

Subregional organization of the sixteenth-century Q'eqchi' Maya, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

John M. WEEKS

*Museum Library University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
33 and Spruce Streets Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6324 EE.UU.*

Fax 1-215-2008 weesj@pobox.upenn.edu

RESUMEN

Organización subregional en el siglo XVI de los Mayas Q'eqchi', Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

La investigación sobre los patrones prehispánicos de asentamiento es un tema importante dentro de los más recientes estudios arqueológicos en el altiplano maya. Tales investigaciones están generalmente basadas en rasgos fisiográficos naturales, tales como valles intermontanos y cuencas de ríos, prestando poca consideración a límites de mayor significación cultural. En este artículo se examinan tres títulos coloniales de propiedad de indígenas maya q'eqchí con el objeto de buscar su utilidad para identificar, localizar y definir las primeras unidades territoriales supralocales, y reconstruir la geografía política colonial indígena.

Palabras clave: Maya Q'eqchí, Guatemala, patrones de asentamiento

ABSTRACT

The investigation of prehispanic settlement patterns is a major theme in recent archaeological research of the Maya Highlands. Such studies are usually based on physiographically natural features such as intermontane valleys and river drainages with little consideration of culturally significant boundaries. In this paper three early colonial Q'eqchi' land titles from the Guatemala Highlands in order to examine the

possible utility for identifying, locating, and defining suprahousehold territories and the reconstruction of colonial political geography.

Key words: Maya Q'eqchi', Guatemala, Settlement patterns

INTRODUCTION

The investigation of prehispanic settlement patterns has been a major theme in recent Maya archaeological research (Ashmore 1981). Households are usually considered to be the basic functional units in settlement systems emphasizing structures and structural aggregates (Ashmore 1981; Ciudad Ruiz 1984; Fauvet-Berthelot 1986; Wilk and Ashmore 1988). However, despite this emphasis on localized social groups in prehistoric or protohistoric in southern Mesoamerica, few attempts have been made to identify and define suprahousehold groups within the context of regional polities (Carmack 1967; Weeks 1988, 1991). The reasons are numerous although the primary constraint has been the lack of appropriate material correlates and relevant historical documentation upon which to base such studies. As a result, the study of regional settlement systems has been usually based on such physiographically discrete natural features as intermontane valleys or river drainages with little consideration of culturally significant boundaries.

The purpose of this essay is to present the texts of three early colonial Q'eqchi' Maya land titles from the northern highlands of Guatemala and to examine their possible utility for identifying, locating, and defining suprahousehold territories and the reconstruction of colonial political geography.

LAND TITLES AS A SOURCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INFORMATION

Early colonial indigenous documents were prepared primarily for legal and political purposes (Carmack 1973: 19). Many of these documents functioned as land titles although some were not designed primarily as such but came to function as land titles as disputes over land became more critical. Rights to land were complex, and various entitlements could be claimed by different social groups. Most early documents refer to local rights of administration or to rights of tribute. Administrative rights were usually based on mythological or legendary associations between property and local group occupancy, in which case land boundaries were given.

Colonial land titles are of some importance for understanding the local organization of indigenous groups to the extent that they specifically identify

geographical locations, neighboring social groups, and other kinds of cultural information (Barrera Vásquez 1984; Riese 1981; Roys 1939, 1957). For the Guatemala highland region these documents complement information presented in more substantial texts such as the *Popol Vuh* (Carmack 1967, 1973). Robert Hill (1989, 1991) has recently identified patterns of nativism, innovation, and cultural resistance in colonial period Kaqchikel property documents. Hill argues for the continuity of prehispanic writing traditions and presents evidence that the Kaqchikel used such documents to perpetuate the past as well as for such pragmatic uses as acquiring, keeping, and transferring land. Documents were used to secure land holdings against claims by Spaniards and others using three kinds of texts: simple bills of sale between individuals (*cédulas*), covenants or formal agreements concerning the ownership, division, or use of land between families, lineages, and towns to avoid or settle land disputes (*convenios*), and wills to secure passage of land to descendants (*testamentos*).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Historical linguistic evidence suggests that Q'eqchi' speakers occupied the Alta Verapaz region since the Preclassic period (ca. 300 BC) and maintained relations with various other lowland and highland Maya groups (Campbell 1977). At the time of the Spanish invasion the Q'eqchi' were confined to a small area near the upper reaches of the Río Cahabón in the northern highlands of Guatemala (Dieseldorff 1909, 1936, Sapper 1895 a y b) (Figure 1). The Q'eqchi' were bordered to the north and east by the Acalá and

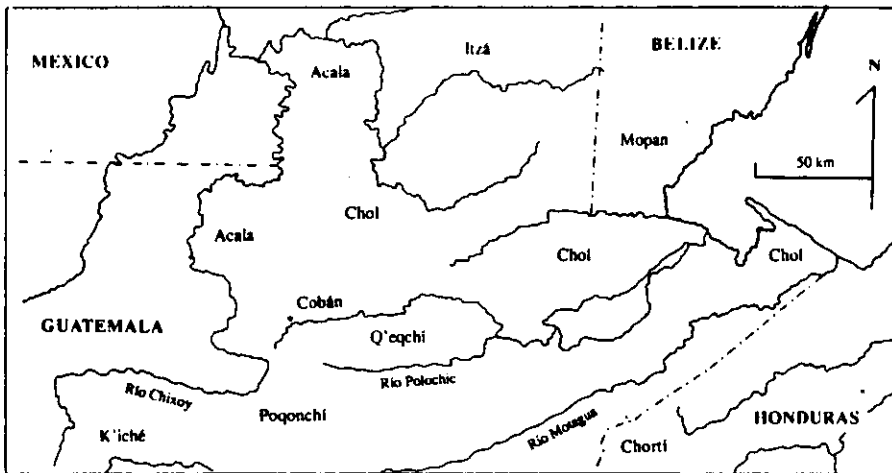


FIGURE 1.—Verapaz Province in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Centuries.

Manché Ch'ol, to the west by the Lakandon, Ixil, and K'iche', and to the south by the Poqomchi' (Sapper 1985: 16-17). Their range today extends from the core communities of Cobán, San Pedro Carchá, and San Juan Chamelco to include most of northern Guatemala and parts of adjacent southern Belize.

The Q'eqchi' were among the last highland groups in Guatemala to be pacified by the Spaniards. The central highland kingdoms of the K'iche' and Kaqchikel were subjugated by Spanish conquistadors and Tlaxcalan auxiliaries in 1524-1525, but the less centralized polities of the northern highlands remained independent for another twenty years. The fierceness of Q'eqchi' and Poqomchi' resistance encountered in late 1529 inspired the Nahuatl-speaking Tlaxcalans to refer to the region as Tuzulutlán (Land of War). Prior to their subjugation these groups were partitioned into a series of relatively independent chiefdoms or petty states, some of which were tributary to the center of the K'iche' kingdom at Q'umarcaaj (Utatlán) (Carmack 1981).

The peaceful pacification of the Verapaz region during the 1540s by the Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas has been often recounted in the literature (King 1974: 15-25, Remesal 1932, Saint-Lu 1968). Las Casas, reacting strongly against the atrocities which indigenous peoples of Hispaniola suffered under the Spanish colonists, advocated a pacification strategy based on peaceful persuasion rather than military force. His program of spiritual conquest was a failure when first attempted on the coast of Venezuela but in northern Guatemala it was successful. The early Dominican penetration in the Verapaz region was concentrated near Rabinal in 1541 and by 1544 a series of successful *reducciones* resulted in the founding of Santo Domingo Cobán, San Juan Chamelco, and San Pedro Carchá. The Indian don Juan Matacbatz (Matalbatz or Apobatz), the cacique of San Juan Chamelco, was appointed governor of Verapaz (Saint-Lu 1968: 229-230). After his death, sometime between 1560 and 1570, the first Spanish alcalde mayor was appointed. By 1547 most of the Verapaz had submitted to Spanish sovereignty and was nominally Christian. Attempts to resettle the indigenous population were to continue for another two centuries, with only partial success (Remesal 1932).

The initial work of the Dominicans consisted of resettling indigenous populations into newly founded nucleated settlements. Here, as elsewhere in New Spain, the Spaniards congregated the Indians into towns so that they could be Christianized and registered as tributaries. The prehispanic settlements at Carchá and Chamil (Chamelco) were reorganized as Spanish-style townships (*municipios*) and renamed San Pedro Carchá and San Juan Chamelco. Along with Cobán, Cahabón, and Lanquín, they became the main Q'eqchi' townships of colonial Verapaz. The *relación* of the Dominicans Francisco de Viana, Lucas Gallego, and Guillermo Cadena, written in 1574, contains population counts taken for tax purposes in 1571 and indicates appro-

ximately 2,350 indigenous households were registered as having been permanently settled in these and a few other towns (Relación Verapaz, 1955). The Spanish policy of *congregación* conflicted with the indigenous milpa system of agriculture, a form of shifting cultivation, which favored a dispersed settlement pattern. Many Q'eqchi' gradually resettled to be nearer to their traditional land as Dominican control in Verapaz subsided during the eighteenth-century (Escobar 1841: 90). Apart from a few resident friars, the region remained largely indigenous until the imposition of the coffee-based plantation system in the middle of the nineteenth-century.

