CONTENTS

xi *Foreword by David Carrasco*
xiii *Acknowledgments*

1 1. INTRODUCTION

4 Definition of the Research Problem
7 Terminology and Orthography
8 Nahua Pictography
11 *Lienzos* and Indigenous Cartography
15 Indigenous and European Cartography
18 Colonial Indigenous Maps
20 Summary

21 2. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

22 Theory
26 Methodology
32 Summary

35 3. QUAUHQUECHOLLAN

36 Prehispanic History of Quauhquechollan
39 Quauhquechollan and the Triple Alliance

43 Arrival of the Spaniards
48 Quauhquechollan's Indigenous Historical Record
49 *Genealogía de Quauhquechollan-Macuilxochitepec*
55 *Codex Huaquechula*
62 *Mapa Circular de Quauhquechollan*
70 Summary

73 4. THE *LIENZO DE QUAUHQUECHOLLAN:* THE DOCUMENT

73 History of the Document and Previous Publications
75 The Cloth
76 Creation of the Painting
77 Glosses
78 Original(s) and Copies
79 Summary

81 5. THE "SPANISH" CONQUEST OF GUATEMALA

83 The Conquest of Guatemala: Sources
87 Pedro de Alvarado's 1524 Campaign of Conquest
89 1524–1527
91 Jorge de Alvarado's 1527–1529 Campaigns of Conquest
95 Indigenous Conquistadors
99 Motivations for Participation
104 Tlaxcalteca and Quauhquecholteca Conquistadors
106 1529–1544
112 Situation of the Former Conquistadors in the Decades Following the Conquest
119 Summary

123 6. BASIC PICTOGRAPHIC CONVENTIONS USED IN THE *LIENZO DE QUAUHQUECHOLLAN*

124 People
127 Place Glyphs
127 Roads with Footprints and Horses' Hoofprints
128 Rivers
128 Scenes of War and Conquest
128 Quauhquecholteca War Emblems
131 A Spanish Banner
131 Weapons
132 Scenes of Rebellion
132 Kaqchikel Traps

134 Dances
135 Houses
135 Marketplaces

137 7. THE *LIENZO DE QUAUHQUECHOLLAN:* A READING

138 Initial Scene at Quauhquechollan
143 Army Departing from Quauhquechollan
144 Places from Which Indigenous Captains and Soldiers Were Gathered
146 Scenes Depicted in the Left-Hand Part of the Document (Mexico)
150 Soconusco and Retalhuleu
152 Zapotitlan and Suchitepequez
155 Quetzaltenango
158 Olintepeque and Totonicapan
163 Chichicastenango, Olintepeque, Comalapa
165 Chimaltenango
169 The Narrative, Part 1
169 A Campaign from Chimaltenango to Utatlan
172 A Campaign from Chimaltenango to Petapa and Tzonteconapan
176 A Campaign from Chimaltenango to Pochutla
181 Escuintla
184 The Narrative, Part 2
184 The Volcán de Agua and Quilizinapa
187 The City of Santiago at Almolonga (Ciudad Vieja)
190 A Dance for the Dead
192 A Campaign from the City of Santiago to Verapaz and the Cuchumatanes
197 The Narrative, Part 3
199 Summary

203 8. THE *LIENZO DE QUAUHQUECHOLLAN:* INTERPRETATION

204 Narrative Structure and Textual Analysis
211 Layout and Orientation
212 A Familiar Format: The *Mapa de Cuauhtinchan no. 2*
218 Set Formats for Conquest and Migration Stories
221 Where Was the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* Made?
223 Function and Use
228 Summary

231 9. OTHER PICTOGRAPHIC ACCOUNTS OF THE “SPANISH” CONQUEST

232 The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*

235 The *Lienzo de Analco*
236 References to Other Pictorials Dealing with the "Spanish" Conquest
238 Spanish-Indigenous Alliances as Represented by the Tlaxcalteca and the Quauhquecholteca
239 Initial Scenes
242 Similarities and Differences
244 Function and Use
245 The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* and *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, and Their Contribution to Our Understanding of the Conquest of Guatemala
248 Summary

251 10. CONCLUSIONS

252 The Role of the Quauhquecholteca in the Spanish Conquest
253 Decipherment of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* and Its Rhetoric
254 Provenance, Purpose, and Message of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*, and the Time and Context of Its Creation
257 Future Research

259 NOTES

297 APPENDIXES

297 1. AGN Tierras Vol. 2683, Exp. 4, No. 164: *Real cédula* (1535) and *merced* (1545)
301 2. Text in the upper left-hand corner of the *Mapa Circular de Quauhquechollan*
305 3. Paso y Troncoso's description of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* (1892–1893)
309 4. AGI Justicia 291: A selection of testimonies
319 5. AGI Guatemala 52: Tlaxcalteca testimonies
323 6. AGI Guatemala 53: Testimonies of indigenous conquistadors from Guatemala
331 7. AGI Guatemala 41: Letter to the king by Jorge de Alvarado (1534)
335 8. AGI Justicia 199: *Encomiendas* granted to Jorge de Alvarado

337 BIBLIOGRAPHY

361 INDEX

MAP SUPPLEMENT: *LIENZO DE QUAUHQUECHOLLAN*

CONQUERED CONQUISTADORS

1. INTRODUCTION

> I would wish Your Grace to know that the country [Guatemala] is healthy and the climate temperate, and well populated, with many strong towns . . . the which, with all the subject towns and neighborhoods, I have placed under the yoke and in the service of the royal crown of His Majesty.
>
> —Pedro de Alvarado in his third letter to the king of Spain, written in Utatlan on April 11, 1524 (Mackie 1924:65)

> fue publico e notorio que si los yndios amygos no vinyeran de las provinçias de mexico con el d[ic]ho adelantado [Pedro de Alvarado] no se pudiera conquystar la provinçia de guatimala ny la de honduras.
>
> —Diego de Mançanares, one of the indigenous conquistadors who had fought in Alvarado's army during the conquest of Guatemala and Honduras, June 30, 1564 (AGI Justicia 291, f. 127r)

Conquest: the word brings up violent images of war and destruction and their related horrors—the tension before each battle, the blood and screams of the dying, and the sickening silence when at last the victorious have conquered. It is a story told over and over throughout history. And regrettably, it is one that will in all likelihood be told many more times before humankind finds peace within itself.

