The correlation of archaeological and ethnohistorical information should be one of the key methods in the determination of historical processes and events in the Valley of Oaxaca during the Postclassic period. The mere existence of alphabetical and pictorial historical documentation in a region that has received extensive archaeological investigations over the last half a century creates possibilities that scholars in many other Mesoamerican regions envy. It is consequently disturbing and disappointing that historians and archaeologists alike have not taken full advantage of this opportunity. There are two principal reasons for this failure. On the one hand, ethnohistorical studies using pictorials and documents written in Tíchazàa, or the Zapotec language, have only recently begun and the results are still undergoing considerable changes when new material is found or studied. On the other hand, the chronology of the Postclassic period has largely been ignored by archaeologists, leaving an unacceptably long period without any significant subdivisions and making it almost useless for the correlation with short-period historical processes (Chapters 1 and 2). An additional problem is that the archaeological and ethnohistorical discourses are handicapped by the existence of opposing “camps” of scholars, making the exchange of ideas and a constructive discussion virtually impossible.
Within the discussion on the Postclassic period, ethnohistorical and archaeological evidence has been used without making any distinction between the two. Consequently, one of the major issues of discussion was caused by an adaptation of the archaeological evidence to the historical model—the fall of Monte Albán. That is, the distinction between two archaeological phases (MA IIIB and IV) was made based on the historical event of the fall of Monte Albán rather than the archaeological evidence. At no time have the two disciplines and the information generated by them been compared independently. The objective of this chapter is to propose a Postclassic chronology based on ethnohistorical information that can then be used for comparison and correlation with the archaeological chronology. With such a method I follow Michael Smith (1987:38), who suggests that “the archaeological and ethnohistorical records should be analyzed independently to yield their own separate conclusions before correlation is attempted. When the two records are compared, one should not confuse any resulting composite models with the independent primary data sets.” This approach forms part of a broader discussion in historical archaeology, and between archaeologists and historians in general, concerning the nature and status of their respective sources: the thing and the word (Andrén 1998; Malina and Vásicek 1990; Moreland 2001; Small 1995; Trigger 1989). Although there is still much to be said about this issue, in practice it seems best to follow the method of keeping independent records.

THE ETHNOHISTORICAL DISCUSSION

For an ethnohistorian it is surprising that in the discussion about the Postclassic period, which is so intertwined with the historical event of the fall of Monte Albán, only one kind of source material has been used—archaeological artifacts. Of course, the discussion is one among archaeologists, some of whom may have a deeply ingrained distrust for historical sources; but it is unfortunate that in discussions about Oaxaca State, which is so well-known for its pictorial manuscripts, we generally do not see reference to these sources (see Chapters 1 and 4). In my opinion, it has become untenable for archaeologists and ethnohistorians not to share information or cooperate more closely; many of the authors in the current volume attempt to bridge this gap. The Early Postclassic period (after 800 CE) may be a bit early for any relationships between archaeology and ethnohistory, but the tenth and eleventh centuries are fully displayed in the pictorials and are investigated by a range of scholars. Each discipline needs the input of the other. Works like those of Maarten Jansen (1998) about the relationship between communities on the hills of Monte Albán and those from the Mixteca Alta may be controversial for some but can also be regarded as new challenges. John Pohl’s (1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c) extensive work on the corridors of information linking the Central Highlands, Puebla, the Mixteca Alta, and the
Valley of Oaxaca into an intricate web of exchange is yet another source of inspiration. Bas van Doesburg and Olivier van Buren’s (1997) work on the Coixtlahuaca region has shown the extensive ties between this region and that of Southern Puebla. Finally, my own work (Oudijk 2000) has shown continuous contacts between the Mixteca Alta and the Valley of Oaxaca throughout the Postclassic, and more recently evidence for direct contact with Cholula has emerged. All of these, as well as others, have shown that the Valley of Oaxaca was part of a complex web of exchange of people, materials, and ideas, which was in full swing since at least the tenth century. Such ethnohistorical evidence cannot and should not be ignored in the discussion on the Postclassic Valley of Oaxaca since it can give crucial information about the difficult period in which the transition from the Classic to the Postclassic took place.