The conquest of northern Guatemala did not however end with the subjugation of the Q'eqchi'. The lowland groups further to the north, the Manché Ch'ol, the Mopán, and the Itzaj remained independent for another century (Thompson 1938). During the seventeenth-century many Q'eqchi' served as soldiers in the conquest of the Manché Ch'ol lowlands. Many of the Manché Ch'ol were eventually resettled in the Q'eqchi' region, specifically Lanquín and Cahabón (Feldman 1978). It has been noted that the people of these two towns maintained customs that are Ch'ol in origin into the late nineteenth-century (Sapper 1907). The memory of the Ch'ol as a distinct cultural group lives on in Q'eqchi' oral history which has transformed the Ch'ol (Q'eqchi': *ch'ol-wiink'*) to a mythical people gifted with magical powers (Schackl 1983: 14).

THREE Q'EQCHI' LAND DOCUMENTS

The Dominicans anticipated and attempted to prevent conflicts between resettled groups. Because ownership of land was a major cause of dispute, documents were prepared in which each group identified the limits of their possessions, their neighbors, and affiliated waterholes. Each generation renewed their document through time by having it rewritten, both the Q'eqchi' and Spanish. As coffee became an important commodity on the world market, lands were bought up by German investors and, from the 1860s to the 1930s, Alta Verapaz received growing numbers of foreign immigrants. Many large coffee plantations were established throughout highland Verapaz. The land laws of the 1870s declared all untitled lands to be public property, *terrenos baldíos*, and established procedures to promote putting *baldíos* into private hands resulting in a land rush. Between 1880 and 1900 the government granted land titles that ranged from 1,500 to 5,000 acres to most of the highland areas (Nañez Falcón 1970: 83). Indians in some cases obtained title to their traditional land, but the majority of the *baldíos*, many with indigenous residents who remained on the land and came under the jurisdiction of the legal owner, were granted to ladinos or foreigners. Peasant Indians were then forced to work either on finca lands or for the municipal authorities. To escape the

mandamiento, many Q'eqchi' gave up their own holdings to become tenants on finca lands (Sapper 1891a: 45). Residents on finca lands were exempted from labor laws, but with the *habilitación* law of 1894, all such residents were legally tied to the land and would have to work for their landowners for a defined number of days per year. By putting into private hands parcels of land that could be sold or combined into larger units, and by permitting the owners to assume control of the residents, the *terrenos baldíos* laws opened the way for the development of the *latifundia* system in Alta Verapaz.

Increased repression of the indigenous population of the Verapaz region was met with violent reactions by the Q'eqchi'. An insurrection in San Pedro Carchá led by Melchior Yat was ruthlessly crushed in 1864 and many of the rebels withdrew to more remote areas. Additional nativistic movements based in San Juan Chamelco erupted in 1885 and again in 1906 (King 1974: 34).

The three land titles presented here were acquired at the end of the nineteenth-century by Erwin Paul Dieseldorff, a wealthy German coffee planter and avocational archaeologist, through the purchase of coffee plantations east of San Pedro Carchá and north of the Río Cahabón at Chiquixjí, Raxahá, and Sechaíb, and south of the Río Cahabón across from Sechaíb, three contiguous fincas at Chajcar, Secac, and Ulpán (Náñez Falcón 1970: 111-112). The original documents were retained by Dieseldorff and deposited during the 1960s with the Dieseldorff Collection curated in the Special Collections Division at Tulane University Library in New Orleans. Realizing their significance and with the encouragement of Charles P. Bowditch of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University, Dieseldorff transcribed each document in Q'eqchi' with English translations and submitted them in typescript in September to Frederick W. Putnam at the Peabody for publication in *American Anthropologist*. The manuscript was eventually sent to Franz Boas at the American Museum of Natural History in New York for review. Boas deemed them unsuitable for publication and returned them to Bowditch in November 1903. The manuscript was never returned to Dieseldorff and remains in the collection of the Peabody Museum Library (now Tozzer Library) at Harvard University (C.A. 6 D 566F).

The three land titles include the *Testamento Chicojl*, pertaining to land located north of Cobán and San Pedro Carchá, *Testamento Tontem*, located east of Carchá and north of the Río Cahabón, and *Testamento Tux*, located east of Carchá and south of the Río Cahabón. A complete linguistic analysis of these documents is beyond the scope of this paper. However, according to Dieseldorff (1903) the Q'eqchi' language used in the texts was understood by Q'eqchi'-speakers in San Pedro Carchá in the late nineteenth-century. Dieseldorff also notes that the orthography and spelling used is inconsistent thereby making some meanings unclear. In order to resolve these difficulties, he consulted several informants and provided the most likely interpretations.

No attempt has been made to correct errors in the original Dieseldorff typescript although some editing has been imposed on his English translation.

In 1991 the author visited the territory included in the Tontem and Xalija Chah Pixol documents to verify the Dieseldorff translations with Q'eqchi' speakers and to locate toponyms on modern 1:50,000 topographic maps. Most of the landmarks mentioned, including waterholes and natural springs, are still recognized today.

Q'EQCHI' LINGUISTIC GEOGRAPHY

The northern highlands of Guatemala comprise an impure limestone formation with occasional exposures of shale, upon which a relatively complete complex of karstic landforms has developed. The overall relationship of the Q'eqchi' to their landscape is highly religious. Mountain ridges are deified and anthropomorphized and today their names are called up in the course of prayer (Sapper 1925). Obligations are felt when approaching the earth deity to prepare milpa and caves are the places where these obligations are kept.

Historically the Q'eqchi' cultivated dolines and valley floors since these have soils which support perennial cropping (Cortés y Larranz 1958:2: 11). More recently, population increase and alienation of superior land by ladinos and others has led to the cultivation of all but the highest ridgecrests. Springs abound in the region although there are places where the underground drainage is so deep that drinking water is at a premium.

The 1:50,000 scale topographic maps for Alta Verapaz are rich with indigenous place names although the actual density is much greater. Within a radius of frequent travel, a Q'eqchi' can identify and define locations to within a few hundred meters of trail by naming an aldea, caserío, finca or hacienda, and the name of a waterhole, natural spring, cliff, cave, bridge, or wayside cross (Wilson 1972: 53). Living plants are often used to mark the corners and boundary lines of property. To be effective protectors and markers of gardens and other property, plants must have repulsive or prolific properties. The most common hedge and property marker is *kuk'il* (*Yucca elephantipes*). While *kuk'il* serves for immediate marking of corners and minor lines in the survey and partition of land at sale or inheritance, *tz'inté'* (*Erythrina* spp.) cuttings are often planted to provide long-term witness trees (Wilson 1972: 167-168).

Most place names are based on plant or animal names, or physiographic features qualified with one of a number of locative affixes, including *cham-* (deep, large), *chi-* (bank, edge, lip), *chirre-* (at the bank or shore), *jolom-* (peak, summit), *pan-* (locative), *rocjá-* (river mouth, literally foot or leg of the water), *rubel-* (below), *sa-* (inside), *se-* (in, inside), *xal-* (cross), *xe-* (below), *xuc-* (corner), and *yal-* (water, water source). Informants usually prefer to con-

sider the place names to be simply identifications of specific locations, having no other lexical significance (Hopkins 1973).

TESTAMENTO CHICOJL

The *Testamento Chicojl* relates the land title of Cristóbal Ba to the lands of Chicojl. The original document, now lost, was dated October 10, 1539. There exists a copy in Q'eqchi', dated February 6, 1802, as well as a translation into Spanish of the Q'eqchi' made at the request of the communal landholders dated March, 1832 which is accompanied by a copy in Q'eqchi' made in March, 1832. Accompanying documentation includes a document in Spanish, dated March 26, 1832, regarding the decision of the alcalde of Cobán in a dispute over the ownership of a portion of the Chicojl lands; a copy dated March 6, 1857 in Q'eqchi' together with a copy of the 1832 decision in Spanish; a copy dated April 30, 1870 in Q'eqchi' together with a copy in Spanish of the 1832 decision. Other documentation includes a letter from Dieseldorff to Jacobo Vaidez, dated September 22, 1937, requesting information about the testament of Cristóbal Melchor Ba.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Apoba años de 1539. Jesús María y Joseph | In the year 1539. Jesús, Mary and Joseph |
| 2. van covi laheb catanc y be le po octubre de 1539 año nac ta czoc yn | We are at the tenth day, the road of the month October, of the year 1539 |
| 3. memoria yn testamento rech valbal choch hain chichol y ccaba | when this is title is made, my will of my native lands called Chicojl ¹ |
| 4. hain don Xptoval Melchor Ba haut ahban aran quin yolac albal choch | I, Cristóbal Melchor Ba, and because I was born there, my native lands |
| 5. rech vi yn mam chi haruh chi harah chimay chihab | belong also to my grandchildren, for all time, for all the periods of twenty years ² |
| 6. ah ban na quin ulac ah val don Gaspal Cuculna vinc don Bartolome | After I had been here, there arrived the chief don Gaspar Cuculná and don Bartolomé |

¹ Chicojl is an aldea of San Pedro Carchá; *chi*, locative; *c'ojl*, beater or scout.

² Clear reference is made here to the *katun*, or calendrical cycle of twenty years.