During the first half of the sixteenth century, Mesoamerica was conquered in the name of the Spanish king. This titanic clash of two worlds has been recorded as ending in the pacification of the region by a handful of triumphant and valiant Spanish captains. But there is another story to be told. History, it is said, is written by the victors, but the Spanish were not alone in their victory. They had a most unlikely ally—indigenous conquistadors—an ally whose history, although written, has yet to become well-known or properly understood.

The topic of the Spanish conquest of Mesoamerica first became *en vogue* in the scholarly world with William Hickling Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, first published in 1843. Like many others, Prescott attributed the success of the conquest primarily to the Europeans' superiority over the indigenous population. Approximately a century later, Robert Ricard portrayed the colonization of Mesoamerica as a spiritual conquest, attributing its success largely to the work of the mendicant orders (1933). Many works followed, in which the Spanish conquistadors, whether military leaders or clergy, were featured as the conquering forces.[1] The subjection of Guatemala to Spanish rule has likewise long been (and often still is) represented as a controlled process of pacification under Pedro de Alvarado and his brothers.

Behind these apparently Spanish successes, however, is the poorly understood but indispensable role of thousands of indigenous captains and soldiers and their retinues, as well as African servants and slaves, who together provided the manpower and knowledge needed to make the Spanish conquest work. Only in recent years have scholars begun to focus on the story of the indigenous conquistadors, discovering the nature and indispensability of the many alliances established between the Spaniards and the indigenous population.[2] This research shows clearly that the indigenous conquistadors who assisted the Spaniards experienced the conquest very differently from the Spaniards. In the historical documents they created, they tell a story of a *joint* conquest, one in which both Spaniards and indigenous conquistadors are seen as equal allies seeking advancement by combining their forces.

The present work focuses on a Nahua source concerning the conquest of Guatemala, composed by indigenous conquistadors from the Central Mexican Nahua town of Quauhquechollan, Puebla. The Quauhquecholteca established an alliance with the Spaniards in 1520, and they assisted them in the subjection of the Mexica Empire and other areas in Mexico. In 1523, a first campaign to Guatemala was organized and executed under the command of Pedro de Alvarado. Four years later, when Pedro left for Spain, his brother Jorge de Alvarado was called upon to take over the conquest of the country, and between 5,000 and 6,000 Central Mexican allies departed with him to take part in this campaign. Among this combined army of indigenous and Spanish conquistadors were Quauhquecholteca conquistadors. In the subsequent three years, this army accomplished most of the pacification of what is now Guatemala.

Once the initial period of conquest was over, some Quauhquecholteca veterans of Jorge de Alvarado's army founded a colony near the present-day town of Ciudad Vieja in Guatemala. They continued to live there, enjoying privileged status as indigenous conquistadors for at least a few decades. During this period, the Quauhquecholteca units' military achievements and experiences were documented by Quauhquecholteca *tlacuiloque* (scribes), who worked in either Quauhquechollan or Guatemala. These scribes created a large pictorial document made according to Nahua historical traditions. This document is presently known as the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*.

In a setting of roads, rivers, and place glyphs, the painters depicted the journey of the Quauhquecholteca units from Quauhquechollan to and through Guatemala. They depicted the units' military successes and several other events and described the landscape in which the conquistadors of their community came to live. The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* tells the story of the conquest of Guatemala as seen through the eyes of the Quauhquecholteca, reflecting their concerns, ideology, and historical awareness. It is a narrative of conquest and migration. It is a unique source, not only because it represents the Spanish conquest from a Nahua point of view but also because it was composed in a Nahua medium of communication (narrative pictography) and with, most likely, a Nahua public in mind.

The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* was made according to Nahua traditions, and therefore it will be dealt with as belonging to the large corpus of surviving Nahua pictographic documents made in what is now Mexico, regardless of whether this *lienzo* was made in Quauhquechollan or in its colony in Guatemala. Conquest and migration are prevalent themes in this corpus of pictorial stories, especially in those that report prehispanic events. The best-known example is undoubtedly the *Codex Mendoza*, a Mexica (Aztec) pictorial that represents the conquests of Mexica rulers between 1383 and 1521. The pictorial records of conquest created in the colonial period are a continuation of this tradition.

The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is not an isolated creation. Other communities that sent out conquistadors with the Spaniards produced similar pictorials. Particularly suitable for comparison are the several versions of the famous *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* from Tlaxcala, another Central Mexican Nahua community, which record the military achievements of Tlaxcalteca units under the Spanish banner. Another Tlaxcalteca document is the *Lienzo de Analco,* which pertains to the municipality of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios Analco, presently part of San Ildefonso Villa Alta, Oaxaca. The *Lienzo de Analco* tells the story of Tlaxcalteca conquistadors who participated in the conquest of the Sierra Norte, Oaxaca, and founded a colony there. Reportedly, a Central Mexican colony in Totonicapan, Guatemala, once had a conquest pictorial as well, but the whereabouts of this document are unknown (see Chapter 5).

These documents seem to have been created not only for the purpose of recording the communities' conquest histories. They also addressed the need to keep order and the need to understand and find a way to deal with the new post-conquest situation. After all, the European intrusion and the changes it brought about were drastic and destructive for the indigenous peoples. Most important, however, these documents served as proofs of identity and legitimization of status for the indigenous rulers and their communities. The Quauhquecholteca conquest pictorial and most of those of the Tlaxcalteca were created shortly after the conquest. They reflect the indigenous communities' contemporary perception of the conquest as a joint one and as one that led to their own advancement. None of the extant pictorials represents the Spanish conquest as a humiliating event. Instead, the alliances with the Spaniards take their place in indigenous history as the beginning of a new conquest story for the communities in question, continuous with prehispanic processes of conquest and domination.

Of the many books written on the conquest of Guatemala, I would like to mention the work of Wendy Kramer. In her book, *Encomienda Politics in Early Colonial Guatemala, 1524–1544: Dividing the Spoils* (1994), she provides a detailed analysis of a large number of published sources and unpublished archival documents, and she presents a clear and accurate overview of the leading people and events of this period. Kramer was also the first historian to fully recognize Jorge de Alvarado's role in the conquest of Guatemala. Another work that stands out is Laura Matthew's dissertation, *Neither and Both: The Mexican Indian Conquistadors of Colonial Guatemala* (2004). Matthew's research sheds new light on the situation of the indigenous allies from Mexico who settled in Guatemala after the conquest period and continued to live there, with a focus on those who settled in Ciudad Vieja. Her study is likewise based on many unpublished archival documents and also on extensive fieldwork in Guatemala. Chapter 5 of this book depends substantially on both Kramer's and Matthew's work. For detailed narratives of the role of indigenous conquistadors in the conquest of Mexico and Guatemala, the works of Matthew Restall (1998, 2003) and Michel Oudijk (Oudijk and Restall 2007) also deserve particular mention.

