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Myth of the Suns and the Toltec-Chichimec Origins of the Mexica People: The Entire Leyenda de los Soles

Willard Gingerich

Montclair State University, gingerichw@montclair.edu

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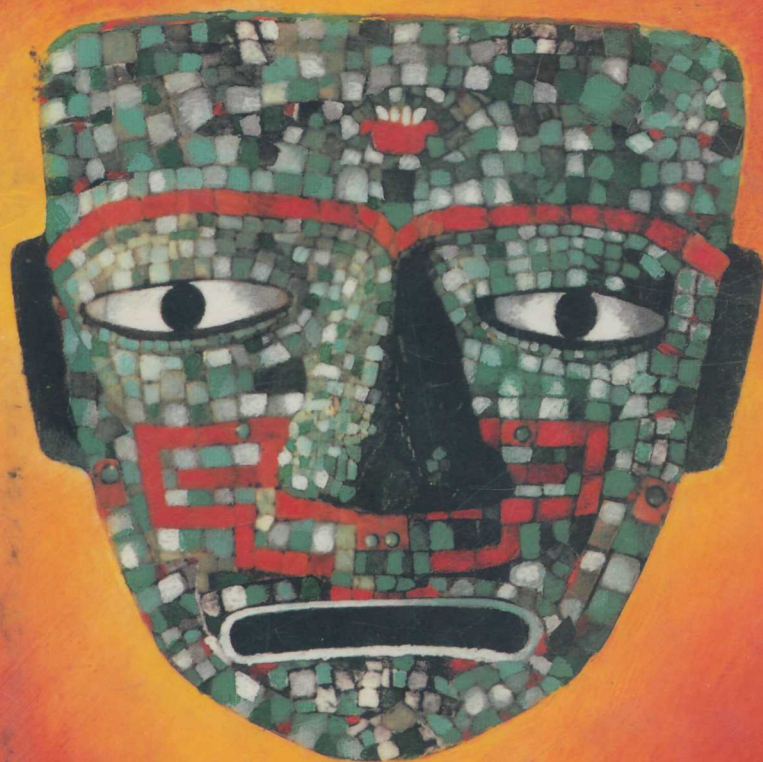
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THE FLAYED GOD

THE MYTHOLOGY OF MESOAMERICA
SACRED TEXTS & IMAGES FROM PRE-COLUMBIAN MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA



ROBERTA H. MARKMAN & PETER T. MARKMAN

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Myth of the Suns and the Toltec-Chichimec Origins of the Mexica People: The Entire *Leyenda de los Soles*

The *Leyenda de los Soles* contains what is probably the most ancient and most complete version of the Aztec creation myth. It was written in Nahuatl by a Spanish-educated Indian free of priestly direction who completed it in 1558, some time after the Conquest. León-Portilla, for one, believes that "the form of writing, which consistently juxtaposes such expressions as 'here is' to dates, indicates that it was used as a commentary on a native [pictographic] manuscript."⁴⁸ Willard Gingerich, the present translator, notes that the text "appears on internal linguistic evidence to be the redaction of a specific performance event, by an unknown Mexica Aztec speaker and recorded by an unknown amanuensis, from a lost pictographic codex (or codexes) on the date given in the first paragraph. Especially the first section gives repeated evidence of a speaker pointing to specific visual images." Supporting this conclusion is the fact that the number and order of the creations correspond very closely, although not exactly, to those on the Aztec calendar stone and to the account in the *Historia de los Mexicanos por sus Pinturas*.

The *Leyenda* version follows the pattern manifested in other Mesoamerican creation stories: each sun is given a name or an identification, usually related to the mode of its destruction; a number of years is given to indicate the duration of each sun; the particular food of the era is named; the means of destruction of the inhabitants is told, and the transformation of the inhabitants is described; and a date is given for the entire period of each sun. The fact that no two sources agree exactly on these matters suggests that it is this structure that is important within the tradition rather than the particular details. For the peoples of Mesoamerica the earth was not static; it was always in motion, but the constancy of that movement required a balance. The disturbance of the equilibrium of the forces within each era brought about cataclysmic destruction and the end of the period of that sun.

After narrating the creation and destruction of the first four suns, the *Leyenda* tells of several of the major events of the Fifth Sun: the discovery of fire and the raising of the heavens; the creation of mankind through Quetzalcoatl's shrewdness and creativity in overcoming the forces of death; the discovery of corn in a sacred mountain, thus assuring the subsistence of mankind in the present world of the Fifth Sun; the creation of the sun and the moon through the sacrifices of the gods. The *Leyenda* concludes with four sections loosely related to Quetzalcoatl, his parents, and the origin of the Mexica state.

This inclusiveness is typical of the mythic documents that remain, and it is for this reason that we present the whole of the *Leyenda* in this section despite the fact that the last six sections belong thematically with Part VI, "Feathered Serpents and Hero Twins: The Mythic Structure of Rulership," with the tenth section related also to fertility.



MYTH OF THE SUNS AND THE TOLTEC-CHICHIMEC ORIGINS OF THE MEXICA PEOPLE, OR TLAMACHILLIZTLATOLZAZANILLI ("THE WISDOM DISCOURSE OF FABLES")

This is an original translation from the Nahuatl, prepared for this volume by Willard Gingerich, of this manuscript, bound in the so-called *Codex Chimalpopoca* and traditionally titled *Legenda de los Soles, Legend of the Suns, or Manuscript of 1558*.

Here is the wisdom-discourse of fables, how in ancient times it happened that the earth was established, and each individual thing found its place. This is the manner in which it is known how the sun gave rise to so many things, two thousand five hundred and thirteen years before today, the 22nd of May, 1558.

This sun, Nahui Ocelotl, 4 Jaguar, endured 676 years. Those who lived here first were eaten by jaguars on [the day] 4 Jaguar, of this sun. And they ate chicome malinalli, 7 Grass, which was their sun-sustenance, and so they existed 676 years until they were savagely devoured in 13 years, and so they completely perished and were abolished. And then the sun disappeared. And their year was the year Ce Acatl, 1 Reed. And they were first eaten under this same day-sign 4 Jaguar, so by just this means they were abolished and totally destroyed.

This sun is named Nahui Ecatl, 4 Wind. Those who lived in this second place were swept away by the wind; during the sun 4 Wind it was. And this way they were destroyed: they became monkeys. Their houses and even their trees were all swept away by the wind. This sun itself was carried away by the wind. Their sun-sustenance was matlactlomome cohuatl, 12 Serpent. And so they lived 364 years; thus they were utterly destroyed: in one day they were swept off by wind. Under the single day-sign 4 Wind they were destroyed, and their year was 1 Flint.

