

Introductory Study

Amo Aquí miclapa nechtzotecnehuas

No one is to cause me headaches in the land of the dead.

Melchora María, San Bartolomé Tlatelolco (Toluca area), 1737 (No. 24)

NAHUATL TESTAMENTS can give the impression of being extremely intimate documents; when reading them it can seem as if we are privileged to watch something we would not normally be permitted to see. But after all, if we look at the documents closely, the truly intimate touches are rare. Perhaps what the wills really give us is a sense of great immediacy and reality, much of which comes from their almost always being issued when the testator is expected to die very soon, probably that day, creating a unique moment in a life, a very special perspective on it. In the area of Calimaya/Tepemaxalco in the Toluca Valley, a native term is often used toward the end of a will to describe the testament—*nococoxcatlatol*, “my sick person’s statement”—and we can almost see the testator lying in bed at home, where the document was usually prepared.¹

The will is a distillation of a life only in certain basic respects—family, property, some economic activity, death rituals—but it is dramatized for us by the imminent end of that life, the realization that the testator is about to let go of the connections we are just discovering. Indeed, a Nahuatl will is even more dramatic than the type of testament we are familiar with from Europe and the United States nowadays, and not only because it is made in extremis, but because it is almost theater. An audience is present, whether it be relatives and friends, or most often officials, and the testator talks to them; that is why he or she is always saying “my statement is to be realized,” or “no one is to take it away from my child,” and sometimes, despite the convention of using the third person, he or she even speaks directly to the witnesses or one of them.²

I was not the first person to become interested in indigenous wills. The interest has come out of the general social history of early Spanish America, out

of the desire to study the social reality and everyday life of indigenous people, and when we look for sources in indigenous languages which would show that dimension, we always come up with wills.³ That is precisely what happened to me in the Archivo Histórico del Arzobispado de México (AHAM). I was thinking of the wills as material for a dissertation and later monograph on gender and everyday life in the indigenous world of the Toluca Valley in the eighteenth century. I went ahead to do the dissertation using a fairly limited corpus of wills, only provisionally transcribed and translated, a practical necessity which permitted good preliminary results.⁴

As my thoughts turned toward a future monograph, I realized how much more was to be learned from further study of individual wills, and also of the whole body of them. Facing the many subtleties of the corpus—the two cultures involved, Hispanic and indigenous; the changes over time; the marked variation from place to place; the connections between specific documents—I came to understand a great deal more about each document and each situation, which would gradually come to life and deliver more information both about the testator and about the general context than I at first would have imagined possible. I began to write informal commentaries to give concrete form to these insights before going on to the next stage. At the same time, I was hoping to make all this information available to others, to enable them first to share the actual experience of the indigenous peoples’ expression, and second to use these rich materials and my comments about them for various kinds of research. And because the wills are from different writers in different districts, I became aware of the importance of the notaries, the intermediaries between the testators and us, and in my commentaries I began to discuss what

¹In Nahuatl wills of many times and places, the testator speaks of the house “where I lie,” a formulation that is found only once or twice in the Toluca wills, but frequently we see the words “this home of mine,” or “this house,” telling us equally well that the testator lies sick at home.

²See the passage in No. 80 where the testator suddenly begins to speak in the second person to her nephew, wanting him to take care of her daughter for her.

³The first published collection of Nahuatl mundane documents, Anderson, Berdan and Lockhart 1976, has a prominent first section devoted to testaments. Other collections with indigenous wills followed, such as Cline and León-Portilla 1984, Reyes García et al. 1996, Rojas et al. 1999–2002, and, to an extent, Kellogg and Restall 1998.

⁴Pizzigoni 2002.

I noticed about their lives and work.

In sum, I imagined a publication in which each and every testament would have the following: to aid future research, a very exact and careful transcription; for readers of all kinds, a translation which is both accurate and readable; and to save for the public the knowledge I had gained only through a long process of deduction, intuition, and comparison with other documents, a document introduction—a substantial item which not only highlights and interprets the most salient points in the testament, but reconstructs the whole situation of the testator, and also adds an analysis of some characteristics of the notary. With this apparatus, these precious life-documents could speak to us today and convey a great deal about a world now largely disappeared, but still fresh, fascinating, and significant.

As it happens, it was not necessary to invent everything from scratch, for over the past few decades others have been coming face to face with similar situations regarding various types of Nahuatl texts. An increasingly analytical kind of philology has evolved, leading to publications which, though they are editions, are also like monographs and make the same sorts of contributions that monographs do.¹ In particular, the collection *The Testaments of Culhuacan* was a model, a source of perspective, and a point of departure for further developments.²

In light of the above considerations, I decided on a publication that features a collection of wills (98 of them) carefully transcribed and fully translated, with many notes, and for each one an interpretive introduction that is sometimes longer than the original document. This introductory study that you are now looking at attempts to give the reader needed information about the corpus and how to deal with it, while also setting forth a large number of important findings in a provisional way.

I have now told you the genesis and rationale of this book at an intellectual level. I believe it will add to your understanding if I also say some words about the more tangible history of the project. In the years 1999–2001 I did research in Mexico City toward a dissertation at King's College, London,

with emphasis on gender and everyday rural life among indigenous people in the late colonial period. My explorations centered on the archiepiscopal archive (AHAM). In addition to the litigation in Spanish that I found, I came upon some wills in Nahuatl from the Toluca region and soon began collecting all I could find, even though at that time the Nahuatl language was a mystery to me.