DEFINITION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The present work focuses primarily on the reading and contextualization of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*. Previously, the document was studied by Hilda Judith Aguirre Beltrán, who analyzed it using the Galarza method.[3] For Aguirre Beltrán's analysis, I refer to her Ph.D. thesis, *El Códice: Lienzo de Quauhquechollac. Manuscrito pictográfico indígena tradicional Azteca-Nahuatl* (2 volumes, 1999), in which she presented an elaborate descriptive analysis of the manuscript. The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is also regularly mentioned in scholarly studies. Nonetheless, no one has ever identified the locations of the place glyphs depicted in the document or recognized the area represented as Guatemala.[4] Instead, it was generally presumed that the landscape depicted represented a region in the neighborhood of Quauhquechollan. Therefore, the places, persons, events, and time frame depicted were never identified correctly.

The objectives of my study are (1) to decipher the pictographic contents of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*; (2) to identify the places, people, events, and time frame of the narrative depicted; (3) to come to an understanding of the purpose, message, and possible meanings of the work; and (4) to place the document and its narrative within its historical, cultural, and ideological contexts to permit its use as a historical source. Over time, the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* served in various contexts, starting with the one for which it was originally created and proceeding on to the museum context in which it serves today. Too little is known about the history of the document, however, to reconstruct all these contexts. The present thesis therefore limits its focus to the original purpose for which it was created.

This book begins with an introductory section, intended to lay the foundation for the analysis. The present chapter provides a brief introduction to the Nahua pictographic script and the so-called *lienzo* genre. Chapter 2 presents the theory and methodologies used to come to a reading and interpretation of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*. Since no specific information is available on the authors of the pictographic document or on where, when, and why the document was created, the structure and the rhetoric (i.e., convincing power) of the text are our main keys to understanding it. Therefore, I chose to use iconology in combination with a rather structuralist approach to the text, also borrowing some tools from semiotic narratology. Chapter 3 provides an introduction to the history of Quauhquechollan, the hometown of the main actors in the painting. The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is not the only pictorial made by the Quauhquecholteca. There are three others, presently known as the *Genealogía de Quauhquechollan-Macuilxochitepec*, the *Codex Huaquechula*, and the *Mapa Circular de Quauhquechollan*. The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*, the *Codex Huaquechula*, and the *Genealogía* are presently in Puebla, Mexico. The *Mapa Circular* is now in Vienna. The *Genealogía*, the *Codex Huaquechula*, and the *Mapa Circular* all deal with local affairs and are of a more modest size than the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*. They will be discussed briefly, to place the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* within the context of Quauhquechollan's indigenous historical record.

In the following chapters I proceed with my study of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*. Chapter 4 provides an examination of the document itself: its physical shape, history, and extant copies. Chapter 5 deals with the contextualization of the narrative depicted. In that chapter I give a brief overview of the most prominent persons and events involved in the conquest of Guatemala, with a primary focus on Jorge de Alvarado's 1527–1529 term as lieutenant governor. The military achievements of Jorge de Alvarado are poorly documented and therefore often ignored in historical reconstructions. A study of unpublished sources, however, revealed that it was in these years and under his command that most of the Spanish conquest of what is now Guatemala was realized. The indigenous conquistadors, among whom were both Quauhquecholteca and Tlaxcalteca, played an important role in this period. I investigate the nature of their alliances with the Spaniards and their contributions to the conquest, seeking to answer questions such as: Why did they participate? What kind of services did they provide? How did they perceive this episode in history? What was their situation after the conquest? The main sources for this exploration are documents composed by the indigenous allies themselves or ones in which they or their descendants testified. These documents have long been ignored in the reconstruction of the conquest of Guatemala as it is known today.

Chapter 6 provides an overview of the basic conventions (pictorial codes) used in the manuscript. Then, in Chapter 7, I present my reading of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*, using the historical data provided in Chapters 3 and 5. Chapter 8 is an analysis of the document's structure and rhetoric. The chapter investigates questions such as: What does the selection of information presented in the document say about the concerns of the creators? How are the elements structured? What does one learn from the document's format and layout? For what public was it intended, and what does this say about the relationship between the composers and the public? What do the contents and medium reveal about when and where it was made? What does the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* show us of the viewpoint of the Quauhquecholteca? More simply, this analysis asks, and attempts to answer, the key questions of who made the *lienzo*, where, when, for whom, and why. To come to a proper understanding of the document, it is essential to regard the work not as an individual object of information but rather as a physical body of data communicating the experiences and concerns of its creators and of the community to which they belonged.

In Chapter 9, the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is compared to the extant versions of the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* and the *Lienzo de Analco*. These pictographic documents all show the same ideological strategy and address the same concerns. They tell how the Quauhquecholteca and Tlaxcalteca allied with the Spaniards, highlighting their role in the conquest and focusing on their victories. Each document enhanced the self-image and position of the community for which it was made. There are many similarities between these documents but also a few important differences. Analyzing them as a corpus leads to a better understanding of each text and of the Quauhquecholteca and Tlaxcalteca perceptions of the Spanish conquest.

The interpretation of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* presented in this book does not pretend to be exclusive of other interpretations; rather, it is offered as a tool that gives the reader the context and historical data necessary to use the manuscript as a historical source. The present study is also not to be considered the final word on the document. Pictographic documents like the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* were originally presented in combination with the performance of a storyteller. These oral traditions are now lost. Physically, the document is also incomplete: the right-hand part has been cut off and is unknown. Hence, the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is an incomplete body of information, which we attempt to fit into a history as yet only partly known to us today. Possibly, new information will surface in the future that will provide new insights regarding both the document itself and the history it communicates.

In 2002, my colleague Rosanna Woensdregt and I made a large-sized historical *lienzo*. By doing so, we became particularly aware that each person, each scene, and each element depicted in a pictorial document communicates a message or messages: some obvious, others hidden. If the reader is familiar with the subject, some images trigger the memory of entire stories. Without knowing the details of the background of a story, it is impossible to identify all of the messages the author(s) intended to communicate. This is a major difference between the creation of a *lienzo* and an alphabetic text. Participating in the creative process of a *lienzo* gave me insight into the many layers of information that can be incorporated in a pictorial narrative, be they intended or unintended by the makers, and into the complexity and diversity of the medium. In other words, because the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is presently incomplete and a gap exists in time, knowledge, and worldview between the sixteenth-century indigenous world and the present scientific world, much of the encoded information and message will likely remain unknown.

TERMINOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHY

The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* was made by artists who belonged to the community presently known as San Martín Huaquechula, *cabacera* of the municipality with the same name. This town is located in the Valley of Atlixco in the southeastern part of the present-day state of Puebla, Mexico. Quauhquechollan is the prehispanic Nahuatl name for this town. The word consists of the elements *quauh*–Nahuatl for “eagle,” *quechol*–“quecholli bird,” and *(t)lan*–place-name suffix (“place of”), and can be translated as “Eagle quecholli place.” In the sixteenth-century sources this name is spelled many different ways: Cuauhquechollan, Cuauhquecholan, Quauhquechollan, Quauhquecholan, Guaquechula, and so on. For consistency in this book and to avoid confusion, I only use the name Quauhquechollan. I do not use the modern name.

With regard to the orthography of the Nahuatl community names used in this book, I normally write them the way I found them most frequently used in the sixteenth-century sources I consulted. This means I do not use the Spanish accents. The same applies to Nahuatl personal names, such as Xicotencatl and Ixtlilxochitl. I make exceptions, however, for community names that are presently well-known (e.g., Tlaxcala instead of Tlaxcallan, Escuintla instead of Yzquintepeque). For indigenous place-names in Guatemala other than Nahuatl names, I use either the old names used in the sources or the indigenous spellings currently used (e.g., K’iche’ instead of Quiché).

Throughout this book I use the words “Mexico” and “Guatemala.” Unless indicated otherwise, I use these names to refer to land within the boundaries of the present-day countries. With the words "Mexican" and "Guatemalan," I refer to the inhabitants of these lands. Also, although neither Mexico nor Guatemala was ever officially a European colony, they were treated as such. Therefore, in line with other writers, I apply the word "colonial" to describe the status of these countries after the Spanish conquest.

Another term that requires clarification is the word "Aztec." Aztec originally designated the inhabitants of Aztlan, the place of origin of the Mexica of Tenochtitlan. In his early-nineteenth-century work, however, the naturalist Alexander von Humboldt erroneously used the word "Aztec" to designate the Mexica of Tenochtitlan. As a result, the word "Aztec" started to appear in the literature in various contexts, and a long tradition of incorrect usage was established. At times, the word is used for all the inhabitants of the Basin of Mexico in the Late Postclassic period. At other times, the culturally related inhabitants of the Puebla-Tlaxcala valleys are also referred to. The word also refers to the peoples who made up the Triple Alliance. Furthermore, the term has been used to designate speakers of the Nahuatl language, the language itself, and even ceramic types that have nothing to do with either the Mexica or the inhabitants of Aztlan. In other words, "Aztec" has become a problematic term involving historical inaccuracy and ambiguity (López Austin 2001:68). I have therefore tried to avoid it. However, since so many earlier scholars have used it, I also use the word on some occasions for the sake of convenience. When used, the word "Aztec" should be understood to refer to the Mexica of Tenochtitlan and the members of the Triple Alliance contemporaneous with the period of conquest. For the most part, however, I use the term "Mexica."

NAHUA PICTOGRAPHY

In contrast to peoples who relied on alphabetical or other methods of writing, the indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica developed a system that combined oral and pictographic images to record and transmit information. In the sixteenth century the Spanish friar Diego Durán wrote: "todo lo tenían escrito y pintado en libros y largos papeles con cuentas de años meses y dias en que habían acontecido tenían escritas en estas pinturas sus leyes y ordenanzas sus padrones & c. todo con mucha órden y concierto de lo cual había excelentísimos historiadores que con estas pinturas componían historias amplisimas de sus antepasados" (Durán 1984 I:226).

Modern scholars have not always shared Durán's perception of the Mesoamerican pictorials as valuable historical sources.[5] As a result, the contents of most Mexican pictorials were often ignored in historical reconstructions. Over the past few decades, however, these documents have become the subject of many scholarly investigations, and fortunately their unique value as historical evidence has again been rediscovered.[6]

The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is a most edifying example of the Nahua pictorial writing tradition as practiced in the Basin of Mexico and its immediate surroundings in Late Postclassic and Early Colonial times. The system was likely used before that period as well.[7] The system consists of a combination of two types of pictographs: (1) images that are stylized or conventionalized representations of things present in the world around us (for example, roads, water, plants, animals, persons), and (2) logographic signs used for personal names, place-names, and dates (i.e., hieroglyphs with phonetic elements). Most pictographs are agreed-upon standards of graphic representation, and they are structured and organized in such a way that a narrative is told. The script is therefore generally referred to as "narrative pictography" (Prem 1992:53).

Since most conventions were not confined to a particular language, they were used and understood by the inhabitants of a variety of political entities in Mexico. Ñuudzavui (Mixtec), Benizaa (Zapotec), and Otomí or Ñañhu readers all used scripts with similar conventions. Variants of these scripts were used on stone (as inscriptions), the walls of buildings and caves, pottery, paper, bone, animal skin, and cloth. The surviving corpus of pictorial manuscripts includes book-size screenfolds (for example, *Borgia group, Codex Nuttall*), scroll-like strips of animal skin or amate paper (often used for genealogies or tribute lists), manuscripts made after the model of European books (*Codex Mendoza*, *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca*), and single panels of paper, hide, or (cotton) cloth in a variety of sizes (Johnson 2000:575).

The arrival of the Spaniards in Mexico brought about the destruction of most prehispanic manuscripts. Regardless, the pictorial writing tradition was kept in use throughout the Early Colonial period. There are even some examples of eighteenth-century productions. Elements new to the indigenous traditions, such as European objects, three-dimensionality, and shade effects, were adopted as the system gradually adapted to function in the colonial world. Meanwhile, the indigenous nobility was educated in Spanish convents and learned the alphabetic script. For a while, both writing systems were used next to, or in combination with, each other, until alphabetic writing proved more functional and the pictorial writing system was used less and less. As time passed, many of the pictorial conventions were forgotten, and so were many of the oral traditions related to the extant pictorials. Presently, scholars know of the existence of perhaps 20 prehispanic and around 500 Early Colonial pictorials from Mexico. There are several references to pictorials produced in prehispanic and Early Colonial Guatemala as well, made according to either Maya or Nahua tradition. However, no prehispanic pictorials have survived, and the extant colonial pictorials from Guatemala are few in number (see Chapter 9).

