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## **The Book of Tributes: The Cuernavaca-region Censuses**

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THE STUDY OF indigenous-language documents has vastly expanded our understanding of Nahua culture, particularly from the mid-sixteenth century into the eighteenth. There are far fewer sources for the first couple of decades after the conquest, but arguably the richest of them are the earliest extant large-scale local-level Nahuatl documents, a set of house-to-house censuses from the Cuernavaca region in what is now the state of Morelos. Three volumes, written sometime around the mid-1530s and in some cases on into the early 1540s, survive and are preserved today in Mexico City, in the Colección Antigua of the Archivo Histórico of the Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia. The three bound volumes, written on indigenous paper, deal with six different Nahua settlements, of which only Tepoztlan can be positively identified with both a colonial and a modern community. Since the documents were produced less than a full generation after the conquest of central Mexico, they are tremendously valuable for information on the impact of the conquest on hinterland communities as well as to give information about the precontact era and continuities from it. Very likely the censuses were ordered by the Spanish crown to settle its dispute with the conqueror Hernando Cortés concerning how many tribute payers he held.

The three volumes deal with six named communities, Huitzillan, Quauhchinollan (both in CA 549), Tepoztlan (CA 550), Tepetenchic, Molotlan, and Panchimalco (the last three in CA 551); the extent to which some of the entities may have been contained in some of the others is not clear. Each census is lengthy and contains the same basic types of information concerning household membership and structure, landholding, and tribute obligations. Thus the censuses from each locality can be directly compared to others, and general trends can be deduced. Unfortunately though, since only the community of Tepoztlan can be clearly identified with a known indigenous polity, we can deepen the locale-specific historical record only for this one well studied indigenous community. But the congruence and variation in patterns among all six localities adds greatly to our understanding of local-level social and economic organization in the early postconquest era.

**History of the project.** We do not know how these three volumes of census records came to be where they are today. It is very likely that more such volumes existed, and for unknown reasons only these were preserved. Another section of the Tepoztlan census is found in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Manuscrit Mexicain 393). Perhaps other portions are still extant and will appear at some point. Although the documents are incomplete, they are of enormous interest to scholars who study conquest-era Mexico. In the 1960s and 70s anthropologist Pedro Carrasco published a number of articles outlining some of the basic socioeconomic patterns that emerge from the censuses. His presentation at the 1962

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International Congress of Americanists, held in Mexico City, brought early attention to the censuses, and the first scholarly publication on them was in the *Actas y Memorias* of the Congress. But it was not until the publication of his 1972 article in *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl* that the censuses come to the wider attention of Nahua scholars. When Jim Lockhart began his Nahuatl projects in the early 1970s, he made a partial transcription of key sections of each of the three manuscripts. He generously offered me access to those transcriptions, which became the basis for my MA project in Latin American Studies at UCLA (1976). He also lent me his microfilm of the entire three volumes. With excitement I popped it into the microfilm reader and was appalled to discover that it had been photographed out of focus. I scrambled to arrange another microfilm at long distance, through the kindness of a contact in Mexico, Dr. Juan José Rivaud. Given the first disaster, I urged him to make sure it was microfilmed in focus!

I had earlier planned to pursue an analysis of the Cuernavaca censuses for my doctoral dissertation, and in anticipation of that spent six months of 1977 transcribing the microfilm. After passing my doctoral exams in 1978, I was offered the opportunity to work on *The Testaments of Culhuacan* (see my article here) and planned to work on the censuses at a later date. In the meantime, Eike Hinz (1983) in collaboration with Claudine Hartau and Marie Luise Heimann-Koenen not only analyzed volume 551 in detail but also published a Nahuatl transcription and German translation. The publication of the text along with the analysis is a landmark of Mesoamerican ethnohistorical scholarship. Unfortunately for many scholars, myself included, the fact that it was published in German translation rather than Spanish or English has meant that the work has probably not received the attention outside Germany that it deserves.

