the Ñnuu Ndecu village-state.

58. Codices Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-V ff, Tonindeye, page 44, and Iya Nacuaa I, page 1.

59. Compare the dark speckled material in Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 1-III, with the gravel in the place sign of Yuhua Cuchi (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 3). Dark Speckled Mountain continued to be important in the genealogical history of the Mixteca Alta (Codex Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu reverse), which is consistent with the historical importance attributed to Sosola by Burgoa. The hypothetical identification of this place as Acuchi coincides well with our suggestion that the Town of the Pointed Objects is Yucu Ndeque (Huaucillila); they are neighboring towns and shown to be closely related in Codices Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu and Iya Nacuaa I.

60. On the valley sign, between the legs of Lady 4 Rabbit, a sign is painted that looks like a leg (*saha*) or hand (*ndaha*). As hand it may represent both the act of “giving” and tribute (*ndaha*). Hand and foot together stand for “human resources” and “services” (*ndaha saha*).

61. Codex Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 10-V. The reading is not clear, but the sign is very similar to *dzoco ñuhu* signs elsewhere. In Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 1-III, the different toponymic signs are conflated into “Mountain of the Pointed Objects and Spines, Mouth of Dark Dots, with Cradle (*dzoco*) and Cave,” at the foot of which the Heaven Temple was located.

62. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 2-III; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 13.

63. Cf. Jansen 1998c.

64. Lord 1 Death appears in Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 2-II, and Lord 1 Movement in Codex Ñnuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 10-IV. As a pair they are mentioned in the creation scene in the beginning of Codex Añute, page 1. Lord 1 Movement, Venus, has the “flaming foot,” which stands for *nduwua ndecu*, “war” (Codex Ñnuu Tnoo–

Ndisi Nuu, 10-IV). During the ball game the protagonists have taken off the sandals they normally wear.

65. In Codex Tonindefe, page 15, she gives a jade bead to a young woman as a sign of pregnancy. In the case of Lord 8 Deer's conquest, the context is more militaristic in character. One is reminded of the big jade signs in the central chapter of Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (dealing with the cult around the Heaven Temple), which mark ritual focus points inside the sanctuary (30, 44), particularly the spot for fire drilling (34, 46), the "heart of the deity" (44), and the place of origin of the *Cihuateteo*, the Spirits of the Women who died in childbirth, Patrons of sexual life and war (47).

66. Codex Añute, page 6-II. Lord 3 Lizard's younger brother, Lord 6 Movement 'Precious Bones,' would marry a princess of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty, Lady 1 Flint, and become the new ruler of Chiyo Yuhu (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 6-II; cf. Codex Tonindefe, 6-II). The reading proposed by Byland and Pohl 1994: 123 is quite different: "after consultation with 8 Wind the youthful 2 Rain attacks Jaltepec in the Selden, with 8 Wind's son 3 Lizard Jeweled Hair acting as his champion."

67. Codex Tonindefe, page 8; cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 17. Within the red interior of the mountain we see the day 2 Flint, which might be the actual day on which Lord 2 Rain was interned in the temple, but it could also indicate that the place belonged to Lady 2 Flint 'Blood Feathers of Red Town' (originally 'Blood of Town of Flames, Ñuu Ndecu?'), who was either a daughter or one of the wives of Lord 8 Wind (Codex Tonindefe, 6-II).

68. Codex Añute, page 6-II. The cave of the "Corazón del Pueblo" is described by Fray Francisco de Burgoa 1934, I: 319, 332–333. Codex Vaticanus A, page 4V, explains the concept of the Heart of the People (*altepeyollotl* in Nahuatl) as a relic of the Founder of the community (see also Romero Frizzi 1994: 237). Quetzalcoatl was the "father of the Mixtecs" according to Sahagún 1950–1978, book X: ch. 29.

69. Cf. Sahagún 1950–1978, book IV: ch. 31.

## NOTES to CHAPTER 6

1. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-IV; cf. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 1-II, where the two types of shells are mentioned. The same event was situated somewhat later in time in Codex Tonindefe (44-IV), probably as a consequence of misunderstandings in copying the reading order of a now lost original (cf. Troike 1974b). There is a Mountain of Heaven in Yuta Tnoho (Cavua Caa Andevui), but there are several other places with such a name—see, for example, Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 42-I.

2. Cf. Codices Yuta Tnoho, pages 30–27, and Añute, page 8-III.

3. The document was published by Jansen 1982, appendix 2. If one took *tani* to be the local variant of Alvarado's *tnani* (or *tnahni*), one might choose from meanings as distinct as "bundle of cloth," "to incense," "to smell," "belt," "lover," "prudent," and "industrious." Referring to females, the term *ñaha nee ñaha yoco* means "virgin."

4. The S-shaped tortillas are depicted in Codex Magliabechi, page 81. The constellation is said to be "las estrellas que están en la boca de la bocina" ("the stars that are in the mouth of the Lesser Bear") (Sahagún 1950–1978, book VII: ch. 4) and in the southern sky: "la encomienda de Santiago, que es la que está por parte del Sur hácia las Indias y chinos" (Tezozomoc 1975: 574).

5. Prayer texts from Guerrero, registered by Chantal van Liere and Martijn Schuth (2001). The similarity of the onomastic sign to the Nahuatl title *Citlalcueye*, "She with the Skirt of Stars," is obvious. We interpret *ichi ñuu* ("road of the night") as synonymous with *sichi ñuu* ("furrow of the night"), Alvarado's translation for the Milky Way ("Camino de Santiago"). Today in Ñuu Ndeya the term for the Milky Way is *ichi yuyu*, "road of dew." Compare the iconography of Cihuacoatl in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29 ff).

6. Possibly, this is a parallel to his earlier visit to the territory of Tiyuqh and Big Mountain (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 8/9-V), which also resulted in its ruler, Lord 3 Reed, marrying a sister of Lord 8 Deer.

7. See Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 36-I: the visit of several priests and their families to the buried Lords of Monte Albán.

8. Lord 6 Vulture has the head of a *Ñuhu*, which qualifies him as a spirit. The given name of the *Ñuhu* is 'Bone-Digging Stick.' The digging stick (*coa*), *yata* in Dzaha Dzau, can be used as a phonetic homonym of *yata*, "ancient, past." The day 6 Vulture represents the eve of the important day 7 Movement and is part of the ritual sequence of days related to ecstasy and "diving into the ground," that is, entering a cave (cf. Jansen 1997a). Good Eshelman comments on the helping function of bones among the Nahuas (Broda & Báez-Jorge 2001: 274 ff).

