

THE OLMECAS AND THE TULTECAS :

A STUDY IN EARLY MEXICAN ETHNOLOGY AND HISTORY.

BY PHILIPP J. J. VALENTINI.

(Translated from the German by Stephen Salisbury, Jr.)

SIXTY years ago the early history of the people of the Nile and the Euphrates was still shrouded in deep obscurity. To-day the veil is rent. We are now taught of their existence and achievements thousands of years before the period of written history. Active scientific research has won this victory.

Interest has not been wanting, nor has labor been spared, to throw a similar light upon the condition and history of the early people that inhabited the table-lands of Mexico and Central America. For more than three hundred and fifty years, students have been endeavoring to solve the mysterious problem, and we might therefore reasonably suppose that the labor would not have been wholly in vain. Unfortunately, however, this seems to be the fact. The steps taken in this direction have been slow and somewhat discouraging, and it is almost to be feared, that despite the activity which has been displayed during the last ten years in this ancient province of research, the wished-for goal may never be reached. The reasons must be strong, indeed, to lead us to so melancholy a conclusion. In the following pages we shall endeavor to bring them before our readers.

If we consider the historical material offered to the investigator, it is as regards form almost identical in both Hemispheres. In each the written record, either modified or amplified by later writers, forms the main substance: in each also monumental inscriptions of various designs await translation or decipherment. But a difference exists in the character of the material which facilitates the work of the student of Eastern history and perplexes him in the study of Western archæology. It is the ethnic discrepancy that causes the embarrassment. The ancient East has always been looked upon as our historic fatherland, and is so regarded to-day with more certainty than ever before. The European, to us, is only a variously transformed exponent of generations, whose ancestry reaches back into Asia, for thousands of years. In this long course of time, it was Greece, Rome, and Judæa, that in written records and in a language quite familiar to the student have left to us a multitude of dates disclosing the process and vicissitudes of our

political development. More or less we have always been aware of the revolutions that had taken place in the far East before the first Olympiad, what nations were foremost and had succeeded each other in the task of founding and destroying great empires, what grand deeds we should connect with the names of certain leaders and kings; and although much new material has been brought to light by finding keys to dead and lost languages, it is nevertheless true that by means of this discovery we merely obtained richer details, and in addition the very welcome assistance of a more accurate chronology. These helps, however, only interweave themselves into the substance of dates and events with which we were already acquainted. Therefore, since through the industry of ancient historians the bridge was laid that leads us into the first stages of our historic genesis, and since our resources for research and study are so competent and reliable, it was but natural that the labor undertaken with the material for Indo-European history should have been crowned with success.

The case is far different in regard to matters pertaining to the Western Hemisphere, and how difficult are the duties of the investigator into American prehistory! When the Spaniards came to this continent they had no idea of its existence and isolation, nor of the multitude of different nations collected together here, nor of the peculiar state of civilization that some of them had reached. Likewise the natives of this great Western Hemisphere had lived in ignorance of an Eastern Continent. A mass of their historical traditions, reaching back into untold centuries, indeed existed, and were immediately collected by the missionaries from the lips of the natives themselves. But what correct estimation, what thorough understanding of the dates and the materials gathered could be expected from the minds of hearers so unprepared as the Spanish conquerors were? We must not forget that these researches were made either with the help of inexperienced interpreters or by the missionaries themselves, who were and remained but imperfect scholars in this new language to be used in their intercourse with the natives. Not only the whole structure of the language differed from theirs, but even the mode of expression puzzled them. Enquiries for actual proofs were answered by a reference to songs, whose heroic phraseology obscured the original statement of the events themselves, and when the painted annals were referred to, no guarantee for correct interpretation was furnished beyond the good faith and the doubtful learning of the native interpreters. A ready-made summary of historical materials did not exist. Each tribe cared only to preserve its own interesting events. Many tribes in their long migrations had lost their records, or they had been seized by victorious tribes and destroyed. Experiments to reconstruct the records from memory must necessarily have been defective. They invited fabrications, and either little attention was given to the important matter of designating the exact date of an event, or it was given only in round numbers, so that when computations were made

and could be compared with others, uncertain and contradictory results were reached. Wherever the Spanish investigator labored he found foreign material and groped in darkness. The names of persons and places had a foreign sound. Between the conqueror and the conquered all sympathy of races, all ethnic consanguinity was wanting, and this absence prevented any sure insight into the historical logic of events. The result is that a great mass of dates have been transmitted to us without proper connection, and the numberless gaps can not be filled.

Except for the wonderful similarity which early Mexican civilization bears to that of the ancient nations of the Eastern Hemisphere, only a small fraction of the workers, who in past and present times have so willingly given themselves to this study, could have been induced to undertake the labor. The theory has been advanced that the natives must be considered as a branch of the human family, which, coming from the far East, and having been driven out of its course, has finally settled in these parts; and, indeed, there are many circumstances on which to base the theory. It has been the highest aim of the investigator to firmly establish this theory by positive and well-founded proofs, and both foolish and ingenious arguments have been brought forward for that purpose. An immense literature, grown up from the time of the conquest and continued till our day, bears testimony to the restless effort to unearth the secret. The hope seemed to dawn some time ago, on the discovery of the Landa Alphabet, that by help of the key thus discovered a way might be found to decipher the stone hieroglyphics. And, indeed, the most authentic way to learn a nation's early history is to glean it from such monuments as are covered with the records of events that were sculptured by contemporaries. Therefore the hope arose of filling out the large gaps of the written history, and, if not obtaining direct information, at least of arriving at reasonable conclusions concerning the descent of a people, that had been brought to this new world and afterwards had been lost sight of. But even this cheering hope has been lost to us, and the so-called Landa Key has proved to be an ingenious contrivance of the Spanish missionaries, who wished to aid the natives in learning the sentences of the catechism by means of a picture-writing, which had formerly been quite familiar to them. So ardent was the desire to find out this great secret, that a few modern students forgot entirely, that the question whether the paintings and sculptures were to be explained phonetically or ideographically had been answered, nay practically solved, beyond all doubt, by the natives themselves immediately after the conquest, in favor of the latter method.

With such lamentable prospects for final success it might seem advisable to bid a formal farewell to investigations in the prehistoric history of Mexico, rather than to trouble ourselves any more about it, without obtaining corresponding progress or profit. But it is easier to think and to say this than to follow the advice. A literature composed of thousands of volumes collected in the course of centuries can not be

annihilated, nor can it be treated with indifference. It is true that from its deficiencies and confusedness, the literature can offer us but little of certainty, but still the material is too voluminous and important to abandon it entirely for these reasons.

It has always seemed to us that the right way to treat these matters should be to moderate our expectations, and to no longer demand of those sculptures a revelation of secrets that they are unable to yield, since they contain nothing of the sort. We should thereby lose a great incentive to investigation, but one very liable to lead us astray. If the materials were consulted solely on account of their own intrinsic value, they would win just as much in solidity as they had lost in exciting interest. Consulting the materials in this way, our first aim should be to fix and determine the main epochs, a task that would be comparatively easy, and for the moment omit entirely the other minute chronological details. We should next enquire what is to be understood by the names frequently met with of the two most ancient nations, the Olmecas and the Tultecas—names so often used but so meaningless; and we should ascertain which of these two nations was the older, or whether both of them were contemporaneous and lived and acted side by side; which part of the country each of them inhabited; whether in the course of time their frontiers became changed; whether in their midst other mixed nationalities sprang up to form independent communities; whether the Olmecas and Tultecas were tribes which immigrated to Mexican soil, or whether they were aborigines with a marked difference between them as to race and language. If investigation should be carried on in this or a similar manner, the probable consequence would be that instead of shadowy nations and empires, which up to the present time have been prominent in historiography only as an expedient for designating certain nations once having an existence not hitherto understood, we should have condensed them into a more tangible historical body. A most oppressive nomenclature would thus be eliminated, and the history of these nations would be made more conformable to truth and more attractive for study and investigation.

It is not the purpose of the writer to give a complete and exhaustive essay upon this subject, for it would require more time, more help from others and more talent than he has at command. He will in the following essay merely endeavor to ascertain what conclusions we are entitled to draw from the facts transmitted to us by the earliest and most reliable Spanish chroniclers, and with these points established, to investigate in what directions the wave of civilization, originating suddenly on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, spread over the Western and Southern part of the interior; what active or passive part was taken by the various tribes which appeared under distinct names, though certainly very vaguely described up to that time, and into what chronological frame this historical picture ought to be placed.

In conformity to the limited space which the Publishing Committee of the Society allows to contributors, and mindful of the restriction that the writer has imposed on himself to make use of the early Spanish authorities exclusively, he hopes he will not be considered lacking in literary courtesy, if he does not allude to the many and important labors of his predecessors.

From the written testimony before us, and from other corroborating circumstances, we find that the period in which dates can be given to the early history of Mexico is about thirteen hundred years. All that we know of this history will fall between the middle of the third and the sixteenth century, or more exactly between the years 232 and 1521 of the Christian Era. The latter date rests on good authority: it was the year of the Spanish Conquest. The first and earlier date is constructed from an examination of the chronological hieroglyphics on the Calendar Stone. Its credibility is supported by the date 245 A. D., which we obtain from the Codex Chimalpopoca,¹ and from the Maya Katunes, which gives us the year 242 A. D.²

¹The successful collector and ardent student of American History, M. l'Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, during his residence in Mexico, had access to the archives of the College of San Gregorio in that city. In the library of this convent he found an ancient MS., there filed under the title: "History of the Kingdoms of Colhuacan and Mexico." It was written in the Nahuatl language, and with the assistance of the professor, Galicia Chimalpopoca, he translated it into the Spanish language. This translation has not yet appeared in print. But M. Brasseur makes use of its contents very fully in his publications, and he informs us (see *Historie des nat. civil. du Mexique*, Vol. I., page 70) that the title-page of the above-named manuscript bears an inscription of the following tenor: "6 times 4 centuries, plus 1 century, plus 13 years, to-day the 22d of May, 1558." The anonymous author by those terms appears to declare that the contents of this work embrace a certain historical period and such a number of years as would result from the solution of his arithmetical proposition. Thus M. Brasseur understood it, and we agree with him. We must, however, differ from him in his adoption of a period of 100 years for a Nahuatl century. From a text written by an Indian chronicler, in his native language, and treating of Indian history and chronology, we can not help inferring that a Nahuatl century must be computed with 52 years, which is the great Mexican cycle. The Spaniards, indeed, always render the word for the Mexican cycle with that of *siglo*, century. Misled by this circumstance, M. Brasseur sums up the following statement: $6 \times 400 + 100 + 13$ years, 22d of May, 1558, and thereby arrives at the date of the beginning of the history of Colhuacan and Mexico in the year 955 before Christ. Through the introduction, however, of the cyclical figure 52 into this account, the correct sum of 1313 years thus gained, and subtracted from the date of 1558 A. D., would carry us back not farther than to the year 245 A. D. This year stands under the date of 1 Calli (Mexican chronology), which is only 13 years, or one quarter of a cycle (tlapilli) later than the date which we found upon the disk of the Calendar Stone (232 A. D., 1 Tecpatl). See "The Mexican Calendar Stone," Proceedings of Am. Ant. Society, Worcester, Mass., April 24, 1878.

²*The Katunes of Maya History*, Proceedings of Am. Ant. Society, Worcester, Mass., Oct. 21, 1879.

This entire period of about thirteen hundred years can naturally be divided into two distinct epochs. The one is that from 232-1064 A. D., which we may call the epoch of the Olmecas and Tultecas; the other from 1064-1321, the epoch of the Chichimecas. This latter epoch we shall leave entirely out of consideration. Its events are well authenticated, and a comparatively rich material is at the disposal of the historian. Not so, however, with the epoch that belonged to the Olmecas and the Tultecas, and which we intend to make the subject of our discussion.