This is the sun Nahui Quiyahuitl, 4 Rain. And these are the ones who lived during the sun Nahui Quiyahuitl, which was the third. And thus they were destroyed, in a rain of fire; they were all transformed to birds. And the sun itself also burned; all their houses burned. And so they lived 312 years, and so they were totally destroyed by a rain of fire in only one day. They ate chicome tecpatl, 7 Flint; it was their sun-sustenance. And their year is 1 Flint, and in only one day-sign, 4 Rain, thus they were destroyed: they became the Pipiles, whose

speech sounds like turkey-talk. This is why today children are called "little gobblers."

This sun is called Nahui Atl, 4 Water. And the water gathered for 52 years. These are the ones who lived in the fourth age, the sun of 4 Water. And so they lived 676 years and so they were destroyed, were inundated: they were transformed into fish. In only one day the heavens came down to inundate them, and they were destroyed. And they ate nahui xochitl, 4 Flower, it was their sun-sustenance. And their year was 1 House and on the single day-sign 4 Water they were destroyed; all the mountains were destroyed. And thus the water gathered for 52 years.

And so their years are finished.

II

Then Titlacahuan, "Our Master," [Tezcatlipoca] called forth the one known as "Our Father" and his consort known as "Nene." He said to them, "You will want nothing more. Hollow out a large ahuehuatl log: you will enter it during the vigil of Toçoztli when the heavens will come crashing down." And so they entered it, and then he sealed them in. He said, "You will have a single ear of corn to eat and likewise your woman will have one." When they had finally consumed all the kernels, they heard the water outside declining. Their log no longer moved. Then they opened the log, they saw a fish, they struck a fire from the wood and cooked the fish for themselves. Then the gods Citlallinicue and Citlallatonac gazed down on them and said, "Who has made fire? Who is now smoking up the heavens?" And so then Our Master Tezcatlipoca descended; he scolded them and said to them, "What are you doing, Grandpa? What is this fire?" Then he struck off their heads and reattached them over their buttocks; they became dogs. And here at the sign 2 Reed [you can see] the way in which the heavens were smoked up.

Here are we ourselves, this was already us. Here the firestarting-sticks fell and here the heavens were inundated in the year 1 Rabbit. Here it is [shown] how the firestarting-sticks fell when fire appeared, and here how darkness covered everything for twenty-five years. And here the heavens came to a stop in the year 1 Rabbit. And while the heavens were arrested, then the "dogs" smoked them up, as already mentioned, off there in the distance.

And so finally the firestarting-sticks fell and Tezcatlipoca lit a fire, so that once again the heavens filled with smoke in the year 2 Reed.

III

And then the gods called an assembly; they said, "Who will be seated there, now that the heavens have come to a halt and the Earth Lord has come to a halt? Gods, who will be seated?" Then the gods

*Citlallinicue, Citlallatonac;
Apanteuctli, Tepanquizqui;
Tlallamanqui, Huictlollinqui;
Quetzalcoatl, Titlacahuan;*

were distressed.

And then Quetzalcoatl went off to Mictlan, the Region of the Dead, where he came before the Lord and the Lady of Mictlan. Then he said, indeed he did, "I come to take away the jade bones which you so honorably guard." And so then the Lord of Mictlan said to him, "What is it you will do, O Quetzalcoatl?" And again he said, indeed he did, "The gods are anxious to know who will be settled on the earth."

And so once again the Lord of Mictlan spoke, "Very well; Blow on my conch trumpet and carry it four times around my jade throne." But the conch trumpet had no holes for finger-stops. Then Quetzalcoatl called the worms who filled it with holes, and then bees and hornets quickly rushed inside and filled it with sound so that the Lord of Mictlan heard it.

And then once again the Lord of Mictlan said, "Very well, take them." And then the Lord of Mictlan said to his messengers, the Mictecans, "Tell him, O gods, that he must leave them." And Quetzalcoatl then came forward and said, "I will take them, once and for all." And then he said to his spirit-double, his nahual, "Go tell them that I will leave them." And the nahual came saying loudly, "I will leave them."

Then Quetzalcoatl went up quickly and took the jade bones, those of the man on one side and of the woman on the other. In this way he took them: he wrapped them in a bundle which he carried up with him.

And once again the Lord of Mictlan said to his messengers, "O gods, Quetzalcoatl is in fact carrying off the jade bones! Gods, go dig a pit." Then they went to dig it, so that Quetzalcoatl fell down into it. He was startled by a covey of quail and fell down as though dead, scattering the jade bones across the ground and the quail nibbled and pecked at them.

Soon Quetzalcoatl revived; he began to weep and said to his nahual, "How can this be?" His nahual answered, "As it must. Things have gone wrong but let us go on."

Then Quetzalcoatl gathered up the bones and made a bundle and carried them at once to Tamoanchan. And as soon as he brought them the goddess named Quilaztli, who is also Cihuacoatl, ground them in her jade bowl. And then Quetzalcoatl bled his penis over it.

Then all the aforementioned gods performed penance, Apante-cutli, Huictlollinqui, Tepanquizqui, Tlallamanac, Tzontemoc, and the sixth, Quetzalcoatl. And then they said, "The gods have given birth to men, the common people," for certainly they performed penance in our behalf.

IV

So once more they spoke: "What shall they eat, O gods? Already they are searching for nourishment, a sun-sustenance." Then the ant went to take kernels of corn from within the Mountain of Food-Stuffs. Quetzalcoatl encountered the ant and said to it, "Tell me where you went to get it." Persistently he questioned the ant but it did not wish to tell him. Finally it said, "Over there," and led him to the place.

Then Quetzalcoatl transformed himself to a black ant, accompanied the first ant, and they went into the mountain together. That is, Quetzalcoatl followed the red ant to the storage bin, gathered up the corn and carried it quickly to Tamoanchan. There the gods chewed and ate of it and then fed it to us, to nourish and strengthen us.

And then they said, "What shall we do with this Mountain of Food-Stuffs?" Then Quetzalcoatl went and tried to pull it with ropes, but could not lift it. So then Oxomoco performed divination with the kernels and also Cipactonal, his wife, performed divination (Cipactonal is the woman). They said the kernels revealed that only Nanahuatl would be capable of breaking open the Mountain of Food-Stuffs. Then the attendant gods of Tlaloc, the Tlaloque, lords of rain,

appeared: the Blue Tlaloque, the White Tlaloque, the Yellow Tlaloque, the Red Tlaloque, and Nanahuatl broke open the corn.