7. cocona vinc na queb chal aran chi
za lacantun nil chirix cambal ratin
Dios Coc, who came from where is the
Usumacinta³ river. In the name of
God
8. ta co xic ut ta cacameb le ah val
don Quespal Cuculna tax xic ca tau we go and bring along the chief
Gaspar Cuculná; we go and find the
9. le po carcha vinc chi caniabah y
ccaba toh hunpocal y ha yquch municipality of the Carchá people at
the waterhole Chicaniabaj⁴, beyond
the water
10. nac ta co elc aruin chi cuculna chi
cocona y ccaba nac ta co alc aruin Chicuch. We start from here with Cu-
culná and Coconá, we start from here
11. chiza le ualbal choch chichol yb
y ccaba aran alan bilin etpanic ce
hul in my native lands Chicojl, they are
called, where I was born. The water-
hole
12. y ccaba le ha alanbilin vi hunah
caticaribl ruquin ahval don
Basilio called Etzpanic, where I was born, is
where we live in the same
13. calelbac aruin chi ruch taca
pocolha y ccaba uancovi ut taco
xic ruquin settlement with Basilio Caalel⁵ Bac,
here in the plain of Pocolá⁶
14. cambal ratin y Dios ha eb
cablaha chi chohom holchan and we go with the word of God and
with the twelve holchanes⁷
15. vancovi ut ta cohlae retal y
nupalhil ualbal choch aruin We are here to set down in writing
the boundaries of my native lands

³ The Río Usumacinta is the longest river in Central America and the important to drain into the Gulf of Mexico.

⁴ *Chi*, locative; *q'anibash*, yellow rock, possibly impure recrystallized limestone (MW).

⁵ A title for the head of a substantial lineage or town; TC gives *3alel* as lord (*ahau*), *cacique*, or prince; in the Popol Vuh (1950: 120), *Galel* is the title of one of the officials who served in the K'iche' court, together with *Lolmay*, *Atzihuinac* and *Ahuchan*.

⁶ Pocolá is an aldea of San Pedro Carchá; *pok*, sand or white earth.

⁷ A fragment of an early Q'eqchi' vocabulary published by Freeze (1975) gives *holchan* as: was a captain or valiant one in ancient times, and now it is used when someone does a great deed. The title *holchan* was probably comparable to the Yucatec *holpop*, a lineage head who usually served as a *batab* or local head of a town Roys (1957: 7). After the conquest the functions of the *holpop* were only social or ceremonial although most were created caciques.

16. y behen ynupalhil ta cohlaç arvin
hain don Xptoval Melchor Ba Here I set up the first landmark, I,
don Cristóbal Melchor Ba
17. haut y behen ynupalhil chichuy-
ha y ccaba ruquin cael Cac nan
cul aran The first landmark is called Chuyha,
and my lands meet there with Caalel
Bac
18. y cab ynupalhil vanc ui tolox
cahui la cael Bac na cul aran The second landmark is where the
tolox⁸ tree grows, I meet there with
Caalel Bac
19. rox ynupalhil cequeç choç y ccaba
cah ui lm cael Bac tain cul aran The third landmark is called Sequerk
Choch, and I meet there with Caalel Bac
20. tain canab ut le ah ual don
Basilio Cael Bac aran I leave there with the chief don
Basilio Caalel Bac
21. cachin ut tain que rech a Bar-
tolome Cocona cachin taun que
rech ah val I give a little land to Bartolomé
Coconá; I give some land to the
22. don Quespar Cuculna vinc ta
queb y toc chihi yal y looconquil
yn ban chief don Gaspar Cuculná, which
they have to divide in halves, only for
23. yn xutan chirucheb ha le chic-
queç choç tain que rech a the esteem and respect I have for
them, but the land Sequerk Choch
24. Bartolome Cocona na tama ui
chiunch yn xutan chiruch eb
queb ulac ah ual I give to Bartolomé Coconá, who
requested it, out of respect for
25. don Quespal Cuculna naqueb
chalç chi lacantun vanc vi cansin
retal him and don Gaspar Cuculná, who
came from the Usumacinta valley, and
there the cansin⁹ tree is the landmark
26. le tain que rech a Bartolome
Cocona ac vinc vi zabcacte I give to Bartolomé Coconá where
there is a sacbact¹⁰ tree

⁸ *Tolosh*, matapalo (*Ficus tuerckheimii* Standl.).

⁹ K'ansin, EH gives *c'ansin* or *quenak' che'* as a type of tree.

¹⁰ *Baqche'*, a small tree (*Eupatorium ligustrinum*) whose bitter leaves are used in the treatment of colic and diarrhea.

27. ta elc aran vi vanc vi tucup hul y ccaba ta ca cal quib ruquin cac quib bil vinc From here we come to Chituhul where we meet with the Cac-Quib people¹¹
28. ta elc aran tamil chire y yal yn sarb cham cacsisqur y ccaba chi holom From here we come to the edge of the waterhole under the forest called
29. y tzul Cham Cacsisq¹², beneath the summit of the hill
30. ta elc aran xacamilin chi behen y tzul uanc ui y yal in sarb pahalche From here I come to the summit of the hill, where there is the waterhole Pajalché¹³
31. y ccaba ac ah ual don Quespal Cuculna tain cul aran and here I meet with the chief don Gaspar Cuculná
32. taquin elc aran xacamilin chah chubal y ccaba ac ah choh hain ta yn cul aran From here we get to Chaj Chubal¹⁴, it is called, where we meet with the Choc people
33. ahban le ta quin sihinc tain cih hun xucul rach al ual don Cuculna and because I wish to, I present to the chief Cuculná a corner of land
34. oxib ut roc ahuil che uanc chi ca calbaib ruquin ah Poncio Cac And there are three trees planted where I meet with Poncio Cac
35. ah ban taqueb uachab aran and here I leave them
36. taquin elc chac aran xacamilin cham ccana u chul y ccaba From here to Cham Cana u Chul, it is called
37. taquin elc chac aran xacamilin xaltaca chi olococ y ccaba I leave here and come to the valley Chi Olococ¹⁵, it is called

¹¹ EPD gives tribe for *vink*; *cwiink*, hombre, is perhaps better given as people.

¹² *Cham*, tall; *cak*, color red; *sisik'*, a legume of the family (MW).

¹³ *Paxl* (*Solanum* spp.).

¹⁴ *Chaj*, *taj*, locative; *ch'ub*, a general term for wasps (MW).

¹⁵ *Olokok*, an edible mushroom (Basidiomycete).

38. ta elc chac aran xacamilin chi holom y tzul chahba soyon y ccaba I leave here and come to the summit of the hill Chajba Soyom¹⁶, it is called
39. ac quib bil vinc tain cul aran The Quib people I meet there
40. ta elc chac aran xacamilin chi holom y tzul cechach y ccaba I leave there and come to the head of the hill Sechaj¹⁷, it is called
41. ta lec aran xacamilin cepoc y ccaba I leave there and come to Sepoc¹⁸, it is called
42. uanc ui y yal sarb ha uichic le ah choh ayn vuch behen where there is the waterhole, bordering again with Choc
43. nac ta quin elc aran xacamilin uan ui ah uil che cah ui ah choh ain vuch behen When I leave here I come to the planted tree, alongside only with Choc
44. ta elc aran xacamilin chi holom y tzul cetzah y ccaba I leave here and come to the head of the hill Setzac¹⁹, it is called
45. tain canab ah choh ahin aran Here I leave the Choc people
46. ta elc aran xacamilin cham cocom y ccaba achich vuchben le Francisco de García We leave here and get to Cham Cocom²⁰, bordering here with Francisco de García
47. ta elc aran ac rubel saconac pec xilic y ccaba We leave here and come to beneath the white cliff of the animals of the wind²¹

¹⁶ Chajba Soyom; *sooyom*, rectum, intestine (EH).

¹⁷ *Se*, locative; *chaj*, pine (*Pinus* spp.).

¹⁸ *Pok*, sand or white earth.

¹⁹ *Se*, locative; *tz'ac*, mortar, wall; probably refers to a prehispanic ruin; Setzac is a place located northwest of Arenal and south of the Río Cahabón near Carchá; Burkitt (1906) reports excavating a terraced mound at Se-Tsak. In his reading of the K'iche' *Popol Vuh*, DT reads *tz'aq* (*tzac*) to refer to constructions whose major materials are earth, stone, or cement, rather than wood.

²⁰ *Cham*, tall; *kokom*, a thin reed (*Stigmatophyton pseudopuberium* Niedenga) used for lashing.

²¹ *Xilic* as small animals, companions, or servants of the wind, which one hears in caves, but whoever sees them must die (Dieseldorff 1903); *xillic*, woman with wild uncombed hair, who maintains the ceiba tree, and transforms herself into a young girl (PW).

48. ta elc aran ac chamuchulc ix ccaba We leave here and come to Chamuchulc
49. ta elc aran xacamilin rubel moxante y ccaba vanc vi y yal in sarb From here to beneath the moxante²² tree, where exists a waterhole
50. havi uuchben de Francisco García bordering only with Francisco de García
51. ta elc aran ac chi holom y tzul seoboc ha vi uuch a Francisco de García From here to the head of the hill Seoboc²³, bordering only with Francisco de García
52. ta elc aran xacamilin ce chicoyab y ccaba ac ha le Gaspal de la Cruz tain cul aran From here to Se Chicoyab, where I meet Gaspar de la Cruz
53. ta elc aran xacamilin chi benhen canococ y ccaba From here I get to the summit of Canococ, it is called
54. ta elc aran ac sirso ui pec chimucan y ccaba From here to the circular stone Chimucan²⁴, it is called
55. ta elc aran ac chiholom y zul chach sanc y ccaba From here to the head of the hill Chach Sanc²⁵, it is called
56. ta elc aran ac multun cepopol cal y ccaba From here to Multun²⁶, the maize fields of the municipality, it is called
57. ta elc aran xacamilin chimu y ccaba ac ah zut cholom tain cul aran From here to Chimu, it is called, where I meet Cholom, the wearer of the headdress²⁷
58. ta lec aran xacamilin cehubub y ccaba From here to Sehubub²⁸, it is called

²² *Much'*, a wild plant whose leaves are used to wrap meat and tamales (*Crotalaria penduliflorum* (Dunal) Baillon) (MW).