Like the early epochs of all nations, this also is full of uncertainties. No authentic record exists from which we may read a full account of such events as occurred during those eight centuries, and thereby gain an approximate idea of the political and social condition then existing on the table lands of Mexico. Tradition, and a very slender one at best, by a few half-obliterated pencil strokes, and to the bewilderment of posterity, has kept alive the memory of those two nations to whose civilizing energy has been ascribed the clearing of the virgin forests, in order to make room for sumptuous temples and palaces. On reviewing the material, we have found this tradition best preserved by Sahagun and Torquemada. The first, as will be shown hereafter, dealt in original historical research, and the latter was a very circumspect compiler. We can not pass over a third writer, Alva de Ixtlilxochitl, whom it has been the custom to slight. Like Sahagun he has copied directly from the painted annals, and his reports, though open to criticism, must be respected. Here and there linguistics and topography will help us in securing important tints, which have been fading from the musty canvas of traditional lore. It is by no means our ambition to write the pages of a history of eight centuries which has been irredeemably lost, or to make a bold attempt to reconstruct it on the tottering pedestal of fragmentary material. We wish only to eliminate a variety of errors, which have become prevalent concerning those ancient civiliziers, through the fantastic compositions of various writers. We cherish the hope that by emphasizing certain features, whose recognition has been neglected, and which to us appear of paramount value, we may arrive at a better understanding of the particular direction and course which those nations took in occupying and civilizing the large Mexican isthmus.

One great error, which we shall try to correct, has been committed by modern writers in following too verbally the opinion formed and propagated by the Spanish chroniclers with regard to the chronological relation in which the Olmecas stood to the Tultecas. We found the former always considered as having been antecedent to the latter. The Olmecas are always termed "the first possessors of this country of New Spain." This expression has given rise to the opinion that the Olmecas were the very pioneers of civilization on the Mexican isthmus. Whether they were indigenous or immigrants from abroad was left in obscurity, but it was assumed as a fact that in later times a

powerful and highly cultured tribe, the Tultecas, coming from the North, had invaded their country, seized upon their possessions, and effaced their existence to such a degree as to erect thereon a large empire, embracing Mexico and the whole of Central America. These are opinions and statements for which no evidence appears in recorded tradition, and can not be accepted to such a broad extent. Based upon reasons to be explained in the following pages, we are compelled to modify such views considerably. It will be shown that although Olmecas and Tultecas present themselves as two different nations in later historical times, yet from the outset they were of the same stock, the same creed, culture and training, and that when they set out in their work they started from the same place. Yet while one branch, which later appears under the name of Olmecas, directed their expeditionary steps toward the South and their efforts appear to have met with comparative success, another branch of the main body, the later Tultecas, made the far North-west and its inhabitants, the savage Chichimecas, the province of their colonization. It was only after three centuries that a few families of the old stock—the lost brothers' tribe—being compelled to quit those Northern abodes and to wander South, succeeded in joining the Olmecas on the ancient spot of separation. Both were changed, of course, but not to such a degree as to fail in recognizing their common descent. The Tultecas did not invade the territory of the Olmecas by force; they settled on a ground then wild and open to colonization, on the border of the Tezcucan *lagunas*. They never founded an empire, never aimed at nor attained a supremacy over the Olmecas. Both were pacific and contemporaneous co-workers in their perhaps unconscious task of civilization, during the long period from the sixth to the eleventh century.

These are the preliminary outlines, and we shall try to explain only the most interesting details of the story in the discussion which follows.

Mexican prehistory begins with the curious record, that a body of bold invaders made its appearance in the mountains of Tlascala and on the sources of the river Atoyac, where they had a hostile encounter with giants. The name of these giants is given as the Quinamé or Quinametín. They are described as a band of ruffians addicted to all kinds of vices.¹ The strangers, falling an easy prey to these fellows, were made slaves, and were subjected to the lowest drudgery. But at a feast the servants placed before their masters a beverage so sweet that they became intoxicated, and all of them were then massacred. So runs the

¹*Fern. de Alva Ixtlilxochitl*, *Historia Chichimeca*, in *Kingsborough Coll.*, Vol. IX., pages 197 and 205, and *id. Relaciones Historicas*, page 322. *Veytia*, in *Kingsb. Coll.*, Vol. VIII., page 179. *Las Casas*, *Hist. Apologética*, Tom. I., Cap. 175. *Geronimo de Mendieta*, *Hist. Eccles.* (Icazbalceta, Mex., 1870), page 96. *Oviedo*, Vol. III., page 539. *Diego de Duran*, *Hist. Ant. de l. N. Esp.*, Tom. I., Cap. 1, 2. *Torquemada*, *Hist. Ind.*, Lib. I., Cap. 13, 14. *Cod. Vaticanus*, *Kingsb. Coll.*, Vol. V., page 165, *Spieg. d. l. tavola VII.*

story when divested of the manifold additions which later writers had probably added. That this account has been preserved and has not shared the fate of many others of the greatest importance, which have been forgotten, may be explained as follows: The claim of conquest by their forefathers was one of the first victorious acts of a conquering people, and the generations which followed saw in it the oldest legitimate title to the possession of the country which they had acquired. Through this introduction of the sweet liquor cup as a means of conquest, the story receives a peculiar American tinge. One is involuntarily reminded of the fact that cheating the indigenous redskin of his hunting grounds by offering him the sweet bowl is not of recent invention on this hemisphere. It seems to stand on record as a time-honored practical device. If we incline to accept as true this part of the story, we can not say as much of the statement that the conquerors met with a race of giants in the highlands. Still, this fable seems to have been fully believed by the natives, and also later on by the Spaniards. Torquemada, about the year 1605, mentions the event, and allows himself to speak with great latitude about the different races of giants in antiquity, and we may read in Bernal Diez¹ of the impression made upon him when the inhabitants of Cholula laid a thigh-bone before him, which as he measured it with his body was exactly his own height. We know sufficiently well what to think of such giants, in our own times, and that this metaphor is only an exaggerated mode of native expression. The invader, feeling himself unsafe in the new country, either tries to find an excuse for his fear, or after he becomes a victor he thus seeks to give a high sounding proof of his own valor.

These giants of the Atoyac river were called by some *Quinamé*, by others *Quinametin*. An old adage says that much lies in a name. The truth of this proverb finds striking confirmation in many Mexican proper names, whose analysis contains an abundance of hints, without attention to which, difficult questions would have remained unanswered. For example, if we take the word *Quinamé* we recognize in its last syllable *mé*, the plural form of a Nahuatl noun, which in the singular must have been *Quinatli*. If we take the second version of the word *Quinametin*,

¹*Bernal Diez*, *Hist. verdadera, d. l. Conq., d. l. N. Esp.*, Cap. 78: "And they (the Tlaxcallans) said that their ancestors had told them, that in times past there lived amongst them in settlements, men and women of great size, with huge bones; and as they were wicked and of evil disposition, they fought against them and killed them, and those who were left, died out. And that we might see what stature they were of, they brought a bone of one of them, and it was very big, and its height was that of a man of reasonable stature; it was a thigh bone, and I, Bernal Diez, measured myself against it, and it was as tall as I am, who am a man of reasonable stature; and they brought other pieces of bones like the first, but they were already rotted through by the earth, and we were all amazed to see those bones, and held that for certain that there had been giants in that land; and our captain Cortés said to us, that it would be well to send the great bone to Castile that his Majesty might see it; and so we sent it by the first messengers who went."

we find in the last syllable *tin*, an additional Nahuatl plural, which belongs to a second grammatical series of nouns.¹ But what was the meaning in the Nahuatl language of the nouns *quinatl* or *quinamé* we can not find in the Dictionary, even if we look for the initial letters under *q*, or *h*, so nearly related to it. Remembering, however, the fact that Nahuatl and Maya are border languages, and that the theatre of the event chances to be located on the ancient border line of the two nations, the inference is obvious that the word belongs to the Maya idiom. It is therefore an agreeable discovery to find the word *uinac* in one of the oldest Maya dialects, in the *Mame*, with the meaning of *man* or *mankind*, and again to find the same form in the Quiche dialect, while in the Maya proper it is *uinic*, and in the Huasteca *inic*.² From this explanation, it will not be hazarding too much to conclude that the Nahuatl tribes coming from the North, found on the Atoyac river a race of men who called themselves *uinac*—man; and a race, therefore, doubtless of Maya origin. The terminology itself is explicit in the highest degree, and recurs in numberless instances among the primitive tribes of America. In this case the fact itself is of great interest. The primitive Maya word *uinic*, combining with forms taken from the Nahuatl language, gives a certain sort of allusion to the first meeting of the two races. We may go even still further and take it as an evidence that Maya, at that remote epoch, was spoken on the plateau of Tlascala, from which to-day, however, it has entirely disappeared.

Should our treatment of this topic find acceptance and give an incidental explanation to a presumably historical event, we are compelled to dislodge it from the place of honor which it has occupied by having hitherto figured at the head of early Mexican history. The Tultecas, who were the undisputed importers of the Nahuatl language, made their appearance not earlier than in the middle of the sixth century on the plateaux of Anahuac, and the three preceding centuries, as will be shown, are not devoid of data showing a steady and previous conquest of the Maya aborigines by another set of invading foreigners, the so-called Olmecas. As their civilizing influence was not only the primitive but was also the most powerful, we shall place them at the head of the list.

THE OLMECAS.

Neither Cortés nor any of his contemporaneous conquerors make

¹See *Carochi*, Arte Mexicana, Mexico, 1759, page 7, and André de Olmos, 1547, re-edited by Simeon (Remi) Paris, 1875, page 35.

²*Dr. D. G. Brinton*, of Philadelphia, who has purchased the Berendt collection of ancient Maya literature, was so kind as to furnish us with this information, taken from the Maya vocabularies, at our request. Besides, we notice that the word *uinac*, with the aspirated alliteration of *quinac*, is found in places which we know were colonized by Maya people in later centuries. Thus in Honduras and Nicaragua, in the province of Chorotega (properly Choluteca) villages are found with the name of Oroco-guina, Paca-guina, Palaca-guina. That of the famous volcano of Cosi-guina is of the same derivation.

mention in their reports, of a tribe or nation met with on their expeditions that bore this name. It was only through the antiquarian curiosity of the missionaries, that attention was called to the existence of remnants of such a people living on the plateau of Tlascala, in scattered villages, and far off the main track which the Spaniards then took when landing in the port of Vera Cruz to reach the City of Mexico. They were found in thick clusters, forming a large national community, settled from remote times East of the Mexican plateaux, on the slopes of the Atlantic Coast, and in the vast South, in Yucatan, Tabasco and Guatemala, under names so different from each other that centuries have passed away ere the true character of their co-nationality has been brought to light.¹ By misconception they were termed by the natives "the first possessors of the country of New Spain." But how this came to pass and how the main part of colonization, generally attributed to the Tultecas, must in reality be ascribed to the Olmecas, is a fact which will form a part of our discussion and has never been explained.