And the food-stuffs were all stolen away by the lords of rain; the white, black, yellow and red corn, beans, chia, amaranth, fish-amaranth—everything was stolen.

V

The name of this sun is 4 Motion. This is now our sun, the one under which we live today. This is its figure, the one here, because this sun fell into the fire at the sacred hearth in Teotihuacan. It is the same sun as that of Topiltzin, "Our Beloved Prince" of Tollan, Quetzalcoatl. Before becoming this sun, its name was Nanahuatl, who was of Tamoanchan. Eagle, Jaguar, Hawk, Wolf, 6 Wind, 6 Flower—all are names of this sun.

This thing is called the "sacred hearth," and it burned for four years. Tonacateuctli and Xiuhteuctli called to Nanahuatl and told him, "Now you shall become guardian of heaven and earth." He was much saddened and said, "What are the gods going about saying? I am only a sickly person." They also summoned there Nahuitecpatl, "4 Flint," who is the moon. Him the Lord of Tlalocan, Tlaloc, called upon, and also upon Napateuctli. Then Nanahuatl fasted in penance. He took up his maguey thorns and his pine branches upon which to offer them. The moon provided his own thorns. Nanahuatl was the first to offer sacrifice, then the moon sacrificed also. The moon used quetzal feathers for branches and jade for thorns, and incense.

When four days had passed, they coated Nanahuatl in chalk and down feathers and he went to throw himself into the fire. Nahuitecpatl made a kind of female song for him. Then Nanahuatl fell into the fire and afterward the moon fell also but only into the ashes. When Nanahuatl fell, the eagle lifted him and carried him off. The jaguar could not carry him, but only leapt into the fire and was spotted. Then the hawk smoked himself and the wolf was scorched. None of these three was able to carry him.

And so when Nanahuatl came to the sky, the high gods Tonacateuctli and Tonacacihuatl bathed him and sat him on a mat of flamingo plumes and wrapped his head with red bands.

And then he spent four days in the heavens; he stood still at the sign 4 Motion. For four days he did not move. The gods asked, "Why doesn't he move?" Then they sent Itztlotli to speak and inquire of the

sun. He said to him, "The gods say, 'Ask him why he will not move.'" The sun answered, "Because I require the blood of their legitimacy and their reign."

Then the gods consulted with each other and Tlahuizcalpanteuctli, Lord of the House of Dawn, became angered and said, "Why don't I put an arrow into him? He'll wish he had never been detained!" Then he shot at the sun but missed him. For this the sun shot Tlahuizcalpanteuctli; he shot him with the flaming plumes of the cuetzalin-papagayo and suddenly covered over his face with the nine heavens together. This was Tlahuizcalpanteuctli, the ice-god.

Then the gods Titlacahuan and Huitzilopochtli and the goddesses Xochiquetzal, Yapaliicue, and Nochpaliicue gathered in council, and from then on the gods in Teotihuacan began to die.

And when the sun rose into the sky, then the moon, which had fallen in the ashes, went also. He had no sooner arrived at the edge of the sky than Papaztac came to smash his face with a rabbit-jar. Then the female demons and other demons came out to meet him at the intersections of roads and said, "May you be welcome." Nevertheless they stopped him there and clothed him in rags and came to make offerings. And when the sun came to halt at 4 Motion it was also at sunset.

VI

[At this point in the manuscript the scribe inserts a crude pictographic sketch outlining the mythic precincts of Tula (Tollan) with Topiltzin Ce Acatl Quetzalcoatl, "Our Beloved Prince 1 Reed Quetzalcoatl," standing at its center. Marking the four corners are his "four-part" temples: "Serpent House," "Gold House," "Jade House," and "Turquoise House." (In the *Anales de Cuauhtitlan* these are called "his turquoise-plank house, his coral-inlay house, his whiteshell-inlay house, and his quetzal-feather house.") Under the sign for town, which appears to bear the name "Xicococ," the names of Ce Acatl's parents, Mixcoatl and Chimalman, are joined by what looks like a long umbilical, being cut in the center by a detached arm and hand. Directly below the arm stands Topiltzin. Mixcoatl's age at the time of his son Topiltzin's birth, thirty-nine, is written in the upper-right corner of the pictograph, above the date 1 Flint.]

And so Mixcoatl had lived 39 years. His wife was named Chimalman. And Topiltzin lived 56 years [the drawing indicates fifty-two, the figure given in other accounts]. In the same year 1 Reed in

which he moves, here he also leaves his city, Tollan. And here he died on 4 Rabbit in Tlapallan.

In the year 1 Flint the Mixcoa, "Cloud Serpents," were born, they were created. Iztacchalchiuhtlicue, "White Jade Skirt," bore the Four Hundred Cloud Serpents. They entered a cave and when they had entered the cave, again their mother gave birth; then "the Five" were born, also Cloud Serpents: this one is named Quauhtliicohuah, "Eagle's Twin," this second is named Mixcoatl, "Cloud Serpent," this third, a woman, is named Cuitlachcihuatl, "Wolf Woman," this fourth is named Tlotepe, "Hawk Mountain," and this fifth is named Apanteuctli, "Lord of the River."

And when they were born they entered the water, they threw themselves into the water; then they emerged again and were nursed by Mecitli, she who is Lord [sic] of the Earth, Mecitli. And so it is that today we are "Mexica," not actually "Mexico" but "Mecitin."

And then the sun sent forth the Four Hundred Cloud Serpents. Giving them arrows, darts and shields, he said, "Here is that with which you will satisfy my thirst, with which you will serve my table." [He gave them] arrows, precious-feather arrows, fletched with quetzal plumes, heron plumes, troupial plumes, roseate spoonbill plumes, flamingo plumes, cotinga plumes. "And, furthermore," [he said,] "she is your mother, Lord of Earth."

But they did not perform their calling, they only shot at birds, they only enjoyed themselves; so it is that place is called "Bird Arrow." And occasionally they caught a jaguar; they did not offer it to the sun. When they did capture a jaguar, they decorated themselves with plumes and down, they slept with women, drank tzihuac liquor and wandered about completely drunk, wandered about completely intoxicated.