²³ Possible reference to *ch'obok* (*Philodendron tripartitum*).

²⁴ *Chi*, locative; *mucaan*, something to protect with; glass vessel for images or icons.

²⁵ Chach Sanc; *sank* is a general term for all ants.

²⁶ *Muul*, shrub; *toon*, trunk of a tree, origin of a family.

²⁷ EPD gives *ah zut cholom*, the wearer of the headdress; *ah*, personal affix; *suut*, small crown; PW glosses *zut* as cotton cover, blanket; *cholom*, personal name.

²⁸ *Uubub*, an edible mushroom (*Portulaca* spp.).

59. Ta elc aran xacamilin hun zulil sehul pecxilic y ccaba From here to a hill where there is a cave²⁹ of the xilic
60. na elc aran xacamilin vanc ui nim la tzup ce nim be chises y ccaba From here to where grows a large tzup tree, in the road, which leads
61. ac ha le don Juan Sotzoh tain cul to Chisis³⁰, and here I meet don Juan Sotzoh
62. ta elc aran xacamilin chi ruch y pec chichior y ccaba From here to facing the stone Chaj Chior, it is called
63. ha vi la ah chocoh vuchben bordering only with Chocoh
64. ta elc aran ta unachab ce tzacambil pec chah chior yal hun roc taka From here I go to the masonry stone Chaj Chior³¹ and going along a plain
65. ta quin xic hun cotin vanc ui xulu ycque where I come to a fallen maguey³² plant
66. yal hun roc taka taquin xic tain cul hin tzutz aran From here always going in the plain I meet Tzutz
67. vanc ui moxante chuiha y ccaba where there is the place Moxante Chuiha³³, it is called
68. cahvi an xquiozo y culbaib hi xoralinquil rib le ualbal choch Only herewith the closing and circumscribing of the borders of my native lands is completed
69. na ca cul ui quib ruquin calel Bac, hain don Xptobal Melchor Ba and we have again met with Caalel Bac, I, Cristóbal Melchor Ba
70. hale ualbal choch rech ui yn mam chi haruh chi harab Therefore my native lands belong to my grandchildren for all time

²⁹ As entrances to the underworld, are used for sacrificial and other rites.

³⁰ *Chi*, locative; *sis*, pizote (*Nasua narica narica* L.); pottery figurines at reported from a site named Sesis (Sapper 1897, Seler 1904: 97).

³¹ This probably refers to a prehispanic settlement.

³² *Ik'e*, maguey (*Furcraea guatemaltensis*) (MW).

³³ *Chui*, locative; *ha*, water.

71. vanco vi tain que retal juramente se choxa houí arvinc chiruch y choch And now I swear before those who are in Heaven and those on earth
72. chirucheb ut y tepaleb le cristianos chiza y ccaba le Dios avebeh and before all the Christians, in the name of God the Father
73. Dios caholbeh Dios espiritu santo amen Jesçes María y Joseph God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. Amen. Jesçes, Mary and Joseph
74. xqui ozoc hun chi memoria yn testamento rech ralbal choch ah ual And now is completed the title, the will of the chief
75. don Xptoval Melchor Ba y uahi ut retal laheb cutanc y be y po Cristóbal Melchor Ba concerning his native lands. Here is the writing done on the tenth of
76. octubre de 1539 años nac ta otzoc chi behen y mesa le Dios Rey October of the year 1539, when it is completed on the altar of God the King
77. alcaldes Thomas de Aguilar Ah Pocac, Juan de la Cruz Hernandes alcaldes Tomás de Aguilar Ah Pocac, Juan de la Cruz Hernández
78. Calel Bac regidores Pedro Hernandes Rax Juan de la Cruz Yaxcal Caalel Bac; regidores Pedro Hernández Rax, Juan de la Cruz Yaxcal
79. Gaspar Mentés Coc Juan de Olaris Valna Pedro ah Pocac Pedro de Torres Gaspar Mendez Coc, Juan de Olaris Valna, Pedro Ah Pocac, Pedro de Torres
80. ah Poxi maestro escribano de cabildo ha ut a don Francisco ah Tukurba ah Poxi; chief secretary of the municipality Francisco from San Miguel
81. Ah San Miguel haut ahi a don Perip Ah Tukur Sarip Ba ah Miguel ha ah also don Perip Sarip Ba, from San Miguel Tucurú

82. ban ac xqui banu yn testamento nac ta y cul se be mahi chic razon auuch
And because my will is made, when I meet you in the road
83. uey chicam auuch uey mahi
you have no right [to ask me for land] whether you like it or not
84. cachin chic y rax cquehenil chix-chior y ccaba mahi chi razon ha vuech
The small piece of land called Chix Chior you no longer have any right
85. ac xquin vanu yn destamento cah ua tinan auuech ha fray Pedro Mexía cura
to, because I have made my testament, only that I say to you. Friar, Pedro Mejía, parish priest
86. vahi ut retal yn quicheel yn tzul yn taca in sarb y itzaquinquil
Here I name my forests, my hills, my valleys, my waterholes, from which
87. quib tahn cque retal y ccaba chi hun hunal rech y vi mam chi ha rub
get my sustenance, and I name one by one and they belong to my grandchildren
88. chi harab chi may chi hab tain cohob ratal ha al hin sarb
for all time. I state now the names of my waterholes:
89. y behen yn sarb rubelxi y ccaba y cab y sarb chi cquehay y ccaba
The first waterhole is called Rubelhi³⁴; the second waterhole is called Chi Quercha
90. rox yn sarb chichaib y ccaba y cahin sarb Cham Cacsis
The third waterhole is called Chichaib and the fourth waterhole is Cham Cacsis³⁵
91. re hin sarb pahalche y ccaba ixguas in sarb cepoc y ccaba
The fifth waterhole is called Pahalché and the sixth waterhole is called Se Poc

³⁴ *Rubelhi*, beneath; *ji*, oak (*Quercus* spp.) (EH).

³⁵ *Cham*, tall; *cak*, red; *sisik'*, a kind of legume.

92. y vuc yn sarb chi chinla eleha y ccaba y vacxac chi nimla eleha y ccaba The seventh waterhole is called the little Eleha³⁶ and the eighth the large Eleha
93. y bele rubel Moxante y ccaba chi ca nupalc ruquin a Francisco de García The ninth waterhole is called Rubel Moxante³⁷, our landmark with Francisco de García
94. y lahe yn sarb cham amay y hunlahu ce oboc y ccaba The tenth waterhole is Seamay³⁸ and the eleventh is called Seocob³⁹
95. y cablahu ce coc sanau y ccaba roxlahu chi nimla eleha y ccaba The twelfth is called the small⁴⁰ Sesanau and the thirteenth is called the
96. chi ca nupalc ruquin ah nicho de García Tiul large flowing waterhole, our landmark with Dionisio García Tiul
97. y calahu ce hub chi nupalc ruquin al tzutz cholom The fourteenth is Sehubub⁴¹, the landmark with Tzutz Cholom
98. cah ut an qui ccaba ca memoria yn testamento ta otzoc vanc covi laheheb Only these are the names. Our title and will was finished on the tenth
99. cutanc y be po octubre de 1539 años fray Pedro Mexía cura day of October, 1539. Friar Pedro Mejía, priest.

³⁶ *Eliha'*, natural water spring.

³⁷ *Rubel*, beneath; *moxante*, probably *much'*, a wild plant whose leaves are used to wrap meat and tamales (*Crotalaria penduliflorum* (Dunal) Baillon) (MW).

³⁸ *Se*, locative; *amay* is a species of *Chusque longifolia*, a common reed grass used to make flutes; a cave near Seamay in aldea Candelaria is where jade beads have been reported (Dieseldorff 1894, 1905, Sapper 1895b: 14, Seler 1915:3: 600).

³⁹ *Se*, locative; *oqob*, liquidambar (*Liquidambar stryicifera*).

⁴⁰ *Se*, locative; *canau*, an indeterminate type of tree.

⁴¹ *Sejubub* is a caserío of aldea Chisón; *se*, locative; *ubub*, an edible herb (*Portulaca* spp.) (MW).

TESTAMENTO TONTEM

The original sixteenth-century document was lost and the copies preserved are based on a reconstruction made in 1779. The present document, in Q'eqchi', is dated February 17, 1862, and is accompanied by a Spanish version dated October 31, 1878. Related documentation includes a letter from Dieseldorff to Jacinto Vádez, dated September 21, concerning the testament of Diego Zeb.

1. En el nombre de Padre, de Dios Hijo, de Dios Spiritu Santo	In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Chost
2. Amén. Jesús, María y José	Amen. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
3. Hayn jun chi a guabax Diego Zeb yn ccaba tayn banu li testamento	I, the chief, Diego Zeb, is my name, I make this testament
4. rech li jun chi calebal choch como each li calebal guan chi Tontem	of a maize land ⁴² , because it is mine, it is Tontem ⁴³
5. quin chutub li testamento chix caycal bam quitzec li retalil li gue	I bring together the titles of my neighbors because I have lost my
6. la in Diego Zeb haut ta raah in chool nac ta oc lix testamentoil	documents. I, Diego Zeb, this is what my heart wishes, that my
7. lix xoranliquil nac jo ze choxa joc chiruch y choch	The measuring should be made as in Heaven so on earth, before the
8. chi ruch cheb li jun chol chi uabeh a guababnac testigo chirix lin	assembled chiefs, which shall be witness to my dispositions
9. cauxl lain ah Diego Zeb	I, Diego Zeb
10. tain cojob lix nupalxil yx xoralinquin li calebal choch arquin	I put up its landmarks; the boundaries of the maize lands, here I

⁴² *c'alebal*, caserío, series of houses, or settlement.