Once I had finished my monograph on Culhuacan and another philological project,<sup>1</sup> I returned to work on the censuses. In 1993 *The Book of Tributes: Early Sixteenth-Century Nahuatl Censuses from Morelos*, edited and translated by myself, became volume 4 in the UCLA Latin American Center's Nahuatl Studies Series. The book contains the complete transcription and English translation of volume CA 549, the census of Quauhchichinollan and Huitzillan. Also in 1993, I published a separate article entitled "The Spiritual Conquest Reexamined: Baptism and Christian Marriage Patterns in Early Colonial Mexico," based on data in all three volumes of the censuses. Given that the census of Tepoztlan, both CA 550 and the fragment in the French archives, remains unpublished, and volume 551 is inaccessible to scholars without knowledge of German, significant work on this valuable set of Nahuatl documents remains to be done before they will be available in their entirety to the larger scholarly community.

**Historical background and general characteristics of the censuses.** The working assumption of most scholars involved in these matters is that the censuses were undertaken to resolve a dispute between Hernando Cortés and the crown in the 1530s. Future research may uncover more direct information, but circumstantial evidence points to this dispute as the origin, especially given the scale of the undertaking, the consistency of the information solicited, and their

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<sup>1</sup>Cline 1986 and Cline 1989.

preservation in colonial archives. Only a project directed by colonial authorities for the crown's interests, it is thought, would likely have resulted in the creation and preservation of the censuses. Yet surely the crown would have wanted the documents translated into Spanish. In any case, no other count in Nahuatl of such extent or of a similar nature is presently known, and the discovery of one would be a major event.

One aspect of these censuses that leaps to the eye is that the data sets are large and lend themselves to compilations and comparison in the aggregate. Personal information in individual household entries includes the name of the householder, names of all other residents and their relationship to the male head, their civil category (married, single, widowed), individuals' baptismal status, the ages of minor children. Economic information includes the amount of land households have, the types of tribute goods to be rendered, and the periodicity of tribute delivery. Furthermore, most censuses have summaries of numbers of individuals in particular civil categories and the aggregate amount of tribute.

Analysis of these data gives a detailed picture of the overall size of households; the numbers of resident couples; the structure of nuclear (single-couple) and joint (multiple-couple) households; the types of dependents; and the relationship of married couples to the household head. In addition, the data on children and their ages allow insight into rates of reproduction and survival. An important set of data for this early period includes the number of baptized per household; the baptized members' ages or civil status; and their relationship to the head of the household. Carrasco's work as well as that of Hinz et al. included statistical treatments of many of these matters, but none of the earlier work exploited the potential of the baptismal information. Although it too lends itself primarily to an aggregate approach and gives no direct testimony about Nahuas' decisions to be baptized or not, some interesting patterns emerge from the analysis, giving us clues to the pace and nature of evangelization.

Unlike some other types of Nahuatl documentation, such as wills and testaments, municipal council minutes, lawsuits, and the like, these census data have no sustained narrative quality. One household entry sounds much like another, with the exception of rulers' compounds. It is not surprising that Carrasco chose as the section on the Molotlan tlatoani's household to translate and analyze, since it has great variety and yields quite spectacular insight into a ruler's situation twenty years after the conquest. But the information on the common folk gives us an even richer picture of whole communities at one point in time and goes to the heart of social history.

A striking feature of these documents is that they are entirely alphabetic rather than pictorial or some combination of the two forms. It had once seemed that the postconquest evolution from pictorial to alphabetic writing was entirely straightforward, that having been combined from the beginning, one gradually ceded to the other in a simple linear process. It now begins to become clearer that there was an early time in which the two methods had not yet been brought into conjunction. By the second half of the sixteenth century a style had developed in some genres in which a pictorial element was similar in function to that in preconquest writing, indicating major topics, and an alphabetic element

had the function of the earlier oral component, containing fully grammatical utterances.<sup>2</sup> In the censuses we seem to have a transcription of the oral element alone. The content runs closely parallel to what is seen in pictorial cadastral documents. It is as though the speaker had a pictorial document before him and was explaining it; most mentions of people, lands, and tribute are introduced by *izca*, “here is.”

The fact that the censuses are entirely alphabetic in content is especially striking considering that pictorial censuses were recorded in other localities somewhat later in the sixteenth century, especially the Matrícula de Huexotzinco and the Codex Santa María Asunción from the Tetzaco region.<sup>3</sup> A possible explanation might be that the Cuernavaca censuses were created explicitly for use outside the community from pictorial versions already existing, and the alphabetic text left nothing to chance when reading and interpreting the information. When the Codex Mendoza was completed around twenty years after the conquest, the native pictorial elements were then annotated in Spanish, fixing the meaning for colonial officials.<sup>4</sup> Phonologically based variation in the writing leaves no doubt that these manuscripts were created by Nahuas themselves, and the corpus also attests to the fact that by the time it was compiled, there were a sufficient number of Nahua scribes with facility in alphabetic writing to undertake this large-scale project in several different Nahua communities. The calligraphy of all the censuses is quite similar, so perhaps there was a single instructor or group of instructors teaching all the scribes in the same place at the same time, probably at the Franciscan establishment in Cuernavaca.