So the sun then called "the Five" who had been born later. He gave them tzihuac arrows and lords' shields and said, "Listen carefully now, my sons; you must destroy the Four Hundred Cloud Serpents who offer nothing to Our Father, Our Mother." So they gathered together in a large mesquite, from which the others saw them and said, "Who are these, so like ourselves?" And the time came to make war: Quauhtliicohuah hid inside a tree; Mixcoatl hid within the earth; Tlotepetl hid within a hill; Apanteuctli hid in the water; and his older sister, Cuetlachcihuatl, hid in the ball court. And so when the Four Hundred came near, none of the Five were left in

the mesquite tree. Then the tree cracked open and fell on them and out came Quauhtliicohuah, the earth shook and out came Mixcoatl from within the earth, the hill erupted and fell down and out came Tlotepetl, the water boiled and out came Apanteuctli. So then they eliminated and destroyed the Four Hundred, and then served the sun at his table and gave him to drink. Others who had escaped came to supplicate and plead with them, saying, "We have been a great trouble to you. Please, won't your Honors go in to Chicomoztoc, 'Seven Caves'; certainly it is your beloved cave. Won't your Graces please go in, since it is your beloved home? Could it be that you have just now damaged your caves, your home? We will only sit outside the cave."

VII

Then there came down two deer, each with two heads, and also these two cloud serpents named Xiuhnel and Mimich, who hunt in the Sacred Lands.

Xiuhnel and Mimich pursued the two deer, trying to shoot them. A night and a day they pursued them and by sunset they were tired. They consulted each other and said, "You build a hut there and I'll build one here." The malicious ones had not yet arrived.

Then they came, they who were deer but had become women. They came calling, "Xiuhnel, Mimich, where are you? Come, come to drink; come to eat." And when they heard them they said to one another, "Hey, why don't you answer?"

Then Xiuhnel called to them and said, "You come here, sister." She came and said to him, "Drink, Xiuhnel." Xiuhnel drank the blood and then immediately lay down with her. Suddenly she threw him down and came face down upon him, then devoured him, tore open his breast.

Then Mimich said, "She has actually eaten my elder brother!" The other woman was still standing and calling, "Lover, come and eat." But Mimich did not call her. Instead he took the firesticks and lit a fire, and when it was lit, ran and threw himself into it.

The woman, pursuing him, also entered the fire. She followed him there the entire night, until noon of the following day. And then he descended into a thorny barrel cactus, fell into it, and the woman fell down after him. And when he saw the star-demon had fallen, he shot her repeatedly. Only then could he turn back.

Then he returned, parting and tying his hair, painting his face and weeping for his elder brother who had been eaten. Then the fire gods heard it and they went to bring the woman, Itzpapalotl, "Obsidian Butterfly."

Mimich went in the lead. And when they took her, they burned her and she burst into bloom. First she blossomed into the blue flint; the second time she blossomed into the white flint, and they took the white and wrapped it in a bundle. The third time she blossomed into the yellow flint, but no one took it, they only watched. The fourth time she blossomed into the red flint which no one took. And the fifth time she blossomed into the black flint which no one took.

Mixcoatl, Cloud Serpent, took the white flint for a god and wrapped it and carried it in a bundle, and then went off to make war in a place called Comallan. He went carrying his goddess of flint, Itzpapalotl. And when the Comalteca learned of it, they came out to meet Mixcoatl and placed food before him, and with this put his heart at rest.

And then he went to Tecanma where also his heart was rested. They said to him, "What does the Lord wish? May he be satisfied here. Bring him his beloved tzihuac, that I might here chop it up and serve him." And then he went to Cocoyama where at once he came pulling down the high places [village temples]. And he conquered there in Cocoyama then went to Huehuetocan and conquered in Huehuetocan, then went to Pochtlan and came there to conquer also.

And then when Mixcoatl went to conquer in Huitznahuac, the woman Chimalman came out to confront him. He spread out his shield and filled it with arrows and atlatl darts. She stood naked, without skirt or shift. When he saw her Mixcoatl shot his arrows: the first went over her and she only turned aside slightly; the second arrow passed by her side and she deflected it; the third she simply caught in her hand; and the fourth she passed between her legs. And being thus that Mixcoatl had shot four times, he transformed himself and immediately went away.

The woman fled away at once to hide in a cave among the canyons. And again Mixcoatl came to prepare and supply himself with arrows. And again he went to look for her but saw no one. So then he attacked the women of Huitznahuac, and the women of Huitznahuac said, "Let us go in search of her." They went to take her; they said, "Mixcoatl is searching for you. On your account he is mistreating your younger sisters." Then when they had gone to take her, they came to Huitznahuac. Then again Mixcoatl went and again met her,

finding her exposed as before. Again he lay down the shield and the arrows and again he shot at her. Again the arrow went over her head, and one went by her side and one she caught in her hand and one passed between her legs.

And then when this had occurred, he took the woman of Huitznahuac, the one who is Chimalman, and lay with her and so she became pregnant.

VIII

And when he [Topiltzin, also called 1 Reed] was born, for four days he caused his mother to suffer. Then 1 Reed was born and as soon as he was born his mother died. And 1 Reed was then raised by [the divine women] Quillaztli and Cihuacoatl. And being already grown, he accompanied his father on campaigns. In this way he became exercised in arms, in a place called Xihuacan there he took captives.

The Four Hundred Cloud Serpents are uncles of 1 Reed; they despised and killed his father, and after killing him went to bury him in Xaltitlan. 1 Reed then went in search of his father; he said, "What is this about my father?" Cozcaquauhtli, "King Vulture," then said, "Well, they killed your father; he lies over there where they went to bury him." So he went and took him and seated him in his temple, Mixcoatepetl, "Mixcoatl Mountain." And the uncles who had killed his father were Apanecatl, Zolton, and Cuilton.

Then he said, "How will I dedicate the temple?" "If with only a rabbit, with only a snake, we will be angered; better would be a jaguar, an eagle, a wolf," [the uncles] said. 1 Reed spoke when they said this, "Very well, so it will be." Then he called the jaguar, the eagle, the wolf; he said to them, "Won't you come in, uncles? They say with you I must dedicate my temple. Certainly, you will not die. Instead you will eat men and with them indeed will I dedicate my temple." The ropes which tied the man eaters by their necks were rotten. And so then 1 Reed called the moles and said to them, "O uncles; won't you come here? We will tunnel into our temple." And the moles then promptly scraped down and tunneled and 1 Reed entered into it and emerged at the summit of his temple.