Nahua pictography is a relatively well-understood script, thanks to several factors, including (1) the existence of a large corpus of Nahua documents (both pictorial and textual), (2) familiarity with the Nahuatl language, and (3) the existence of direct translations of glyphic texts into alphabetic writing (like the *Codex Mendoza,* mentioned earlier). Also, some of the early alphabetic records created by indigenous writers (such as the *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas*, a textual transcription of earlier painted annals; the *Codex Florentino* [Sahagún's team]; and the writings of Ixtlilxochitl, chronicler from Texcoco) still reveal some of the indigenous (pictorial or oral) cognitive ways of structuring a text. However, since each document was made for the individual needs of a community and was created in its own historical and ideological context, the interpretation of the individual Nahua pictorials requires further study with regard to contextualization and to improve our understanding of their meaning.

As Durán indicated, the *tlacuiloque* who composed the pictorials were professional artists and historiographers. These scribes were masters of the use of the pictorial codes, the use of space, and the art of composition. They also mastered the use of rhetorical tools to present a narrative in such a way that it affected the reader and the use of images of everyday objects to convey coded political, moral, and religious messages. In other words, they knew exactly how to use their liberty within the rules of the system to present and combine the elements in such a way as to come to a phase beyond the text: to provoke certain emotions within the reader. This structuring process (or "creative moment") gave a power to the text, a meaning. Normally, these *tlacuiloque* worked under the authority of a lord or the local nobility. They based their work on orally transmitted texts, previous pictorials, and the wishes and concerns of the person or community that commissioned the work. With few exceptions, they never signed their works.[8] Their names were seemingly considered irrelevant, probably because most pictorials were not meant to serve the cause of the artists but rather that of the artists' lords and their community.

The extant corpus of pictorials covers a variety of subjects: from genealogies, migration stories, war records, and tribute lists to socio-political organization maps, religious and calendrical documents, and cartographic-historical maps. Each so-called genre had its own specialized *tlacuiloque*. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl wrote at the beginning of the seventeenth century:

> las pinturas y caracteres que son con que están escritas y memorizadas sus historias, por haberse pintado al tiempo y cuando sucedieron las cosas acaecidas . . . tenían para cada género sus escritores, unos que se trataban de los anales poniendo por su orden las cosas que acaecían en cada un año, con día, mes y hora. Otros tenían a su cargo las genealogías y descendencia de los reyes y señores de linaje, asentando por cuenta y razón los que nacían y borraban los que morían, con la misma cuenta. Unos tenían cuidado de las pinturas de los términos, límites y mojoneras de las ciudades, provincias, pueblos y lugares, y de las suertes y repartimientos de las tierras, cuyas eran y a quien pertenecían. Otros, de los libros de las leyes, ritos y ceremonias que usaban en su infidel-

> idad: y los sacerdotes, de los templos, de sus idolatrías y modo de su doctrina idolátrica y de las fiestas de sus falsos dioses y calendarios. Y finalmente, los filósofos y sabios que tenían entre ellos, estaba a su cargo el pintar todas las ciencias que sabían y alcanzaban, y enseñar de memoria todos los cantos que observaban sus ciencias e historias. (Ixtlilxóchitl 1985 I:527)

For the sake of scholarly research and cataloging, previous scholars have classified the surviving Mexican pictorials into several groups (see Glass and Robertson 1975). This division was based on (1) the document's material or format; (2) its genre, theme, or contents; and (3) the circumstances in which the document was made. The names by which most Mesoamerican pictorials are known today have been determined by a variety of circumstances, such as their place of origin, the place where they were (re)discovered, or a collector's name. These names often also include references to the material or the theme (for example, *lienzos*, *mapas*, *genealogías*). It cannot be presumed, however, that the makers and users of the documents thought in terms of the same classifications or the same names. Their way of referring to their own works may have been very different, and modern classifications and names often tell us little about a pictorial's original meaning or function.

The unique value of the indigenous pictorials lies in the fact that they provide the indigenous version of history as captured in an indigenous medium of communication. In other words, they reflect the indigenous view of historical events, concepts, morals, and ideas, represented by a means of communication the indigenous peoples themselves developed and felt comfortable with. However, since the majority of the extant pictorials were made in a colonial context, they were often adapted to Spanish expectations or influenced by European iconographic and historiographic structures. The degrees of indigenous and European influence therefore depend largely on the document, the region and time period in which it was created, the author(s), the purpose for which it was made, and similar factors. Nonetheless, the corpus of extant pictorials provides unique insight into the indigenous history both before the conquest and throughout the colonial period.

LIENZOS AND INDIGENOUS CARTOGRAPHY

The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* belongs to both the so-called *lienzo* genre and the "cartographic histories" genre. The word *lienzo* (Spanish for cotton cloth, canvas, linen, or hemp) is generally applied in reference to pictorials that were painted on large cloth panels. It thus refers to the physical medium rather than the contents of a painting. The name "cartographic history," in turn, is generally applied to pictorials that transmit both cartographical (toponymic) and historical information. Some cartographic histories emphasize cartography (like the *Lienzo de Ocotepec*, for example, which is almost fully cartographic), while others are mostly historical (like the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*). However, both aspects are always represented.[9]

John Glass defined *lienzos* as follows:

> The lienzo is a sheet of cloth, frequently of considerable size. In Spanish art-historical usage the word is similar to the English word "canvas." The lienzo is usually made of narrow strips of cloth sewn together; they may be of cotton, maguey fibre, or other material. . . . The lienzo is the common medium for maps and documents recording village history and boundaries, especially those of the cartographic-historical type. (Glass 1975:9)

In their 1975 survey, Glass and Robertson recorded about fifty *lienzos* dating from the Early Colonial period to the nineteenth century and eighty-seven cartographic histories. The bulk of these documents were painted in the modern Mexican states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Michoacan, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Veracruz in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A few came from the state of Mexico and the Distrito Federal. Although the indigenous peoples of southeastern Mexico, Yucatan, and Guatemala are also known to have used pictographic scripts, no *lienzos* are known from those areas. The *lienzo* genre as we know it today thus seems to have been limited to specific areas. The 1975 census, however, does not include all extant *lienzos*. Others were identified and published after the census was made, and the fact that new *lienzos* continue to be brought to light indicates that local archives, churches, and private collections in Mexico and elsewhere still hold *lienzos* presently unknown to the academic world.[10]