Since these censuses are the earliest known local-level Nahuatl texts, they have great importance for our understanding of early Nahua literacy. The arrangement of the letters and other markings on the page gives insight into the scribes’ pronunciation and their conception of meaningful linguistic units, and places the texts in a certain relation to other Nahuatl writing. In many respects the writing is already like what the Nahuas would produce across the coming centuries. The texts are written in parallel lines, arranged top to bottom on the page, reading left to right in standard Western form. The spacing of letters does not correspond well to linguistic units, a feature of all Nahuatl writing and even of the Spanish writing of the time; diagonals and period-like dots thickly decorate the pages in the way of punctuation, but they too are hard to connect with any unit larger than a minimal phrase. As with virtually all later Nahuatl writing, the orthography was applied to the writer’s pronunciation in an ongoing stream, without any special spelling given to any particular word. The scribes used various Spanish calligraphic conventions, including the mainly ecclesiastical set of abbreviations for *que*, *qui*, and *qua* that is often seen in writers close to ecclesiastical training around the middle years of the sixteenth century, gradually fading out thereafter. A few abbreviations are seen, particularly *a<sup>o</sup>* for *amo*, “not,” most often found in the phrase *a<sup>o</sup> moquatequia*, “not baptized,” one of the most common descriptors for individuals; this same *a<sup>o</sup>* is seen sporadically for centuries in Nahuatl texts

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<sup>2</sup>See Lockhart 1992, pp. 351–53; 1993, pp. 41–42.

<sup>3</sup>Prem 1974 and Harvey 1986.

<sup>4</sup>See Berdan and Anawalt 1997.

from a variety of regions. The orthography varies somewhat from one writer to the next, in part with that writer's pronunciation, in part apparently with the extent of his instruction and experience. The letters used and their values are close to what was current generally in central Mexico during later times, with *v* and *u* still often being used to represent [w] instead of the later predominant *hu*, as was the case in many Nahuatl texts prior to the late sixteenth century; the outstanding discrepancy from the classic Nahuatl orthographic repertory is the absence of the digraph *tz* to represent [tʰ]; *z* or *c/ç* are used instead.<sup>5</sup>

The documents contain some internal evidence about how the censuses were taken. In Huitzillan and Quauhchichinollan, the census taker(s) may have acted in a purely scribal function, recording the information given by each head of household. In general the information is quite skeletal and stylized, but on a couple of occasions interaction between the census takers and the household head is recorded. Two examples in vol. 549, one from Huitzillan, one from Quauhchichinollan, involve households that were apparently newly arrived from elsewhere. The texts read in part "We interrogated them; they will not go away again" ("otiquitlatlanique aocmo yazque").<sup>6</sup>

One volume has data for two distinct named communities and another for three, suggesting that the overall enterprise was tightly coordinated and probably concerned entities closely associated with one another in some way. The three volumes of censuses have the same format and generally contain the same types of information, house-to-house enumerations and a final summary. Generally each household entry begins with the named male head of household, followed by the names of all his dependents and their relationship to him. Usually the age of minor children is given. A person's baptismal status is usually given, although it is obvious by the presence or absence of a Christian name whether or not someone is baptized. In some cases, church marriage is noted. The Tepoztlan census is less detailed on some points than the other four, with less complete lists of children, giving the name and age of the eldest only. There are notations for particular households indicating that for a time the Tepoztlan manuscript was updated as members died or were born. Each household listing in all the volumes has economic data, giving the size of a household's fields and the type, amount, and periodicity of tribute delivery.

The final summaries contain information on the numbers of people in different civil categories, which vary slightly from census to census, as well as totals of tribute goods. In Quauhchichinollan the final summary gives the total number of houses or households at 135. This seems to stand for the number of independent householders, presumably married. Then there is a listing for "married men who are still just together with other people, not yet in their own separate residences: a total of 152." The census is explicit about these being married men—i.e., those who have taken a wife ("yn omozivauhtique"), and their wives are not explicitly counted.