In the summer of 2000 I attended a Nahuatl course at Yale University, where I got a good foundation in the language.³ It so happened that James Lockhart took over the class for a week, and knowing that he had worked with older Nahuatl documents and even specifically with Toluca, I brought photocopies of some of my wills to class, where one of them was studied by the group. By good fortune the one chosen, that of Melchora María (quoted above), now No. 24 in this volume, gave excellent examples of the role of women in forming networks and bringing up children, topics then at the center of my interest, and by even better fortune, the will contained the remark here quoted, open evidence that the Nahuas interpreted everything including religion in their own way, based on their own heritage. From that time forward I have worked with Jim at long distance on the transcription, translation, and interpretation of the Nahuatl wills; he became my dissertation adviser, although informally, with the chapters of my 2002 dissertation that were based on Nahuatl documents and that were the beginning of some of the approaches used here.

Even during my dissertation campaign, Jim saw the relevance of another effort to collect Nahuatl wills from Toluca, made quite a few years before by Stephanie Wood. Using mainly the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), as well as the Newberry Library and some other repositories, Stephanie had put together a collection of testaments much larger than my own, had written essential notes from the archival dossiers in which they were contained, and above all had completed by hand on the photocopies the important portions of the documents that are lost in the right margins in the binding at the AGN. Jim contacted Stephanie, whom I already knew, and it

¹Karttunen and Lockhart 1987; Lockhart 1993; Sousa, Poole and Lockhart 1998. Publications such as these are at the heart of what is often called the New Philology. As it happens none of these books deals with testaments, but the principle is the same with any kind of older Nahuatl documentation.

²Cline and León-Portilla 1984. A publication of Yucatecan Maya wills. Restall 1995, takes advantage of the *Testaments of Culhuacan* and develops its methods further. It also contains much material that would be useful for comparative purposes, but in the name of practicality I will for now remain within the Nahua sphere.

³I take the occasion to thank Jonathan Amith for his excellent instruction.

was agreed that she would make her photocopies and notes available for use in my dissertation as needed, and that at some future time a volume or volumes of the wills collected by both of us would be published. We were thinking of a joint editorship. As it turned out, the Nahuatl wills were crucial both to my dissertation and to my plans for a future monograph, so they have taken up a very large proportion of my life and time, whereas Stephanie has been occupied with her fascinating recent book⁴ and a large number of other pressing academic activities. As the

book began to take final shape, in an unparalleled act of generosity she declined to be credited as co-editor of the present volume.⁵

Looking ahead, I see this book partly as a large step toward a monograph on life among indigenous people of the Toluca Valley in the eighteenth century.⁶ But I think that it is something of great permanent value on its own, and I hope that both Nahuatl experts and other readers will open their minds and hearts to it, becoming aware of the almost inexhaustible richness of its original materials.

1. Characteristics of the Corpus

ONCE THE CORPUS of available Nahuatl testaments from the Toluca Valley was narrowed to the 98 included in the present collection,⁷ the parallels with the Testaments of Culhuacan became clearer, as well as a number of very significant differences. It is in relation to the Culhuacan testaments that one can get a first appreciation of the nature of the body of documents employed here and of the significance of the present publication. The present corpus is considerably larger (including informative but unfinished wills, there are about 60 in the Culhuacan collection), but each one is large enough to demonstrate significant patterns. The Culhuacan documents are from the Valley of Mexico, the Toluca materials from the first major valley to the west, still in the central area of the country but a bit more removed

from the capital. The Culhuacan documents are dated ca. 1580, in the heart of a hundred years of evolution that are sometimes called Stage 2, whereas the Toluca materials are from later, the second half of the seventeenth and above all the eighteenth centuries, falling into Stage 3.⁸ Temporal comparisons between the two bodies of documents are called for, especially since the later period is still less studied in terms of such documents than the earlier.

A strength of the Culhuacan testaments is that they were a unified collection from their very inception. The corpus here was assembled from scattered sources, but through concentration on certain areas, much of the same unity was achieved, and at the same time, spreading over a much longer period and

⁴*Transcending Conquest*, Wood 2003. See her work based on the corpus of Toluca Valley testaments in Wood 1991, 1994, and 1997, and in Wood and Haskett 1997.

⁵Through Loera Chávez 1977 and 1981 I have become aware that another collection of Nahuatl wills from Calimaya and Tepemaxalco may be in existence, and I intend to explore this possibility in the near future.

⁶I am not the first to take this path. Sarah Cline followed *The Testaments of Culhuacan* with a monograph on Culhuacan in the same years (Cline 1986). In that case, the documentary publication and its commentary stand to this day beside the monograph as something of equal value with distinct characteristics and potential, and I hope that the same will be true in my case.

⁷I presently have about the same number of wills from the Toluca Valley not included in this book, a good many of which are already transcribed and translated in preliminary fashion. I will be using them in monographic research in which I am now engaged, but it may be many years before they are published as a second volume. They could prove useful not only in adding numbers to the corpus, but in contributing to our understanding of cultural unity and variety in the region, showing whether the rest of the valley is more like Toluca, more like Calimaya/Tepemaxalco, or quite distinct from either.