Most *lienzos* consist of several quadrangular pieces of cloth sewn together that were separately woven on the native back-strap or body-tension loom. Cloth is thought to have been used for pictographic records in prehispanic times as well. Unfortunately, however, no example seems to have survived. A detailed study of the pieces of cloth used for certain *lienzos* has shown that in many cases, some edges or seams have ribbed borders while others do not. Johnson (2000) therefore argued that those pieces were originally woven for another use, such as clothing, and were only later used for *lienzos*. This seems a reasonable hypothesis.[11] Some *lienzos* also contain pieces with a palimpsest. One of the pieces of cloth in the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* shows traces of just such an erased previous painting (see Chapter 4). In other words, some pieces of cloth used for *lienzos* had been recycled.[12]

One can assume that the shape and size of a *lienzo* were primarily determined by the document's purpose, although they may also have been influenced by the availability of cloth. The narrative pictography was painted directly on the cloth. Some *lienzos* show sketches of incomplete and uncolored drawings to the side of the final painting. This indicates that the *tlacuiloque* first made sketches to divide the space of the document and to determine a composition before they proceeded with a final version. Such traces of sketches can also be found in the *Lienzo de*

Quauhquechollan. The pigments used in colonial *lienzos* were often of traditional indigenous manufacture, in combination with European colorants. The most common were black, the dark red cochineal, a fine blue-green called *matlalli*, yellow, and a red and a green obtained from certain minerals (Valle 1997:9).

The painting styles and techniques used in Mexican *lienzos* vary over time and from community to community, although some seem to be clearly the product of a certain artistic "school" (Gruzinski 1993; Robertson 1994). Some *lienzos* are primarily indigenous in style and content (e.g., the *Lienzo de Tuxpan*, *Lienzo de Tequixtepec II*, and *Lienzo de Zacatepec*). Others are clear examples of the new painting style that resulted from the combination of indigenous and European elements (i.e., concepts, styles, perspectives, colors, layout, and materials).[13] The largest known example of a Mexican *lienzo* is the sixteenth-century *Lienzo Seler II* from Coixtlahuaca, Oaxaca (4.25 × 3.75 m; see Glass and Robertson 1975:110). At 3.25 × 2.35 m, the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is among the larger ones as well.

With regard to the pictographic elements and layout of the extant *lienzos*, I identified these common characteristics:

1. There is almost always a central place, usually represented by a place glyph and a temple or a church. This central place is usually situated more or less in the center of the painting, or, if elsewhere, it is shown in considerable size. A *lienzo* usually reflects the interests and needs of the community associated with this central place glyph, and it was often painted there. Most *lienzos* are concerned with small-scale local history, although there are exceptions, such as the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* and the various versions of the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*.
2. Near this central place, one often finds a reference to its founders and its rulers or a ruling genealogy, sometimes in combination with a depiction of the establishment of a political alliance.
3. Other places depicted in a *lienzo* are always related to the main place in some way. These relations are usually of a political, economic, military, or geographic nature. The other places are subject towns or tribute towns, conquered places, *linderos* (border places), neighboring *altepetl* ("city-states"), and similar places.
4. *Lienzos* also show the people involved in events such as the foundation of settlements, conquests, the subjugation of an enemy, and ritual performances. Normally, the main actors in the narrative are related to the central place. *Lienzos* often represent the history of local lords by depicting the genealogies, achievements, and migrations of their ancestors. In most cases they also designate the borders of the territory to which the ancestors laid claim. Land claims were usually defined historically rather than geographically, and the emphasis was primarily on the history and achievements of the people who possessed these lands (see also Kagan 2000:115–116).

5. Movements and connections are usually indicated by means of roads or lines with footprints. These roads serve as graphic links to make the separate elements of the narrative a coherent whole and to indicate the movement of the actors and the structure and reading direction of the narrative. Although the exact distances and the spatial relationships between the toponyms depicted are often not precisely defined in *lienzos*, the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* does give that information accurately.
6. Sometimes elements of flora and fauna (trees, plants, animals), or other place indications such as rivers, roads, mountains, lakes, springs, and seas, are added. Some *lienzos* are bordered on one or more sides by a band of water ("sea band").[14] Later *lienzos* (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) generally show more of such elements than the earlier *lienzos* (sixteenth century).
7. If explanatory texts are added, they are usually transcriptions of personal names and toponyms. Larger texts are added only in a few occasions.
8. In general, only actors, places, and events that were of influence on the formation and situation of the community in question at the time of the manuscript's creation are depicted. The places, actors, and events depicted were generally selected on the basis of their relevance to both the community and the purpose of the work.

Most *lienzos* from the state of Oaxaca emphasize dynastic foundations and genealogies of ruling families, going back four or five centuries before the Spanish conquest. Most *lienzos* from the states of Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Michoacan, in turn, record a more contemporary history, often related to the Spanish conquest (Mundy 2001:121; see also Chapter 8). Scholars have subcategorized the corpus of extant *lienzos* based on their themes (territorial, genealogical, historical, or a combination) and on their structure or layout. Distinctions are made between (1) "road maps," dealing with migration histories and conquest journeys, (2) "idealized maps" (subdivided into rectangular and circular ones), (3) the so-called Texcoco type (characterized by a unique sort of geographic realism), and (4) mixtures of these types.[15] The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* belongs to the first category, as it shows both a conquest journey and the migration history of the Quauhquecholteca who founded a colony in Guatemala.

Unlike folded codices, *lienzos* were meant to be viewed flat, and accordingly they are painted on one side only. It seems that they were put on a wall (as is still done in some indigenous communities), laid on the floor, or both. The seventeenth-century chronicler Francisco de Burgoa referred to a manuscript, possibly a *lienzo*, that was hung on the walls of an indigenous palace (Mundy 2001:121). The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* seems to have served a similar purpose (see Chapter 9). Barbara Mundy raised the possibility that *lienzos* may also have been hung out like banners on festival and market days (Mundy 2001:121). The use of *lienzos* on the floor seems the most plausible assumption, though, since most *lienzos* show people and places in a variety of orientations. When displayed on the floor, readers can walk around the document, creating diverse orientations depending on where and from which angle they see what is depicted. At the same time, a use on the floor (and also on a wall) transforms the *lienzo* into a physical microversion of the landscape of the narrative.

A *lienzo* was not read silently, as one reads books today. Instead, its presentation was a public event. A storyteller (*tlamatini* in Nahuatl) presented the oral traditions related to the text. These orally recited texts often included dialogues, songs, and prose and must have answered many "why" and "how" questions about the actors in the narrative, their motivations, and the meaning of events.[16] They helped viewers understand the contents and meaning of the pictorial. They may also have revealed information on how nonmaterial, nonphysical circumstances[17] shaped the *tlacuiloque*'s understanding of the past and present and on the internal mechanisms within the community that determined the presentation of the narrative (i.e., which persons and events were considered relevant to depict, and which were considered less relevant and were subsequently left out). The transformation of oral traditions to pictorial documents was never a complete replacement of the former by the latter. Pictorials and orally recited texts were used in combination, and each played an essential part within indigenous historiography. The oral texts that accompanied the pictorials were thus essential and indispensable parts of the messages.