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<sup>5</sup>See Lockhart 1993, p. 41

<sup>6</sup>Cline 1993, households Q126, H#133.

**Social structure.** The census data provide information not only on household structure but also on broader social organization in the settlements described. There is a strong tendency toward complex social arrangements within households. It is difficult to tell whether these are pre-Hispanic patterns or the result of postconquest epidemics. As with *The Testaments of Culhuacan*, no comparable source for preconquest times exists, making interpretation relatively speculative. But since multiple households are well integrated into the scene, and as we will see there seems to be a correlation between larger households in an entity and social stability, it seems likely that complex households were an integral part of the precontact system. Some apparent class distinctions between elites and commoners can be discerned, although terms for nobles and commoners are little used in the texts. Age, gender, civil status, and baptismal status are all markers of social differentiation. Household size and structure are also implicated in establishing the wealth and social standing of the household members. One of the key findings from these censuses is the very considerable variation in patterns from one locality to another.

The households of the high-ranking stand out because of their overall size, the extent of their lands, and the number of dependents, including some slaves (even in such residences, a significant number of the members are unbaptized). The most obvious elites are the men holding the title of *tlatoni* in the communities of Huitzillan, Quauhchichinollan, and Tepoztlan and the rulers of Molotlan, Tepetenchic, and Panchimalco, with lesser titles. The Huitzillan *tlatoni*'s household had 20 people, including six concubines and eight children. The Tepoztlan *tlatoni*'s household contained 10 people. Only elite households, those of a *tlatoni* or a district lord, contained domestic slaves. Huitzillan nobles apparently held no slaves; the *tlatoni* of Quauhchichinollan had one. In Tepoztlan and Panchimalco, Molotlan, and Tepetenchic there were more, with a certain amount of information on the circumstances of their sales. In this time perhaps fifteen to twenty years after the conquest, slavery among Nahuas still existed, but in the Cuernavaca region it does not seem to have been important. Note that none of the information given in this paragraph is stated as such in the sources, but must be derived through attention to original categories and counting.

One variation between communities as a whole is in the complexity of household structure. That is, in some communities, nuclear families are the more common household type, while in others the "joint" household with more than one married couples in residence predominates. Pedro Carrasco's 1964 study of the Tepoztlan census divided household types into those two basic categories, nuclear and joint families, depending on the number of married couples resident. The norm for the communities of Huitzillan, Quauhchichinollan, Tepetenchic, Molotlan, and Panchimalco was the joint household, composed of two or more married couples, their young adult and small children, as well as other dependent kin, such as widows. In Tepoztlan, however, the nuclear family predominated, composed of parents and children and sometimes widows or other unmarried kin. All the communities had both household types, but the percentages were significantly different.

A further set of households in the Huitzillan census, a group of 40 households

listed after the tlatoani's residence, appear to be the direct dependents of the tlatoani. This group not only had a significantly higher percentage of nuclear families than the general Huitzillan population, but more of these householders are described as having recently arrived than those in the general population. Tepoztlan's high percentage of nuclear households, on the other hand, does not appear to be linked to dependent status.

**Religious change.** Although we have a tremendous amount of information from European sources about Christian evangelization in the first decades after the conquest, much of it is suspect on various grounds, and all of it is one-sided; the Cuernavaca censuses contain unique data from the indigenous viewpoint, not with the sort of explicit, synthesizing and often self-advertising statements on the topic that teem in the Spanish sources, but with a multitude of personal details which we can synthesize for ourselves. In most households, residents are identified as being baptized or not, and in some cases the Christian marriage of a couple is noted. Although a person's baptismal status was already given unambiguously by the presence or absence of a Christian given name, census takers added the phrase *amo moquatequia* ("not baptized") to the names which were native only. Baptismal status seems to have been a social as well as religious marker. The highest ranking men in the six communities were all baptized, but not all of their co-residents were. We can infer that neither the friars nor the household head or ruler coerced a blanket baptism. Perhaps, then, to be baptized or not was an individual decision. However, the case of the Huitzillan tlatoani's dependents, who had a higher baptismal rate than the larger community, suggests that the ruler's decision did influence his subjects, or that being located near to the ruler, they received more clerical attention.