The ethnohistorical discussion is not without its problems. It is a fairly young discipline if we consider constructive interrelated studies. Before Joseph Whitewcotton (1990a) presented his results on the Bènizàa, or Zapotec, pictorial materials, only isolated, uncritical, and/or unsystematic studies of indigenous sources had been published. I have published a broad overarching history based on a study of Bènizàa pictorial and alphabetical documents (Oudijk 2000), but there are still many unanswered questions and uncertainties. Consequently, Francisco de Burgoa, Martínez Gracida, and Antonio Gay’s mytho-historical version of the Bènizàa Postclassic Valley of Oaxaca is still pervasive but not seriously considered by “scientific” archaeologists.

Finally, a strong polemic exists between the main scholars working with the Postclassic and Colonial ethnohistory of the Valley of Oaxaca. Whitewcotton (1990a) was the first to make an integrated study of various Bènizàa pictorial documents, reaching conclusions that confirmed political and military opposition between Ñuu Dzavui (Mixtec) and Bènizàa groups in the valley as was recorded in the above-mentioned mytho-historical version. My own work (2000) has questioned the historical value of the traditional sources, and through an analysis and comparison of indigenous sources I have come to the conclusion that ethnicity was not an important factor in Postclassic Oaxaca but rather factionalism and interfacional relationships were responsible for shaping Postclassic Oaxaca. This interpretation has led to a totally new Postclassic and Early Colonial history of the Bènizàa relating the Valley of Oaxaca with the Mixteca Alta, the Sierra Zapoteca, and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec into one large complex historical process.

In order to make useful comparisons of the archaeological and ethnohistorical information it is thus necessary to create two independent models for analysis (Table 3.1). Although we are still far from a solid ethnohistorical dataset that allows us to make any profound analysis in relation to the archaeological dataset, there certainly is enough to create a tentative chronology that can be used as a guideline for future ethnohistorical research and as a tool for archaeological comparison.
Until two decades ago the Bènizàa pictorial documents had received relatively little attention from ethnohistorians. Only the famous Lienzo de Guevea had been the object of study since Eduard Seler’s analysis (1906) over a hundred years ago. Since then, only some partial studies of this same document have been done (Cruz 1983; Marcus 1980, 1983; Paddock 1983a, 1983b). This situation persisted until the 1980s when Whitecotton (1982, 1983a, 1983b, 1990a, 1990b) began to publish his studies of little or unknown pictorial manuscripts. Instead of discussing these as isolated documents, Whitecotton demonstrated that it was necessary to relate the information contained in each of these with each other in order to reach a better understanding of the history they were telling. In my own studies (Oudijk 2000),
I have contextualized the pictorial documents by using alphabetical Tíchazàa and Spanish manuscripts, through the analysis and comparison of oral history, and by working with indigenous people. In this way I have been able to relate the pictorials to the geographical and historical reality. With these studies, we can now look at the pictorials as a corpus and draw certain conclusions that we could never have drawn if we had been working with only one.

We know twelve pictorial and two alphabetical documents, all Bènizàa, which contain genealogical information that goes back into prehispanic times (Table 3.2).²

The document from San Antonino, called Genealogía Oaxaqueña (BNAH 35-104), is badly damaged in certain crucial parts, which makes it impossible to verify how many lords are represented and what kind of relationship exists between them. We thus will ignore this document in the following discussion.

So, as a start, if we count the generations or, more accurately, the consecutive lords that make up the genealogies in the different documents, we encounter quite an interesting pattern (Table 3.3). There are three groups of documents: those of one to four generations,³ those of six to nine generations,⁴ and those of twelve to seventeen generations. Assuming that the existence of these groups is not merely accidental, we thus could identify certain periods related with the foundations of the lineages or dynasties as represented in these documents; at certain times, specific historical processes were in progress that resulted in the foundation of lineages during particular periods. Only if we can date these periods, however, will we be able to identify the reasons that motivated these foundations.