The tradition of creating large paintings with conquest narratives for public viewing was familiar to the Spaniards. In the same decades in which *lienzos* on the conquest of Mexico and Guatemala were created, in Spain large tapestries were made showing the conquest of Tunis by Charles V, which likewise served a public function.[18] These tapestries, part of a long tradition of tapestry making in Europe, may have been presented in combination with storytelling events as well. Thus, a mutual understanding of this tradition must have existed, at least to some degree.

INDIGENOUS AND EUROPEAN CARTOGRAPHY

Since no pre-conquest *lienzo* has survived, some doubt that maps in the modern sense of the term (i.e., the projection of a three-dimensional spatial reality onto a flat surface) existed in prehispanic Mesoamerica. Particularly outspoken on this issue is the anthropologist Arthur Miller, in whose view indigenous maps emerged only after 1521 and as a result of the conquest (Miller 1991:171). Other authors, however, have argued in favor of pre-conquest indigenous maps (see, for example, Boone 1992; Kagan 2000). I agree with the latter. Indications of a prehispanic mapping tradition can be found in the alphabetic references and by extrapolating backward from surviving colonial pictorials. Several arguments can be raised:

1. As appears from the *Codex Florentino*, the Mexica made and consulted pictorial maps to plan their military campaigns and prepare their attack strategies (see Sahagún 1950–1982:2, book 8, f. 33v).[19] The same happened in Michoacan (see Acuña 1987).
2. It is known that the Tlaxcalteca also had a long tradition of painting conquest histories in *lienzos*, as is clear in these words of Díaz del Castillo: "y trajeron [the lords of Tlaxcala] pintadas en unos grandes paños de henequén las batallas que con ellos [the Mexica] habían habido, y la manera de pelear" (Díaz del Castillo 1992:212 [ch. LXXVIII]). Motecuhzoma was likewise informed about the arrival of various Spanish conquistadors in Mexico by messengers, sent from Veracruz, who brought him the information painted in *lienzos*. Andrés de Tapia wrote:

   > At this time Moctezuma called the marqués [Hernán Cortés] to show him a mantle on which were painted eighteen ships, five of them wrecked on the coast and turned over in the sand. This is the way the Indians have of conveying news accurately. He told the marqués that the ships had been wrecked eighteen days ago on the coast, almost a hundred leagues from the port. Then another messenger came with a painting that showed certain ships anchoring in the port of Veracruz, and the marqués feared it was an armed force sent out against us. (Tapia 1963:44, transl. Kranz 2001)

3. Cortés mentioned that Motecuhzoma had prepared for him a cloth map of the coast of Mexico, with all its rivers and coves, and that the rulers of Tabasco and Xicalango also presented to him a road map on cloth (Kagan 2000:47–48). The indigenous peoples thus clearly had the skills to make such maps.
4. The European chronicler Peter Martyr (or Pietro Martire d'Anghiera) mentioned two indigenous maps Cortés had sent to Spain in 1522. One was painted on a piece of cotton cloth about 10 m long and depicted the Mexica provinces and their enemy states. The other was a smaller map, representing Tenochtitlan and its temples, bridges, and lakes. Both documents are lost, but Martyr's remarks imply that these indigenous maps showed cartographic characteristics familiar to him as a European (Kagan 2000:49; Linné 1948:189).
5. Some of the colonial *lienzos* are clearly copies of prehispanic *lienzos*. Examples include some of the maps created in Cuauhtinchan, Puebla. These documents must be copies of fifteenth-century maps, as their temporal and thematic contents suggest that the originals were made when the Mexica conquered the region, not after the Spanish conquest (Reyes García 1988:10, 15).
6. The formats and layouts of some pictorial migration and conquest stories presented in a geographic setting show striking similarities. This also suggests a continuation of a longer and thus prehispanic tradition (see Chapter 8).

7. There are various indirect indications of mapmaking skill. The order and detailed planning with which the Mexica built parts of Tenochtitlan and Texcoco, for example, indicate the work of urban designers and land surveyors capable of rendering ground plans useful for building purposes. None of these maps have survived, however (Kagan 2000:48). Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl also indicated that some *tlacuiloque* were specialized in the painting of maps (see earlier discussion), which points to the presence of such mapmakers in prehispanic society.
8. The geographic accuracy of the distribution of toponyms in some of the Early Colonial *lienzos*, along with the appearance of the genre over such a large geographic area, also indicate the existence of a longer tradition of so-called cartographic histories in Mexico and a basis for this tradition in prehispanic times.[20]

The surviving indigenous maps made in the Colonial period show various indications of a long tradition of indigenous mapmaking and reveal the differences between the indigenous way of representing geography and the mapping tradition familiar today. The major difference is that the indigenous peoples of Mexico represented geography in historical terms. They were primarily concerned with the historical aspect of a narrative, and to them places did not normally exist independent from history. Conversely, events were not necessarily place-related and could also be represented by persons or actions. The story being told usually determined the structure and content of the indigenous maps, and as storytelling instruments, these maps were therefore prone to different layers of representation. In addition, the physical shape of the document, conventions for the depiction of human actors in the maps based on their place in the social order, and the nature of the narrative represented each influenced the layout of indigenous maps. Most indigenous maps can best be described as "maps of experience"[21] or "lived geographies"[22] rather than maps representing a physical geography or linear connections. Other indigenous maps, however, do represent the distribution of the places on the ground very accurately, the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* being a good example.

The works of the indigenous mapmakers were indeed very different from the contemporary maps of famous European cartographers such as Gemma Frisius, Gerard Mercator, and Abraham Ortelius (to whose works scholars tend to make comparisons). However, they were little different from the way the Spaniards who arrived in the Americas in the sixteenth century made maps.[23] The latter also provided their maps with buildings and other images, projected historical events onto a geographical framework, and depicted the world in local, fairly personal, and often historical terms (Kagan 2000:46). Their focus was still mostly on territoriality, however, instead of on actors and events. Good examples of contemporary Spanish-made maps of Guatemala are the maps published with the work of Francisco Antonio de Fuentes y Guzmán, who wrote in the late seventeenth century (Fuentes y Guzmán 1932).