The overall data show a higher baptismal rate for boys, especially in the communities with the lowest overall rates. The friars' own reports from that era indicate that boys were indeed the group they targeted for baptism. Most married couples had the same baptismal status, but it was not always the same with parents and children. There are a number of cases of unbaptized parents with baptized children. Parents may have positively encouraged their children, seeing the status as important for future generations but not their own. Another possibility is that parents were unable to prevent the baptism of their offspring. Sometimes households were described as not containing any baptized members, but further examination shows that in fact, though the parents were not baptized, the children were.

In general we see in the records that in this time of transition, when fewer were still baptized than not, the baptized and the unbaptized functioned within the community on the same basis, in similarly organized households, with the same kinds of land rights and tribute obligations. Here we have, then, a multitude of patterns that can be securely deduced from assembling the fragments in the census documents but that we would never learn from friars' statements.

There are a few cases of couples who were formally married by church rites. Of all the challenges friars faced in drawing Nahuas into the Christian fold, the question of marriage was perhaps the most difficult. Plural marriage and the possibility of divorce and remarriage were counter to the orthodox Christian practice

of lifelong marriage to a single partner. In the Cuernavaca censuses, the Nahuatl terminology for marriage gives clues about the penetration of Christian marriage into native practice. In the censuses we find the phrase *teoyotica omonamicti*, “took a match through divinity [or sacrament],” i.e., “got married in the fashion sanctioned by the church.”

Before the end of the sixteenth century, the modifier *teoyotica*, through sacrament, had gradually disappeared in most areas because by then all relationships considered to be marriage were in the church. Indeed, the trend appears already in the censuses; the tlatoani of Quauhchichinollan is said to be “not married,” *amo monamictia*; the phrase is reminiscent of the much more common “not baptized,” *amo moquatequia*. It seems clear that the statement about the tlatoani conveys not so much that he is not married at all as that he is not married in the Christian fashion. But despite a few cases of sacramental matches, the most common way that the censuses indicate what seems to be marriage are the phrases *mocihuatia* “to acquire a woman [wife]” and *moquichtia* “acquire a man [husband].” The Nahuatl term *-namic*, “spouse,” standard in the second half of the sixteenth century, does not appear in the Cuernavaca censuses, although the verb *namictia* in the sense “to marry” derives from it and in a sense implies it. The censuses represent a strong indication, though not absolute proof, that both terms are postconquest innovations related to Christianity and did not have to do with marriage in precontact times.

Nahuas responding to the census takers’ queries had no qualms about divulging their plural marriages and concubines. In several households of baptized residents the male head of household is listed with two wives,<sup>7</sup> though in no case with the language conveying that the unions were sacramental. Did the individuals accept baptism prior to forming the union? Did the friars baptize them despite the unorthodox marriage arrangement? Or did the friars simply not recognize any type of marriage other than in the church, and if they had had these documents translated, would not have used terms such as marriage, husband, and wife?<sup>8</sup>

The Quauhchichinollan census provides fragmentary but important information on Nahua sexuality. Three men in three different households are described as “impotent” (*tetzicatl*). Two were household heads, while the third was a dependent in another household.<sup>9</sup> Childlessness was not a sufficient reason to label men as “impotent,” since in a number of cases men in couples married up to ten years without children are not so denominated. If my reading of *tetzicatl* as impotent and not sterile is correct, then this highly intimate fact was public knowledge. In Christian marriage, a man’s impotence was sufficient cause for

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<sup>7</sup>CA 551, ff. 80v, 97v, 98.

<sup>8</sup>In 1530 the crown attempted to regulate Indian marriages by legislation, setting sanctions for baptized men who married again while the first wife still lived. Interestingly, the legislation allowed the unbaptized to follow traditional marriage practices. Twenty years later, the crown changed the legislation to apply to the unbaptized as well. Borah and Cook 1966, p. 955.

<sup>9</sup>Cline 1993, households Q94, Q115, Q119.

dissolution of the marriage. In the three Quauhchichinollan cases, the other aspects of marriage may well have sustained the partnerships, and the men (and their wives) may not have considered the condition something to be hidden. Perhaps impotence was seen as an inevitable part of the aging process. Attention to the full context and implications of certain words thus can lead surprisingly far toward understanding how private behavior was seen, and at the same time opens up further questions. As in this case, one must remain open to the occurrence of the relevant terms in different contexts in other Nahuatl documentation.