9. The closed eyes also indicate ecstasy in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 36.

10. Cf. Codices Añute, page 6-IV, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 35-IV.

11. The death shield and arrow were used in taking possession of Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec) and later Ñuu Tnoo; they also were carried on the journey to Cholula (Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 6-II, 14-III, 19-III). The golden fish was placed in front of the temple of Yucu Dzaa; it appeared together with the conch in the great water Lord 8 Deer was to cross (Codex Tonindeye, 80). The *cuauhxicalli* served its purpose during the execution of the children of Lord 11 Wind (Codex Iya Nacuaa II, 10).

12. Codices Tonindeye, page 44, and Iya Nacuaa I, page 3-III. The same symbolism is found in Palenque (the tomb of Lord Pakal; the Group of the Cross).

13. The motif and color of the frieze have been completely obliterated in Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 4-III.

14. In Ñuu Yucu (San Miguel Cuevas), the idea survives of four trees situated around the village toward the four directions (Bonnie Bade, pers. comm.).

15. Codices Iya Nacuaa I, page 5, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-III. M. E. Smith 1973a identified the toponyms of Ñuu Sitoho (Juquila) and Yucu Dzaa (Tututepec). The sign of Tututepec occurs also in Codex Telleriano-Remensis, page 43. Arthur Joyce, Andrew Workinger, and Byron Hamann have situated Lord 8 Deer's rule in Yucu Dzaa within an archaeological context (cited in Robles García 2004). They suggest that the ball court associated with the place sign is the one found at San Francisco de Arriba, one of the outer wards of the Late Postclassic town of Yucu Dzaa.

16. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-III/II. In Codex Tonindeye, page 45, the Water of the Rubber Ball (or Mirror) is represented as Cradle (*dzoco*) of the Rubber Ball (or Mirror). From these alternative signs we reconstruct the name Source (*dzoco*) of the Rubber Ball (or Mirror). Codex Iya Nacuaa (6-I) shows that this battle initiated a long list of conquests (Codices Iya Nacuaa I, 7/8, and Tonindeye, 46–49), which, given the context, must have taken place in the coastal area. Logically, the coastal historiographic tradition (Codex Iya Nacuaa and possibly the corresponding part of Codex Tonindeye) gives prominence to these toponyms. The view from the Alta, as represented by Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pays no attention to them.

17. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 7-IV; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 44-IV. The place sign might also refer to a similarly named town on the coast, in which case the two brothers would have followed Lord 8 Deer and lost their lives during this first campaign.

18. This identification was first suggested by Mary Elizabeth Smith 1973a and was further elaborated by Jansen 1998b.

19. Codex Tonindeye, pages 33–35, 61; Codex Añute, page 13-I. See Jansen 1989, as well as Oudijk & Jansen 2000.

20. The identification of the latter town, proposed already by Mary Elizabeth Smith, is fairly certain.

21. See Smith 1973a: 68.

22. Codex Tonindeye, page 49-III. See Smith 1988.

23. Cf. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 47.

24. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 5-II. Cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 13, Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 4-II, and the Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco).

25. Compare the similar scene in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 7/8-I.

26. We recall the primordial importance of the Spring of the Serpent River during the foundation of the village-state of Ñuu Tnoo. See Codices Tonindeye, page 45, Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 4-IV, and Tonindeye, page 22. The scene can also be compared with the offering made to the tree in the cave (serpent mouth–water),

represented on the famous vessel of Nochixtlan (Seler 1960–1961, III: 522 ff; cf. Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: 210–211).

27. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 6-I. Compare the representations of trance roads in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia (29 ff) and in the Roll of the New Fire.

28. Codex Tonindeye, page 50. For the representation of the Goddess as Itzcueye and Yollotlicue, see also Codices Yuta Tnoho, page 28, Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 30-V, and Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, pages 47, 66. Her character as the divine power of the arrowhead is made clear in Ruiz de Alarcón 1953, II: ch. 9. Her calendar name *Quehuiyo* is mentioned in the Proceso inquisitorial contra caciques de Yanhuitlan (Jiménez Moreno & Mateos Higuera 1940: 40).

29. The term “Toltec” in itself stands for the core of Mesoamerican civilization as given form by the tradition of Teotihuacan. It is generally assumed that tribes globally termed “Chichimecs,” which invaded the area from the north after the fall of Teotihuacan, spoke the Nahuatl language. The blackened eye (*sahmi nuu*) is a diagnostic of the hunter God Mixcoatl, Patron of the Chichimecs (Lehmann 1938: 53).

30. Ixtlilxochitl 1975–1977, I: 283 refers to this connection when he describes the use of copper axes, very similar to the *tumi* used in the Chimú culture in northern Peru.

31. This event is also described in a central Mexican chronicle, the *Annals of Cuauhtitlan*, which names the new monarch of Coixtlahuaca as *Atonal*, a Lord whose name contained the sign ‘Water’; see the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec (Caso 1961: 259; cf. Van Doesburg & Van Buren 1997) and the *Annals of Cuauhtitlan* (Velázquez 1975, §§ 67, 187). For the Toltec character of the *macuahuitl*, see Byland and Pohl 1994: 141 and Hassig 1992: 112–113. Also, the victorious Toltec Lord who founded the lineage of the rulers of Yucu Ita Ino (Xochitepec) in the Mixteca Baja swayed this weapon (see the Map published by Caso 1958); although his name is not given, the context suggests that he is the same historical figure.

32. Abundant literature exists about Quetzalcoatl, both as a historical figure and as a deity. We mention here only the crucial contributions by Lehmann 1922, Jiménez Moreno 1941, Nicholson 1957, López Austin 1973, and Feldman 1974. The sources have been synthesized and analyzed by Davies 1977, 1980; Stenzel 1980; Carrasco 1982; Van Zantwijk 1986; Graulich 1988; and Florescano 1995. The Christian reinterpretation of this complex figure has been the object of a profound study by Lafaye 1977.

33. See Caso 1967: 173.

34. Mendieta 1971, book II: ch. 11. For the general background, see Phelan 1970.

35. Ruiz de Alarcón and the Chilam Balam of Chumayel have documented this form of discourse (Jansen 1985).



36. Codex Tonindeye, page 14, shows an interesting image of Lord 4 Jaguar (with Quetzalcoatl face painting) in front of Lord 2 Reed, a manifestation of Tezcatlipoca (Ome Acatl), on the Mountain of Words. The latter, we suggest, is the Tzatzitepetl near Tula, where the priest-kings used to do their bloodletting rites and give instructions to their people (Codex Vaticanus 3738 [A], 8r; Sahagún 1950–1978, book III: ch. 3).

37. Chimalpahin 1998, I: 108 tells how Nacxilt Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl attacked Teotenanco and tried to conquer and destroy it, in vain.

38. See M. E. Smith 1973a: 203. In this period the term *tay sabmi nuu* had to refer to the Toltecs, that is, the people associated with the archaeological culture of Tollan-Xicotitlan (Tula, Hidalgo) and Tollan-Cholollan (Cholula). Nancy Troike has commented on this section of Codex Iya Nacuaa in detail, both in her Ph.D. dissertation (1974b) and in several congress papers.