⁸The stages of postconquest evolution of the Nahuas were first discussed in Karttunen and Lockhart 1976 in regard to linguistic phenomena specifically and were developed as a broader theory of social and cultural change in Lockhart 1992. Stage 1 (to about 1540 or 1545) is the first postconquest generation, during which the Nahuatl language hardly changed. In Stage 2 (from then until the middle of the seventeenth century), Nahuatl took a myriad of words from Spanish, but mainly nouns, while other aspects of the language were unaffected. Finally, during Stage 3 (from then on, including the time investigated here) Nahuatl took words other than nouns, created equivalences between Nahuatl and Spanish words, and added Spanish sounds to its phonology. In Lockhart 1999, p. 209, the cultural implications of the stages are succinctly summarized, calling Stage 1 a generation of little cultural change; Stage 2 a hundred years when change affected predominantly corporations, and Hispanic elements entered Nahua frameworks as discrete items; and Stage 3 a time of personal interpenetration of the two societies, with more intimate, structure-altering change.

containing documents from a variety of places, the present corpus allows study of temporal and regional variation within its own quite broad boundaries of time and space. Aspects such as patterns of possession and inheritance, funeral practices, and many others can be tested in multiple localities and over several decades. Cultural subareas can be discerned as well as unities across the larger region, and even the idiosyncrasies of some individual *tlaxilacalli* can be studied. The Culhuacan collection, with so many wills made in the same year in the same altepetl, contains several invaluable clusters of wills by relatives. But the documentation in this volume, as a result of the regional concentration and the archival practice of including several wills in the same dossier, also contains clusters, and in fact even more of them. Reconstructing the clusters has been a sort of detective work that was both difficult and fascinating. Some of the associated wills were in the same dossiers, but others were not, and it was only by recognizing internal crossreferences that many could be identified. I wish I could convey to the reader the sense of successful puzzle solving, of reality, that I felt as one after another of the clusters emerged, sometimes from the merest hints at first, and I hope that the reader too can have that experience in studying them in this book.

Chronology

LET US EXAMINE some of the prime characteristics of the corpus in more detail, starting with the chronological framework. At the same time it is necessary to say something about the regional distribution, to which I will devote more space below. Briefly, the corpus is divided into two main parts regionally, first Toluca proper with its immediate surroundings, and second the area of the double altepetl Calimaya/Tepemaxalco; discussion of temporal distribution in the collection must take this regional division into account. Overall, the testaments concentrate in the eighteenth century up until 1763; there is only one document from later (1783). Far fewer, just 10 of the 98, come from the second half of the seventeenth century (from 1652 to 1699); nevertheless, they are crucial in defining evolution over a longer time and in distinguishing the eighteenth century from what preceded it, identifying the changes that took place later. Many of

the testaments concentrate in specific years, particularly 1737, 1759–60, and 1762. Although a large number of variables have been involved in the preservation of testaments and their appearance in this volume, it does seem that these concentrations correspond to years in which more people died as a result of epidemics (smallpox in 1737, *matlaçahuatl* [typhus] in 1762).¹

The table on p. 5 gives the number of testaments in the present corpus by decade for the Toluca area and Calimaya/Tepemaxalco, with totals.

The testaments from Toluca proper are in the main from relatively early in the eighteenth century, concentrating around the decade of the 1730s, with 10 in the first three decades and only 2 as late as the 1750s. The majority of the testaments from Calimaya/Tepemaxalco, 35 out of 60, concentrate in the 1750s and 1760s; indeed, 31 of them are from the short period 1758–63. Thus the reader of the book may form the impression that the coverage for the Toluca area is mainly earlier than for Calimaya/Tepemaxalco. In a sense that is true, but note also that the latter group actually has more seventeenth-century wills than Toluca and displays a reasonable selection from the first half of the eighteenth as well, 18, concentrating in the 1730s just as in Toluca proper.

The division between seventeenth and eighteenth century in this context seems meaningful to me, and surely there are several phenomena which can be detected primarily only in one or the other. Yet I have also noticed that the documents of the 1690s share much with those of the first decade or two of the next century, and further that the numbers pick up with that decade. One way to look at the matter would be that the “early eighteenth century,” and the core of the corpus, begins with the 1690s.

Temporal patterns of change will be discussed below in a number of specific categories of interest. Here let me make a more general remark about the temporal patterning that can be discerned because of the relatively even distribution of the documents over more than a hundred years. All of the documents in the corpus fall within Stage 3 as generally conceived, that is, after the dividing line of 1640 or 1650. To a great extent all belong to that stage linguistically and in other ways. From the begin-

¹Rojas 1999–2002 (vol. 1, p. 26) contains a graph with the comment that in the whole ACN there are more Nahuatl testaments from 1737 than from any other year early or late. See also Márquez Morlín 1993 and Florescano and Malvido 1992, 1: 171–76. My thanks to Linda Newson for these references.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE CORPUS OF WILLS

Date	Toluca	Calimaya/Tepemaxalco	Totals
1650-59	1	1	2
1660-69	—	—	—
1670-79	1	1	2
1680-89	—	1	1
1690-99	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<i>Totals 17th century</i>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>
1700-09	3	2	5
1710-19	5	3	8
1720-29	2	1	3
1730-39	21	12	33
1740-49	2	—	2
1750-59	2	19	21
1760-69	—	15	15
1770-79	—	—	—
1780-89	—	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<i>Totals 18th century</i>	<u>35</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>88</u>
<i>Totals overall</i>	38	60	98

ning, for example, they contain loanwords for close kin like siblings and nieces/nephews. But the three stages of postconquest Nahuatl evolution have not yet been defined closely, year by year, in many categories, or within specific regions. What is seen in the present corpus is that many facets often thought of as characteristic of Stage 2 persist in the Toluca Valley, at least to some degree, through most of the seventeenth century and are still present in certain documents even in the first couple of decades of the eighteenth.

Regional distribution, sociopolitical organization, and order

FOR CONSIDERATIONS of time and space, it was not possible to put the entire approximately 200 testaments collected from the Toluca region in a single volume. My choice, as already mentioned, was to concentrate on two main areas. First, the immediate area of Toluca (38 testaments), including Toluca proper with its constituent *tlaxilacalli*, as well as the *tlaxilacalli* that surrounded it and were in some way associated with it. Second, the double

atpetl of Calimaya/Tepemaxalco (60 testaments), to the south of Toluca in the Valley, half way between Motepec and Tenango del Valle.² The areas were chosen not for any preconceived attributes but because they delivered the largest concentrations of documents, and so many important cultural elements can be studied when there is a sufficient supply of texts from the same places, with related people and practices, and the same notaries. The testaments from the Toluca area mainly correspond to holdings of the AHAM that were collected by myself, while those from Calimaya/Tepemaxalco are principally from the AGN and were collected primarily by Stephanie Wood.