**Economic information.** Most households had cultivable land, and the census data usually give at least some measurement of the plots' sizes. Although by the time wills were being produced in the second half of the sixteenth century many Nahuas owned multiple parcels of land scattered in different places within given communities, the Cuernavaca data do not contain hints of that pattern. It could be hypothesized that the multiple scattered plots that late sixteenth-century Nahuas held resulted from changes during the colonial era, particularly devastating epidemics that reduced the numbers of heirs. However, it is possible that the Cuernavaca censuses only give information on total land that a household controlled. The single area might be composed of multiple plots. In many household listings only one figure for land is given, with only one dimension of its measurement. The Quauhchichinollan data more consistently give measurements of both length and width, so that field sizes can be calculated.

Later Nahuatl documentation occasionally includes information on soil types for particular fields, but the Cuernavaca censuses are largely silent on this point. A number of fields are called *amilli*, "irrigated fields" in Molotlan, Tepetenchic, and Panchimalco (CA 551). There is little information on civil categories of land as found in sixteenth-century Nahua and Spanish sources, but in Huitzillan the tlatoani had 800 units of "lordly land" (*teuctlalli*).<sup>10</sup> Other rulers in Tepetenchic, Tepoztlan, Panchimalco, and Molotlan had large plots, but each was just described as his "field(s)" (*milli*). Interestingly, the Quauhchichinollan tlatoani had relatively little land, just 50 by 60 units.<sup>11</sup> The unit of measure is often given as the *matl*, while other times no unit is designated. The Tepoztlan census contains examples of purchased lands,<sup>12</sup> but they do not appear elsewhere. Certainly by the late sixteenth century Nahuas created a large-scale real estate market, and the category of purchased land dates to the precontact era, but in the Cuernavaca data the phenomenon is barely mentioned.

In sum, the census data mention interesting categories having to do with land and provide us with locally exhaustive aggregate data of great interest not to be found elsewhere; at the same time, they lack the wealth and subtlety of information and categories concerning individual holdings to be found in testaments.

The amount and type of tribute that households paid, as well as the schedule of delivery, is given in almost all cases in the six censuses. Most paid tribute in lengths of woven cotton cloth, as well as in foodstuffs such as maize, turkeys, eggs, and salt. Most had some labor obligation, but large-scale draft rotary labor is

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., household H1.

<sup>12</sup>MNAH-AH, CA 550, f. 55.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., household Q1.

not a prominent feature of the documents. Both obligations correspond to what postconquest sources tell us of the precontact period. Some recent households, particularly those newly arrived in Huitzillan (CA 549), seem to have heavier labor obligations than more established residents. Often these newcomers have not yet received land to farm.

The two most common forms of labor duty mentioned were going to Cuernavaca to provide foodstuffs and “looking for cotton.” It is not clear what either of these duties really entailed; they were largely associated with landless dependents. Other households too may have had these duties, taken for granted when tribute deliveries of food and lengths of cotton cloth are specified. The censuses give a few clues as to who actually performed the labor duties. Sometimes the household head was named along with other male kin; other times just the dependents within a household are mentioned as fulfilling the obligation.

The periodicity of tribute delivery varied, but four times a year at approximately 80-day intervals was typically indicated, the same as our understanding of the normal precontact tribute schedule.

Gender largely determined tribute-related tasks that individuals carried out. Men did agricultural work, took provisions to Cuernavaca, and “looked for cotton,” while women’s most important task was to weave cotton into lengths of cloth for household tribute payments as well as household consumption. When something was unusual about a work arrangement, the census taker departs from stereotyped language. Several entries indicate an explicit exchange of women’s labor in weaving cloth for their support in the household. In general these women were widowed or otherwise adult dependents. The censuses occasionally mention another female task, grinding corn. A slave in the Quauhchichinollan tlatoani’s household “just helps her mistress [the tlatoani’s mother] with the metate.”<sup>13</sup> Since it had no direct relationship to tribute delivery, census takers largely ignored the female role in raising children, but in one Quauhchichinollan case we know that a widowed dependent son in a joint household turned to his own mother to tend his baby girl. “It is just her grandmother who is raising her” (“ça yçi y quizcaltia”).<sup>14</sup>

With further research, the Cuernavaca censuses will doubtless yield further important information on local-level processes in early postconquest Mexico. Publication of the Tepoztlan census is a clear priority. Systematic comparative analysis of all six censuses similar to the comparison between Quauhchichinollan and Huitzillan in Cline 1993 is much to be desired to bring all the data into a single comprehensive framework. Even though the language of the censuses is spare and stereotyped and they are focused on certain types of social and economic information, here we can get unique glimpses of the daily life of sixteenth-century Nahuas as they raised their families, paid their taxes, and coped with change at a very early time otherwise virtually undocumented at this level.