39. The day sign in his calendar name is damaged but could be deciphered by Nancy Troike 1974b in the original. The *Historia de los Mexicanos por sus pinturas*, ch. 2, mentions the sacrifice of a hunchback to the Rain God in a cave (Garibay 1979: 26). Regarding the presence of hunchbacks at the Toltec court, see Sahagún 1975, book VI: ch. 41, 406. The Mexica rulers continued the Toltec tradition (Motolinía 1969: 149).

40. Compare the gestures in Codex Tezcatlipoca / Fejérváry-Mayer, page 43, and on the stucco reliefs of Tomb 1 in Zaachila.

41. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 10-I. A similar scene is found in Codex Añute, page 7-IV. A pictorial text of such a war ritual is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris as Fonds Mexicain 20/21, renamed by us as Codex Yecu.

42. Information given by Maribel Alvarado during the Mixtec Gateway in 2000. The local word for “devil,” *timiaha*, corresponds to Alvarado’s *teñumi ñaha*, “owl person.” A description of the site, with drawings of the rock paintings, is given in the unpublished work of Martínez Gracida, vol. 29. Antonia Montague presented slides of the same paintings during the Mixtec Gateway of 1999. Thanks to the initiative of Manuel Barragán Rojas (Museo Regional de Huajuapán) and Antelmo Sánchez Gómez, and with the help of the Consejo Municipal de Vigilancia de Flora y Fauna of Tonalá, we were able to visit the caves in January 2003.

43. Codex Vaticanus 3738 (A), page 7r, documents the contact the Toltec ruler had with the female deity Chalchiutlicue. The context is different, but the text illustrates the influence of the deities on daily politics.

44. “Por tradición se sabe que esta cueva servía como de casa consistorial a los primeros pobladores” (“According to local tradition this cave was used as a town hall by the first inhabitants”) (Martínez Gracida 1883, n.p.).

45. Codices Iya Nacuaa I, page 12-II, Tonindeye, pages 45–46, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 10-III. A member of the Toltec delegation later present at Lord 4

Wind's enthronement carried the same instrument (Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 32-III). Alvarado gives the name *cutu yeque*, “bone flute,” to a flute used during dances (*flauta de los bailes de indios*).

46. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 10-III. Codex Tonindeye, page 45, also shows the eagle coming down on the quail but in a less explicit way, so that it also could represent the name (something like ‘Cuauhtemoc’) of the Toltec standing in front of Lord 8 Deer.

47. “Que conforme era el *tlaxtli* con cuatro géneros de piedras preciosas, y todas cuatro tan estimadas y puestas en igualdad, que así, ni más ni menos, todos cuatro [señores] de aquí adelante gobernarían sus reinos y señoríos con grandísima paz y conformidad, y que el carbunco era uno solo y de tanta virtud para el efecto de tirar y jugar con él en lugar de pelota entre los cuatro al primero que le cupiese, que así sería en su mando al que primero mandase una cosa, que los otros tres lo tendrían por muy bien hecho y lo mismo ellos, viviendo siempre en conformidad y paz ellos y sus descendientes” (Ixtilxochitl 1975–1977, I: 279).

48. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-III, and Tonindeye, page 45 (cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, 35). Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu also mentions a red rodent that approached him with something in its paw. This enigmatic “gift of the red rodent” seems to have played an important part in the tradition. Codex Tonindeye (45) presents this story as part of Lord 8 Deer's enthronement in Yucu Dzaa, which is illogical. Comparing this with the much more consistent version in Codex Iya Nacuaa, it is possible to reconstruct the original order (see Troike 1974b). The day of the event in Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu was added later and is not clear (8 or 9 Jaguar?).

49. Codices Iya Nacuaa I, page 13-III, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 10-II. For discussion of the appearances of Monte Albán in the codices, see Jansen 1998b. Mountain of the Moon has been interpreted as Acatlan de Osorio in the Mixteca Baja by Ojeda 2002: 66. In Dzaha Dzauí that place is called Yucu Yusi or Yucu Tisaha, however, and its sign has been identified convincingly by Smith 1973a as Mountain of the Jewel.

50. Codices Tonindeye, page 51, and Iya Nacuaa I, page 14-III.

51. Codices Iya Nacuaa, page 14, and Tonindeye, page 52-I. A similar sequence of place signs is found in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 39-I. Stone Valley is followed by four volcanos, a reference to the Cave of Origin (Chicomoztoc), and a series of place signs, which we interpret as references to Cholula: Quetzal-Breast Mountain (Yucu Ndodzo) as a translation of the name of the main sanctuary of Cholula Chichiualetepec (“Man Made Mountain,” interpreted as “Breast Mountain”), Valley of Cattail Reeds (Ñuu Cohyo, Tollan), and Place where the Toltec Rulers were seated (compare also the Toltec Quetzal Mountain mentioned in the Roll of the New Fire as the place where the central ceremony of drilling fire was carried out). Another piece of geographical evidence is given later, when Lord 4 Wind went to the same place to

undergo the same nose piercing ceremony (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 34-II). To get there, he had to cross the River of the Hummingbird, which is clearly the Yuta Ndeyoho or Huitzilapan, the river that gave its name to Puebla (see also the Lienzo of Cuauhquechollan).

52. The *Título de Totonacapan* (f 8v) tells how the founders of the Quiché ruling lineages went to Cholula to receive a Sacred Bundle (Pizom Cacal) from the Toltec king Nacxitl.

53. Several other authors have considered this possibility but did not reach a definitive identification. Smith 1973a proposed Tulixtlahuaca as near Jicayán or—as a less likely candidate—Tulancingo near Coixtlahuaca. Byland and Pohl 1994 prefer the latter. After a detailed study, we find compelling evidence for saying that this Town of the Cattail Reeds is Cholula (Jansen 1996, 1997b; Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000). The same idea is advocated by Ojeda 2002 without referring to earlier publications.

54. According to Durán 1967, I: 9, 14: “los discípulos que trajo el Papa [Topiltzin], a los cuales llamaban toltecas e hijos del sol . . . tuvieron su principal asiento en Cholula” (“The disciples of the Priest [Topiltzin] were called Toltecs and children of the sun; their main town was Cholula”). Mendieta is among the chroniclers who document the special relationship of Cholula to the Toltec ruler (Mendieta 1971, book II: ch. 11).

55. Cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 12-V.

56. The Mexica historian Tezozomoc 1975: 439 registers a similar Toltec origin and ideological base for Mexica rulership. References to Nacxitl are also found in other sources, such as the Annals of the Cakchiquels and the *Título de Totonacapan* (Recinos, Chonay & Goetz 1967: 64, 176).