In the early stages of my Toluca project it was far from my mind that I might discover significant cultural differences between the subareas of the Toluca Valley. In my dissertation, based more on the materials from Toluca proper, I tended to assume that what I was finding was common to the whole valley at that time. Now, after close work with documents from both subareas, I realize that al-

²I imagine that most readers of this volume are already acquainted with the terms *atpetl* and *tlaxilacalli*. Here I will say only that the local states of central Mexico, seen by the Spaniards in the light of municipalities and called *pueblos*, were called *atpetl* in Nahuatl both before and after the conquest, and that they consisted of separate constituent parts called *tlaxilacalli*, usually arranged symmetrically in an order of rotation and precedence.

though there are many significant commonalities, the two also constitute distinct cultural regions in some quite important respects, and that some of the interesting things I found in Toluca were entirely absent in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco; some features of the latter were also missing in the former. The result is a more differentiated picture of evolution and an opportunity for fascinating comparisons within a regional setting. I will point out many below, but I am sure that additional distinctions remain to be discovered, and I also imagine that there were other cultural subareas in the valley.

With the documents for the volume once identified and grouped into the two different areas, the question arose of how to order them logically and usefully in the book, a matter naturally related to their organization in actuality, so that I will discuss the two things at the same time. To an extent I have followed Nahuatl sociopolitical principles (and indeed, if all the relevant information were available, I would have followed them much more closely). The large categories are based on the *altepetl* and the secondary categories on the *tlaxilacalli* that compose them. I immediately faced problems in that the organization of the *altepetl* of Toluca is not well studied, whereas Calimaya and Tepemaxalco are a complex, interwoven double *altepetl*, somewhat better studied but still mysterious, and sometimes it is not clear which of the larger entities a given *tlaxilacalli* belongs to.

I started with Toluca, the largest population center of the valley and the hub of its economy. Works on the area, based entirely on Spanish sources it seems, make a distinction between *tlaxilacalli* that they call *barrios* of Toluca and other *tlaxilacalli* more outlying but somehow still associated with Toluca. I followed this order, putting first the “*barrios*” (15 wills) and then all the other testaments belonging to the area (23).¹ The individual *tlaxilacalli* in both groups come in a random order here, because nothing is presently known about their order of precedence or rotation, and the works do not even always agree about which category a given entity belongs in. In the wills themselves there is very little to document the existence of two categories. Nearly all of the documents name the *tlaxilacalli* only and no larger entity. In both of

them testators often have church bells rung for them (not a known practice in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco), and in both they are often buried at the *huei teopan*, “the great church,” apparently meaning the establishment built by the Franciscans on the main square of Toluca city.

As for Calimaya/Tepemaxalco, in this case too much information is lacking about internal organization. The two were paired *altepetl* sharing the same basic territory, and also the same parish and central church, but they had separate sets of *tlaxilacalli*, separate *cabildos* and separate governors. We have virtually no knowledge of exactly how the territories of the two related to each other. We do know that both had various *tlaxilacalli* in the central settlement cluster now known as Calimaya. In one case, it is known that an outlying Calimaya *tlaxilacalli*, San Antonio de Padua (la Isla), was the northern part of a single cluster, San Lucas Evangelista (Tepemaxalco) the southern.

It is strongly to be presumed that Calimaya was the senior of the two. Not only did it ultimately give its name to the whole, but the patron saints were San Pedro for Calimaya, coming first, and San Pablo for Tepemaxalco, coming second. San Antonio is today much larger and more prosperous than the adjoining San Lucas and has a much bigger and more luxurious eighteenth-century church. Yet no explicit, conclusive information is available about the order of the two *altepetl*. Even being aware of the fact that Calimaya is no doubt senior, I have put Tepemaxalco first in the volume because there are many more documents from there (31 against 18 from Calimaya), and because, as we will see, its internal order is better understood. There are some cases in which it is not certain whether a *tlaxilacalli* belongs to Calimaya or Tepemaxalco, and these documents have been placed at the end of the book (11 wills).

A set of tribute lists extant for Tepemaxalco from 1658 to 1665² allows a certain insight into the internal organization of that *altepetl*, for not only do the lists go by *tlaxilacalli*, their order is unvarying from one list to the next, just as in traditional Nahuatl sociopolitical organization. Also traditional is the fact that there are exactly eight *tlaxilacalli*. They are as follows:

¹See Romero Quiroz 1973, pp. 135–43.

²Museo de Antropología e Historia, Archivo Histórico, Colección Gómez de Orozco 185.

1. Teocaltitlan Tlatocapan (also sometimes called Teopanquiyahuac)
2. Pasiontitlan
3. San Francisco Pochtlan
4. Tlatocapan
5. Mexicapan
6. San Lucas (Evangelista)
7. Santa María de la Asunción
8. Santiago

Not all of these actually appear among the tlaxilacalli of the testaments in the present corpus (Pasiontitlan, San Lucas, and Santa María are definitely represented, with a reference in one will to Pochtlan), and one Tepemaxalco tlaxilacalli in the corpus, San Juan Bautista Yancuictlalpan, is not on the tribute list. Nevertheless, I have followed the order as far as it is applicable, putting the wills from the missing tlaxilacalli last. In the corpus there appear some wills from an entity called Santiago Apóstol Quaxochtenco. It is conceivable that this is the eighth tlaxilacalli of Tepemaxalco. In dossiers it is identified as belonging to the larger Calimaya parish (which does not exclude Tepemaxalco), but since the modifying words Apóstol and Quaxochtenco are very prominent in the wills and their dossiers, and they are entirely lacking in the tribute lists, I have classified Santiago Apóstol Quaxochtenco for now as uncertain between Calimaya and Tepemaxalco.