**Names and language.** Names and naming patterns in the first postconquest generation, with implications for precontact times, can be analyzed on a large scale on the basis of the Cuernavaca census materials. Some revealing preliminary

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<sup>13</sup>Cline 1993, household Q1.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., household Q21.

findings are available,<sup>15</sup> but a great potential is still untapped, involving not only methodical counting of names and name types, but etymological analysis, for many if not all of the Nahuatl names consist of transparent ordinary vocabulary used descriptively. Indeed, the vocabulary of the whole textual corpus, as our only substantial set of texts from the first postcontact generation, will reward close study. So far only certain sociopolitical and kinship terms have begun to receive such analysis. Linguistic analysis of syntax and idiom is also called for. The range of expression at first glance seems not very broad, but the corpus does contain some spontaneous and complex utterances here and there, and it is in this corpus if anywhere that we will get a more concrete notion of Nahuatl speech in the earliest postcontact years.

The virtual absence in the Cuernavaca censuses of loanwords from Spanish—with the large exception of Christian baptismal names—is consonant with the time of origin attributed to them in previous scholarship, that is, Lockhart’s Stage 1 or the first decades after the conquest, when there was little contact between Nahuas and Spaniards. The censuses provide important information on baptismal names and early colonial naming patterns in general. In the Huitzillan and Quauhchichinollan censuses, three men’s names, Juan, Domingo, and Pedro, account for two-thirds of all baptized males (N=112). Among baptized females, the names Magdalena and María account for four-fifths (N=55). Nahuatl names are by far the most common in the censuses, since the majority of the population was unbaptized, and most people with a baptismal name had a traditional Nahuatl name as well. One example is in the Quauhchichinollan census, “Mexicatl’s second younger sibling is named Nicolás; his old-style name is Teuctlamacazqui” (“ynic umeti ycava / mexicatl- ytoca / niculas yvevetoca / tecuitlamacazqui”).<sup>16</sup> The Nahuatl name means “lordly priest.” Nahuatl names were sometimes from the preconquest calendar, sometimes poetic, sometimes ranks or titles, sometimes sardonic or scurrilous or indicative of behavior as an infant.<sup>17</sup> Among females, the number of both Nahuatl and Christian names is much smaller than for males, perhaps because naming a female was considered less important. The rich fountain of names will reward systematic comparison with those of the Matrícula de Huexotzinco, the later Testaments of Culhuacan, and any other collections or compilations from a specific time and locale. Large trends are already clear; whereas in the Cuernavaca censuses the normal appellation was a Nahuatl name alone for the unbaptized and a Christian plus a Nahuatl name for the baptized, by the time of The Testaments of Culhuacan the latter was the norm, purely Nahuatl names had disappeared, and distinction was indicated by a second Spanish name. Nor was the evolution to stop there.

There are a few other loanwords in the censuses that are worth noting. *Marqués*, actually written “malquex,” showing that the sound and letter substitutions well known in Nahuatl’s Stage 2 began in Stage 1, refers to Hernando Cortés

<sup>15</sup>Cline 1993, pp. 48–51; Lockhart 1992, pp. 118–21.

<sup>16</sup>Cline 1993, household Q17.

<sup>17</sup>A sample can be seen in a table in Lockhart 1992, p. 120.

as the Marqués del Valle de Oaxaca.<sup>18</sup> The loanword appears regularly in the Tepoztlan census entries, with the Marqués at the apex of the hierarchy of tribute recipients. Two important Spanish loanwords, *don* and *doña*, which are used in the texts as titles for a few indigenous people of very high rank,<sup>19</sup> indicate the early adoption of this key signifier of elite status. Yet although these words are in some sense nouns, the characteristic loanword of Stage 2, they are above all titles and are virtually names; “el Marqués” was the nearest thing Cortés had to a name in Spanish among the population in general, and “don” and “doña” were also essential and integral parts of names; the tlatoani of Huitzillan was don Tomás, not just Tomás. Thus even these words do not violate the general trend that Stage 1 loanwords embraced names only.