57. The conquest of Town and Mountain of the Eagle took place on the consecutive days 7 Rabbit and 8 Water, only six and seven days after the nose piercing ceremony in Cholula; the conquest of Cliff with Waterfall took place on 4 Flint. Together they form a logical sequence. Codex Tonindecy, page 53, adds the conquests of Mountain of the Black Drops and Mountain of the Spines with the days 7 Flower and 9 Alligator, which are out of place with the others. Either there is an error in these dates and they should be 6 Flower and 7 Alligator, or these conquests should not have been included here. Indeed, Codex Iya Nacuaa (II, 13-II) mentions them in another context.

58. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 17-I. The following scene with the praying to the trees occupies band II in Codex Iya Nacuaa I, pages 17–15 (notice that page 16 was placed in between them later and is out of sequence). The gesture of Lord 8 Deer on this occasion is the same as that of the Gods of the Night that flank the world direction trees in Codex Tezcatlipoca / Fejérváry-Mayer, page 1.

59. We take the two types of leaves as a *difrasismo* to encompass the different trees. In view of the terms for leaves given by Alvarado, they can be read as *yutnu*

*ndaha* and *yutnu vuisi*, respectively. Three kinds of leaves are used in the cleansing ceremonies in Codex Yuta Tnoho.

60. Codex Tonindeye, page 4; cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 33.

61. The scene in Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 15-II, has been badly damaged, leaving little more than the diagnostic war band (*yecu*). Codex Tonindeye, page 53-IV, mentions the days 1 Alligator and 9 Wind as marking the period of rituals in Ñuu Tnoo.

62. See the arrangement in the Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco). Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 15-III, also lists seven nobles. A full account of all assistants is given in Codex Tonindeye, pages 54–68, which shows that these seven were only a first group, associated with the Temple of Death.

63. Nancy Troike 1974b has carefully examined the badly damaged original and compared the fragmentary data to Codex Tonindeye, pages 54–55. Both sequences start with Lord 12 Vulture ‘Jewel.’ The second person in Codex Iya Nacuaa is Lord 7 Movement ‘Speaking Rain God,’ who is probably identical to Lord 7 Grass with the same given name in Codex Tonindeye. The numbers 3 and 4 are too damaged to be identified; we can only speculate that they were Lord 9 Vulture ‘Vapor-Rain’ and Lord 10 Alligator ‘Flowered Stone Man.’ Then follow Lord 6 (Serpent) ‘Death (with Jaguar Claw),’ Lord 9 Monkey ‘Precious Fish (?),’ Lord 4 Movement ‘Fatal Dark Brazier,’ and Lord 1 (Death) ‘Bundle of Leaves.’

64. The second group is associated with a round ball of soft fur with eyes in it, a necklace and gold ornament in the center, and quetzal feathers encircling it (Codex Tonindeye, 56-III). The same sign occurs in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 47, as a rather general characterization of the Ñuu Dzauí world as soft, delicate, and sacred (cf. the modern expression *vii ndaa vii nene*, “in harmony and peace”). The presence of precious stones, gold, and feathers suggests that we are dealing here with persons of fame and wealth, that is, the nobility, the privileged.

65. The community of Ñuu Tnoo is likely meant; cf. the use of this sign in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 48.

66. This place is also close to Spider Web Valley (Andua) in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 42-II. Perhaps Amaa, “Deep Place,” is meant, that is, Almoloyas, later a subject town of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan).

67. Cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 42-III.

68. The identification of the object is problematic. It might represent a knot. In that case Tlapiltepec, Hill of the Knot, could be meant. Shortly afterward this place became a subject of Lord 8 Deer’s realm (Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 18-I).

69. This may be a reference to the cave passage represented in the Roll of the New Fire (Selden Roll), which has been identified as the Puente Colosal on the Ndaxagua River, the entrance to the Coixtlahuaca Valley (Rincón 1999: ch. 4).

70. This place, too, became a subject of Lord 8 Deer’s realm (Codex Tonindeye, 69-IV).

71. Cf. Van Doesburg & Van Buren 1997. Both Lords of Feather Place have *bezotes* (lip plugs), a common trait for certain towns in the Valley of Puebla, and the first one wears the characteristic headband of the Tlaxcalteca (Nicholson 1967).

72. This place, too, became a subject of Lord 8 Deer's realm (Codex Tonindeye, 69-III).

73. Cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, pages 44-IV, 43-I.

74. The rulers of this place were related to the first dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo (cf. Codex Tonindeye, 12).

75. The place sign has not been completed. Given the area, we suspect a reference to Gravel Ball Court, Yuhua Cuchi (Guaxolotitlan), in the Mixteca Baja was meant (cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, 3). In this composition the Tonindeye painter included the Plain of Feathers and the Place of the Jaguar but left them without color. In the next two pages these places appear again, but there with the correct information.

76. This is the same toponym as a place conquered earlier by Lord 8 Deer (Codex Tonindeye, 44-I). In that case we suspected it referred to the border area between Ñuu Tnoo and Chiyo Yuhu in the Valley of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan). Here the context suggests a locality in the Mixteca Baja. Compare Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 39-III.

77. See also Codex Tonindeye, page 3-III. The central element also shows some similarity to one of the two place signs that refer to Yucu Yusi (Acatlan); cf. Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 4. Plain is *yodzo* and green is *cuii*. Given the context, we suggest that this may be a partial rendering of Yodzo Cuiya, which, however, means "Plain of the Year" and is depicted as such in Codex Cochi (Becker II), page 3.

78. The sign resembles that of the Nahuatl toponym Tecamachalco (Codex Mendoza, 42). The context suggests a place in the Mixteca Baja, however. Notice that some of the associated nobles have "stone" (*yuu*) in their given names.

79. Compare the sign of Tecamachalco in the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec (Jansen 1992). Place-names with trees in them are widespread, however, and therefore difficult to identify.

80. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, pages 17/18-III.

81. Codex Tonindeye, page 68-III. See also Codex Tonindeye, pages 53-IV, 19, 22, as well as Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 48.

82. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 19-III; cf. page 4-I.

83. The central church on this page of Codex Yodzo Cahi is glossed in alphabetic script as that of Yucu Ndaa (Tepozcolula). Friar Antonio de los Reyes suggests that this capital was controlled by Ñuu Tnoo, at least sometime during the Postclassic. So if we follow the gloss, we might be dealing either with the frontier between Ñuu Tnoo and Yucu Ndaa or with the frontier between Yucu Ndaa—as part of the realm of Ñuu Tnoo—and some outside village-state. In that line of thought, one might even speculate that the Valley of the Column could represent Huamelulpan (Yucu Nuu Ndavua, "Mountain of the Beam or Post," also interpreted as Yucu Nindavua,

“Mountain that flew away”). In Codex Yodzo Cahí (Yanhuitlan), plate xiii, however, the central toponymic sign (White Blanket), where the church is standing, clearly represents Yodzo Cahí itself, so the most logical conclusion is that the cited places represent the boundary between Yodzo Cahí and Ñuu Tnoo.