And the uncles [who had killed his father] said to him, "We will light fire with the fire-starting stick there on the summit." The jaguar, the eagle and the wolf were most delighted to see them and thought

them worthy of being wept for. And as they came reviving, returning to their senses, 1 Reed himself lit the fire with the fire-starting stick. Then the uncles became enraged, and they came up, ApanecatI rushing to the front. And then 1 Reed rose up and threw into his face a polished clay vessel so that he came falling down.

And then he quickly seized Zolton and Cuilton and whistled to the man-eaters, who proceeded to kill them. He brought them together and cut their flesh a little. And when they had tormented them then they cut open their chests.

And then 1 Reed conquered once more in a place called Ayotlan. And when he had conquered there, he went on to Chalco and Xicco where he conquered also. And having conquered there he went to Cuixcoc where he also conquered. And then he went to Zacanco where he also conquered; then he went to Tzonmolco where he also conquered; then he went to Maçatzonco where he also came to conquer; then he went to Tzapotlan where he also came to conquer; then he went to Acallan where he crossed a river and also there conquered well.

So he came to Tlapallan. And then in that place he became sick and was ill for five days until he died. And when he had died in honor there, they immolated him, he was burned.

And so then in Tollan no one remained. Huemac was installed as Speaker, and the second was this one named NequametI, the third this one named Tlalchicatzin and the fourth this one named Huitzilpopoca. These four succeeded Topiltzin.

IX

The Speaker of Nonohualco is named Huetzin. . . . [text partially damaged] . . . They were startled and horrified; they saw the tlacanaxquimilli, the night-being without head or arms, the "long man." This then is the one who ate people. And then the Toltecs said, "O Toltecs, Who is this man-eater?" Then they guarded him, they seized him; and having seized this huge young man, toothless, lipless and filthy-faced, they killed him. And having killed him, they opened him up to look inside, and found no heart, no guts, no blood. Then he stank, and whoever smelled him died and even he who did not smell him but only passed by. And in this way many died. Then they dragged him but he would not move, and the rope broke. And those

PLATE 1



THREE EARLY FIGURINES FROM THE
VILLAGE CULTURES OF THE BASIN
OF MEXICO:

PLATE 1

A two-headed figurine from
Tlatilco

PLATE 2

A female figurine from
Chupicuaro

PLATE 3

A mother and child from
Tlatilco



PLATE 2



PLATE 3

PLATE 4

"The Lord of Las Limas," an
Olmec stone sculpture from
Las Limas, Veracruz



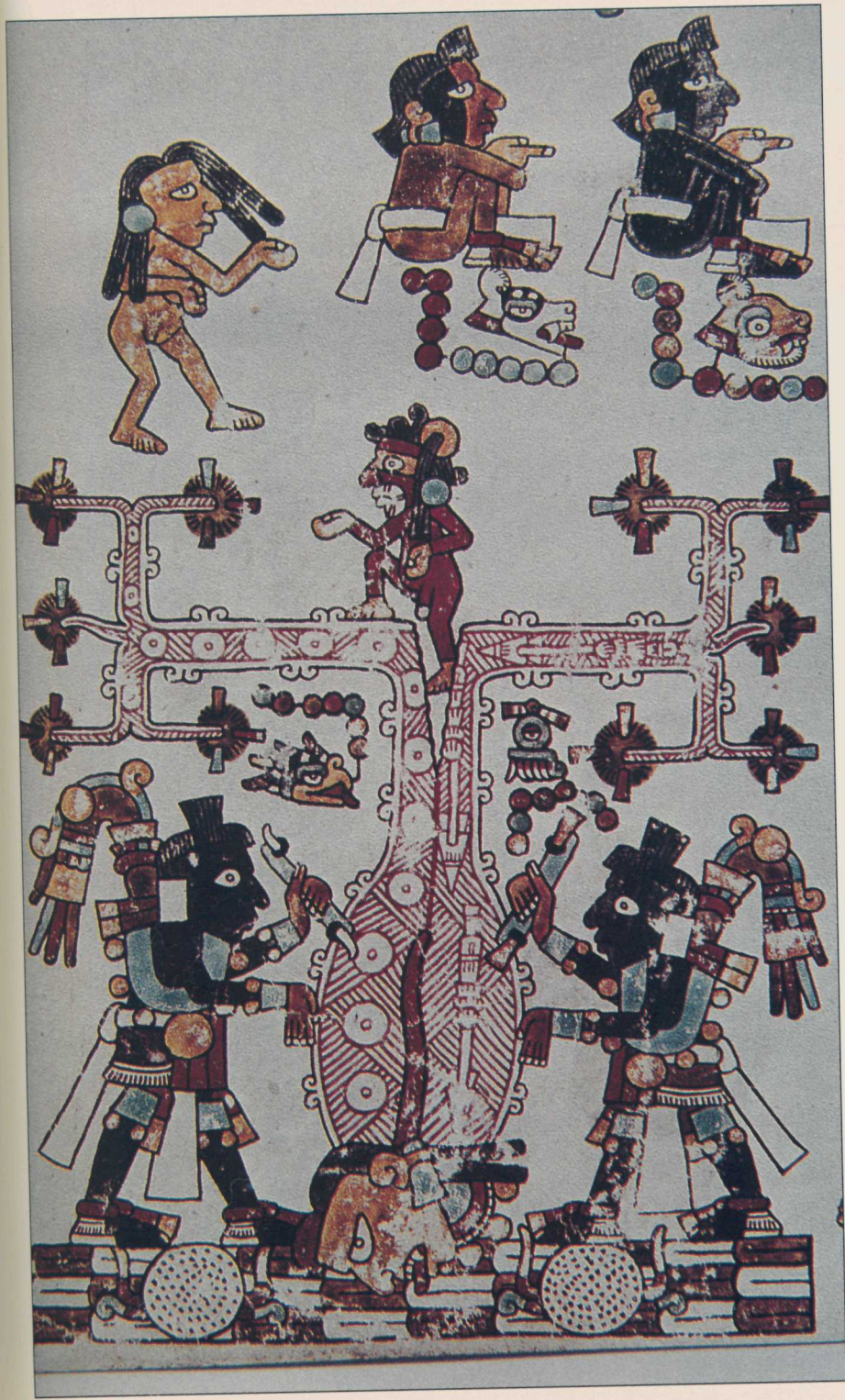


PLATE 5

The Mixtec tree of
origin from the
Codex
Vindobonensis

PLATE 6

The Aztec Xiuhtecutli and
the four directions from the
Codex Fejérváry-Mayer

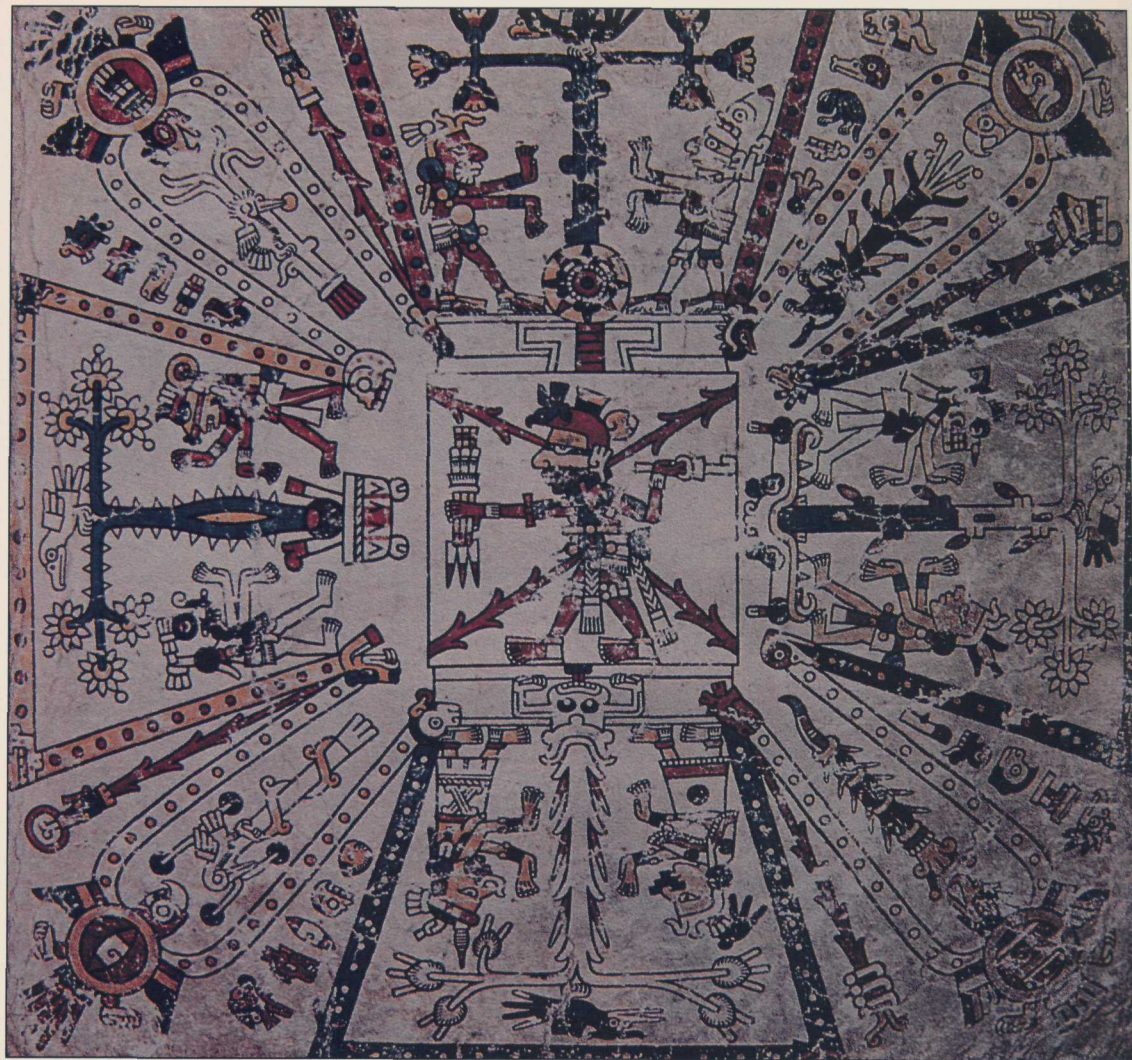


PLATE 7

The Aztec Tlaloc and the
four directions from the
Codex Borgia

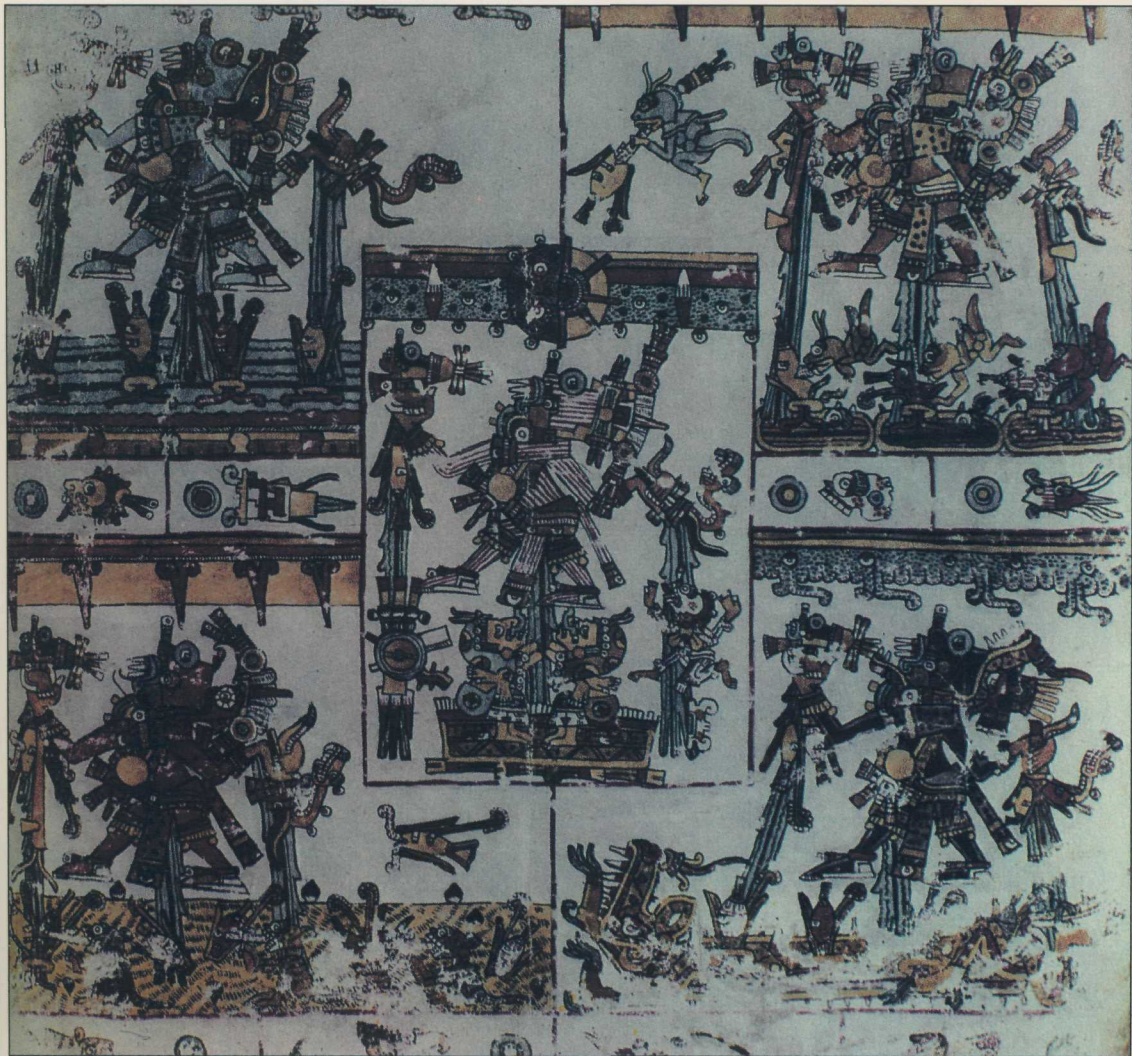


PLATE 8



PLATE 9



LIFE IN DEATH, DEATH IN LIFE:

PLATE 8

A Mixtec ceramic figure of a face half-fleshed, half-skeletal from Soyaltepec, Oaxaca

PLATE 9

A Zapotec ceramic Xipe Totec from Monte Alban, Tomb 58



PLATE 10

LIFE IN DEATH, DEATH IN LIFE:

PLATE 10

The god of death, a Teotihuacan stone sculpture

PLATE 11

A decorated skull with a flint sacrificial knife as a nose from an offering at the Aztec Templo Mayor of Tenochtitlan

PLATE 12

A ceramic Xipe Totec from Veracruz

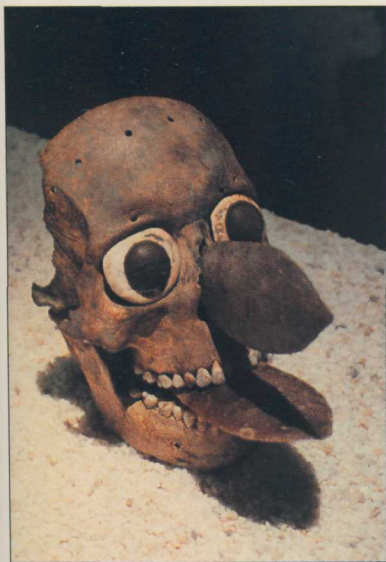


PLATE 11



PLATE 12

FERTILITY AND THE GODDESS:

PLATE 13

The Aztec Mayahuel from
the *Codex Laud*

PLATE 14

An Aztec ceramic corn god-
dess brazier from Tlatelolco



who fell died where they fell. And when he did move, everyone died wherever he went, he devoured everyone. And when he did move along, everyone adorned him, the lineage-bearers, the elders, the princes' sons, the matrons. They tied him with eight ropes and dragged him along to Itzocan. And then he stood up. Those who dragged him did not let go of the ropes but were carried along dangling from them. And all who took hold of the ropes were lifted up and dragged along.

X

And so then Huemac played ball; he played ball with the lords of rain, the tlaloque. And the lords of rain said to him, "What shall we wager?" Huemac said, "My jade and my quetzal plumes." And again they said to Huemac, "None other than this shall you also win: our jade and our quetzal plumes."

Then they played and Huemac beat them. So the lords of rain went to transform that which they would give to Huemac, the ripe maize ear and their quetzal plumes, the green maize leaves in which the ear swells. But he would not accept them; he said, "Can this be what I have won! Was it not jade? Was it not quetzal plumes? Take this stuff away!"

So then the lords of rain said to him, "Very well; 'Give him the jade and the plumes and take away our jade and our quetzal plumes.'" And they took them and went away, then said to Huemac, "Very well, for now we are hiding our jade; the Toltecs will continue to work in suffering but only for four years."