⁴³ Tontem is a caserío of aldea Chirrequim (Figure 2) located approximately three kilometers north of the Río Cahabón and some 14 kilometers east of San Pedro Carchá; *toon*, tree trunk or the origin of a family; lineage; *tem*, bench (EH).

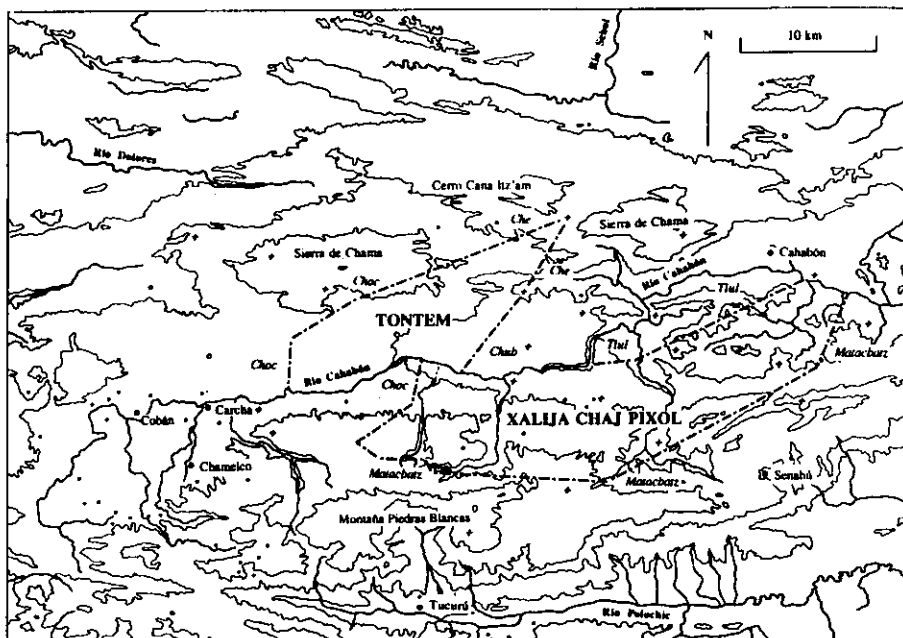


FIGURE 2.—Location of Tontem and Xalija Chaj Pixol (darkened circles represent known archaeological resources and crosses indicate the location of ethnographic eremitas).

- | | |
|---|---|
| 11. tain coyob li nupalix | set up the landmarks: |
| 12. arquin chiziguan ca calbaib
ruquin ah choc agau-guil vinc
tain cul aran | Here at Chi-Siguan ⁴⁴ , our boundary
with the chief of the Choc people,
whom I meet here |
| 13. tain lech aran xacamilin chi gua-
rom guan gui cruz | I leave there and come to Chi
Guarom ⁴⁵ where there is a cross ⁴⁶ |
| 14. taquin leec chic ut aran xacami-
lin chimuxc | I leave there and get to Chi Muxc |

⁴⁴ Chisiguan is a caserío of aldea Pocolá; *chi*, locative; *sicwan* or *sihuan*, sinkhole or doline (EH).

⁴⁵ Chiguarrom is a caserío of aldea Pocolá; *chi*, locative; *guarrom* or *cuarrom*, owl (*Bubo virginianus*) (EH).

⁴⁶ The cross is considered as a representation of Tzuul tak'a (lit. mountain and valley), the earth deity, and is considered to be especially sacred and powerful, and receives prayers and offerings of flowers, incense, pine boughs, and candles on hilltops, in caves, and at waterholes during agricultural rituals.

15. ta llec chic aran ac zecherehenc I leave there and get to Se Chirre
guangui zaconac pec Quenq⁴⁷, where there is a white cliff
16. xin cul ah choh xi li vinc aran Here I meet with the Choc people
17. taquin leec aran xacamil chiunch I again leave there and come to
guan vi z zarb Chiunch, where there is a waterhole
18. tain leec aran xacamilin se lala I leave there and get to Seocob⁴⁸
ocob
19. cuncumcab chibatatz to Cuncumcab, to Chibatatz⁴⁹
20. xicanab ah choh aran ac ah cheil I leave the Choc and meet with the
vinc gui cul aran secumcumcab Che people, here at Secumcumcab⁵⁰
21. xin alc aran xacamil rubel tzul I leave there and get to below the hill
chire y quim Chirrequim⁵¹
22. ze be jun be ixben xacamil chiru From here straight to the summit,
cruz xal y tzul chi quisis facing the cross on the side of the hill
Chi Quisis⁵²
23. xi canab ah cheil vinc aran quin I leave the Che people here and meet
cul rib ruquin al chubil vinc with the Chub people
24. xin el aran xin cam jun roctaca xaca- I leave there and go along a valley
mil guan vu zaconac pec senima and come to a white cliff at
25. yx cajec gui riob ruquin ah zeb the river⁵³, where we divide with the
bil vinc Zeb people
26. xin ca jun rocnima xacamil chi I go along the river valley and come
ziguan lix quin cob gui lin monjon to Chi Siguan, where I set up

⁴⁷ *Se*, locative; *chi re*, at the edge; *queenk'*, a general term for bean (*Phaseolus* spp.).

⁴⁸ *Se*, locative; *oqob*, liquidambar (*Liquidambar stryicifera*).

⁴⁹ *Chi*, locative; *batz'*, howler monkey (*Alouatta* spp.).

⁵⁰ Secumún is a caserío in aldea Chirreaché; *se*, locative; *común*, waterhole or deep pool in a river.

⁵¹ Chirrequim is an aldea of San Pedro Carchá; *chi re*, at the edge; *q'uim*, thatch (roofing material).

⁵² Chiquisis is a caserío in aldea Chirrequim; *chi*, locative; *q'ui*, many; *sis*, pizote (*Nasua narica narica* L.) (MW).

⁵³ Reference to Río Cahabón.

27. quix cul ut rib nupalix li calebal
choch my first landmark. They have met,
the landmarks of the maize fields
28. chi cu lao alcaldes regidores de
municipales Before us, the alcaldes regidores of
the municipality
29. De esta ciudad esta población de
San Pedro Carchá of San Pedro Carchá
30. Los señores alcaldes son los
siguientes nombres
31. El alcalde primero, Cornelio Choc
32. El alcalde segundo Pedro Martil
Ycal
33. Ocho regidores decanos: Anto-
nio Chub, Domingo Cucul, To-
más Tiul
34. José María Ycal, Manuel Choc,
Lucas Ycal, Vicoriano Coc
35. Santiago Chub
36. Testigo de asistencia J. Luciano
Mucu, síndico primero
37. Sacada copia y traslado de esta
memoria en la ermita de San
Sebastián
38. Martín en 17 de febrero de 1862
39. Por el señor gobernador Pio-
quinto Yaxcal. J. De los Santos
Coc, síndico primero
40. Tomás Coc, escribano primero
41. J. Luciano Mucu, síndico segundo

42. El año que tiene la memoria original; en que copié esta escritura

43. Noviembre 18 de 1779.

November 18, 1779.

TESTAMENTO XALIJA CHAJ PIXOL

On October 10, 1539, on the basis of testimony given by Poncio Tux, a document was prepared which set forth the landmarks that demarcated the boundaries of the property owned by Tux and his people. The original document was lost and the copy preserved is based on a reconstruction made in 1834. The present document, in Q'eqchi' and Spanish, is dated March 3, 1834, and is accompanied by a Spanish version dated September 9, 1871. Accompanying documentation includes a letter from Dieseldorff to Ismael Delgado and Salvador Santa María, dated September 21, 1937, requesting information about the testament of Poncio Tux.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Se yx ccaba y Dios aguabeh Dios caholbeh Dios, Espiritu Santo | In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost |
| 2. Amén. Jesús, María y José, Juaquin y Ana | Amen. Jesús, Mary and Joseph. Joaquin and Anna. |
| 3. Hayn ah Ponsio Tux guanco vi se li hab de 1539 años laheb ix be y po | I, Poncio Tux, in the year 1539, tenth day on the road of the |
| 4. octubre nac ta osoc yn memorial testamento rech valbal choch aran | month October, complete my title and testament of my native land |
| 5. xaliha chah pixol harran yx cul rib rruquin ah García Tiul | Xaliha Chaj Pixol ⁵⁴ , where it borders with García Tiul |
| 6. yx cab yn nupalh se ix pense hunah ca be rruquin García Tiul | The second landmark is the pens tree ⁵⁵ , still our boundary with García Tiul |

⁵⁴ Xaliha Chaj Pixol; *shaliha'*, confluence of two rivers or streams; EH gives *pixol* as that which is fastened or lashed.

⁵⁵ Allspice (*Pimenta dioica* L. Merrill) is an important cash tree crop (MW).

7. rox yn nupalh chirre saguaquitum The third landmark is the edge of the water Secuaquitum⁵⁶
8. yx el aran yal ticc xacamilin chirroqueha samaib I leave here and go directly to the water course at Arenal⁵⁷
9. yx el aran xacamil chi ynup From here I come to Chi Ynup⁵⁸
10. yx el aran xacamil se cantal From here I come to Cherital⁵⁹
11. yx el aran xacamil sa nima sa-acte chi rubel pec chi tzalam⁶⁰ From here I come to the river Chachte⁶¹, below the hill called Prison
12. yx el aran xacamil chi nim la cub-sinq aran ut quin ccanab aj García From here I come to a long incline, where I leave García
13. Tiul se taca Tiul in the valley
14. quin el ut aran xacamilin se-pos, hunah ca be rruquin ah Santa María Cajbom From here I come to Se Pos, our boundary with the people of Santa María Cajabón
15. yx el aran xacamilin guan vi saho-nac pec hunah ut chic ca be rruquin From here I come to where are white cliffs⁶², our boundary with
16. don Juan Matacbatz don Juan Matacbatz⁶³

⁵⁶ Secuaquitum is a caserío in aldea Rubeltum.