84. Codex Tonindeye, page 70, gives the day 9 Alligator, but that is out of the chronological sequence; a correction to 10 or 11 Alligator seems justified—both possibilities would fit the damaged date associated with Mountain of the Eagle in Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 19-I. We opt for the latter possibility, as 11 Alligator is known for its ritual significance: it is the calendar name of one of the primordial lords who forms a pair with Lord 4 Alligator, a name day twenty days later (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 51). Apparently, both days mark the beginning and the end of a twenty-day period with special significance (within it fall the days 13 House and 9 Grass). In two important scenes where these lords are mentioned, a White Mountain also occurs (Codex Tonindeye, 19, 21). Because of the context, one is tempted to identify it with a “white place” in the Valley of Oaxaca, such as Ñuu Cuisi (Tlalistic), but it is represented rather differently at that occasion, so we cannot be sure.

85. Codices Iya Nacuaa I, page 19-I, and Tonindeye, page 70.

86. See Sahagún 1950–1978, book VI: ch. 4, 21, 33.

87. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 19-I. An abbreviated image of a similar preparation for war is seen in Codex Añute, page 11-IV.

88. Codex Tonindeye, page 71; cf. page 54. The mountains are marked with red openings, which suggests that holes were made in the ground to deposit the bowls.

89. Byland and Pohl 1994 suggest that the places depicted in this chapter of the codices are stations on a spiritual journey from Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) to neighboring Ñuu Ndecu (Achiutla). This is contradicted by the fact that the places are marked as “conquered” (perforated by darts) and that there are no volcanoes or lagoons with alligators in the Mixteca Alta.

90. The naming of towns is described by Durán 1967, I: 12. See Schultze Jena 1957: 138 ff for the famous elegy on Quetzalcoatl’s disappearance (cf. Lehmann 1922) and Sahagún 1950–1978, book III: ch. 3 ff. for the identification of this trip with the voyage of the Creator (cf. Stenzel 1980: 46).

91. For a detailed study of the geography and history of this area, see Scholes & Roys 1968, Thompson 1970, and Gerhard 1991. The “Place of the Water House” (Acalan?) is represented in Codices Iya Nacuaa I, page 21-III, and Tonindeye, page 74-I.

92. Lehmann 1938: 90. Cf. Codex Vaticanus 3738 (A), page 9v; Durán 1967, I: 12; Acuña 1984–1985, I: 131.

93. Codices Tonindeye, page 75, and Iya Nacuaa I, pages 22/23. See also Jansen 1996. The identification was already suggested by Lehmann 1938: 372 and Caso 1977–1979, II: 175.

94. Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 24, followed by Codex Iya Nacuaa II, pages 1–2; Codex Tonindeye, page 76.

95. Codex Tonindeye, page 76-II, confirmed by Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-I.

96. Codices Tonindeye, page 76-III/IV, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 12-I/II.

97. In Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 14, a Mountain of Stone forms part of the landscape belonging to the *Huahi Cabi*. Possibly this is Yucu Yuu, the impressive and sacred mountain behind San Mateo Peñasco. The place-name in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, however, clearly contains seven stones. This sign Seven Stones also appears in the Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco), at the confluence of the Río Hondo with the river that comes from Cahua Cuaha (Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992b: 46). There it represents the toponym “River of Stone 7,” the boundary between the kingdom of Chiyo Cahnu and Yuu Usha (Yuxia) as a community pertaining to Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo).

98. Codices Tonindeye, page 77, and Iya Nacuaa II, page 2-III. Among those mentioned in Codex Tonindeye we recognize Lord 7 Flower, presented as a precious twin, and Lord 4 Movement, important ancient Lords of the Yuta Tnoho alliance, killed in the war against the Stone Men. In Codex Iya Nacuaa a Lord 4 Grass appears, possibly one of the shamanic priests who guided Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey to the *Huahi Cabi*.

99. For the identification of Old Coyote, see Codices Telleriano-Remensis, page 10v, and Vaticanus 3738 (A), page 16v. Cf. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, pages 10, 64.

100. Codices Tonindeye, page 78, and Iya Nacuaa II, page 3-III. Cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 8-II, 5-I.

101. The representation in Codex Tonindeye, page 78, is similar to that of the East Temple in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 49. Notice the roof decoration with the *yacaxiuhtl* in Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 3.

102. The entire sequence of events is synthesized in one scene in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 9-I, in which Lord 8 Deer goes on the warpath, arrives in Heaven, the abode of Lord 1 Death, and enters his sanctuary.

103. Tedlock 1985: 203–204; cf. Recinos, Chonay & Goetz 1967: 64, 176.

104. Seler 1960–1961, I: 683; cf. Schele & Freidel 1990: ch. 9. Lord Sun also plays a prominent role in the frescoes (Kutscher 1971, Miller 1977). An alternative reading would be that the meeting of Quetzalcoatl and the Sun God was a recurrent theme and that its commemoration in Chichén Itzá actually referred to an earlier arrival of a “Toltec,” that is, late Teotihuacan, leader. Erik Boot explores this possibility in his dissertation on the Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions of Chichén Itzá (2005). If we considered that the dates given in the mantic historiography of the

so-called Books of Chilam Balam for the arrival of Kukulcan actually refer to an earlier, similar event as the symbolic prototype for later occurrences, it would resolve the contradiction between the Maya and Ñuu Dzauí chronologies on this point. The Maya prophecies would then be based on the incursion of a Teotihuacan leader during the final epoch of that capital, while the Ñuu Dzauí codices deal with the Early Postclassic king of Cholula.

105. Cf. Landa 1996: ch. 7, 14; Tozzer 1941: 27.

106. See Jansen 1997b; Ringle, Gallerta & Bey 1999; Carrasco, Jones & Sessions 2000 (especially the contribution by López Austin and López Luján).

## NOTES to CHAPTER 7

1. Codex Tonindeye, page 79, gives day 11 Grass, which falls out of the chronological sequence. In Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 4, the number is 10 (+ ?), but the day sign is obliterated. If the number was 10, we should reconstruct 10 Grass, which is forty days after the last mentioned day (9 Grass) and eighteen days before the next (2 Dog). We prefer to maintain the number 11 and to reconstruct 11 Death, supposing that in the copying process the sign Death was confused with the similar sign Grass (which is probable, as the last day mentioned had been 9 Grass). This reconstruction ties the vision closer to the immediately following acts: 2 Dog is only four days after 11 Death. It also would establish a dramatic relationship with the killing of Lord 12 Movement the following year.