If we wish to be informed, which portion of the plateau of Tlascala the Olmecas still possessed at the epoch of Torquemada's history, the reader may find it quite clearly defined in the *Monarquia* of this author.² They had been compelled by the intrusion of invading Northern tribes to abandon the comfortable plains, and retire into the mountains South and North. In the Southern portion, besides other small Olmecan places, Torquemada enumerates the important towns of Huexotzinco, Huitzilapan (the town of la Puebla de los Angeles and Orizaba.) The map shows us in what a strong and naturally well-defended region they lived. To the North the broad cross chain of the Sierra Matlalcueye protected them. Anyone coming from the East or from the coast could only reach them through the passes of Orizaba. On the West they were safely separated from Anahuac by their nearness to Huetzotzinco, the pass which divides the volcanoes of Popocatepetl and Ixtaczihuatl. On the South the long chain of mountains traversing the Mexican Isthmus fixes the limits of the Tlascala high valley and furnishes them protection. In the northern corner, the Olmecas grouped themselves around Zacatlan, and also at the Southern slopes of the Sierra Madre and of the Sierra Metztitlan. Cortés, on his march from Tlascala to Anahuac, through the pass of Huexotzinco, went through the territory of the Southern Olmecas, and saw there remnants of old walls which had again been imperfectly repaired in order to resist him. Later investigations reveal long extended defences through this whole Southern territory. When the Nahoas invaded this country from the North they found on

¹It is but fair to mention at this place that through the industry of two scholars, the Mexican savant, Dr. Don Orozco y Berra, and the German, Dr. H. Berendt, the first steps were made, and mainly in the direction of linguistic research, which have led to the recognition of this ethnologic fact.

²Torquemada (Juan de) *Monarquia de la Indias* [written about the year 1590], Libro III., Cap. 8, 9 and 18.

one of the high peaks of the Matlalcueye Mountains a stone statue, representing Tlaloc, the God of Rain, whose worship had been either long respected by them, or was tolerated from prudence and afterwards adopted. Also in the North, in the Sierra of Metztilan, sculptures have been found which bear no relation to the religion of the Nahoas and are of a different period, and Boturini¹ saw upon a high rock of the mountain a *tau* (T) painted in blue with the color still well preserved, and at the right of it five small white balls.

The Olmecas themselves still narrated with pride that they were the first colonists of these regions until the Tlascaltecas and the Teochichimecas came and took from them the best part of the land and forced them to leave the country. They still remembered their genealogy in a fragmentary way, and enumerated the names of their chiefs in succession, each of whom had reigned eighty years, as they reported. At the head of this list stands *Omeacatl*. If it could be ascertained that this name was merely corrupted from *Olmecatl*, it would give confirmatory evidence of the conception we have formed concerning them, and which they themselves seemed to have entertained. But their so-called forced migrations prove, on closer investigation, of no great extent. They only prove that the union of their settlements in the high plateau of Tlascala was interrupted about the year 1100 A. D., and the middle territory was occupied by the victorious Tlascaltecas (as we already know) until the time of the conquest. The Olmecas complained loudly that these invaders had occupied the best part of their land, and had succeeded in driving many families to the North and South side of the middle zone of the high plateaux, while others were forced to retreat East and West, and a portion of them came back and accepted the new conditions. The chroniclers make no mention of a language peculiar to the Olmecas, and we know of no catechism or vocabulary attributed to them. They seem to have accepted the Nahoia idiom of the Tlascaltecas, but to have spoken it with a foreign dialect that was strange to the Tlascaltecas, and also to the Mexicans of Anahuac. For this reason those of them who had settled in the North around Zacatlan were called by the natives *Tenimes*, Stutterers, a name which is preserved in a part of the Sierra Madre by the designation Sierra de Tenamitic. Those living on the Southern mountains of Tlascala were called Populucas, a name which recurs in other places, and which the Nahoas understood as designating a foreign people who had amalgamated with them.

An interpretation of the name Olmeca has been attempted by Buschmann, in whose correct studies and investigations we can always place much confidence. He has great doubts as to the word being of Nahuatl

¹*Boturini*, *Idea d. u. nueva Historia General*, page 50, Madrid, 1746. This *tau* is not a Nahuatl but a Maya symbol for one of their Calendar-days. It doubtless performs this function on the Palenque slabs, on account of the number of bars and points that stand by it.

origin. "If it is Nahuatl," he says, "the word *Olmecatli* must contain in its first syllables the name of the place *Olman*, while *mecatli* is the ending for those names and places which end in *man*. Those, however, who prefer *Hulmecca*, which is the orthography employed by Torquemada, can not fail to recognize in the root the word *olli* or *hule*, rubber." That the Nahoas should have called the Olmecas a Rubber People can not surprise us more than the designation they gave to other neighboring tribes, as the Zapotecas and the Xicalancas. They named the inhabitants from the chief products found in their territories, or which they procured from them. The *xicara* is a tree gourd from which the natives even at the present time make their drinking vessels, and their utensils for washing and for the kitchen. The *zapote* is a soft apple from which meal is produced to be used in case of a bad harvest of corn, in making a variety of tortilla much liked by the natives. The *hule*, on the contrary, is the thickened juice of *Castilleja edulis*, which among natives so much given to ornamental finery was used to fasten feathers to their diadems, helmets and cassocks, and to light the fires in their vessels containing copal used at their sacrificial ceremonies. To explain the name *Hulmecca* from the large production and use of this valuable sap, is at least very reasonable, but has the appearance of an afterthought. It will be preferable to derive the word from *Oloman*, for this is the proper name of one of the four principal leaders of the conquering immigrants, as we shall see hereafter, with whose tribe the Nahoas probably first came in contact, and they may have named the neighboring settlements from it.¹ Buschmann's purely linguistic conjecture thus receives from the discovery of the name *Oloman* a valuable historical confirmation.

The present extent of the high plateau of *Tlascalala*, however, seems to have been but a small portion of the ancient territory of the Olmecas. Without contradiction from any source, *Sahagun*², in a broader and more antiquarian sense, describes the whole of the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, from *Tampico* Southward to the *Laguna de Terminos*, as the old territory of the Olmecas, which his contemporaries, the Nahoas, indicated to him by that name. They informed him that the Northern part of this territory was still known among *Nahoa* natives by the name *Olmeca-Vitzoti*, while the Southern portion bore the name *Olmeca-Xicalanca*. He does not say what tribe dwelt between these two territories. He cared to collect only what the natives knew and had preserved about the Olmecas, whom they recognized as the most ancient people, and, indeed, their notions about those things seem to have been

¹*Oloman* recurs repeatedly in *Popol-Vuh* as being one of the most ancient chieftains of the *Quiche* (Maya) tribe. He is mentioned together with *Tepeu*, *Cohah*, *Quenech* and *Ahau*. In the *Katunes of Maya History*, § 1, he seems to appear under the name "Holon-Chan-Tepeuh and his followers." *Proceedings Am. Ant. Soc.*, Oct. 1879.

²*Sahagun* (*Hist. d. l. Conquista d. l. Nueva España in Kingsbor. Coll.*, Vol. VII., Lib. III., Cap. XIX., § 12, and the end of § 14.

exceedingly vague. Let us therefore supplement this omission by stating that on the coast similar changes of occupation had occurred as on the high plateaux. While there the Tlascaltecas had broken the unity of the Olmecas, a new tribe of Naho descent had shifted towards the coast and divided the Olmecas who resided on the seaboard into a Northern and a Southern portion. This tribe was known as the *Totonacas*. Their chief town was Cempoalla, and they were the first to salute Cortés as the long-expected deliverer Quetzalcohuatl, and who drew his attention to "the riches of *Colhua* and *Mexico*." They enabled him by their friendly offices to penetrate to Anahuac, and protected him later in his retreat to the coast.

Let us now turn to what Sahagun reports concerning the territory of the old Olmeca-Viztoti, which was known to his contemporaries by the name *Huasteca* or *Cuezteca*. Inhabiting both sides of the river Panuco, they extended downwards to near the Tecolutla river. On the Western side they bordered on the limits of tribes not particularly described, and on the East were the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, where the alluvium from the rivers had formed the great bayous of Tampico, Tamiagua and Tuspan. Of the ruins which are left there only the great *teocalli*, the pyramids of Papantla and Misantla are known. But this district has hardly been explored at all. Besides other reasons to be hereafter stated, we have the following grounds for believing that it is here we must look for the so-called *Tamoanchan*, very often mentioned in historical accounts as the supposed starting point of prehistoric civilization. The names of places in no part of Central America and Mexico begin with *Tam*, while alone near the mouth of the river Panuco and the Laguna of Tamiagua we find such names in great abundance.¹ (See map.) It is true the word *Tamoanchan* does not appear on our maps, but the similarity of sound induces us to associate it with the others, and to ask the question what was really the meaning of the *tam* so frequently recurring in the language of the Huastecas. Of this the grammar and vocabulary of Father Tapia Zenteno,² which appeared in Mexico in the year 1767, affords us information, and we find that *tam* may mean both a *canoe*, and a *son* when his mother calls him. But if used in connection with the names of places, it is equivalent to *there are*, and Zenteno gives a variety of examples. Now, if the second syllable *oan* expresses the local adverb *where*, according to Zenteno's vocabulary (page 45), and the last syllable *chan* or *tzan* means a *serpent*, we have a pure Huastecan word which means *the place where serpents live*. We can safely change the word serpent for priest or sorcerer, as according to the use of the Central American languages either interpretation would be correct. If people

¹As we had no room to write them out on the map, they shall be enumerated here in full: Tamaulipa, Tampico, Tamesin, Tamiagua, Tampazquin, Tampacan, Tamuy, Tampaol, Tamguyo, and probably many more of the kind, not written on the map of V. A. Malte Brun, in Brasseur's Hist. d. Nat. Civ. du Mexique.

²*Carlos de Tapia Zenteno*, Noticia sobre la Huasteca, Mexico, 1767.

speaking of snakes they always add a description of the particular kind they wish to indicate.

The language of the Huastecas is one of the many dialects which belong to the great Maya stock. We have seen above that while the *Tenimes* of the Olmecas in the Northern valley of Tlascalala learned and spoke the Nahua idiom, but never were able to reach that elegance with which it was spoken at Tezcuco, the portion of the Olmecas living beyond the mountains of Tlascalala and residing on the Atlantic slopes and in the Huasteca proper had preserved their parent idiom, the Maya.¹ The Nahoas and these Huastecas did not understand each other. The civilized Mexicans politely called the Huastecas "*tohueyo*, our neighbors," but the common people are said to have called them by various bad names. They ridiculed their teeth, which they used to file to a point and to color black, and found fault with the red and yellow color of their hair and with their indecency in not wearing a *maxtli*. But they were held to be very rich. The women wove cotton into the finest fabrics. They made holes in their noses and ears and suspended therefrom green stones set in gold rings. Their arms and feet they ornamented with ruffles made of feathers, and around their necks and heads they wore frills in the form of fans. From this description of Sahagun,² we might believe that he had taken his information, not from the lips of the natives but from some of the many sculptures of the Maya race, from Huasteca to Yucatan, and as far as Palenque and Copan. Sahagun also mentions this fact, that the Huastecas cut off the heads from captive and fallen foes, as we see often in those sculptures where a head hangs from the richly ornamented girdle of a victor,³ while in regard to their Totonacan neighbors, he informs us (l. c. § 9) that they lived in a more civilized way, probably on account of their kinship to the Nahoas stock. These Totonacas, like the Huastecas, had strikingly low foreheads, but they shaved them artistically, and their faces being much longer gave them a better appearance. They made use of mirrors and never neglected to put on a *maxtli* under the *huipil*, which was woven like a net. They also delighted to ornament themselves with gold and feathers, which, as they were worn by men of a whiter color, more strongly built and having nobler countenances than their neighbors, gave them a splendid appearance. One part of the Totonacas spoke the Otomi, another the Nahoas, and a third part the Huasteca dialect, which

¹C. Hermann Berendt, Remarks on the Centres of Ancient Civilization in C. America; Address before the Amer. Geogr. Society of New York, July 10th, 1876, page 10.