⁵⁷ Finca Arenal (Spanish: sandy place or quicksand; Q'eqchi': *samahib*) is located where the Quebrada Arenal flows as a subterranean stream three kilometers northward to the Río Cahabón. A number of archaeological resources have been identified near Arenal. Dieseldorff (1905) reports finding jade objects in a cave site at Arenal. Seacal, a small Late Classic period masonry group comprising some ten structures is also located on Finca Arenal (Smith 1955: 56, Fig. 33, 34a-e, 129, R.E. Smith 1949: 229). Chijolom, a Late Classic-Postclassic period site consisting of five platforms, including a ball court, is located on Finca Semarac, approximately three kilometers east of Finca Arenal (Smith 1955: 57, Fig. 35, 36a-f, R.E. Smith 1949: 230).

⁵⁸ *Inup*, ceiba (*Ceiba pentandra* L. Gaertn.).

⁵⁹ *Chi re*, locative; *tal*, teosinte (*Tripsacum* spp.).

⁶⁰ EPD gives *tzalam*, prison; however, other sources gloss *tz'alam* as plain, flat, wall; also, *tz'alam che'*, board; *tz'alam pec*, stone slab, large rock. Given the context, a more appropriate translation refer to a wooden stockade or, by extension, a late prehistoric defensive settlement.

⁶¹ *Se*, locative; *acte'*, wild pacaya (*Chamaedora* spp.). Seacte is a small river in the vicinity of San Pedro Carchá. Jade beads are reported to have come from a cave near Seacte (Dieseldorff 1905, Sapper 1895b: 14).

⁶² *Sakoonac*, white rock, large stone (EH).

⁶³ The Testamento Chamelco describes negotiations between the caciques Juan Matacbatz of San Juan Chamelco and Coconha Zal of San Pedro Carchá (Sapper 1897).

17. yx elc aran xacamil cac ruhch y pec vohben don Juan Matacbatz From here I come to the red colored cliff, still alongside of don Juan Matacbatz
18. yx elc aran xacamilo gui sehala-guna From here we come to where is a lagoon
19. yx elo aran xacamil se nimla jul se ochoc pec From here I come to the large hole and cave
20. yx el aran xacamil secac ruch ha From here I come to the water⁶⁴ Secac
21. yx el aran xacamil chiben y zul zehalaute From here I come to the top of the hill Sejalaute⁶⁵
22. yx el aran xacamilin chi ben y zul aran ac qui ret ci chac Zehalaute [The reading of this sentence is not clear; it seems to be a repetition: EPD]
23. quin el aran xacamilin chi rubel coj chiri ha sepos From here I come to beneath the *canoj*⁶⁶ tree, at the edge of the water Chipos
24. yx el aran xacamil chirru saho-nac elb qui ha chirruch From here to the white cliff, below which the water sprouts
25. yx el aran xacamil chirre sarb chix ton y sah From here to the edge of the water at the foot of the *tzaaj*⁶⁷ tree
26. yx elc aran xacamilin ulpan, ac aran quin cul ah San Juan Chamelco From here to Ulpan⁶⁸, where I meet the people of San Juan Chamelco
27. yx el aran xacamil sacpur From here I come to Sacpur⁶⁹

⁶⁴ *Rokha'* is small stream (EH).

⁶⁵ *Halaute'*, a type of palm (*Chamaedora* spp.) (MW).

⁶⁶ *Canoj*, an indeterminate tree.

⁶⁷ *Tza'ax*, tree (*Vernonia leiocarpa* DC) (MW).

⁶⁸ Ulpan is a river within the jurisdiction of San Pedro Carchá. Dieseldorff (1894, 1905) reports recovering jade objects and thin sheets of gold associated with human burials. An archaeological site is reported at Finca Panzamala, located near the Río Canlich some nine kilometers east of Ulpan and seven kilometers west of Arenal (Villacorta and Villacorta 1927: 322, Seler 1901: 179, Fig. 256).

⁶⁹ Sacpur is a caserío in the jurisdiction of San Pedro Carchá; *sak*, white, many; *pur*, a general term for jute or highland river snail (*Pachychilus* spp.), a mollusc with many associated beliefs (MW).

28. yx el aran xacamil zemesche From here I come to Semesche⁷⁰, there
aran nin cul ah choh ahau I meet the chief of the Choc people
29. yx elc aran xacamilin chitap From here I come to Chitap⁷¹
30. yx elc aran xacamil cacau chiben From here I come to Chi Cacao⁷²
y zul
31. yx el aran xacamil chirital seritche From here I come to Chirital Seritche
32. yx el aran quin el hun rocika From here I get to a valley alongside
chire cacnab of a river with deep pools
33. xacamilin chire nimlahul chirre I come to the edge of a large hole in
li cacnab the rock, on the side of a deep pool⁷³
34. quin el aran xacamilin xaliha From here I come to Xaliha Chah
chah pixol quin [...] quix cul Pixol, from where I started; they have
35. rib yx [...] le ain Ponsio Tux aran met, the boundary lines, which
[...] ruquin belong to me, Poncio Tux, there
36. García Tiul where I meet with García Tiul
37. guan gui yn tzul yn taca yn sarb I possess hills and valleys [and water-
yx tzacanquil rib tain qu rretal holes] where I find my support, and I
state
38. yx ccaba rech vi yn mam chi their names; they are for my grand-
jaruj chi jarab chi jun may ta children forever, for every period of
chihab twenty years⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Semesche is located within the boundaries of Finca Chajcar at the source of the Río Ulpan and some six kilometers south of the Río Cahabón. Dieseldorff excavated extensively throughout Finca Chajcar during the late 1890s recovering some 12,000 pottery fragments, at latest 12 burials, some including jade objects, deer antlers, and tepescuinte teeth, and two thin copper ear flares (Dieseldorff 1894, 1895, 1905, Seler 1915: 3, Plate 3, Villacorta and Villacorta 1927: 322, 343-346).

⁷¹ Chitap is a caserío in aldea Chiacalté; *chi*, locative; *tap*, land crab found near rivers and springs (MW).

⁷² Cacao (*Theobroma cacao* L.).

⁷³ EH gives *caznaab* as ocean, sea, or vast expanse.

⁷⁴ Reference to a *katun*, the calendar cycle of twenty years.

39. tain cohob retal yn sarb guahi ix ben yn sarb ha petche I state the names of my waterholes: here the first, Petche ⁷⁵
40. yx cab sarb chio ha colol My second waterhole is Sehaocolol
41. rox yn sarb chichache My third waterhole is Chichache
42. yx ca yn sarb chio ha colol My fourth waterhole is Sehaocolol ⁷⁶
43. ro yn sarb chi cac y pec My fifth waterhole is Chi Cac y Pec
44. yx guac yn sarb sera suup secopur My sixth waterhole is Sera Suup Secopur ⁷⁷
45. yx vuc yn sarb setanpaz My seventh waterhole is Setanpaz
46. yx vacxac yn sarb chiru taca zecanpaz My eighth waterhole is in the plain Zecanpaz
47. yx bele yn sarb se hocob My ninth waterhole is Se Hocob ⁷⁸
48. yx lagep sarb chirru saconac chirre leb y ha Chi Cheheh My tenth waterhole is under the cliff on the edge of the water Chicheheh ⁷⁹
49. yx lahe yn sarb chi chahba buch My tenth waterhole is Chi Chahba Buch ⁸⁰
50. yx hunlahu yn sarb chichinla va purulha My eleventh waterhole is the small Purulha ⁸¹
51. yx cablahu yn sarb chi nimla purulha My twelfth waterhole is the large Purulha ⁸²

⁷⁵ Probable reference to *peche'*, a term for *Rubus* spp. (MW).

⁷⁶ *Kolol*, a short-billed pigeon (*Columba nigrirostris*) (MW).

⁷⁷ Secocpur is an aldea of San Pedro Carchá; *se*, locative; *coc*, small; *pur*, is a general term for jute or highland river snail (*Pachychilus* spp.), a mollusc with many associated beliefs (MW).

⁷⁸ Sejocob is a caserío in aldea Sechinacté; *se*, locative; *oqob*, liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*).

⁷⁹ A species of carpintero or bushy-crested jay (*Cassilopha melanocyanea*) (MW).

⁸⁰ EPD gives this as Secac, a caserío in aldea Secajc; *se*, locative; PW gives *c'ac*, flea; *cac'*, roof pole, and *cak*, thunderclap.

⁸¹ *Purul*, something which boils; reference to a small hot springs.