Working with the corpus has made me aware of a distinction within each of the two altepetl. Each of them had several tlaxilacalli in the same central, apparently somewhat nucleated settlement. Wills from these tlaxilacalli almost always try to identify the respective altepetl. But wills from outlying settlements, such as San Lucas and Santa María de la Asunción in Tepemaxalco, do not identify any overarching altepetl; sometimes the tlaxilacalli itself is called an altepetl. Santiago Apóstol Quaxochtenco appears to be one of these outliers, not giving any larger altepetl framework and making identification harder.

With Calimaya, essentially nothing is known about the organization of the tlaxilacalli, and probably there were some that have not yet been identified. As it happens, Calimaya too had a tlaxilacalli named Pasiontitlan, and I have put it first because it was ranked high in Tepemaxalco, but for the rest the order of Calimaya tlaxilacalli is random except for

putting the outlying San Antonio de Padua last within Calimaya. A tlaxilacalli Santa María Nativitas known to be within the parish and general jurisdiction possibly belongs to Calimaya (it at least borders some Calimaya areas), but as with Santiago Apóstol Quaxochtenco, information is insufficient for a definitive classification, and here the tlaxilacalli is put at the end among those unclassified within Calimaya/Tepemaxalco.

The whole question of dual organization and parallel altepetl within the same jurisdiction is challenging and significant, and I believe that I have made here some contribution to the topic, but many aspects of it remain a mystery. Several wills of the corpus even contain hints that the people of the time were themselves becoming somewhat confused, and that some earlier distinctions may have fallen by the wayside.³ But the materials make clear that even as late as the 1760s, the two altepetl were functioning separately side by side.

Reflecting indigenous sociopolitical organization when feasible is important to me, but even more important is putting similar material together in one place for the benefit of the reader. All the documents from each tlaxilacalli will be found together, and within that all the documents prepared by a given notary; I maintain a general progression forward in time within each entity. Nevertheless, in the case of clusters of relatives in the same tlaxilacalli, I put their wills together regardless of the other principles. The result is something of a compromise, but I hope it will make the materials as usable as possible, and by crossreferences I have tried to point the reader to similar or connected materials which are located far apart.

Gender

A VITAL ASPECT of the corpus is the gender ratio, how many testaments were issued by men and how many by women. In the immediate Toluca area, women represent roughly 37% of the testators and men the remaining 63%. In Calimaya/Tepemaxalco the aggregate percentage is similar. But when data are split into subentities, we find a surprising predominance of women in the altepetl of Calimaya, women representing almost 56% of the total, against 44% for the men. In the overall total for the double altepetl, this exceptional female predominance is outweighed by the data from the better

³See Nos. 42 and 43 among other testaments.

represented Tepemaxalco and from the tlaxilacalli that do not belong clearly to one altepetl or the other. In the entire combined corpus, 38 testaments were issued by women against 60 by men, meaning that women are about 39% of the testators and men about 61%.

The ratio is surprisingly consistent with that in some other collections. Counting all wills in the Testaments of Culhuacan including fragments with named testators, women are nearly 38%. In the Rojas collection of testaments, four different sub-collections have ratios for women of 41%, 35%, 27%, and 38% respectively.¹ The norm seems to be less than half but more than a third. That male testators were more numerous could have been expected, since men had easier and more frequent access to document production and public officials (despite some notable exceptions in this very corpus), and as family heads they generally had more property to bequeath. But the proportion of female testators is still relatively high, telling us that their role in the ownership and transmission of property was active and significant.

We should not forget that females are frequently mentioned in the testaments of males, and vice versa. No doubt that tends to be true of all wills; it is outstandingly true in the testaments of Toluca.

Clusters

ANALYSIS OF MANY kinds of patterns, notably those involving more than one generation, are greatly facilitated when we can study not merely a single will, however rich, but two or three connected wills of relatives. Family clusters are a great asset to scholarship, something that the field learned already

in the Testaments of Culhuacan. As said before, the wills of the present corpus were scattered in different archives, branches, and dossiers, so that recognizing clusters was often quite a challenge, but a highly rewarding one. A total of 13 clusters have been identified and studied, 8 in the Toluca area and 5 in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco.² No less than 32 testaments are involved in some cluster, almost a third of the corpus.

In the majority of cases (at least 8), parent and child are linked, although in 4 instances another kind of relationship is involved as well, particularly husband and wife or siblings.³ It is important to notice the presence of women in these parent-child relationships, either as mothers or as daughters. The other clusters are built around various kinds of relationships: brothers, husband and wife, grandfather and granddaughter. One cluster includes the peculiar combination of son-in-law, father-in-law, and relative of the latter, with considerable light thrown on the woman who was wife of one and daughter of another, crossing tlaxilacalli lines to marry.⁴ In another the relationship is not clearly stated, but is likely either father-son or grandfather-grandson. Among the 8 cases of parent-child relationship there is a very complex cluster, with wills from a mother, a daughter, a distant in-law, and the in-law's husband.⁵

Readers who come searching for immediate insights and human color (such as father and son both being buried under a copal tree in Nos. 22 and 23) could do no better than to read some of the clusters first of all.