In other words, when studying early indigenous maps, present-day scholars face a set of concepts different from the ones they are used to in modern cartography. Obviously, concepts such as "accuracy," "order," and "disorder" are very much culturally and temporally related, and in a historical map, what was a logical order to the indigenous *tlacuiloque* and contemporary readers is not necessarily logical to modern scholars. Likewise, the chronological ordering of events may not have been similarly significant to both. The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* shows these differences very clearly (see Chapters 7 and 8).

COLONIAL INDIGENOUS MAPS

Some of the colonial Mexican pictorials were prepared to answer the needs of indigenous people. Others were made specifically for the colonial administration. A pictorial's original purpose can be discerned in the way the narrative is presented, the selection of the information conveyed, and the rhetorical tools used by the *tlacuiloque* (see also Chapters 2 and 8). In *lienzos* or other maps created for a use within the indigenous sphere, geography was normally represented in relation to the history of a particular community (discussed earlier). They were mostly used to remind community members of their shared history and traditions, and so the *tlacuiloque* constructed the world primarily in human terms. From their perspective, space belonged to the people who inhabited it and had no independent, abstract existence (Kagan 2000:42).

Most indigenous maps offered depictions from a "communicentric" rather than a "chorographic" viewpoint. While a chorographic viewpoint might offer a distant overview of a town and reduce towns to a series of elemental forms and shapes in accordance with a mathematical grid (as in "scientific" cartography), the communicentric viewpoint of the indigenous *tlacuiloque* focused on the human elements and structures of a community. Instead of presenting distant overviews, the *tlacuiloque* depicted their communities with close-up pictures of identifying structures (such as churches) and people associated with the community's history and concerns. As these maps were often intended for a local public, that is, people familiar with these elements, the necessity of a description of the town was only a secondary concern. The messages embedded in these maps were therefore often meant primarily for the inhabitants of the community itself (Kagan 2000:108–109).

Normally, pictorials created for an indigenous public were made to help structure collective memory, to offer a visual framework for understanding events, and to establish community identity (see also Leibsohn 1994:161). Obviously, the community's view of itself that emerged from these pictorials was strongly influenced by the way the *tlacuiloque* structured and presented the story.

On the other hand, indigenous maps specifically made for the colonial administration often show a different perspective on places in the landscape and a different interest in those places.[24] Since territoriality was the main concern of the European judicial system, these documents are often characterized by a greater focus on territoriality than on historical information. Some documents of the *lienzo* genre were specifically created within the context of land claims or land disputes between communities, and they were presented in Spanish courts of law as evidence. Indigenous communities are known to have presented *lienzos* originally made for their internal use to Spanish authorities to support certain land claims as well. The *lienzos* entered the Spanish court for a "secondary" purpose, or what Mundy called a "second life," often in combination with oral testimonies or alphabetic documents (Mundy 2001:121).

Some documents combine pictography with alphabetic writing (in the form of alphabetic explanatory texts; i.e., glosses) to make their contents accessible to readers unfamiliar with the pictorial script. A well-known example in which Nahua pictography and alphabetic writing are used next to each other is the *Codex Mendoza* from Tenochtitlan.[25] Often, documents originally made to serve in the indigenous sphere were later provided with glosses to enable them to serve cross-culturally in the Spanish sphere. It seems the indigenous *tlacuiloque* knew very well how to design a pictorial in such a way that it would help a community's case with the Spaniards and at the same time serve the community itself. The speaker who presented the narrative could then focus on the aspect he or she knew was most interesting to the audience and that would enable the document to best serve its immediate purpose (Endfield 2001; Mundy 1996; Smith 1973). The fact that Spanish judges accepted indigenous *lienzos* and *mapas* as legal evidence in court is probably one of the reasons the indigenous pictographic tradition continued well into the post-conquest period.

Well-known examples of Nahua historical cartographies are the maps related to the *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca* from Cuauhtinchan, Puebla. Another well-known example is the *Codex Xolotl* (1542), also a Chichimec history, which, in turn, consists of a series of maps in which battle sites and the territory of Chichimec influence are indicated by toponyms. Next to the *lienzos* and cartographic histories, a large corpus of post-contact maps is kept in museums and archives.[26] The best-known Mexican maps are undoubtedly the maps that accompanied certain *Relaciones Geográficas* (see Gruzinski 1987, 1993; Mundy 1996). These maps date from the 1570s and 1580s and show a large variety of gradations in indigenousness and European influence; this influence is displayed mostly through the addition of landscape and three-dimensionality. Hundreds of other maps, the majority simple sketches done in pen and ink, were produced by indigenous communities in the course of boundary disputes brought to the Spanish court. Although these maps clearly reflect colonial concerns, they still contain features seemingly of indigenous origin and are valuable sources for the reconstruction of prehispanic cartography. As it seems, pre-conquest cartography in Mesoamerica encompassed a broad spectrum of geographic representations that ranged from cadastral maps that were little different from European maps to historical cartographies that were more difficult for Europeans to understand. The conquest caused this spectrum to narrow, as well as a shift to European cartographic techniques, including the use of three-dimensionality and the depiction of landscape in naturalistic terms (Galarza 1995; Kagan 2000:46, 53).

SUMMARY

This book presents a study of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*, a large Nahua painting narrating the story of indigenous conquistadors from Quauhquechollan who participated in the "Spanish" conquest of Guatemala. Fortunately, the Nahua pictographic script is relatively well understood. The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is a continuation of a prehispanic tradition of recording migration and conquest stories in a geographic setting. Through Nahua pictographs and logographs ordered along a road, it depicts part of the history of the Quauhquecholteca community. Pictorials composed in this script were not read in silence but were presented during community rituals and accompanied by oral recitals. These recitals explained the pictography and provided details of the story not given visually. Among the corpus of surviving Nahua pictographic documents are documents with a geographic character, such as the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan*. These manuscripts are generally referred to as "cartographic histories." The *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* is named a *lienzo* because it is painted on cotton cloth.

The Nahuas of Central Mexico already possessed the skills to make "accurate" geographic maps before the arrival of the Spaniards. Unfortunately, very few prehispanic pictorial documents have survived, which makes it impossible to trace the tradition back in time. However, the surviving colonial indigenous maps provide indications of how geography was generally dealt with in Central Mexican indigenous records. One of the most important differences with contemporary European maps is the fact that in indigenous records, geography did not exist independently from history. It was the story that made the maps, leading to depictions of "lived" or "felt" geographic maps rather than just territoriality. This book focuses on the reading of the *Lienzo de Quauhquechollan* and the interpretation and contextualization of the story it communicates.