⁸² Reference to a large hot springs.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 52. roxlahu yn sarb sehalba ca | My thirteenth waterhole is Sehalbalj |
| 53. yx calahu yn sarb ze rettzi | My fourteenth waterhole is Seretzi |
| 54. cah ut yn memorial testamento
le hayn Poncio Tux | Only this is the title of Poncio Tux
and |
| 55. testamento re le Poncio Tux se le
ab 1539. Jesús María y José
Joaquín y Ana | will of Poncio Tux in the year 1539.
Jesús, Mary and Joseph. Joaquín and
Anna. |
| 56. alcalde primero Tomás de
Aguilar Ah Pocac | |
| 57. alcalde segundo Juan de la Cruz
Hernández Calel Bac | |
| 58. regidor Pedro Hernández Rax,
regidor Juan de la Cruz Yaxcal | |
| 59. regidor Gaspar Mendez Coc,
regidor Juan de Olaris Balná | |
| 60. regidor Pedro Ah Pocac; Pedro
Dolores Apoxy | |
| 61. maestro el escribano hayn ah don
Francisco ha Tucurba San
Miguel | The chief secretary I Francisco from
San Miguel Tucurú ⁸³ |
| 62. escribano segundo haut hayn don
Felipe Tucurba San Miguel | The second secretary I Felipe from
San Miguel Tucurú |
| 63. oso ut ratin guanco vi laheb
cutan ix be y po octubre de 1539
años | The wording is completed on the
tenth day of October 1539 |
| 64. fraile Pedro Megía. | Friar Pedro Mejía. |

⁸³ San Miguel Tucurú is a Pokomchí-speaking municipality bounded to the north by Senahú and San Pedro Carchá, to the east by Senahú and Panzos, to the south by Purulhá, and to the west by Tamahú and San Juan Chamelco.

DISCUSSION

The general region considered in the three land titles is significant for the archaeological and historical study of the Guatemala highlands. The Cobán-Carchá area was an major conduit from the highlands to the adjacent Petén lowlands during the prehispanic and colonial periods. Perhaps more significantly, Carchá was an important population center in ancient Tuzulutlán, the region in which the Kiche' placed the mythological deeds of the Hero Twins in the *Popol Vuh* (1950: 112-113).

The land titles provide several kinds of information important for reconstructing aspects of the local social mosaic in the Q'eqchi'-speaking northern highlands of Guatemala. Of particular interest is the mention of the Coc and Cucul lineages, presumably remnants of Ch'ol-speakers who were resettled into the highlands from the adjacent lowlands to the north. In the *Testamento Chicojl*, Cristóbal Melchor Ba claims his legitimate right to property referred to as Chaj Chicojl as he identifies land held by Bartolomé Coc and Gaspar Cucul, originally from the Río Usumacinta region, and defines boundaries with Bac, Cac, Choc, Cholom, Cruz, Quib, Sotzoh (Chocoh), Tiul, and Tzutz lineages.

The documents are also of considerable use for the reconstruction of social groups larger than individual homesteads and smaller than regional centers. The regional organization of the Q'eqchi' can be generally described in terms of two distinct spatial concepts: *tenamit* and *c'alebaal*. The *tenamit* (Nahuatl: *tenamitl*, fence, enclosure) is generally coterminous with municipio or town, although the term applies to all categories of political units above the level of the *c'alebaal* (village). Q'eqchi' towns of any size were divided into wards (*molam*) or barrios (*teep*), each administered by a *caalel*, later referred to as a this official was called a *principal* or a *regidor* by the Spaniards.

Seven Late Postclassic period Q'eqchi' centers or *tenamits* have been located on elevated mountain spurs above valleys in the Cobán-Carchá area by Arnauld (1986). The lack of protohistoric remains is probably the result of survey methodology since historical documentation clearly indicate that the region was not thinly populated when the Spaniards first entered.

The largest of the sites is Chicán, consisting of several rectangular platforms arranged around one or more plazas. Plastered masonry is usually visible. At Chicán two high platforms show inset or projecting stairways flanked by wide sloping balustrades. Similar types of architecture are noted at two sites near Tactic, and at a late site located above San Pedro Carchá. No ball-court, central altar, pyramidal structure, except Group A at Chicán, have been found. The sites generally exhibit residential or funerary functions and apparently lack the primary ceremonial functions associated with Classic period sites they had during the Classic period. The religious centers probably moved

from the bottom lands to mountain summits, which are presently important religious foci of the Q'eqchi'. One of these is *Kaacwa' Xucaneb*, located just above the site of Chicán. The site of Chichen was another important protohistoric important center. In 1550, Juan Matacbatz was the cacique of San Juan Chamelco, probably populated by the residents of Chichen. The general population resided on or near cultivated flat lands (*c'alebaal*) during the Late Postclassic period.

The *c'alebaal* (milpería, aldea, caserío; *c'al*, milpa) is an extension of the patrilocally extended domestic group. The members of a patrilineage live on adjacent lands which they have inherited from their ancestors. A patrilineage possess some jural authority, in that important decisions for lineage members are made by the senior males. In addition to control of land, some patrilineages also own ritual paraphernalia used in ceremonial or ritual occasions. The *c'alebaal* may vary in size from approximately ten to fifty families which act as a large residential corporate group in which marriage, residence, and social interaction are influenced by membership (Sapper 1891b: 893; 1913). Nuclear families characteristically inhabit separate dwellings, and corporate lineage (*toon*) boundaries may be difficult to recognize physically. Dwellings are scattered about an *ermit* (hermitage), a specialized public structure of the local community to conduct and administer such corporate matters as education, worship, sacrifice, and economic affairs, within a specific residential zone. In the eighteenth-century the floor of the hermitage served as a common burial area and the building housed crosses and other saintly images, and probably also attended other non-religious functions as local temples may have done in ancient times. These structures, when reduplicated in various parts of a landscape, may represent one type of evidence for the existence of a lineage group. Waterholes (*sarb*), important sacred places within each *c'alebaal*, are marked by cross shrines. Control of rights to water is crucial for human life in this karstic environment, especially during the long dry season. The milpa (*c'al*) is usually cleared on high and well-drained lands generally located relatively far from the village nucleus.

The *c'alebaal* groups were apparently nested within larger divisions known as *xakibaal*, or *paraje*, the largest subdivision of a municipality. The data are unclear however whether such ethnographic constructs were present in the sixteenth-century.

In order of frequency, boundary markers given in the documents are: waterholes, forests or trees, hills or elevated places, caves or dolines, valley floors or level areas, cliff faces, and cultural features. Boundary maintenance and composition are made clear by ceremonies performed to the ancestral deities and the *tzultakaj*. The sacred landscape is marked by the distribution of lineage shrines (*mayejbaal*) dedicated to the worship of the *tzultakaj*. These shrines are typically located in low places near springs or other water sources, high on mountain summits, and at natural openings into the earth, caves and

sunken waterholes. The *tzultakaj*, literally hill-valley, define a class of deities that are multiple, but can also be conceived of as a unitary entity (Schackt 1986:60). Each hill and mountain has its own *tzultakaj*, but the term generally personifies the totality of the earth. The number of *tzultakaj* is usually considered to be thirteen, a number with a special sacred and ritual connotations.

The *tzultakaj* are all associated with specific physiographic features in northern Guatemala, most located in the Verapaz highlands. A Q'eqchi' prayer recorded by Sapper (1925) in Alta Verapaz requesting protection for a maize crop names the following: *Cancuen* and *Chahmayic*, both rivers, and the mountains *Kana Itzam*, the northern boundary in the *Testamento Tontem*, and the only female and most malevolent, and *Pecmo'*, a mountain with a sacred cave and the place of great pilgrimages. The Q'eqchi' in southern Belize recognize several other *tzultakaj* including, *Kaacwa' Xucaneb* (a hill near San Juan Chamelco), *Kaacwa' Cojaj* (near San Pedro Carchá), *Kaacwa' Ixim* (near Tactic), *Kaacwa' Siyab*, *Kaacwa' Sayil* (in the Department of Izabal), *Kaacwa' Rax Hon*, *Kaacwa' Chit'unun*, *Señor San Vicente*, *Kaacwa' Chimuy*, *Kaacwa' Saki Pec*, *Kaacwa' Chikoivon*, and *Kaacwa' Sariquib* (Schackt 1986: 61).

The *tzultakaj* are believed to keep wild animals locked up in pens inside their hills. On receiving appropriate offerings of copal, the animals are released to become the prey of hunters. The animals may also be let out to trespass on a milpa if one has neglected the customary rituals in connection with clearing and sowing. Since the *tzultakaj* are masters or owners of both the land and the animals, people are completely dependent upon them for their livelihood. The masters must be appeased, both to give and not to destroy. The *Testamento Chicojl* makes reference to the *xilic*, or animals of the wind, as boundary markers in two places, possibly corresponding to the *tzultakaj*.

In addition to the *tenamit* and *c'alebaal*, historical documents make reference to other sociospatial constructs, such as the *amak'*, given variously as a collection of families, clan or lineage segment, or pueblo in general. The *amak'* is probably not a discrete localized unit but rather a more dispersed social unit. Such groups may be only amorphous constructs but remain useful for the study of social groups.