2. The Wills and What They Tell Us

THIS CENTRAL SECTION of the introductory study is dedicated to an analysis of the different parts of a testament as they are seen in the corpus here, following the order in which they appear in an actual

document. In this way I attempt to give the reader a good grasp of the organization of the testaments and at the same time present an in-depth discussion of their contents. The overall structure of these mainly

¹Vol. 1, pp. 59-60.

²A page in the front matter, "List of Testaments in Clusters," specifies and numbers each cluster, also giving the relationship of those involved. Nos. 3 and 4 are also probably a cluster, not to speak of another potential but unproven one, Nos. 26 and 27. The testator of No. 26 makes his executor his *consuegro* Francisco de la Cruz, and the testator of No. 27 is Francisco de la Cruz, but he says nothing that would confirm the connection. The situation is even more confusing because the two testaments have a Francisco de la Cruz as notary. Besides, Francisco de la Cruz is such a common name that it could possibly be another person altogether.

³Parent/child clusters are in Nos. 5-6 in the Toluca area and 22-23, 28-29, and 30-31 in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco. Nos. 35 and 36 also may constitute a parent/child cluster. Clusters in which other relatives are added to the parent and child are, in the Toluca area, Nos. 10-13, and in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco, 39-41, 47-49, and 85-87.

⁴Nos. 72, 78, 79.

⁵Nos. 10-13.

eighteenth-century wills of the Toluca Valley is very much like that of other indigenous testaments in New Spain from the sixteenth century forward; the major components and their order remain the same. New features and variety within the corpus are found in the contents of each part and in the forms of expression.

In discussing each consecutive part of a testament I will give some attention to how it corresponds to the general tradition of Nahuatl wills. Sometimes this amounts to comparing it with the Testaments of Culhuacan, the classic collection of the late sixteenth century. In this way we can begin to understand developments over the postconquest centuries as a whole, the evolution from Stage 2 on into Stage 3. But I am even more concerned to discuss variation and uniformity within the corpus itself. A major category of interest is how much or how little change is observed over the more than a hundred years between 1652, date of the first document, and 1763, date of the last but one. Even more central is to show some of the dimensions of the subregional variation that has emerged in the course of this project, the differences in each consecutive topic between the immediate Toluca area and Calimaya/Tepemaxalco. And where evidence exists, I will point out variation even within these two cultural subregions, at the tlaxilacalli level. Yet I do not lose sight of the extent to which both subregions were uniform, and the larger Toluca Valley, at least as far as these two regions exemplify it, possessed important commonalities.

Preamble

FROM THEIR FIRST inception in the mid-sixteenth century under the direction of mendicant philologists through their further evolution in the hands of Nahuatl notaries, wills in Nahuatl always began much like their Spanish counterparts, with a formulaic doctrinal statement varying little in the practice of any particular notary, though not entirely the same from one notary to the next, one settlement to the next, or across time. Starting in the sixteenth century, mention of the Trinity was extremely common, as well as invocation of the Virgin Mary to pray for the testator's soul. Other common material, not all of it always included in any particular example, was reference to the ill health of the body

and the soundness of the mind, to the inescapability of death, to giving the soul to God (who should come to receive it) and the body to the earth of which it was made, often ending with a brief endorsement of the beliefs of the Roman Catholic church. In Stage 2 wills, rarely would the preamble contain mention of any saint other than the Virgin Mary.

In the Toluca corpus, all the Stage 2 formulas can be found in some text or other, but one soon notices that they are most fully represented in the oldest wills, or in especially conservative writers, or in outlying settlements. The Toluca wills as a whole move in the direction of a new style or styles.

Generally speaking, perhaps the easiest, quickest way to identify Stage 3 Nahuatl wills as opposed to those of Stage 2 is the presence at the very top of mention of the holy family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; in Stage 2 wills the holy family is lacking. Some general directive of church officials must have been at the root of the change, but it becomes a diagnostic trait. In the Toluca Valley corpus we do indeed find the holy family in a prominent role. They are missing in the first two documents, of 1652 and 1654, but are present from 1678 forward.

Both subareas were strongly affected by the trend, but a regional difference can be detected. Toluca seems, as so often, more conservative, more often putting the holy family after the Trinity than before it, and in a large number of cases only Jesus is named. In Calimaya/Tepemaxalco the names of the full holy family are at the very beginning of almost every testament; then they may be repeated after the Trinity, and sometimes for good measure after the whole preamble as well.

The preamble phrase *ma in mochihua amen*, "may it be done, amen" (the "may it be done" is of course a translation of "amen") is also probably a Stage 3 trait. It is entirely absent in the Testaments of Culhuacan. Just when it becomes common in Nahuatl wills generally is not presently well established. It is a standby of the Toluca Valley corpus, most often immediately after mention of the Trinity and sometimes at the end of the preamble as well. It is equally predominant in both subregions, though not universal.⁶ In Calimaya/Tepemaxalco the phrase is from the beginning sometimes in

⁶The notary Sebastián Fabián of San Lucas Evangelista, for example, does not use it at all in his four testaments (Nos. 52–55).

Nahuatl only, without the “amen.” In that form it is present in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco from 1654 (No. 42), but the three seventeenth-century wills from the Toluca area lack it, which may or may not be significant.

The three elements—the holy family, the Trinity, and “amen”—often stand as a sort of heading preceding the preamble proper, and this too seems a new feature since Stage 2. In Stage 2 wills the testator usually started by saying “in the name of” (*ica in itocatzin*, etc.) the Trinity, or expressed belief in it. These ways and similar ones (such as *icatzinco ninomachiotia*, “I take as my sign”) are still seen in the Toluca corpus, above all in earlier documents or ones from certain outlying tlaxilacalli, but there is movement toward a new dominant phrase, that of praising the Trinity. The term used is *cenquizcayectenehua*, “to praise entirely, wholly, perfectly.” Still missing in the earliest testaments, it becomes dominant in the Toluca area after 1700 and in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco by the 1690s.