²B. d. Sahagun, Lib. X., Cap. 14, parrafo 10.

³Stone statues of this description are exhibited in the rooms of the New York Historical Society. For heads cut off and hanging down from the girdle, see illustration given by J. Lloyd Stephens, Central America, etc., Vol. II., page 353, and Ph. J. J. Valentini, Two Mex. Chalchihuites, page 13, Proceedings Am. Ant. Soc., April, 1881.

remark designates plainly the territory of such tribes as they had invaded.

The Olmeca-Xicalancas are said to have lived South of the Totonacas.¹ The chroniclers add nothing regarding them except that the name Xicalanca still survives in two places on the coast of the Gulf, the one in the neighborhood of Vera Cruz, the other upon one of the islands lying near the Laguna de Terminos. The first had been a market very much resorted to; the other is still somewhat frequented to-day for the same purpose. At the time of the conquest, the territory of the Southern part from the Totonacas downwards beyond Tabasco was variously designated. The Mexicans called the coast from Vera Cruz to the mouths of the river Alvarado *Chalchihuecan* (the land of green mussels). From here to the mouths of the Guatzacoalco the coast was called *Anahuac-Xicalanco* (Xicalanco by the water). Then followed the present territory of Tabasco with the name *Nonohualco* (the land of Nonohual). The interior of the country directly West bore the name *Cueltachilan* (the land of wolves²). It is important to note that Mexican tradition designates the whole of these Atlantic slopes and coast as the land of the early Olmecas. The reason is probably because about the year 1100 the highlands of Mexico were overrun by several Nahoas tribes, and the former inhabitants were driven slowly towards the coast, as we have already seen in the case of the Totonacas who stopped only at the sea. Other Nahoas, more adventurous, spread themselves further, and we have strong historical proof of their appearance and occupation in Yucatan at this same period.³

When, therefore, the name of the Olmecas appears in the early Mexican records of the Nahoas, we must not hesitate to recognize in them that people East of Anahuac who spread along the Atlantic slopes and South of it through Yucatan, Tabasco and the whole of Guatemala, and whom we designate to-day by the collective name of Maya. The Nahoas never attempted to bring them into subjection, for although we find the Northern highlands of Tlascalala and the coast of the Totonacas occupied by Nahoas, and their language still spoken, their success was achieved slowly, and with qualifications, in a long period of years, beginning with the year 1064. Before this epoch, the Olmecas, when hard pressed, retired to the Northern mountains of Tlascalala or returned after the lapse of years to places on the plain which had remained unoccupied, and

¹*Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl*, Relaciones Historicas, Tom. I., Cap. 1, in Kingsbor. Coll., Vol. IX. *Las Casas*, Historia Apologetica, Tom. III, Cap. 123. *Juan de Torquemada*, Monarq. Indiana, Tom. 1, Cap. 23, and Tom. III., Cap. 8, Madrid, 1613. Francisco Lopez de Gomara, Historia gen. d. l. Indias, Cap. 66, Zaragoza, 1552. *Codex Vaticanus*. Kingsbor. Coll., Vol. II., plate 91. *Mar. Veytia*, in Kingsbor. Coll., Vol. VIII., Tom. 1, Cap. 12.

²See the map.

³*Ph. J. J. Valentini*, Katunes of Maya History, Proceedings of Am. Ant. Society, Worcester, Mass., Oct., 1879, page 44.

which Acosta, Torquemada and others have designated as Yancuictlapan-Huapalcalco, Texoloc and Huexotzinco. Here they began peacefully to mingle with the Nahoas and to construct that peculiar dialect, which the Spaniards were unable to decide, whether it was more nearly related to the Nahuatl, or to the Olmeca. The Olmecas, therefore, as primitive owners of the soil, were those who taught the needy immigrating Nahoas the secrets of their country. Nowhere can we detect any evidence that the Nahoas or Mayas, impelled by mutual hatred or religious zeal, had ever sought to exterminate each other. Land for settlements and for agricultural purposes could be obtained in abundance. Covetous encroachments of the poorer immigrants against the possessors of the soil, and altercations and violence on the border-land no doubt existed. It was only after the year 1064 that serious troubles began to affect them, of which it is not our purpose to speak here. If the ancient Nahoas, well known to us under the name of Tultecas, had really brought with them from their Northern homes the worship of the sun, we see on the other hand the worship of the ancient and venerable *Tlaloc*, the God of Clouds and Rain, of the Mayas preserved among them. This worship was also continued by the fanatical Aztecs, of whom we read that they had built for him a chapel, with his statue inside, on the platform of the large Pyramid near to that of their own God Huitzilopochtli.

We may add that as at the time of the Conquest those Mayas who had settled in companies on the Pacific Coast from Nicaragua as far down as Nicoya were also designated by the name of Olmecas.¹ It is stated that they had been expelled from Cholula and driven there about the year 1100. This statement will be confirmed when we examine the vocabulary collected in Nicaragua by the historian Oviedo, in 1530. It shows a strong intermixture of Maya and Nahuatl words, the latter imported by a party of Mexicans, who about the year 1350 made a sudden appearance and settled in the midst of the Olmecas along the shores of the Lake of Nicaragua. By this invasion this new Olmeca ground was divided into two portions, the Northern called Choluteca, and the Southern Nicoya, both names being still preserved. Oviedo² spells it Chorotega, and observes sagaciously that the invaders spoke a different language from the former settlers, however, without stating the descent of these two colonists, or the events that had caused them to settle at such a distance from their original home. As a proof that Maya was spoken by these invading Olmecas, we may mention the following fact: Gil Gonzalez de Avila, the first conqueror of Nicaragua, reported to the Crown of Spain that the cacique of Nicoya had furnished him with a messenger, to tell the cacique of Nicaragua that all the *Calachuni* in his country were already converted to Christ. In *Calachuni* we must certainly recognize the *halach uinic* or the *holy men* of the Maya

¹Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquía Indiana*, Lib. III., Cap. 39.

²G. F. de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia Gen. y Nat. d. las Indias*, Tomo IV., Appendix.

language. Thus, very probably, all the sculptures discovered by E. G. Squier¹ upon the islands of the Nicaraguan Lake derive their origin from those Cholutecan Olmecas, an opinion which is highly corroborated by the similarity to those found in Huasteca, Yucatan and Mexico in general.

THE TULTECAS.

It appears like a contradiction when we propose to treat of Tultecas, and declare at the very commencement that strictly speaking no nation of Tultecas, nor empire, nor language of that name ever existed. Had their existence been a fact, there would have undoubtedly remained a collection of families in some corner of Central America and Mexico, which would look back with pride to the works of their forefathers, and which would have called their new home, however circumscribed its limits, *Tulteca*, and themselves the *Tultecas*; if so great an empire as is pretended had ever been destroyed. The missionaries would have traced them, and we should now meet their languages in grammars, catechisms and vocabularies. But of such records no vestiges remain. The contradiction, however, will be removed if we remind the reader of the fact that a tribe came from the North to Anahuac about the year 600 A. D., and settled near the lakes of Tenochtitlan and Tezcuco, gaining some prominence on this central spot; and if its language had only been preserved we should therein possess material in their idiom, different from that of the Olmecan-Maya, from which to draw sure inferences as to their preëminent intelligence, their high social civilization and their skill in all practical works appertaining to art and luxury. What we intend to emphasize, is our protest against the general opinion that this tribe ever called itself Tultecas, and that the people and tribes among whom it settled ever called it by that name.

It is not difficult to understand what contributed to the promulgation and final adoption of this name in history, when we consult the rich material left us by the chroniclers. Alva de Ixtlilxochitl, a Spanish half-breed, who was descended on his mother's side from the noble house of Tezcuco, was the author of two voluminous works,² in which he has described the history of his mother's people from the time of "the Great Deluge to the Spanish Conquest." Understanding their language, and possessing besides the complete annals of his people and knowing how to explain in fitting words their historical pictures, he felt a praiseworthy ambition to protect his race against the poor and disfiguring scribbling of the Spanish missionaries, and to present himself as an authority in his people's history, more competent and more fully informed than they were. We will not discuss here wherein he also often fell into

¹E. G. Squier, Nicaragua, its People, Scenery, Monuments, etc.; 2 vols., New York, 1852.

²Fern. de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, Relaciones Historicas; Id. Historia Chichimeca; both in Kingsbor. Coll., Vol. IX.

error, and wherein we must set him down as a very confused chronologist. The great value of his work, for our purpose, consists in the supposition that among the pictured annals which he had before his eyes when he wrote, a sheet must have existed upon which the Exodus of the "Tultec Knights" (as he calls them) from the North to Anahuac with corresponding chronological signs was pictured, and that he describes to us their halting places, step by step, in a most circumstantial manner. It is to be regretted that this sheet, as well as all the others from which he worked, has been lost. The government of New Spain ordered these drawings with his MSS. to be given up, and forbade their printing and publication. Boturini (about 1760) rescued them from the archives, but he also was forced to give them up, and they were handed over to Veytia¹ for inspection and criticism. He examined the pictures and the text of Ixtlilxochitl, and his labors were afterwards published. But the pictures themselves have disappeared, and some traces indicate that they found their way to France, while others denote that they were carried to England. The strongest proof that Ixtlilxochitl possessed pictures of that kind, rests on his own description of the Tultec Exodus. It is detailed so accurately that any one who has obtained a sufficient familiarity with Mexican picture-writing, might almost feel enabled to undertake a reconstruction of the sheet from Ixtlilxochitl's text.

We can not refrain from giving this text, though in greatly abridged form.

"In a town, Tlachicatzin, in the territory Hue-Tlapallan, two chiefs named Chalcatzin and Tlacamitzin rose against the laws and existing order of things in the year 1 Tecpatl² (equivalent to the year 544 B. C.). Punished with exile, they some time later tried their fortunes in war. But finally they found themselves obliged to fly and leave the country, and upon their way reaching the settlements of Tlaxiculiacan and uniting with the troops of related families living there, together they arrived at the settlement of Tlapallanconco. Here they husbanded their strength for three years, and after holding a council with five other chiefs, they decided to migrate still farther, because their enemies were too near to them. Their astrologer, Huematzin (the man with the long hand) had told them of a far-distant land in the East where once the Quinametin had lived, who had been exterminated a long time ago, and whose territory was now without inhabitants and ready for occupancy. It was thought best to leave at Tlapallanconco some representatives, and then move onward. After a

¹*Mar. Fern. de Veytia y Echeverria*, *Historia del Orijen*, d. I. Gentes, etc., in Kingsbor. Coll., Vol. VIII.

²This date 1 Tecpatl is well warranted, both by estimation and computation, as being equivalent to 544 after Christ. The name 1 Tecpatl itself stands in Mexican chronology for every first year of the great period of 52 years. The then succeeding smaller epochs of 13 years (Tlapilli) begin with the years 1 Calli, 1 Tochtli and 1 Acatl.

twelve days' march they came to a fertile region which they called Huey-Xallan.¹ Here they celebrated in the year 1 Calli their *first thirteenth year (tlapilli)* since their departure. They then proceeded on and came to Xalisco by the sea, and remained there eight years and left there some of their people, and then settled for five years at Chimalhuacan Atenco, which also lay near the sea. Twenty-six years had now elapsed since their departure. When leaving their homes they had made a solemn vow to keep themselves from their wives, in order that, free from the burden of children, they might sooner reach their destination. The time covered by their vow having now elapsed, at that place they celebrated their first conjugal feast and then directed their steps to Toxpan,² which they reached after a march of eighteen days. During the five years they had passed at Toxpan their force had begun to increase in numbers, and they moved on and selected the spot Quiyahuitzlan Atenco (near the sea),³ for a settlement, where they were obliged to build boats in order to spread themselves among the islands more easily. After they had passed six years in this locality they went to Zacatlan,⁴ where they remained seven years, and then to Totzapan⁵ for six years. From thence they went to Tepetla,⁶ staying seven years, and then to Mazatepec,⁷ eight years. In Zihcohuatl⁸ they passed eight years, and in Iztachuexucha,⁹ situated farther north, they remained twenty-six years. From that place they moved to Tulantzinco,¹⁰ where the tribe was sheltered in a large wooden building and lived there about eighteen years. But at last they preferred to change that place for Tullan, where they remained in order to make it their final resting place. (648 B. C.)"