The easiest method for dating foundations in genealogical pictorials is to count the generations and multiply them by a particular number of years, although how many years remains contested. Various scholars have proposed different estimations. For example, Alfonso Caso (1977–1979, 1:128) calculated 22.5 years per generation. Mary Elizabeth Smith, in agreement with Emily Rabin, used 23 years for every generation (Smith and Parmenter 1991:45), whereas Jansen and Pérez Jiménez (2000:147) count 18 to 20 years for each generation. It is not clear how

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valley of Oaxaca</th>
<th>Sierra Zapoteca</th>
<th>Isthmus of Tehuantepec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genealogía de Quialoo</td>
<td>Lienzo de Tabaá</td>
<td>Lienzo de Guevea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogía de Macuilxochitl</td>
<td>Lienzo de Tiltepec</td>
<td>Lienzo de Huilotepec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogía de Quiaviní</td>
<td>Lienzo de Yatao</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogías de Etla</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogía de San Bernardo Mixtepec</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogía de Juan Ramírez</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genealogía Oaxaqueña (San Antonino)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zoogocho (alphab.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yatzachi el Bajo (alphab.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 Bènizàa documents with genealogical information
these estimates were determined, but if we gather the information rendered by
genealogies that can be dated, an average of 23.5 years per generation is reached.

What Are Lineages, Genealogies, and Generations?

Ethnohistorians are notorious for their loose use of terminology. For example,
we use the term “genealogy” when anthropologically speaking it is not a genealogy
to which we refer. Although anthropologists do not always distinguish between
lineage and genealogy, here I use that distinction. I use the term “lineage” to refer
to the maximum lineage, or “all the generations and all collateral descendants of the
first ancestor” (Harris 2001:434). The most extensive documents that exist (Codices
Bodley, Nuttall, and Selden) only give “the cognatic lineage which uses both filia-
tions, masculine and feminine, to . . . deduce their obligations, rights and privileges
in respect to other persons and in relation with many other aspects of social life”
(ibid.:428). The use of the term “genealogy” will be restricted to the series of con-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Prehispanic Generations</th>
<th>Colonial Generations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tabáá</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehuantepec (L. de Huilotepec)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehuantepec (L. de Guevea)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiavini</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiltepec 3</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etiá</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoogochó</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yatzachi el Bajo</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaachila (L. de Guevea/C. Nuttall)</td>
<td>5 (+2)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yatao</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macuilxochitl</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetípac (Tabáá 2)</td>
<td>12 (+1)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Ramirez</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Bernardo Mixtepec</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiachila (S. Matheo Mixtepec)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quialoo</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4 Determining average years per generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Generations</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acatlán</td>
<td>1232–1550</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ñuñaha</td>
<td>1248–1521</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teozacoalco</td>
<td>1125–1450</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilantongo</td>
<td>990–1450</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Añute</td>
<td>968–1521</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coixtlahuaca</td>
<td>1096–1457</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

141.0 / 6 = 23.5
secutive lords of a city-state; that is, to the succession itself and thus ignoring the affiliation between its members. Finally, “generation” will refer to a particular level within a genealogy; thus, each new lord will represent a new generation. Within the discipline of pictorial studies, the Aztec rulers Axayacatl and Tizoc are counted as two distinct generations in the well-known Mexica-Tenochca genealogy even though we know they were brothers.5