Nevertheless, some surprising evidence of Spanish linguistic influence occurs in the texts. One scribe recording information for some Huitzillan households<sup>20</sup> used not only Roman numerals (which after all can be interpreted with Nahuatl number words as well as with Spanish ones) but what appear to be at first glance some highly advanced loanwords. Thus he once writes “*quatro annos*,” “four years,”<sup>21</sup> even though the native word for year (*xihuitl*) persisted in texts as long as Nahuatl was written, and the borrowing of small numbers never took hold in Nahuatl. The native *xihuitl* also occurs in this same stretch of text. Yet “*quatro annos*” was more than some kind of slip, for though in no other case is a Spanish number word written out unambiguously, “*annos*” (with the double *n* for Spanish *ñ* that is often seen in Stage 2) occurs repeatedly across the entries for thirteen households (only two lack it).

A different perspective on these examples is given by a phrase found in the Molotlan census,<sup>22</sup> “*tus hanos casato*,” i.e. with typical Nahua sound and letter substitutions, *dos años casado*, “married two years.” Here we have not Spanish loanwords inserted in a Nahuatl sentence but a whole Spanish phrase complete with its grammar. In other words, what is happening here is not the borrowing of Spanish lexicon but speaking Spanish for a moment, what is often referred to as code switching. It is clear that this writer and doubtless others as well had had enough association with Spaniards, whether they be friars or secular census takers, to learn common Spanish census and marriage terminology.<sup>23</sup> Given

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<sup>18</sup>The use of the word also helps in dating the text, which must have been written after Cortés was granted the title and it became common usage. The word was the most common way of referring to Cortés in New Spain among both Spaniards and Nahuas from shortly after his receiving the marquesado forward into the eighteenth century. The term is used in the native-drawn illustrations for fray Diego Durán’s history of Mexico, for example. (Durán 1994, plate 55.)

<sup>19</sup>Cline 1993, households Q1, H1; also the first household in CA 550.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., households H#122–34.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., household H#122. The sentence, and there are many others like it except for the use of Roman numerals on the pages affected, is “/ *quatro annos* / *yn nemi* /,” literally “it is four years that he lives,” i.e., “he is four years old.”

<sup>22</sup>CA 551, household 19.

<sup>23</sup>My guess is that the Spanish mendicants stressed the importance of Christian marriage so much that not only did it become the community norm (see Cline [*cont’d*])

passages such as this (and there are a few others in which the writer resorts to Spanish for a sentence, particularly to explain that someone had absented himself after the census), perhaps the phrase earlier discussed, “cuatro annos,” could also be seen as code switching rather than two Spanish loanwords. The phrases used by that writer, however, are embedded in an otherwise Nahuatl utterance, and indeed within a traditional type of expression for giving a person’s age that later ceded in favor of a phrase more affected by Spanish.<sup>24</sup>

In any case, both of these related phenomena, the use of some apparent loan words of a type later not definitively adopted by Nahuatl at all, and the insertion of phrases in Spanish into a working Nahuatl text, were somehow a minority feature of the very early period and gave way as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries proceeded.

The scale of the Cuernavaca censuses and their unparalleled earliness make them of endless potential use as a timeline for the years just after contact, against which on the one hand to measure later Nahua social and cultural phenomena and on the other hand to make deductions about the late precontact situation, which is entirely without contemporary texts like these.

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1993A, pp. 474–75), but certain Nahua scribes became familiar with Spanish phrases for the institution.

<sup>24</sup>In the Cuernavaca censuses a person’s age is normally given by the phrases “ya . . . xihuitl in nemi,” “he or she already lives so-and-so many years,” or “ya . . . xihuitl yn tlatcat,” “he or she was born so-and-so many years ago”; occasionally one sees “ya . . . xiuhitia,” in which the number of years is incorporated into a verb form. Later the formula would be “quipia . . . xihuitl,” “he or she has so-and-so many years,” based on the Spanish phrase *tener tantos años*.

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