They had spent 104 years in their journey, a distance of about 1200 miles in a direct line, and Ixtlilxochitl does not mention what people and tribes they encountered during this time, only that on their arrival at Tullan, he says that the Chichimecas had become their neighbors, with whom they began to stir up trouble. Then by the advice of Huematzin, they sent an embassy to the King of the Chichimecas with the request that he should give them a King of his own family, who met this overture in a friendly way and promised that then, and for all future time they should remain unmolested, and that both tribes should live together in peace.

¹It is the Huichola of to-day.

²East of the volcano of Colima, to-day Tuxpan.

³Corrupted to Cavistan to-day.

⁴Zacatlolan, at the mouth of the Mescala river.

⁵Totzapan on the maps of to-day.

⁶Probably the Tepeacuilco of the modern maps.

⁷Increased to Temazatepec to-day.

⁸Recognizable in Xuchicoatlan.

⁹Iztac-huechucha, the place of the white willows; to-day Huechutla.

¹⁰Tulan-Tzinco; translated Little Tulan.

This description of the march is as clear as any of that time can be expected to be. With the exception of a few of the halting places, all other localities can be traced with certainty upon almost any good Mexican map.¹ Here and there Ixtlilxochitl's manner of spelling differs from the modern. For the nominal seat of the rebels, which the author calls Tlachicatzin, we do not need to look, because it was not the name of a place but of a person, and signifies "the Lord of the place where the Ball House stands." The mysterious Tlapallan of the North, we should place, from circumstances before mentioned, in the neighborhood of Culiacan, that is in the present state of Sinaloa. The hieroglyphic symbols designating their halts, the number of years of their stay, the number of years passed in going from place to place, the footprints marking the connecting lines, the hieroglyphic symbols for the names of individuals, the settlements they left on their march, and the chronological marks for the epoch of 13 years (Tlapilli), must have all been spread before the Indian writer on that pictured sheet. His otherwise too dry description, he endeavored to enliven by interspersing phrases of their heroic poetry. In the ensuing enumeration of the chiefs who reigned at Tollan (all of them being preserved in the other chronicles and works, with modifications which change nothing in the substance), Ixtlilxochitl makes a statement which has been much ridiculed. A law, he says, had been passed by the tribe that a chief should not be allowed to reign more than 52 years. A better understanding of this seemingly impracticable rule will probably be reached, by considering it as sanctioning an old or introducing a new division of time, by which, as is well-known, the space of 52 years was regarded as a cycle. "Then Huematzin died," so we read, "on reaching the great age of 300 years. But before his death he had nevertheless completed the Teoamochtli, a book which contained the laws, the astrology, the division of time, the sacred rites and the whole science of his people." A perfect copy of the Teoamochtli (book of the gods) has not indeed been preserved. The so-called Dresden Codex, the Codex Tro, the Codex Vaticanus and others, are only fragments of similar compositions describing their ritual compositions. But the real existence of such a pictured Pandect-like collection can not be doubted in the least. Less credible appears the story of the prolonged life of Huematzin, the man with the great hand. But we shall not be mistaken, if we consider the statement of the death of Huematzin at 300 years of age, as a metaphor to be interpreted, that at the time of the settlement at Tullan, the reign of the priesthood came to an end and a new secular reign began. The mentioned period of 300 years still remains of interest. If we should count this period back from the foundation of Tullan (648—300=348) we have the year 348 B. C., but if we venture to count back from the time of the exodus from Huetlapallan, we should have

¹We have taken as a guide the folio map of Antonio Garcia Cubas, Mexico, 1880.

(544 — 300 = 244) the year 244 B. C. This is about the middle of the third century, at which time, according to other calculations (see above) the beginning of an era of the Mexican nations seems to have fallen.

Alva de Ixtlilxochitl says, that Huematzin also left prophecies of the good and bad fortune which his tribe would meet, and that they all took place even to the smallest details. We must not wonder at that, for they were after constructions, which later generations of his tribe have attributed to him out of respect.

Only a short time afterwards the settlers at Tullan received an addition of men of a similar language, religion and race. They also came from the neighborhood of Culiacan; they had, however, taken a shorter and more direct road thence through Michoacan and Anahuac, and they had spent only 40 years in this migration. They were the so-called Mixcohuas, with whom Brasseur first made us acquainted by his translation from the Codex Chimalpopoca, written in the Nahuatl idiom. As to the substance of this work, it surpasses in completeness and importance every other work of its kind, and a new critical translation which is in preparation, promises the student more correct material than he ever had before without probably varying the leading features. This tribe of Nahoas came also to seek land for a settlement. From the account before us, suggestions can be gathered that they had put themselves in communication with their co-nationalists at Tullan, and that they had made and ratified a treaty with them on the plains of Teotihuacan, by which they were allowed to occupy the plateau of Anahuac with its lakes, and settle at Quauhtitlan, but chiefly at Colhuacan. These Mixcohuas outlived their brother-tribe at Tullan for many centuries. The latter was already dispersed in the year 1064, while their brethren at Colhuacan resisted the invasion of the Chichimecas, in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It is narrated that in the year 1376 the ruler of Colhuacan gave a chief of his own blood to the recently-arrived tribe of the Aztecs, at their own request. These inhabitants of Colhuacan were always noted for speaking the Nahuatl tongue with the greatest elegance, and for having been the founders of the beautiful town of Tezcuco. When Cortes on landing inquired who ruled in the highlands, he was answered: The Mexicans and the Colhuas. Neither Cortes, nor any of his generals who advanced still farther heard of Tullan, or of the Tultecas, evidently because the tribe as such had become extinct five centuries before, and portions of it had already been absorbed into other tribes.

After all, Alva de Ixtlilxochitl was not incorrect in regarding Tullan and its ancient inhabitants as a prehistoric people, and in calling them Tultecas. He was well acquainted with their palaces and temples, which then were in ruins, for he often refers to them as being memorable and splendid antiquities, and it must have been well known to him that his tribe (for he was a Colhuan) did not found and inhabit those ancient towns which extended as far as Yucatan, Chiapas and Guatemala,

since he does not intimate that his tribe had ever gloried in having erected such buildings as there exist, or had spread itself over such a large extent of territory. Hence we can readily understand, why Ixtlilxochitl should have attributed all this work to that ancient tribe of Tullan, which had long ago passed from existence. He must also have been acquainted with the appellation *Tultecatl*, so common among his own people, signifying a man skilled in all arts and handicrafts. He therefore had an inducement to state his impression, that these Tultecatl had been the early colonists and builders of the cities then in ruins. We have no objection to the derivation of the word *tultecatl* from Tullan. It seems everywhere the custom of the villagers, to look up to those living in the capital or chief town, as men of large experience in arts, and to apply such designation in a wider sense also to persons and things. But as we can not prove that Tullan was the only or principal cradle of art and science, from which place they spread through the country, we have no right to speak of the architecture of the Tultecas or of their great empire, for, in respect to art treasures the highlands of Mexico make only a poor display, while the majority of them are found in Yucatan, Tabasco and Chiapas, in fact in such territories as were inhabited by the Mayas, and which were occupied by the Nahoas only at a very late date (1100-1200 A. D.), and at a time long after the stones composing these edifices had been placed in position, and had already begun to crumble away.

Thus far we have made ourselves acquainted with the theories regarding the prehistoric Olmecas and Tultecas, which were entertained at the time of the Conquest; we have grouped their settlements territorially and linguistically, and have endeavored to give a correct chronological sequence to their movements. Now we will undertake another task which springs naturally from the subject, viz: to discover what our authorities will allow us to fix upon (1) as the points of departure, (2) the line of march, and (3) the final resting places of the ancient tribes of Olmecas and Tultecas. Some of these questions have already been partially answered. But it still remains for us to discover in regard to the Tultecas, whence they came into that territory, from which Alva de Ixtlilxochitl, without any prior historical statement, describes their descent to Tullan. It is not possible that a people making use of a language so perfect and expressive could have come into sudden existence over night, like the mushroom, in the darkness of Culiacan. Such a people must of necessity date from the past, and possess a rich history. But no traces of such development and actual occupation can be found in the neighborhood of Culiacan. The attempt has been made to represent the buildings of the Zuñis and the Cliff Dwellers as the first essays of an architecture, which we admire so much in its higher perfection in the ruined palaces of Mexico, and particularly in those of Yucatan. To believe in such a *salto mortale* would not be possible for anyone, who has made himself at all familiar with the first principles of

architecture and tectonics. It is not easy to comprehend, indeed it is impossible to understand, how a people accustomed to erect high-storied buildings with windows in them, and who instead of entering from the ground floor by doors, climbed to the higher stories by ladders and descended again the same way, could arrive in the progress of time and architectural development to build houses of *one story only on pyramidal mounds*, and to make them without windows but always provided with *doors*, and to roof this story with a remarkably massive platform. The protoplasm of Tultec architecture can hardly have originated in the head of a Zuñi or of a Cliff dweller. It is difficult also to comprehend that the Tultecas should have made settlements so far Northward as the Zuñi live. Had this been the case, among the many heads of animals found among Mexican hieroglyphics, we should have detected at least one of them resembling the characteristic buffalo, but we do not meet with the slightest trace of it. Therefore, deeming it preposterous to place the cradle of the Tultecas in the far North, we will no longer dwell on this hypothesis, but we will, on the contrary, endeavor to show, that according to the best indications the Tultecas must have first started from the East, and in particular from the coast of the Mexican Gulf, and thence have migrated in a North-westerly direction not very much farther North than Culiacan. As regards the Olmecas, whom we have learned from traditon landed at Panuco on the Gulf Coast, we will endeavor to answer this further question, how these *magicians* (for with this name the savage Maya Indians always designated them) could step by step establish themselves along the Gulf Coast as far as Golfo Dulce and Copan, and could impress upon the intervening territory and people, a civilization whose origin and character is still so enigmatical a problem to the modern student.