2. Codex Tonindeye, page 80; cf. pages 71-I, 72-II.

3. Mendieta 1971, book II: ch. 11: Quetzalcoatl came from Yucatan to Cholula and stayed there for twenty years.

4. Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 5; cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 10-I. No mention is made of Lady 4 Rabbit and Lord 10 Flower of Dark Speckled Mountain, who used to control that area. Actually, we are not sure if this is the same site. In the list of primordial places in Codex Yuta Tnoho there are two Mountains of the Pointed Objects. The first (42-II) is named and is presumably situated between Town of the Quetzal (Huitzo) and Valley of the Spiderweb (Andua), which speaks for its identification as Yucu Ndeque (Huaucilla). The second (40-III) is mentioned in a section of the list where we have no clues as to the area it refers to: it is inserted somewhere between the Ñuu Tnoo–Añute area (42) and the Valley of Cholula (39). This latter place is mentioned in conjunction with a Mountain of the Eagle. As we saw before, there was also a Town and Mountain of the Eagle close to Dark Speckled Mountain and Mountain of Spines (Codex Tonindeye, 53), which are in the same area as Mountain of the Pointed Objects (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 10-V). So we are dealing with a cluster of names that repeats itself. We are not sure which exact



place is referred to in the codices. It is possible that Lord 8 Deer was confused too, at a loss as to how to identify the place shown in his vision.

5. See the depiction in Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 5. For the solar disk as emblem of the Ñuu Dzaui version of *Panquetzalitzli*, see the four feasts in Codex Yodzo Cahi / Yanhuitlan; Sepúlveda & Herrera 1994: plates X–XI.

6. Codices Tonindeye, page 81, and Iya Nacuaa II, page 5.

7. Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 6-I. This mortuary practice is also documented on reliefs from Zautla in the regional museum of Oaxaca (Seler 1960–1961, II: 369; Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992b: 236).

8. The day 7 Flower is barely visible above the temple (Codex Iya Nacuaa II, 7, upper left-hand corner) and was deciphered in the original by Nancy Troike 1974b.

9. See Codex Tonindeye, page 19 (Jansen 1998b).

10. Cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 4. Codex Tonindeye, page 62, mentions celebrations on the day 2 Flint and the day 6 Jaguar in year 11 House (1101).

11. This symbolism went back to Teotihuacan; cf. Sahagún 1950–1978, book X: ch. 29 § 12.

12. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 35-V, 34-III, and Añute, page 8-IV.

13. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 11-I. His name sign is that of a jaguar or puma head with small lines around his body. Caso translated this sign as “tigre resplandeciente,” but we think the small lines can be read as “markings” (*tnuni*) in the sense of “orders.” The given name then would be “Puma that gives orders.”

14. Codices Tonindeye, page 83, Iya Nacuaa II, page 8-III, Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 34-V; and Iya Nacuaa II, page 11. According to Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 34-IV, Lord 11 Wind had already died in what seems to be the year 9 Reed (1099), but this is improbable in view of the fact that his son Lord 4 Wind chose the day for killing Lord 8 Deer in commemoration of his father, which strongly suggests that Lord 11 Wind was killed by Lord 8 Deer.

15. Codices Tonindeye, page 83, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 33-V; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 19.

16. Codices Iya Nacuaa II, page 11-II, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 10-I; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 55. The enthronement scene (Codex Iya Nacuaa II, 12) includes several standing vessels and a bowl with a quetzal, which in mantic codices indicate prosperity (e.g., they are among the symbols that accompany the fifty-two columns of day signs in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, 1–8). For the pulque ceremony, compare Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 25.

17. Codices Tonindeye (83–84) and Iya Nacuaa (II, 10) differ as to the sequence and the way in which both princes were killed. For the round blue stone, see also Codex Iya Nacuaa I, page 4-I.

18. Codices Tonindeye, page 84, and Iya Nacuaa II, page 12.

19. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 11-I. In Codex Tonindeye, page 26, the day 12 Serpent is given for the marriage, which is less significant and therefore seems less likely.

20. In Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 23, the day 2 Deer is specifically associated with the First Sunrise.

21. We feel tempted to see one of the wards (Stone) of Coixtlahuaca in this place (cf. Van Doesburg & Van Buren 1997), but that realm is not qualified by a Fire Serpent (*yahui*).

22. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 12-I; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 76.

23. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 12-IV; cf. page 5-IV.

24. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 12/13-IV/V. A similar Place of Bird with Arrow–Pointed Beak occurs in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 19-III, but there we know it represents the mat and throne of Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan), the refoundation of Andua and Suchixtlan after their destruction during a Mexica attack at the end of the fifteenth century. The earlier occurrence of Place of Bird with Arrow–Pointed Beak here may refer to another place. The context suggests it is situated in the Mixteca Baja, in the sphere of influence of Ñuu Niñe and Cholula. A place that fits this criterion is Ñuu Dzaa, “Town of Birds,” called Totomihuacan, “Place of Possessors of Bird Arrows,” in Nahuatl. In Codex Mendoza, page 39, its hieroglyph effectively contains both the arrow and the bird.

25. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 12-II; cf. Codex Tonindeye, page 67-I. The other birth year is given by Codices Tonindeye, page 27, and Yuta Tnoho reverse, page VIII-3.

26. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 11/12-III, and Tonindeye, pages 26–27.

27. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 12/13-V. Lord 8 Deer’s children and their daughters seem to have had the status of Toltec nobility but are not portrayed as rulers of Tollan–Cholollan. The princes who marry those two daughters are not characterized as Toltecs.

28. Codices Iya Nacuaa II, page 13-II, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 12-V.

29. Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 14-III. His given name suggests that Lord 10 Jaguar was a priest; cf. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 30.

30. Ixtlilxochitl 1975–1977, I: 269–270.

31. On Lord 8 Deer’s arrow, aiming at the precious bird (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 14-V), we see the checkerboard sign, meaning *naa*, “dark” (Jansen 1982). We feel tempted to take this as a leftover from a more extensive version in which the entire hunting expedition was qualified as a dark intrigue by the second wife. The expression for treacherous murder, *yosani naa ini nahandi*, “kill somebody with dark heart,” comes to mind. The story told by the Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu obverse, however, is positively oriented toward Lady 6 Eagle, her son being the one through

whom the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty continues. In line with these considerations, we probably should interpret the *naa* sign as referring to the actual hunting. The scene in its present form, then, would only be telling us that Lord 8 Deer was shooting the birds for his wife from a hidden spot.