And then the hail fell; it fell to the height of the knee, destroying all food-stuffs. The hail fell in the month of Teucilhuitl. And then especially on Tollan the sun shone; the trees, the nopal, the maguey all dried up; even the stones broke, everything disintegrated because of the sun.

And the Toltecs struggled and died of hunger. Then a sacrificial prisoner, who was probably kept guarded in some place by his uncle [his captor], miraculously, somehow bought himself a chicken, made himself tamales from it and ate them. And in a place called Chapoltepecuitlapilco, on Mt. Chapoltepec, an old woman sat selling paper banners. He went and bought from her a banner and then went to be sacrificed on the stone known as techcatl.

And when the four years of famine had passed, the lords of rain again appeared there in Chapoltepec where there is water. Then suddenly to the surface of the water rose a green ear of maize that had been chewed upon, and a certain Toltec man happened to see it, took up the chewed ear, and chewed it himself. And then from out of the water came a priest of Tlaloc who said, "Mortal, have you learned something here?" The Toltec responded, "O most certainly, Our God. It has already been a long time that we lost it for ourselves." Then the other spoke: "Mortal, that is very good; sit here while I speak to the lord." And he returned once more into the water but did not tarry long; then once more he emerged bringing with him an armload of fully ripened ears. Then he spoke: "Mortal, deliver this to Huemac. And tell him the gods request the daughter of Tozcuecux, the Mexitin [Mexica], for truly as they will eat this, little by little in a sacred manner she will be eating the Toltecs. For indeed the Toltecs will be destroyed and the Mexica will come to extend themselves. And over there at Chalchiuhcolihyan in Pantitlan they will go to deliver her."

And so then he went to tell everything to Huemac; thus he said just as Tlaloc had commanded it. And then Huemac was filled with contrition and wept; he said, "So it will certainly be; so the Toltecs will indeed depart; so Tollan will indeed be destroyed." Then he sent to Xicococ two messengers, Chiconcohuatl and Cuetlachcohuatl, to request of the Mexica the young woman named Ouetzalxochtzin who was not very old, still a little lady.

So then they went there to Xicococ, and they spoke: "Here have we been sent by Huemac; he says, 'the lords of rain have shown themselves in a sacred manner. They request a young Mexica woman.'" And so the Mexica fasted for four days and fasted as for a death. And when the four days were completed, then they carried her to Pantitlan; her father went with her. Then they sacrificed her.