We will begin with the first acts of the Olmecas on the Panuco coast, the coast of Tam, as we may call it. Three authorities are at our disposal for this purpose—Sahagun, the Codex Chimalpopoca and the Popul Vuh. In the first two we find stated the ideas entertained by the Nahoas writers regarding the Tultecas, and in the third the ideas entertained by the Maya writers respecting the Olmecas. As to the Codex Chimalpopoca and the Popul Vuh, the accounts given agree only in their first chapters. They inform us how, after many fruitless attempts, man was created, or as we should state it in modern prose, divested of poetical phraseology, how the rude savage was led step by step to civilization. Then follow in both works the account of certain catastrophes caused by atmospheric changes and volcanic eruptions which hindered but did not entirely put an end to the civilization already well advanced, and left a portion of the inhabitants unharmed to carry on the work. From this point these two authorities are at variance. The Nahoas (Codex Chimalpopoca) is occupied with the early history of the tribe, which is set down in fixed chronological sequence from the year

596 A. D. to the time of the Conquest (1521 A. D.). Our attention is turned immediately after the narration of physical convulsions to the consideration of particular localities, such as Anahuac and Teotihuacan. Another Nahoia tribe, not the Tultec tribe of Ixtlilxochitl, but one which afterwards came from the North and which is called the Mixcohuas, from the name of its leader, is described to us as celebrating in Teotihuacan a great religious ceremony, probably in connection with its neighbors from Tullan. The Maya chronicle (the Popul Vuh), on the other hand, goes on to state that the leader Gucumatz remained for a long time at Tamoanchan enduring great privations, until he secured provisions for his people and guides for his further progress in countries yet unknown to him, at Paxil and Cayalà (which localities we shall endeavor to designate hereafter). From here we are abruptly transferred by the author to Camuhibal and Xibalba, localities which, in spite of the obscurity which surrounds them, can be sufficiently well ascertained from the statement that great deeds were enacted there "in the *Seven Caverns*." From here they were frightened away and wandered for a long time with their god Tohil at their head, suffering great hardships and privations, till we are able to locate them on their arrival at Guatemala. We can follow them to-day on their route by the names of the places Mixtan, Cavistan and Avilitz, which they passed through, accompanied by a tribe called the Yaqui.¹ The whole narration is of loose coherence, without any chronological statement of time. Only a few circumstantial indications of historical dates can be elicited from this Maya authority (the Popul Vuh). The described migration hardly falls in the early epochs of Tultecan and Colhua wanderings. Our impression is that it rather occurred in the epoch of the eleventh and twelfth century, and that the Quiche tribe, whose fate and exploits the author of the Popul Vuh narrates, broke up from the North of Culiacan at about the same epoch when the seven Chichimecan hordes began to invade Anahuac, but that the Quiches went farther South and finally settled in Guatemala.

While the Maya and the Nahuatl authorities may differ somewhat from each other in regard to the earliest events of their history, the substance of their narrations is strikingly identical, and it is only when passing to the narration of later events, that each of these authors endeavors to give an account of his own tribe. The inference, therefore, is easily suggested that both people may originally have sprung from the same source, and that at a later time they may have separated from each other and each followed its own fortunes by a different path. When they again encountered each other after the lapse of centuries, each of them may have been so entirely changed that recognition was difficult, if not entirely impossible. After what has been stated such an hypothesis is reasonably justified, and should not be instantly rejected. But from what follows it will be seen that there are positive grounds for advancing this hypothesis to the rank of a fact.

¹The Nahoia people appear in the chronicles of the Quiche and Cacchiquels always under the name of Yaqui.

To secure this fact, we must now refer to our third source of information, to the report which Sahagun has left us regarding the prehistoric Mexicans. Sahagun is often quoted, and extracts from his works have been made by most modern writers upon this subject. We are therefore astonished to find, that certain statements which corroborate the views we have advanced above, have hitherto escaped the attention of the readers of these records. As we intend to submit this chapter of Sahagun to close inspection it will be desirable to translate the text as literally as possible, omitting only certain of the longer passages.

SAHAGUN "CONCERNING THE MEXICANS."¹

Numberless years ago the first settlers came in ships and landed at a Northern port, which from that cause was called Panutla, now Pantlan. These travellers, having the snow-covered mountains and the volcanoes always in sight, began their journey with a priest at their head, who carried their God before them, and in this way they finally came down as far as Guatemala.

Still their first settlement was Tamoanchan, where they remained for a long time under the constant direction of their Priests and Soothsayers, the Amoaxagues, who understood how to prepare their pictured annals. Though they all had travelled together, they (the Priests) separated themselves from them and carried away all the pictured annals, in which their sacred rites and acts had been described. But before they left they made the following statements to those that remained behind: "Know that your God lays upon you the command to remain in this country. He makes you lords and proprietors of it. Your God will return from whence he came and we will accompany him."

Of all those wise men only four remained behind. They were Oxomogo, Cipactonal, Tlaltecucic and Suchicoaco. When they were alone they held counsel among themselves and said: A time will come when there must be light and when our community will need laws for its guidance. But how shall we govern this people while their God is absent? They have taken away our Books; what can we do without the advice of Astrology and the interpretation of dreams? At once they set to work and made a reckoning of the days and nights and of the Division of Time, and this reckoning has always been observed, so long as the Tultecas, the Mexicans, the Tecpanecas and all the Chichimecas possessed a government. Only it is not possible to discover distinctly from this reckoning how long they remained at Tamoanchan; but it was well known that this had been stated in the Books that had been burned in the reign of the King Itzcohuatl.

From Tamoanchan they then went to a town called Teotiuacan, and here they took steps for the election of a leader. Then they built tombs and mounds for the Sun and Moon, and though it is not easy to believe

¹Sahagun, Libro X., Cap. 19, parrafo 14.

that all this had been done by the hand of man, it is nevertheless true, because they were a giant race. This we see clearly to-day on the great mountainous hill of Cholula, which was erected with lime and bricks of adobe. The town was named Teotiuacan; because Teotl was there, which signified God.

While they all remained at Tamoanchan, some of the families left and settled in a province called to-day Olmeca-Vitztoti, and we know that they practiced all kinds of abominations and witchcraft in the most ancient times, because their chief, the Olmeca-Vitztoti, had made a compact with the Devil and received his name in consequence. Of him it is narrated: And there was a Cuexteco who was the leader of the Guaxtecas, who drank five glasses of wine, whereby he lost his reason; he kicked away his mantle, and because of his shame he fled to Panotlan with all his vassals and with those who spoke his language. But the others remained at the place which we call to-day Toveime, in their own language Toompahan and in *romance* "our neighbors." The modern name of the Guaxtecas is derived from that of their chief. . . (A detailed narration of his sorceries follows).

After order and good government had been maintained for a long time at Tamoanchan, they removed their settlement far away to a place called Sumiltepec. Here the Lords, the Elders and the Priests came together and held a council, and said that their God had declared that they should no longer remain at Sumiltepec, but that they must wander farther away and discover new territory, and for that reason the young and old, the men and the women, set out again upon their wandering, proceeding at first very slowly, until they came to Teotiuacan, where they elected those who should lead and rule over them; and so every chief accompanied those who spoke his language, and each division (*cuadrilla*) carried at its head the God that belonged to it. The Tultecas always went first; then came the Otomies. When these with their leader had reached Coatepec, they went no farther with the others, for from this point their chief led them to the mountains where he wished them to make a settlement, and this is the reason why they always made their sacrifices upon mountain heights and began to build their dwellings upon the declivities. But the Tultecas, the Mexicans and the Nahoas, and all the others, went on their way over the plains and the high, cold, desert places (*paramos*) that they might discover new lands, and each family was preceded by its God as a recognized leader. No tradition, however, remains behind of the length of time they wandered in this way. At length they came to a valley surrounded by high hills, where they rested themselves and wept over the many hardships and griefs they endured, for they suffered hunger and great thirst. In this valley there were seven caverns, which they selected for their places of worship, and here they sacrificed ever afterwards, according to their custom. The memory and the reckoning of all the time that they remained there are alike entirely lost.

While now the Tultecas with the others remained there, it is reported that their God spoke to them in particular (*que Su Dios les habló a parte*) and commanded them to return back to the same place from whence they came, and not to remain there any longer. When the Tultecas heard this, they inaugurated sacrificial rites in the seven caverns before their departure, and afterwards they all arrived at Tollantzinco, from whence they moved at a later time to Xicotitlan, which to-day is called Tulla.

In later years the Michoaques, with their leader Amimitl, returned from that place and settled towards the setting of the sun, where they still dwell to-day. Little by little the Nahoas came back, whom we to-day call Tecpanecas. The Acoloques, the Huxotzincas and the Tlascaltecas came back also. Each of these families came here by itself where Mexico now stands. And finally came also the Mexicans themselves, who had remained behind, for to them likewise their God had said * * * * * "For that reason all the natives of that country are in the habit of saying that they had been brought up in those Seven Caverns, and that from them they had migrated down to their present abodes. But that is not true, for they did not move away, but only went thither that they might bring their offerings from there at the time when they (the Tultecas) dwelt in that valley." . . . (Then follows a short sketch of the Aztecs, of whom we already know, and an explanation to the effect that all those nations which came from the North called themselves Chichimecas, as also those which inhabited the plateaux and had been assimilated with them.) "All these Chichimecas," says Sahagun, "spoke the Nahuatl language, yet with notable differences of dialect. On the other hand, the nations which dwelt in the East, as the Olmece-Vixtoti and Nonohualca, did not call themselves Chichimecas."

It will not be out of place to add a few explanations to this account of Sahagun.

What portion of our globe had been the home of those landed at Panuco? The answer to this question has been the object of long-continued speculation. Thus much is certain: they must have come from a highly civilized country. Hence no reasonable ground can be alleged for placing its source in the North of our Continent. Were we to allow our views to be guided by circumstantial evidence (since no other is at hand) it is the antique civilization of Western Asia which affords most points of similarity to that of ancient Mexico. But by what fate these foreigners were driven away from so distant a home, what means of locomotion they employed and by what routes they chanced to enter the Panuco river, it will be impossible ever to ascertain. On all such interesting points tradition is absolutely silent. We only read the statement that their first appearance was in canoes, and at the mouth of the said river; and that some time later, one part of them started for the North-west of Culiacan, and another part for the South of Yucatan. We can not fairly presume that they would have come from either of these

regions simply to return thither. We must therefore rather conclude that they came from the North or the East. In the North our eyes meet with the vast half of our continent, destitute at that time of any traces of that peculiar kind of civilization, which these foreigners so rapidly established in Central America. On the East lay the boundless waters of the Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. If they came by this route, the rushing waves have long since buried the secrets of their path behind the furrowing keels of their barks.

Nor do we gain any information in regard to the number of those that arrived. It is difficult to believe that they arrived in large numbers, but quite the reverse. If they were wise men, who possessed a knowledge of the stars, who could calculate periods of time and were acquainted with worldly arts, then indeed but a small number of them would be required to overawe the rude savages, to change them first into servants and afterwards into willing followers, who would accompany them like sons of the same family on their later migrations, to subdue their neighbors and afterwards to conquer more distant tribes.

It is not probable that the site of Tamoanchan was any longer recognized at the time of the Conquest. We have already stated that the word in the Huasteca language signifies "the place where the serpents live." But the ruined pyramids of Tuzpan and Papantla, as well as those of Mizantla, furnish hints where we may look for the forgotten place. These very names are not original in the Huasteca or Maya language. They were given by the Nahoas, probably by the Totonca tribe. In the language of the Huastecas this kind of pyramidal construction was called *Faxil*¹ (templo, cue, baluarte) and *Cayalhà* is the first place mentioned in the Popul Vuh, where the leader of those who landed found the first ear of maize. *Cayalhà* in Maya signifies *water of the fishes*.

The departure of the leader for the South, carrying the Books of the Council and the Gods, apparently for further colonization, and the state of abandonment in which the deserted settlers found themselves, are dramatically described. The tale is evidently gathered by Sahagun from the lips of the Indians, and we accept it without hesitation or comment on its intrinsic credibility. It is however not reported in the Popol-Vuh. The Popol-Vuh² at this point enlarges on events which concern the Maya tribe. We now learn from Sahagun how the deserted band, the future Tultecas, endeavored to shape their destiny. They organized themselves into an independent body. They reconstructed from memory the Book of the Council and also the traditional calendar, probably preserving its fundamental features. They gained in number and in strength, so as to send a colony to the mountains of Huasteca. Still further to the West they discovered the beautiful plain of Teotihuacan, inhabited by Otomies, and there laid the foundations for a central sanctuary. We find them also busied at Sumiltepec. If we might venture to change this

¹See *Zenteno*, Noticia de la lengua Huasteca, vocabulary appendix.