Despite this commonality, regional nuances also assert themselves. Some tlaxilacalli of Calimaya/Tepemaxalco never adopted the praise formula at all (San Antonio de Padua, Santa María Nativitas, Santiago Apóstol Quaxochtenco). It was predominant in the Toluca area in a form that was grammatically standard, the reflexive used as passive (*mocenquizcayectenehua*), but we also notice a form (in almost a third of the cases in the whole corpus) not compatible with normal Nahuatl grammar, in which the active reflexive is combined with the passive ending (*mocenquizcayectenehualo*). In Calimaya/Tepemaxalco the nonstandard form at first glance seems greatly predominant, but a count for the whole double altépetl shows that the standard and nonstandard forms are about equal in frequency. Closer examination reveals that the nonstandard form was hugely predominant only in the central settlement cluster, in both the Calimaya and the Tepemaxalco halves, while it was hardly present in the outlying tlaxilacalli. One such tlaxilacalli, San Lucas Evangelista, in the early 18th century lacks the praise formula, but when it adopted it in the 1750s, it uniformly took a standard but reverential form (*mocenquizcayecteneuhtzinoa*); in neighboring Santa María de la Asunción that very same form was the only one used, and may have started earlier.

Coming to the main body of the preamble, we find that an almost universal feature, continuing

from earlier wills, is mention of the soul. It has been believed that in many regions the Spanish loanword *-anima(ntzin)*, “one’s soul,” gradually displaced the accompanying Nahuatl equivalent term *-yolia*, “spirit,” by Stage 3, but if so that surely had not happened in the Toluca Valley. In the great majority of cases in both subregions, from first to last, both terms are still seen side by side within the preamble.

But otherwise, a large regional divide expresses itself in the body of the preamble. In both Toluca proper and Calimaya/Tepemaxalco the heading is followed by identification of the testator and the sociopolitical entity, which will be dealt with below. In Calimaya/Tepemaxalco there is a movement toward elaboration in what follows, especially involving saints, whereas in the Toluca area the rest of the preamble is reduced or even nonexistent.

If we look back to the Testaments of Culhuacan, whose preambles were not especially elaborate for the time, after the Trinity and self-identification they usually (with some variation and in various orders) move on to invoke the Virgin Mary as intercessor, speak of the state of mind and body, place the soul in the hands of God, and issue an abbreviated credo. The immediate Toluca area in this corpus has preserved the Trinity in the heading, and often added the holy family and amen, but severely curtailed the rest. The predominant style is simply to place the soul in the hands of God, omitting everything else, including even the invocation of Mary. Many wills lack even this much, going straight to the ringing of bells, the shroud, etc., so that in a way there is only a heading and no preamble at all. No saints are ever invoked in the preambles of Toluca, in which aspect the Stage 2 style is preserved.

Calimaya/Tepemaxalco was moving in the opposite direction. It too was shedding such things as mention of the state of mind and body, and the credo, but it retained not only giving the soul to God but also the invocation of Mary to pray for the soul, and it added many helpers in that enterprise. Often included were whole collections of named saints, at least some of whom were important in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco specifically; the recital might start with the patrons San Pedro and San Pablo, name as many as three or four more saints, then perhaps go on to the guardian angel and a general mention of “all the male and female saints” in heaven, sometimes ending with a picture of

celestial bliss and praise of the deity.¹

This style was not there uniformly from the beginning; the earliest wills from Calimaya/Tepe-maxalco lack it, being more like those of the Toluca area. In the central cluster, it picks up starting in the 1690s and gathers strength in the early eighteenth century, reaching a mature form perhaps in the 1730s. But like some other phenomena, it concentrates in the central settlement, in both halves, whereas it is less well developed in the outlying tlaxilacalli. Despite a quite full example or two, San Lucas and Santa María de la Asunción mainly invoke only the Virgin Mary. Santa María Nativitas (ironically) does not even invoke the Virgin.

We will see that many of the largest wills recording the most property were issued by male testators, and that male names showed greater variety than those of females, but it could not be said that preambles of male testators are overall more elaborate. The degree of elaboration seems to have varied with the region, the notary, and probably the notary's fee, but the most elaborate preambles seen in the corpus are in a series of testaments of women prepared by Hipólito de los Santos of Calimaya in the 1750s and 1760s.

Personal names

MOVING FROM the formulas to other elements of the preamble, we find that a universal item, usually placed soon after the heading, is the testator's self-identification, achieved simply by stating his or her name (sometimes accompanied by information on marital status, which I will discuss just below). As is well known by now in the philology of ethnohistory, names are an essential and powerful tool for studying the status and connections of a given person (testator or not), and also of his/her family and other individuals within the setting of a certain community. Thus I will take this opportunity to discuss naming patterns in the present corpus.

The great majority of personal names in the corpus consist of only two elements, the first name and then what I call not a surname but a second name, for in most cases it is not handed on to the next generation; a given nuclear family will usually

have a miscellany of different second names. This is a general characteristic of the Nahuas from the early sixteenth century forward, and it is very well reflected in the present corpus, although the higher a family group's status, the more it was inclined to preserve the same second name across generations. First names were not markedly different by status; it is generally speaking the second name and its use that tells us so much.