Then again there the lords of rain appeared and spoke to Tozcuecux: "Tozcuecux, don't be lost in your grief, for you will be with your young lady. Open your tobacco pouch." There they placed the girl's heart and all the many and varied foodstuffs. They said, "Here indeed is what the Mexica shall eat, for the Toltecs will certainly be destroyed."

And so then suddenly the clouds gathered and it began to rain furiously; for four days and four nights it rained without ceasing and the water was eaten by the earth. Then sprouted all the different

green edible plants and all the herbs and grasses. And all the food-stuffs were created and brought to life.

And then the Toltecs planted; twenty and forty days passed and the young maize plants were full; very soon all the foodstuffs were produced. The year-sign under which all these foodstuffs were produced is 2 Reed.

In 1 Flint the Toltecs were destroyed. Then Huemac went into the cave at Cincalco. Some returned and others dispersed themselves in all directions.

XI

And then the Mexica came, traveling in this direction. 1. Tezcacoatl Huemac. 2. Chiconcohuatl. 3. Cohuatlayauhqui. 4. Cuitlachcohuatl. Thirteen years. 1 Reed. [The narrator is reading literally a pictographic text of some sort; then he explains:] And the names of the four protectors who led them in their departure are—name of the first lord, Cohuatlayauhqui; name of the second, Cuitlachcohuatl; name of the third, Chiconcohuatl; name of the fourth, Tezcacoatl (this one was Huemac). They served as protectors for thirteen years, always wanderers.

And here they are coming from Colhuacan, from Aztlan; here the Mexica are fleeing, 58 years. 1 Flint. Here it shows they lived in Chapoltepec still in the time of Huitzillihuitl; they lived there forty years. 13 Rabbit. Here it shows they lived in Colhuacan, in Tizaapan, twenty-five years.

When the Toltecs departed in 1 Flint, the Mexica were arriving at the same time; they came from there, from Xicococ and it took them thirty-seven years to arrive at Chapoltepec. There they stayed, in Chapoltepec, for forty years. And then the Colhua rented them out as slaves; the Xaltocameca came to rent them. There the Mexica settled for a time, as the saying goes, "I'll only sleep here nearby you, because I'm headed over yonder." So they "slept" there near the Colhua but in such a way that it seemed they went there only to guard them. And then they [the Mexica] suddenly fled from the Colhua; in this way the Mexica violated Colhua law: they said, "We will enter the Colhua houses" [i.e., marry Colhua women?].

And the Xaltocameca and the Quauhtitla were householders [i.e., former Chichimecs who now lived in permanent towns]; the Acolhua, the Tenayo, the Azcapotzalca, the Quahuaca, the Macahuaca, the

Xiquipilca, the Matlatzinca, the Ocuilteca, the Cuitlahuaca, and the Xochimilca; and others were there under protection of the Colhua.

These Colhua captured the Mexica chieftain Huitzillihuitl. Then the Mexica were robbed of their woman, the princess. And other Mexica escaped into the tule marshes at Acocolco and went to camp there for six days.

And here it shows the arrival on dry land here at Tenochtitlan, which was still nothing but tule marsh, still nothing but a reedy place; there the Mexica endured their labors for fifty years. No one was their Speaker.

The Mexica kept exclusively and singlemindedly to their own affairs. Year 51. 2 House: Colhuacan, Tenayocan. And here it was that the Mexica made their first conquests: only Colhuacan and Tenayocan.

1. And it was also there that Lord Acamapichtli was installed as The Speaker. He ruled twenty-one years. 20. 1 Flint: Xochmilco, Cuitlahuac, Quauhnhuac, Mizquic. And here are shown the conquests which he made: Xochmilco and Cuitlahuac and Mizquic and Quauhnhuac. In four places he conquered.

2. And here it is indicated that the son of Acamapichtli, named Huitzillihuitl, ruled for twenty-one years; here he ruled—21. 9 House: Xaltocan, Acolman, Otompan, Chalco, Tetzecoco, Tollantzinco, Quauh-titlan, Toltitlan. And here are shown the conquests which he made. Eight cities Huitzillihuitl conquered.

3. And here it is indicated that the son of Huitzillihuitl, named Chimalpopocatzin, ruled; for ten years he was The Speaker. Chalco, Tequixquiac. 10 years. 4 Rabbit. And here are shown the two cities which Chimalpopocatzin conquered.

4. And here it is indicated that the son of Acamapichtli, named Itzcohuatzin, was made The Speaker, and so he was Speaker for thirteen years. 13. 1 Flint. And here are all the conquests which Itzcoatzin made: Azcapotzalco, Tlacopan, Atlacuihuayan, Coyohuacan, Mixcohuac, Quauhximalpan, Quahuacan, Teocalhuiyocan, Tecpan, Huitzitzillapan, Quauhnhuac, Tetzecoco, Quauh-titlan, Xochmilco, Cuitlahuac, Mizquic, Tlatelolco, Itztepec, Xiuhtepec, Tzaqualpan, Chalco, Yohuallan, Tepequacuico, Cuecallan.

5. And here it is shown that the son of Huitzillihuitl, named Ilhuicaminatzin Moteucōmatzin the Elder, was made The Speaker, and so he ruled for twenty-nine years. 29. 1 House. And here are the conquests which Moteucōmatzin the Elder made: Coaixtlahuacan,

Chalco, Chiconquiyauhco, Tepoztlan, Iyauhtepec, Atlatlahcan, Totollapan, Huaxtepec, Tecpatepec, Yohualtepec, Xiuhtepec, Quiyauh-teopan, Tlalcocauhtitlan, Tlachco, Quauhnahuac, Tepequacuilco, Cohuatlan, Xillotepec, Itzcuincuitlapilco, Tlapacoyan, Chapolicxitla, Tlatlahquitepec, Yacapichtlan, Quauhtochco, Cuetlaxtlan.

6. And here is indicated how the grandson of both Speakers Moteucçomatzin the Elder and Itzcohuatzin, named Axayacatzin, was made The Speaker; he ruled for twelve years. 12. 4 Rabbit. And here are all the places which Axayacatzin conquered: Tlatilolco, Matlatzinco, Xiquipilco, Tzinacantepec, Tlacotepec, Tenantzinco, Xochiyacan, Teotenanco, Callimayan, Metepec, Ocoyacac, Capolloac, Atlapolco, Qua . . .

[The manuscript ends here at the bottom of page 10; the rest has been lost.]