²Popol-Vuh, ed. Brasseur, Paris, 1861, page 215.

word into Samiltepec, supposing a very probable error of print or of composition, we should receive from such correction a hint where to look for this place, which can no longer be found on any map. Samilli, or more correctly xamilli, signifies "brick" and tepec "mountain." We might then recognize the Pyramid of Cholula in this mountain of bricks, to which they transferred their residence from Tamoanchan, and when we read farther on, that from this place they moved very "*leisurely*" to Teotihuacan, the discovery and fixing of that locality which is so near Cholula, is rendered more certain. In this description of their gaining ground on the high plateaux of the West, we obtain a glimpse of the manner in which these foreign colonists, taking the shortest course from the coast, were able to reach the highlands, and obtain a very strong confirmation of their special agency in establishing those central points of civilization always recognized as prehistoric, to-wit: Cholula¹ and Teotihuacan.

Their restless leaders did not give the people time to settle in Xamiltepec. They led them onward to Teotihuacan, where the whole force was put in marching order, and as the author states, separated according to the languages spoken by the tribes. Of such tribes, however, the *Otomies* alone are mentioned. This tribe, tenaciously clinging to the soil of its forefathers, seems to have been left at home as unfitted for distant expeditions. Yet we may fairly suppose that some of those tribes, with which the adventurers had come in contact on their line of operation between Tamoanchan and Teotihuacan, may have been induced by force or by persuasion, and by anticipations of good luck, to join in the novel enterprise.

The Tultecas, we read, marched always at the head of the column. This is the first mention of them we have in the account. It might almost seem from the statement that these Tultecas had joined themselves to those leaders for the first time at Teotihuacan. This may indeed have been the case, when we consider that the foreign immigrants had some time before established this sanctuary, and that friends must have been living there, who took an interest in this movement of their co-nationals, and had furnished them provisions, guides and addition to their numbers. Possibly also the settlers in Teotihuacan had for these very reasons claimed the leadership, and should we not be ready to believe that they had at that time adopted the name of Tultecas, we may suppose that Sahagun only followed the tradition according to which the first tribe which returned back from the North, about the year 544 A. D., in order to settle at Tollan, was usually designated as the Tultecas. Whether we are right or not, the distinct statement, that the said tribe of Tultecas, with another from Tamoanchan, jointly undertook an expedition from Teotihuacan, directed towards the North for further exploration, is very interesting.

¹Read on these explorations *Brantz Mayer*, Mexico, as it was, and as it is; New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1844, page 240.

Led by that tribe they wandered in a Northerly direction, suffering much from hunger and thirst, through lonesome wilds, over high and cold tracts, till they arrived at a deep valley where they found shelter in seven caverns. A shorter or more graphic description of the wanderings of a national caravan, self-reliant and aggressive, moving over the high plateaux of Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Guadalajara, Durango and Cinaloa, can scarcely be given. Nothing is more strongly emphasized in all the traditions of these people than their stern combats with Nature. They never chose to give a moving description of bloody encounters with formidable enemies, but they chiefly recount the thirst, the hunger, and especially the cold which they had to endure, and how they struggled against these three enemies and finally overcame them with the help of their astute priests, whom they classed with their Gods.

Where the valley with the seven caverns was situated, how long they remained there, and how widely they dispersed after they had grown strong, and what wild tribes they subjected, on these points Sahagun, as well as all other native and Spanish chroniclers, are silent. One thing only, already mentioned, is communicated by the chronicler Ixtlilxochitl: that two of the Tultec chiefs rebelled, retired to Culiacan and afterwards wandered Southwards to Tullan. Culiacan is the only place lying in a Northerly direction to which we can follow their wanderings and settlements with historical accuracy. Even from this information alone we gain much, for we obtain the direction of their North-western line of march and a distinct locality from whence they may have spread in different directions. In the valley of Tuitan, in Zacatecas, we come upon a great extent of ruins, called La Quemada, which recent investigations have so far failed to adequately describe. Higher up we meet the very suggestive names Durango and Chihuahua, and in their Southern boundary we find a tribe speaking an idiom, *Sabaibo*,¹ which to-day bears the same name, and has a strong resemblance to Chihuahua and Xibalba. It will be difficult for us now to discover the grounds upon which the Spaniards gave two of the names above mentioned to those two provinces. But we have the linguistic license to change the modern name Durango into the Nahuatl form of pronunciation, which would be Tulanco, meaning "in Tula." We must here remark that the Nahoas as well as the Mayas always designated Tula² as the cradle of their race,

¹Carta Etnografica de Mexico, por el Lic. M. Orozco y Berra: Mexico, 1864.

²There has been much trifling in finding the true etymology of this name. Edw. B. Taylor, "Anahuac," London, 1861, changes it into the Asiatic Turan. The Mexican historians spell it Tullan or Tollan, deriving it evidently from the word *tul*, which means *reed*, in accordance with its hieroglyphic coat of arms, as represented in the Codex Mendoza by a bundle of reeds. The anonymous author of the *Katunes* changes Tullan to Tulapan. We must take care not to give too much credit to the tendency, which all nations have shown, to explain by means of their own idiom topographical names and sounds transmitted to them

therefore both of them in remote times must have dwelt in common in Tula. Both of them speak also of a valley with seven caves, Chicomostoc in Nahuatl and Wukub-pek in Maya. In like manner we have

by the earlier inhabitants. We think Tula to be best explained by the Maya language, in which *tul* means *abundance*, and the affix *à* the preposition *in*: hence "in the land of abundance." It is in this sense that Tula is always mentioned in the chronicles and heroic songs of the Maya Quiches and Cakchiqueles, as the land in which they found repose, a home and happiness. In these songs, record is also made of four such Tulans. The one lay towards the rising of the sun, hence toward the Eastern Ocean, and perhaps *Tula*, halfway between Tampico and S. Lùis de Potosì, a second at the setting of the sun. Now if this second Tula in some of these songs appears in combination with Xibalba also, and is designated as the Tula of the Seven Caves, to which "their Gods had brought them from the Tula of the East," we can not help inferring from this observation, that we have here in substance before us, the same tale and tradition, which Father Sahagun had gathered among the Nahoas. The Tamoanchan of the one is the first and Eastern Tula of the other, and the Chicomoztoc is the second Tula. It was but natural that in Sahagun's narration, the Nahoas should give the leadership to their cognate tribe, the Tultecas, whilst the Quiche should bring into prominence such deeds as were performed by their ancient cognates, the Huastecas; and we must not forget that the foreign conquerors, their leaders, were only few in number, and that the Huasteca or other Maya natives, who had become their disciples, formed the stock of the colonists, who were carried away to settle among the Chichimecas. Being educated to a higher standard of culture, they had gradually assimilated to their teachers, and had thereby become able to transplant the nobler modes of life into the distant South of Guatemala in later centuries, where they were found at the time of the Conquest divided into the three nations, the Quiche, Cakchiquel and Zutigil. By the third Tula probably the proper Tultecan city of Tullan is meant, 13 miles North of the city of Mexico; and the fourth Tullan, "where God is," seems to have been situated in Chiapas, near Guatemala; this suggestion being given by the author of the chronicle, who complains that "the Zotziles had prohibited his people from entering that sanctuary." The Zotziles and Tzendales are to-day two powerful Maya tribes, and occupy the central portion of Chiapas, from which the rapid waters of the Tabasco and Uzumazinta rivers roll down to the Gulf of Mexico, and in which the ruined sanctuaries of Palenque and Ocosingo were discovered. Now, if the Maya-speaking people gave their principal migratory stations the name of Tula, it seems as if the Nahoas had given theirs that of Tlapallan. Hue-hue tlapallan, to be translated the most ancient Tlapallan, could be located at Tamoanchan, the place where the Calendar was made or recomposed after the departure of the Gods with the Book of Council. Hue-Tlapallan, ancient Tlapallan, could be identified with the country surrounding Culiacan, and by Tlapallan, without any prefix, we know that Chiapas was meant, the land to which Quetzalcohuatl resorted, and which Cortes was shown on his expedition to Honduras. He crossed this Tlapallan on a road that led only a few miles distant from Palenque. The translation of the Nahuatl word Tlapallan is "Land of the Varied Colors." Therefore the meaning of the words Tula and Tlapallan appears to give the reflex of similar ideas. Though those wandering colonists, in reality, must have been sufferers wherever they halted and settled, the past, in imagination, presented itself always in the brilliancy of a Golden Age.

no difficulty in recognizing the name Chibalba, so often mentioned in the Popol Vuh as the most ancient abode of clouds and darkness, where the ancestors of the Maya-Quiches astonished the barbarians in *Chihuahua*, or perhaps the modern Zobaibo, with their magic arts. Even Zuivan, which Maya authorities always place after the word Tula, should be added to this group of nomenclatures, all of which, in spite of their various spelling, indicate the same district. To this group also Cibola belongs, one of the seven cities sought for by Coronado. But we have strong grounds for doubting that the migration of the Quiches from Chibalba down to Guatemala occurred at the epoch of the wandering of the Tultecas. The Quiches seem to have remained in the North for a long time, and then to have joined the great invasion of the Chichimecas, which took place in the tenth or the eleventh century. As to the return of the Tultecas, we refer to the quoted statements from Ixtlilxochitl's work.

We have something to say further, in regard to the sources of this information. They are as authentic as we could desire. Sahagun tells us in the prologue of his work how he obtained his facts. He took up his residence at Tepeapulco, a large Indian village near Tezcuco, and with the help of their chief, who had become a Christian, and who was there called Don Diego Mendoza, he brought together about a dozen Indians well acquainted with the early history of their country. To these he added four of his own so-called grammatical parishioners, and handed them a plan and disposition of the subjects of which he wished to treat. It was the business of the older Indians to extract the meaning from the original painted annals, and to set in order the various statements of the text near their appropriate symbols, and at the same time the four grammaticians obtained from the Indians an understanding of the meaning of the pictures and translated it into the Nahuatl language. Sahagun then translated this text into Spanish. From this results the formality of diction in the chapters on early history as compared with what follows and was of Sahagun's own composition. None of the other historians have employed such a methodical system of learning their secrets from the Indians themselves. Although the manuscript of Sahagun was first published by Bustamante at Mexico in 1829, and afterwards republished by Kingsborough at London, the facts contained in it were already known in the sixteenth century. The Superior of his order took the MSS. away from Sahagun, and Duran, Tobar, Acosta, Torquemada and other authors, have drawn facts from them. Torquemada confesses this frankly. We were therefore induced to select Sahagun as our best authority, and taking his text for a foundation, to locate the first germs of the so-called Tultec race, not at the North, but at a landing-place on the coast of the Mexican Gulf.

It only remains for us to endeavor to follow the march of that troop of wise men, who separated themselves from the small colony at Tamoanchan, taking the holy books with them, and directing those whom they left

behind to await their return. In regard to the direction they went and about their fate nothing in particular is said. No Nahoan writer, as we believe, has ever taken up this subject. Were it not for the single document written by an anonymous Maya author, we should be entirely in the dark with regard to the deeds performed by those Wise Men. The *Katunes* of Maya History, which we have quoted on various occasions, although very much abridged, afford us an insight into the gradual colonization and the settlements formed by the invaders. A synchronous history of the two consanguineous tribes, after their separation in Tamoanchan, could be restored in chronological sequence to a certain extent, from the middle of the third to the eleventh century. To do this is not our present task. We only wish to draw attention to certain points, that may become of importance, when the task of penetrating deeper into that mysterious epoch of American prehistory is undertaken.