The naming system is largely as we already expect for this time.² Indigenous names are in effect a thing of the past, and the most common appellations consist of two names of a saint or first names, such as Gregorio Juan or Lucía María. The status implications of such a name are the lowest of all in the repertoire, but can be raised by the addition of "de San," as happens a few times in the corpus (for example with Esteban de San Juan [No. 16], who when young might have been known as simple Esteban Juan).³

In addition to sharing the double first names, both males and females can have religious second names not derived from saints, such as de la Encarnación, de la Trinidad, de los Santos, and de los Angeles. The general tradition in central Mexico was that such names connoted a somewhat higher status, but when we look at all the testators in the present corpus it is not clear that they actually separated those so named from the mass, with the exception of de la Cruz, which I will comment on a bit later. We see an abbreviation of some such names through omission of "de" and the article; thus testator No. 63 is Josefa Trinidad, not Josefa de la Trinidad as the name should be by its origin. Earlier in time this truncation would have reduced the status implications, but in the present corpus, after such names had been in use for generations, that may no longer have been a consideration.

In another type of name both elements are taken whole from some famous source: Baltasar de los Reyes from one of the Magi; Domingo Ramos, a play on Palm Sunday; Tomás de Aquino after the famous saint. Women too could have such names (such as Catarina de Sena), but none seem to appear

¹See testament No. 70 written by Hipólito de los Santos as a full example, discussed in the document introduction there. There was a certain emphasis on archangels, with frequent mention of San Miguel, San Rafael, and San Gabriel.

²See Lockhart 1992, pp. 121-30.

³The important name Santiago (discussed further below) is a frozen example of this phenomenon, with the "San(t)" and the saint's name amalgamated, so that it always requires "de" and by its structure alone has some connotations of prestige, aside from its very specific history.

in the present corpus.¹ Names of this kind have a higher tone than double first names, but they do not normally become the source of a lineage name.²

In many parts of central Mexico by the time of our corpus or before, second names which were established Spanish surnames were the most prestigious name type in the indigenous world. There were two levels, first patronymics and other originally plebeian names, like Hernández or García, and second, for the top level, names with prestige among Spaniards, like Guzmán or Mendoza. This aspect of the naming system exists in our corpus, but is not as well developed as we might expect. The highest-ranking among the testators and other people in the wills do not uniformly have Spanish second names. We can discern Estrada, an excellent Spanish surname, in the governorship of Calimaya, and similar names surface from time to time (Guzmán in an early example, Tapia, Vicuña, Mendoza, Villanueva, Alcántara).³ Spanish surnames at a lower level are also seen as appellations of indigenous people of above average rank (Hernández, González, García, Mejía, Jiménez, Sánchez). But almost all of the wealthiest and highest-ranking testators bear names of the types mentioned before, belonging to the system first devised for indigenous people specifically and evolving over centuries. I am not presently equipped to analyze this phenomenon. For whatever reason, second names that in many parts of the Valley of Mexico would have implied intermediate rank attained the highest level in the Toluca area and Calimaya/Tepemaxalco.

The higher a family's wealth and status, the

more it would retain the same name across generations, generally more with males, although full consistency is lacking. Women do have better chances of receiving a lineage name in high-status families. The peak of this trend is reached with the immensely wealthy former governor don Juan de la Cruz (No. 39), who passes his second name on to all of his many children, female as well as male.⁴ In cases where the family has not yet quite reached the top, some of the children may have one of the parents' second names, while others do not. At a lower level, some lineage continuity is expressed at times by reversing the names of parent and child for both genders, or by retaining the female's more humble second name for female children.⁵

Analyzing gender differences more broadly, it can be said that men's names are much more varied; the difference is heightened by men's receiving the honorific title "don" along with the higher local offices. Normally, though not invariably, the title is retained for the rest of the person's life.⁶ The don transforms even the humblest name, such as Francisco Pedro. The corresponding title for women, "doña," is extremely rare and is never attributed to a female testator, not even to María Micaela, *principal* and *cacique*. It shows up only in early testaments, mainly with the wives of governors, the best example being the de la Cruz family of Tepemaxalco.⁷

The name of this gubernatorial family leads us to another matter, the high concentration of the names de la Cruz and Santiago among prominent people in both Toluca proper and Calimaya/Tepemaxalco.

¹The name Mateo Juárez is of this type; though I do not know the model, the majority of indigenous people named Juárez across a wide range of times and regions had the first name Mateo. See Lockhart 1992, p. 512, n. 139.

²That holds true in the corpus as a whole, yet it does seem that the second element of some such names was beginning to be handed on in families separately at times, especially de los Reyes and Ramos. Of those with the second name Juárez, only two were Mateo, and the other three had different first names.

³The second name Serrano, sometimes as an additional second name, so to speak, was associated with governing families in Calimaya/Tepemaxalco. Possibly it came directly from Spanish, where it would be a quite good surname. But possibly it derived from a famous Nahuatl interpreter of the Toluca Valley in the late sixteenth century, a Juan Serrano del Valle whose name seems to have been concocted especially for him (see Lockhart 1991, pp. 219–20).

⁴Another case is María Ana de Morales (No. 9), with two daughters with the same second name.

⁵See Mauricia Josefa and don Francisco Pedro (Nos. 37 and 38), whose daughters all have Josefa and sons all Francisco as second names, and also the case of Francisco de la Cruz (No. 27), whose wife is Pascuala María, with the daughters María Salomé and María Magdalena.

⁶The corpus does not deliver absolute proof, but it appears that no one in our areas bore the don before holding high office.

⁷The testament of María Micaela is No. 43. Only two references to doñas are from the Toluca area, both in the testament of Elena de la Cruz (No. 10); the other cases are from Calimaya/Tepemaxalco and are to be found in the following testaments: don Juan de la Cruz (No. 39, 1691), three doñas, all wives of governors; María Salomé (No. 42, 1654), two doñas, the executor and a witness; Agustín de la Cruz (No. 72, 1755), casual reference to a property-owning doña who may not be indigenous.