The pattern of residence in the Q'eqchi' region over the past generations has been radically affected by the expansion of the Germans and ladinos, frontier society, and particularly by fluctuations in the Guatemalan coffee trade. The phenomenon of clustering is essential to the formation and maintenance of residential groups in the face of low and unstable subsistence capabilities. The practice of milpa or swidden agriculture, along with a hunting and gathering economy has resulted in a dispersed population. Q'eqchi' residence groups are nested into larger local groups. The concept of the *c'alebaal* is a useful analytical construct that provides a convenient unit of study for the analysis of social relations above the domestic group and below the town cen-

ter. It is a discrete localized settlement unit corresponding to a rough natural or geographical subdivision of the region defined by more or less explicitly recognized political and social units.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My interest in the archaeological contributions of Erwin P. Dieseldorff was initially developed while I was employed from 1981 to 1985 at Tozzer Library (formerly the library of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology) at Harvard University. During this time Dr. Nancy J. Schmidt, then library director, encouraged my investigations. Funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities made possible a visit to the Latin American Library at Tulane University in New Orleans where the Dieseldorff Collection is curated. Dr. Thomas Niehaus, then director of the Latin American Library, did much to make my stay a pleasant one. Finally, a Grant-in-Aid of Research, Artistry and Scholarship from the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota during the spring of 1991 made possible an examination of the holdings at the Archivo General de Centro América in Guatemala City as well as a brief reconnaissance of the region included in the Tontem and Chicojl documents. Accompanied by Vincent Osier, a student at the University of Minnesota, one month was spent visiting the current Finca Tontem north of the Río Cahabón and well as several coffee plantations south of the Río Cahabón between San Pedro Carchá and Finca Xicacaco, a distance of approximately 30 kilometers. These included San Pablo Chimax, Chajcar, Santa Cecilia, Sasis, Chicuc, and Xicacaco. Sr. Armando Vásquez of San Pedro Carchá, present owner of Finca Tontem, led me through his coffee and cardamom plantation and identified many of the toponymics enumerated in the Testamento Tontem. His extensive knowledge of the Q'eqchi' was shared unconditionally and much appreciated. Access to the extensive Dieseldorff land holdings was possible only with the cooperation of Sr. Gustavo A. González B., administrator of W.E. Dieseldorff Sucs., and Sr. Haraldo Luna, site manager for Finca Chajcar.

REFERENCES CITED

- ARNAULD, Marie Charlotte
1986 *Archeologie de l'habitat en Alta Verapaz (Guatemala)*. Centre d'Etudes Mexicaines et Centraméricaines. México.
- ASHMORE, Wendy
1981 *Lowland Maya Settlement Patterns*. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque.

BARRERA VASQUEZ, Alfredo

- 1984 *Documento n. 1 del deslinde de tierras en Yaxkukul, Yucatán*. Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, México.

BURKITT, Robert

- 1906 «A stone ruin at Se-Tsak, Guatemala». *American Anthropologist* 8: 13-14.

CAMPBELL, Lyle R.

- 1977 *Quichean Linguistic Prehistory*. University of California Publications in Linguistics, 81. Berkeley.

CARMACK, Robert M.

- 1967 «Análisis histórico-sociológico de un antiguo título quiché». *Antropología e Historia de Guatemala* 19(1): 3-13.

- 1973 *Quichean Civilization: The Ethnohistoric, Ethnographic, and Archaeological Sources*. University of California Press. Berkeley.

- 1981 *The Quiché Mayas of Uatlán: The Evolution of a Highland Guatemala Kingdom*. University of Oklahoma Press. Norman.

CIUDAD RUIZ, Andrés

- 1984 *Arqueología de Agua Tibia*. Ediciones Cultura Hispánica. Madrid.

CORTES Y LARRANZ, Pedro

- 1958 *Descripción geográfico-moral de la diócesis de Goathemala [1770]*. Tipografía Nacional. Guatemala.

DIESELDORFF, Erwin P.

- 1894 «Ausgrabungen in Cobán». *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 24: 374-382.

- 1895 «Neue ausgrabungen des Herr Dieseldorff in Chajcar, Guatemala». *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 25: 320-322.

- 1903 «Ancient land titles of the Kekchi Indians». Unpublished manuscript, Tozzer Library, Harvard University. 8 leaves.

- 1905 «Jadeit- und anderen Schmuck der Mayavölker». *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 37: 408-411.

- 1909 «Klassifizierung seiner archäologischen Funde im nördlichen Guatemala». *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 41: 862-874.

- 1936 «La arqueología de la Alta Verapaz y los problemas de los estudios mayas». *Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala* 13(2): 183-191.

ESCOBAR, Alonso de

- 1841 «Account of the province of Verapaz, in Guatemala, and of the Indian settlements or pueblos established therein, communicated by don Carlos Meany». *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 11: 89-97.

FAUVET-BERTHELOT, Marie-France

- 1986 *Ethnohistoire de la maison maya: Guatemala, 1250-1525*. Centre d'Etudes Mexicaines et Centroaméricaines. México.

- FELDMAN, Lawrence
 1978 «Choles entre los kekchies». *Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala* 51: 79-118.
- FREEZE, Ray A., ed.
 1975 *A Fragment of an Early K'ekchi' Vocabulary with Comments on the Cultural Content*. University of Missouri Monographs in Anthropology, 2. Columbia.
- HILL, Robert M.
 1989 *The Pirir Papers and Other Colonial Period Cakchiquel-Maya Testaments*. Vanderbilt University Publications in Anthropology, Publication 37. Nashville, Tennessee.
 1991 «The social uses of writing among the colonial Cakchiquel Maya: nativism, resistance, and innovation», in *Columbian Consequences: 3. The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*. D.H. Thomas, ed., pp. 283-299. Smithsonian Institution Press. Washington, D.C.
- HOPKINS, Nicholas A.
 1973 «Compound place names in Chuj and other Mayan languages», in *Meaning in Mayan Languages*. M.S. Edmonson, ed., pp. 165-181. Mouton. The Hague.
- KING, Arden
 1974 *Cobán and the Verapaz: History and Cultural Process in Northern Guatemala*. Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, Publication 39. New Orleans.
- NAÑEZ-FALCÓN, Guillermo
 1970 *Erwin Paul Dieseldorff: German Entrepreneur in the Alta Verapaz of Guatemala, 1889-1937*. Doctoral dissertation. Tulane University.
- POPOL VUH
 1950 *Popol Vuh: The Sacred Book of the Ancient Quiché Maya*. A. Recinos, D. Goetz, and S.G. Morley, trans. University of Oklahoma Press. Norman.
- RELACIÓN VERAPAZ
 1955 «Descripción de la provincia de la Verapaz [1574]». *Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala* 28: 18-31, Guatemala.
- RIESE, Frauke J.
 1981 *Indianische Landrechte in Yukatan um die Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts: Dokumentenanalyse und Konstruktion von Wirklichkeitsmodellen am Fall des Landvertrages von Mani*. Hamburgischen Museum für Völkerkunde. Hamburg.
- REMESAL, Antonio
 1932 *Historia general de las indias occidentales y particular de la gobernación de Chiapa y Guatemala*. Tipografía Nacional. Guatemala.
- ROYS, Ralph L.
 1939 *The Titles of Ebtún*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 505. Washington, D.C.

- 1957 *The Political Geography of the Yucatán Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 613. Washington, D.C.
- SAINT-LU, Andre
- 1968 *La Vera Paz, esprit evangelique et colonisation*. Centre de Recherches Hispaniques, Institut d'Etudes Hispaniques. Paris.
- SAPPER, Karl T.
- 1891a «Die Verapaz und Ihre Bewohner». *Das Ausland* 51-52: 1011-1016, 1034-1036.
- 1891b «Ein Besuch bei den östlichen Lacandonen». *Das Ausland* 64: 892-895.
- 1895a «Die Gebräuche und religiösen Anschauen der Kekchi-Indianer». *Archiv für Ethnographie* 8: 195-215.
- 1895b «Altindianische Ansiedlungen in Guatemala und Chiapas». *Veröffentlichungen aus dem Königlichen Museum für Völkerkunde* 4: 13-20.
- 1895c «Altindianische Siedlungen und Bauten im nördlichen Mittelamerika». *Globus* 128(11): 156-169, 183-189.
- 1897 «Ein altindianischer Landstreit in Guatemala», *Globus* 72: 94-97.
- 1907 «Choles und Chorties». *International Congress of Americanists, 15 session, 1906, Proceedings* 2: 423-465.
- 1913 «Das tägliche Leben der Kekchi-Indianer». *International Congress of Americanists, 18 session, London, 1912, Proceedings* 1: 362-371. London.
- 1925 «Über Brujería in Guatemala». *International Congress of Americanists, 23 session, Göteborg, Proceedings* 1: 391-401. Göteborg.
- 1985 *The Verapaz in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A Contribution to the Historical Geography and Ethnography of Northeastern Guatemala*. Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Occasional Paper 13. Los Angeles.
- SCHACKT, Jon
- 1983 *One God-Two Temples: Schismatic Process in a Kekchi Village*. Department of Social Anthropology, University of Oslo. Oslo, Norway:
- SELER, Eduard
- 1901 *Die Alten Ansiedlungen von Chacula im Distrikte Nentón des Departments Huehuetenango der Republik Guatemala*. Dietrich Reimer. Berlin.
- 1902-1923 *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Amerikanischen Sprach- und Alterthumskunde*. A. Asher. 5 v. Berlin.
- SMITH, A. Ledyard
- 1955 *Archaeological Reconnaissance in Central Guatemala*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 608. Washington, D.C.
- SMITH, Robert E.
- 1949 «Guatemala highlands». *Carnegie Institution of Washington, Year Book* 1948: 229-231.

THOMPSON, J. Eric S.

- 1938 «Sixteenth and seventeenth century reports on the Chol Mayas». *American Anthropologist* 40: 584-604.

VILLACORTA C., José Antonio and Carlos A. VILLACORTA

- 1927 *Arqueología guatemalteca*. Tipografía Nacional. Guatemala.

WEEKS, John M.

- 1988 «Residential and local group organization in the Maya lowlands of southwestern Campeche, Mexico: the early seventeenth century», in *Household and Community in the Mesoamerican Past*, R. Wilk and W. Ashmore, eds., pp. 73-96, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

- 1991 «Defining variability in colonial lowland Maya domestic groups». *Revista Española de Antropología Americana* 21: 171-219.

WILK, Richard, and Wendy ASHMORE, eds.

- 1988 *Household and Community in the Mesoamerican Past*. University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque.

WILSON, Michael R.

- 1972 *A Highland Maya People and Their Habitat: The Natural History, Demography, and Economy of the K'ekchi'*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon [MW].