When we inspect, on the map, the Atlantic coast-line, from Panuco Southwards to Honduras, we observe the openings of four large gulfs. There is first the double Gulf of *Tampico*, then that of *Los Terminos*, also called *Xicalanco*; the third is the Gulf of *Bacalar*, or *Chetumal*, and the fourth the *Golfo Dulce*, with its great inland-lake of *Itzabal*. Beginning at Panuco and ending at *Itzabal*, the whole coast and adjacent interior is ancient Maya ground and territory. As far as the invasions of the Nahoas, about the eleventh century, had made them acquainted with that country, they had called the inhabitants of it *Olmecas*. It is from the lips of Columbus that we hear for the first time the name Maya. He picked it up at a point in the neighborhood of the *Golfo Dulce*, on his fourth voyage.¹ It is not without significance that tradition always designates three of the above-named gulfs, the *Laguna de los Terminos*, that of *Bacalar* and that of Panuco as the landing-places of the early settlers, and the following considerations will become interesting in the highest degree. Directly in the neighborhood of those gulfs we meet with ruins of the greatest importance. In the plain South of Panuco lie those of *Papantla* and *Misantla*. On the *Laguna de los Terminos*, overlooking it from a height, stand those of *Palenque*. On the gulf of *Bacalar* we find the ruins of *Yumpeten* (Island of the Lord). On the fourth gulf, that of *Itzabal* or *Golfo Dulce*, of which however tradition makes no mention, we find the large ruins of *Quirigua* and *Copan*. The character of those ruins is everywhere the same—a truncated pyramid, approached by a flight of steps (*teocalli* in Nahuatl and *Ku* in Maya) either isolated or surrounded by other constructions. This leads us to infer that the same people who landed at Panuco, and who built their *teocalli* in Anahuac, Zacatecas, and elsewhere, might also have made the constructions which exist from Panuco Southwards to

¹This interesting incident is reported by *P. Martyr de Angleria*, Ocean. Decadae, iii., Lib. IV., from which we extract only the following passage: "In magno illo tractu regiones sunt duae; Taya haec, Maya illa nominatur."

the Golfo Dulce. And we can well suppose that, landing from their canoes and leaving a colony at Tamoanchan, the Wise Men may have navigated the coasts, taking advantage of the protecting bays, and have taken possession of the elevated and healthy headlands, and that afterwards they pursued their work by colonization farther into the interior.

Should the above list of constructions of a similar character, erected in localities having the same natural conditions, and situated upon the same coast, not offer sufficient evidence of the course of the early Central American colonization, and proof that Tamoanchan was the place from which it started, we can strengthen the argument by the following additional facts. We turn again to Sahagun, who calls the people living on the coast between Panuco and Tabasco, Olmeca. Beginning with Panuco and the Huasteca province he enumerates them in this order: Olmeca-Vixtoti, Olmeca-Anahuac and Olmeca-Nonohualco. Of the first Olmecas he tells us at length of their reputation as sorcerers. They could change themselves into all possible forms of animals, such as serpents, tigers, eagles and wolves. If we analyze the name Vixtoti, we find in the first syllable a primitive word that recurs in all Maya dialects with such variations as linguistic usage permits. Itz, uitz, quix, means a sorcerer.¹ The savage Mayas, surprised by these arts, had good reason to give the new comers such a title. The second syllable of Vixtoti is the Nahuatl word *tectli*, meaning a lord or sire, corrupted into *toti* by the natives, and by the Spaniards into *teule*. As far as we know the word *vix* does not appear in any connection with persons or localities that belong to the Olmeca-Anahuac, or that of the Olmeca-Nonohualco, but it reappears again in the Peninsula of Yucatan. There we find the famous Chichen-Itza and Itzamal, places recognized as centres of civilization. It is also worthy of note, that the Maya annals report the name of the invaders who landed at Bacalar, as having been the Itzaes, and that they came from Tulapan and belonged to the house of Nonohualco. So also the Spanish chroniclers of Yucatan, repeating the traditions of the people, state that it was Itzamna, who in primitive times organized and civilized the country.² Analyzing the Maya word Itzamna we find it composed of *Itza*, sorcerer, and *na*, house, and we shall do well to correct the prevailing idea that Itzamna was a person, and adopt the more probable supposition that the natives wished to

¹In the language of Chiapas it is Hix; in Quiche and Caxchiquel, Yitz and Itz; in Maya proper Ix (pronounced ids); in Huasteca Chix and Huitz. Zenteno quotes as an example: Huitz-ata, Gods-house."

²*Las Casas*, in his *Historia Apologetica*, Cap. 123, gathered his information, as we suppose, among the Tzendales and Zotziles. He spells Izona and in another place Atzamma, by which the important syllable *itz* is secured, which was dropped by later writers, so that Itzamna was cut down to the less suggestive form of Zamna. Also *Cogolludo*, *Historia de Yucatan*, lib. iv., Cap. 3, and *Landa*, *Relacion d. l. Cosas de Yucatan*, ed. Brasseur, Paris, 1864, § 5, page 30, and § 35, and page 216. The analysis of the name would give Itzaob-na, *House*, and if *na* is accented, *Mother* of the Izaes.

indicate thereby the dwelling of the Itza colony, which had settled in their country. As early as the eleventh century, multitudes of Nahoas



FIGURE OF A [SUPPOSED] BEARDED ITZA OFFERING SACRIFICE, FROM A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF YUCATAN SCULPTURE BY A. LE PLONGEON.

had penetrated into Yucatan and had settled at Mayapan, and we read in the *Katunes*, that from the neighboring mountains of Tabasco a tribe named *Vitzes* came to assist their clansmen, and were instrumental in destroying the seat of the tyrants. We may recognize in them the brother tribe of *Quiche*, the etymology of which name appears to have been derived in this way. Finally we find this word in the form *Itzabal* (*Itzaob-al-*sons of the *Itzaes*) applied to a locality, and a lagoon at the foot of the plateau of *Copan*, to-day the inland lake of *Golfo Dulce*.

If we now condense the information already given we shall arrive at the following conclusions.

The nationality of the men who landed at *Panuco* can not be ascertained. They came in canoes, very probably from a Northerly direction, and under this assumption they must have travelled or sailed very near the coast of *Tamaulipas*, or higher up along the South-western curve of the Gulf of Mexico. Soon after their arrival, this force separated. A part of it followed the direction of the coast towards the South and became instrumental in civilizing the *Maya* tribes of Central America. At such places, where in later times, the *Nahoas* came in immediate contact with the *Mayas*, they gave them the name of "*Olmecas*." By

what name, however, the other Maya tribes of Yucatan, Chiapas and Guatemala were called by the Nahoas is unknown to us. The other portion, for whom we will retain the name *Tultecas*, ascended the highlands towards the West. There they came in contact with the Quinametins upon the mountains, and lower down upon the plains of Tlascala they found tribes that very probably also spoke the Maya language. An inundation surprised them, a pyramid was built at Cholula for protection, and it served also as a temple. After they had become convinced of the subjection and obedience of these Mayas, they penetrated into the neighboring lands of the Otomi tribe, where they selected the plain of Teotihuacan as the central point of their civilization. Holding these strong positions in the rear, they fearlessly penetrated farther towards the North through barren tracts of country to the neighborhood of the so-called Chichimecas. After they had lived and worked among them for the space of about 250 years, a dissension broke out among their old leaders, and in consequence of it, two families left the country, determined to join their Southern parent colony. They arrived at its oldest settlement at Huexotla (the City of Willows) the Huastec Tamland, where a future dwelling place in Tulla is assigned them. Some decades afterwards another family of their tribe, the Mixcohua, followed them from Culiacan. They formed a settlement at Culhuacan upon the lake of Mexico. Both these families may be considered as the promoters of civilization among the Chichimeca and Otomi tribes. In the languages of the neighboring tribes, these Tultecas and Mixcohuas appear under different names. We find that the Totonacas called them *Colhuas*, probably from the name of their capital on the lake of Anahuac, and from that still older place Culiacan. The Maya Quiches speak of them as *Yaquis*, but their other name, *Nahoas*⁴⁷ (those who know), seems to have originated with the Chichimecas, who, being their former pupils and speaking the same language, desired to express thereby the great ascendancy in art and science, which their former conquerors had always held among them. It is curious to note that this epithet is analogous to that which the uncivilized Mayas gave to their conquerors and teachers when they called them *Itzaes* (magicians or wise men).

The language which the pioneers of civilization had brought with them from their distant Fatherland, seems to have merged entirely into that of the tribes with which they came in contact. We can not fairly suppose that the Tultecas imported the Nahoas language and diffused it among the Chichimecas, nor that the Itzaes imported the Maya language into Yucatan and Central America. They must have found these languages in those countries in which they settled as conquerors. A single American Indian may have the ambition to learn a foreign language, but he will retain his mother tongue, and so will the American Indians *en masse*. Whilst the Maya language has made no territorial conquest, nay rather has lost its ancient extension, the Nahuatl can boast of having made a victorious march from the North down to the table-lands of Mexico and



HEAD OF A [SUPPOSED] BEARDED ITZA, OR MAGICIAN, FROM A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF YUCATAN SCULPTURE BY A. LE PLONGEON.

Tlascala and sent its branches farther South through Central America. This may have been owing to the uncommon pliability of its grammatical structure, and its rich treasury of expressive words. The Spanish missionaries learned it easily and preferred it. They, as well as various other modern students, pretend that the Nahoia vocabulary is intermingled with a large amount of Aryan and even of Greco-Italian primitive roots and words, which apply to important ideas and inanimate things, as expressions for the forces of nature, worship, the succession of the seasons, astronomy, the family, the parts of the human body, household utensils, artistic wares, the animals common to both hemispheres, the words for teaching, braiding, buying, etc. These alleged resemblances, however, have never been investigated by any correct method; yet that they should not have been detected in the vocabulary of the Mayas, but in that of the Nahoas, will claim the attention of the student, for if these statements are correct our Nahoia-Tultecas may be viewed in a new light. The reader will remember that the Tultecas represented that portion of the adventurers landed in Panuco, who were deserted by their leaders and left without their book of council, and were thus compelled to re-write it. When we consider that the Itza-Maya calendar coincides in its minor divisions of time with that of the Tolteca-Nahoia, but widely differs from it in its division of the longer periods, this circumstance, combined with the observations made with regard to the linguistic stock of the Nahoia language, involuntarily leads to the supposition of certain differences

either in creed or in nationality, that may have existed among the members of the invading party, and which therefore gave rise first to dissensions, then to separations, and later on to the peculiar discrepancies observed between Maya and Tultec culture. If there is any germ of truth in those conjectures, no effort ought to be spared to develop it. Each new avenue that promises to lead in the direction of lifting the veil which shrouds the history of early Mexican colonization is worth the labor of investigation.

The discovery that a writer of so original and accurate research as Sahagun has enabled us to assign a definite locality to the hitherto apocryphal Tultecas, is a great advantage. After the link had been found by which to connect the first appearance of this tribe on the Eastern shore of the Gulf of Mexico with their later appearance and operations at Culiacan and the Seven Caverns, much of the mist in which the Tultecas have thus far been condemned to a shadowy existence has been successfully removed. We can say the same of the Olmecas and the Itzaes. Beginning with their separation at Tamoanchan we have been able, by consulting local tradition, to designate the various localities along the coast of Mexico and Yucatan as far as the Golfo Dulce, which region they had selected for planting their colonies.

With the light of this information the historical material on early Mexican colonization, thus far apparently so loosely connected and so full of contradictions, becomes at once more comprehensible and harmonious. Many of the details which were not understood in the statements of the Spanish chroniclers can now be assigned to their proper place; but the self-imposed restraints laid upon us from the beginning will not allow us to undertake this further task.

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.