32. Codices Iya Nacuaa I, page 16, and Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 14-IV.

33. Compare the combination stone, stick, and ax in Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, pages 50, 52; cf. Anders, Jansen & Loo 1994: 39–42. The expression “grab a stone and a stick” (*cay yuu cay yutnu*) was used as an explicit call to murder someone in an early colonial document in Dzaha Dzau (Archivo del Juzgado de Tepozcolula 15: 7; Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: 56–62). Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 14-V, also mentions the presence of Lord 10 Jaguar but names the killer as Lord 9 Wind, who is not mentioned anywhere else. We suggest that this name is actually a composite of the names 4 Wind and 5 Flint. In the list of Lord 4 Wind’s companions who assisted at his enthronement (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 31–32), Lord 10 Jaguar appears with the knife in his hand, that is, as a hired assassin. Several other men in the group are qualified in the same way: an anonymous carrier of a knife, a man with blood on his hands, and Lord 8 Vulture who holds a bloody knife.

34. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 14-IV.

35. Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 14-II.

36. Codex Tonindeye, pages 27–28; cf. Codex Ñuu Ñaña / Egerton, page 6, where Lady 6 Wind ‘Quetzal Feather of Royal Blood’ is associated with Huahi Andevui, the name for the ceremonial center of Ñuu Tnoo.

37. The successive events are stated by Codices Iya Nacuaa II, page 14-I, Iya Nacuaa I, page 16-I, and Iya Nacuaa II, pages 15/16-I; cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, pages 34/33-III.

38. The designation “Lord of the Banners” also occurs among the titles of the Quiché ruler Tecum Umam (Freidel, Schele & Parker 1993: 328). Lord 4 Reed ‘Rain’ is mentioned as one of the primordial Lords and a Founder of the kingdom of Black Rock (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 35, 2). The lizard appears as a symbol of a quick and skillful opponent that one cannot catch in Codex Tezcatlipoca / Fejérváry-Mayer (Anders, Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1994: 245). In Dzaha Dzau a lizard is called *tiyechi*, which points toward a wordplay, as *yosiniyechindi* means “to make a mock[ery] of someone” (Alvarado: *burlar de alguno, riéndose de él*). The hiding scenes suggest the expression *yotetendi ita yucu yutnu*, “to hide or cover [oneself behind] plants, bushes, and trees” (Alvarado: *escondarse entre matas o árboles para espiar*).

39. In Smith 1998: 93 ff.

40. According to Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 16-II, it was in the area of the Ñuhu 4 Reed that Lord 4 Jaguar started to invoke the help of the Sun God as the introduction to a number of ritual and political meetings with Lord 4 Wind.

41. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 34-I, and Iya Nacuaa II, page 15-II.

42. The knife is combined with a fish and a serpent, possibly a specific title denoting the right to kill in sacrifice. Perhaps *yaca*, “fish,” is used as a phonetic writing for the word *yaca* in *tay nisacodzo yoo yaca*, “valiente señalado.” See also the combination fish–jaguar warrior in the given name of Lord 3 Wind in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 8-III.

43. This may be a reference to the arrow of flowery warfare, the arrow of ceremonial execution, or a form of Sacred Arrow. Given its location between *piciete* and the white flower, it is also possible that we have to read this sign as Arrow Flower, which would be a powerful plant. Avarado lists *ita nduvua nduhu castilla* as “manzanilla.”

44. A similar series of objects is given to a new ruler in Codex Añute, page 3-III/IV. That list clearly refers to priestly and warrior powers. It documents that the lizard head is part of a bag filled with down balls. The war brazier is shown in function in Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 7-I; the *temalacatl* on page 10. Compare the objects the Quiché Lords received from Nacxitl in the Popol Vuh (Tedlock 1985: 203–204).

45. Compare the caves in the liminal zone between Ñuu Dzau and the Toltec realm, which had to be passed to establish the contact between Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar (Codex Iya Nacuaa I, 9-II, 12-II).

46. A man carrying a drum also appears in Codex Ixtlilxochitl, page 106. The drawing is explained by Mendieta 1971, book II, ch. 26, as a device used in war.

47. Compare the depiction of the *acxoyatemaliztli* ritual in the work of Sahagún (León-Portilla 1958: 58).

48. We suspect that the four serpent men belong together and represent Lords 4 Alligator and 11 Alligator, 4 Serpent and 7 Serpent. Cf. Yuta Tnoho, page 51, and the text of Gregorio García, which attributes the *nabual* names ‘Jaguar Serpent’ and ‘Puma Serpent’ to the primordial couple Lord 1 Deer and Lady 1 Deer.

49. These two, together with a Stone Man, were also among the Ancient Dead Lord 8 Deer encountered when he entered the House of the Sun (Codex Tonindeye, 76; see also 6). The word for monkey (*codzo*) makes a wordplay with a term for rich man: *tay quicodzo maa*. To Ina is also mentioned among the primordial beings in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 49.

50. This War Lord may be identical to Lord 13 Jaguar (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, 10-I). The double-headed eagle seems to have been a title inherited from the ancient Monte Albán realm (cf. Codex Tonindeye, 19); later it became associated with another foreign power structure, that of the Spanish colonial administration, the double-headed eagle being the heraldic emblem of the royal house of Habsburg.

51. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 31-III; cf. Codex Añute, page 1-I. In the following scenes in Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu there is a “chronological break,” which may be the consequence of a connection between data copied from different codices. To follow the chronological order we have to proceed to Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 32-V.

52. The identification of Flint Town as Ñuu Yuchi is based on the comparison of the signs Flint Town–Flint Mountain (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 42-III) with a Flint Mountain on a stone relief found in Mogote del Cacique (Jansen 1982: 276; cf. Jansen & Winter 1980). It was corroborated by archaeological research in the area by Byland & Pohl 1994.

53. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 31-IV, and Iya Nacuaa II, page 15-III.

54. This is the last scene in the preserved fragments of Codex Iya Nacuaa II, page 16-III; cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 5-II.

55. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 31-V. Lord 7 Flower is mentioned as the Founder of the dynasty of Mountain of the Turkey in Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, pages 38/37-I. He is the father of the primordial priest Lord 10 Rain. A person with the same calendar name is important in Codex Yuta Tnoho (18).

56. Here this town is mentioned for the first time in the reverse of Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu; its dynastic history is presented later. For the identification of Ndisi Nu, see the analysis by Smith 1973a: 58–60 and the additional explanation of the place sign by Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1983.

57. The days 2 Flower and 3 Alligator refer to the primordial Ladies who initiated the pulque ritual (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 25). Lord 6 Death and Lord 10 Rain may have been chosen for their calendar names; both names recall important priests who assisted at the marriage scene of Lady 3 Flint and Lord 12 Wind (Codex Tonindeye, 19).

58. Codices Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 29-V ff, and Añute, page 9-II; cf. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 12-III.

59. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 29-IV; cf. page 11-III and Codex Tonindeye, page 27.

60. “After staying twenty years in Cholula, Quetzalcoatl returned to where he had come from [Yucatan]” (Mendieta 1971, book II, ch. 11).

61. Lehmann 1938: 91; cf. Codex Yoalli Ehecatl / Borgia, page 36.

62. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, pages 13-V, 14-II.

63. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 30-IV. Given the identical names, it is also possible that it was the same lady who married a second time, leaving her earlier husband, Lord 12 Dog. A Lord 12 Dog is named as the son of Lord 8 Deer and his third wife, Lady 10 Vulture (Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, 12-IV), but he had another given name and must have been quite young at the time.

64. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 11-IV.

65. Smith 1973a: fig. 85 ff; cf. page 110 ff. These toponyms also occur in the successive scenes of Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu. The Lienzo of Zacatepec associates the Temple of the Fallen Bird with Ndisi Nu, but Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nu, page 29-V, places it in the ceremonial center of Ñuu Yuchi and situates a Temple of Blood and Cacao in Ndisi Nu. Both temples form part of the basic canon of four

sanctuaries that seems to have been reproduced in many Ñuu Dzau communities (Codex Yuta Tnoho, 21 ff).

66. Smith 1973a: 110 ff noted that the *Relación Geográfica* of Zacatepec (Acuña 1984, I) explicitly mentions the same individual. The Lienzo indicates that Lord 11 Jaguar was related to Lord 4 Wind through a Lady 10 ? (the calendar sign was read as Vulture by Caso but could also be Dog), who may have been his mother. Her given name ‘Cloud of Tree with Face’ can be reconstructed as *Yoco Yutnu Nuu*, “Spirit of the Ceiba.” The precise nature of the relationship between her and Lord 4 Wind (a connecting line) is not clear. Caso 1977–1979 II: 367 suggested that she was one of Lord 4 Wind’s secondary wives.

67. Both are mentioned in Codex Yuta Tnoho, page 4, and appear in the opening scene of the Roll of Huamelulpan (Smith & Parmenter 1991). Yucu Iti and Nuu Yoo are close neighbors in the lower, warmer slopes immediately under the steep cliffs of Ñuu Dzau Nuhu, the Mixteca Alta. Nuu Yoo seems to have been a subject town of Ñuu Ndaya (Chalcatongo), which is still referred to locally as *shini ñuu*, “the capital.” The name of Yucu Iti suggests that it was related to Ocotepc, its neighbor in the Highlands.

68. The well-known ceremony in which men, dressed as birds (*voladores*) and tied to a rotating rack on top of a pole, come “flying” down in circles also appears as part of enthronement rituals in the Codex Yada or Tututepetongo (Van Doesburg 1996).

69. River of 11 Wind, *yuta siichi* (which would be pronounced *yucha jichi* in the present-day local dialectal variant), may be a toponym derived from the name of Lord 4 Wind’s father, but it is also a phonetic writing of *sichi*, “ditch,” “to bathe,” or “to be thirsty.”

70. The reproduction of a temple cult has its parallel in the Heaven Temple of Yucu Dzaa, which seems to have been brought there from Ñuu Tnoo by Lord 8 Deer.

71. Caso 1961: 266; cf. Van Doesburg & Van Buren 1997.

72. Codex Ñuu Tnoo–Ndisi Nuu, page 31/2-IV. The scene is mentioned before the start of the genealogical information, but chronologically it should be interpolated here. A Lord 4 Serpent is mentioned as one of the nobles who assisted, together with Lord 11 Jaguar, Founder of the Yucu Satuta dynasty, at Lord 4 Wind’s enthronement in Ñuu Yuchi (Lienzo of Zacatepec), but that was probably a different person.

73. For a description see Spores 1967: 44 and Byland & Pohl 1994: 90–93.

74. The relief was analyzed by Jansen & Winter 1980 and was instrumental in the identification of Flint Town as Ñuu Yuchi, Mogote del Cacique (Jansen 1982: 276). The relief is still in the Museo Regional del INAH in the former Santo Domingo convent in Oaxaca. The beginning of the Roll of the New Fire shows a similar scene (Jansen 1997a: 87–89).

75. In Codex Telleriano-Remensis (8) this sign is read as *ilhuitl*, “feast (day),” which explains why in Codex Mendoza it can mean both “day” (57) and “twenty-day period” (19).

## NOTES

76. In Dzaha Dzauí the verb “to see,” *yondito*, has the connotation “to care for, to look after.” There are several alternative translations. Expressions for “to consider and to think” (*aconsejarse consigo mismo*, *mirar y considerar bien algún negocio*), according to Alvarado, are *yonana chibi tñuni inindi* (“thoughts come up in me”) or *yonadzana nana inindi* (“I let something come up in me”). The verbal stem *nana* may mean “to come up” and “face.”

77. In Dzaha Dzauí *saba* can mean “foot” and is also the stem of the verb “to go.” Alvarado registers “bowing the knee” (*sanu site*) as an expression for “reverence.”

78. The depiction of a person “entering into earth” can be read as the combination of *saba* (“to go”) and *ini* (“heart,” “inside”), which is an expression for ecstasy.

79. The foot stone is a constant element in the foundation rituals of Codex Yuta Tnoho, where it is depicted as a “walking, arriving block of stone.”

80. In the variant of Ñuu Ndeya one would read Nuú kiu *qbcuii* (Kuun Tijii), nuú kuia *Símaa* (Ushi Uni Tñuu, Ushi Uni Vehe), nijaniya ninditoya, nitahuya tiun. Nijahanya, nijani jitiya, ninduuya yaha, ninduuya sukunyuú, nindiyua ini yau, nikeeya kuahanya chii ñuhu Tñduú Ñuu Yuchi, nijaniya ndekuun shiko kiu. Te suan nijainya yuu jaha yaha, nisamaya chiyo vehe ñuhu.

## NOTES to CHAPTER 8

1. See Rappaport 1999: ch. 7. Compare Weber’s observations on the role of the prophet (1993: ch. 4, 5).

2. For the concept of “rebounding violence,” see the work of Maurice Bloch 1997. We do not think this phenomenon occurs in all rituals, but it is clearly the case in some.

3. The story told in Sinicahua was written down in Spanish by Martijn Wijnhoven, a student at Leiden University, during fieldwork for his M.A. thesis.

4. The cross as a Mesoamerican symbol of life force, related to tree symbolism, maize, and similar elements, is documented, for example, in the reliefs of the “group of the cross” temples in Palenque (cf. Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000: ch. 6). See also the analysis of the feast of the Holy Cross by Broda (Broda & Báez-Jorge 2001: 165 ff), as well as the studies of the symbolism of the cross by Sánchez Vázquez and Santacruz Vargas (in Barba de Piña Chan 2002). The cult of the *Cruz Verde* is well-known among the Beni Zaa (cf. Cruz & Winter 2002: 305; Barabas 2003, I: 84).

## NOTE to CHAPTER 9

1. See Anders et al. 1996: 43–47; Anders 2001.

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