In the majority of the documents related with the nobility, the succession of rulers is represented as a genealogy—lords who ruled one after the other in their señorío, or kingdom. Such a representation suggests a direct line, or an ideal inheritance, from father to son during various generations. Although this situation is possible, in many cases the reality was probably different. The few examples that permit us to verify it show this reality: in the lienzos from Guevea and Santo Domingo Petapa the coquis, or rulers, of Zaachila are represented as if they succeeded in a direct line, but Codex Nuttall 33–35 makes it clear that this was not the case. The son of the founder never ruled, probably because he had died before he could rise to the throne. The grandson succeeded the founder, but this grandson was not the oldest son since he went to Teozacoalco to found the fourth dynasty of that town. The successor of the founder of Zaachila was therefore the youngest child and second son. There is another case within this same genealogy in which, after the penultimate ruler of the dynasty died without leaving any children, a half-uncle succeeded on the throne (a half brother of the father). Outside of the Valley of Oaxaca we find another case in the Lienzo de Tabaá I that shows a founder followed by three coquis. These, however, cannot be considered to represent three generations. Internal information about the lienzo and the Primordial Title of the town proves that the three sons of the founder ruled together in a form of government that is quite common in the Sierra Zapoteca (Chance 1989:128).

This information obviously has serious consequences for using generations as a method for dating historical events or processes. Furthermore, since there are very few cases for which we have historical information, we always have to consider a certain margin of error if we date an event based on a genealogy about which we do not have sufficient information. There are also methods to limit the margin of error. After all, pictorial documents with precise chronological information do exist, such as the Ñuu Dzavui codices and some Nguigua (Chochona) lienzos, which depict long lineages with their corresponding dates. These manuscripts also suffer from the same problems that I mentioned above, but if we can join a good number of them, with their well-dated lineages and genealogies, we can possibly determine an average for a generation. This average then can be used in documents like those of the Bénizáa. It is of the utmost importance to bring together as large a number as possible of datable genealogies since the more genealogies we have, the more trustworthy the average will be.
Another problem is how to count the generations. Many of the genealogical documents begin in prehispanic times and end in the Colonial period. The first colonial ruler is normally easy to recognize because he tends to be represented with some Spanish element, be it his name, clothes, or a beard. This is not always the case, however, as we can see in the Codices Tulane and Selden, which include colonial rulers depicted in a prehispanic style and simply ignore the arrival of the Spaniards and their culture. When counting generations, we have to decide whether to include the first colonial ruler. This point seems trivial, but if we consider the situation of the Zaachila-Tehuantepec genealogy, the problem will become clear.

Around 1260 CE, the genealogy of Zaachila (Figure 3.1) was initiated by Coqui 9 Serpent when he married Xonaxi 11 Rabbit.6 Their eldest son was the famous 5 Flower, who was buried in Tomb 1 in Zaachila and whose marriage is mentioned in the Relaciones Geográficas of Zaachila. This matrimony took place around 1280 CE, but we know that 5 Flower never ruled in Zaachila. His son, Coqui 3 Alligator, did rule and he succeeded Coqui 9 Serpent. This means that with 3 Alligator we jump one generation, although in the lienzos from Guevea and Santo Domingo Petapa this is simply represented as if this coqui was the next generation. From here on the problems multiply. Coqui 3 Alligator married two women, apparently at two very distinct moments. From the first marriage he had a son called Cosijoeza 11 Water, who later received the throne. From the second marriage, much later when 11 Water was probably some twenty years old, he had another son, 1 Grass. We do not have any dates for this part of the genealogy, but the information of the next generation suggests that these two sons had long lives. Coqui Cosijoeza 11 Water also had two wives.7 With the first he had a son, Quixicayo 6 Water, who later became coqui of Zaachila. He was born more or less at the same time as, or even before, his half-uncle 1 Grass. Quixicayo played an important role in the Valley of Oaxaca and was responsible for the deaths of two rulers in 1372.8

A second date of this period relates to a daughter of the second marriage of Coqui 11 Water, the so-called Xonaxi 3 Alligator. She married a ruler of Tlaxiaco and had a son in 1402. Considering that the age to have children is between fifteen and thirty, this lady must have been born between 1372 and 1387 CE, making her much younger than her half-brother Quixicayo. These dates are therefore another indication that the marriages of prehispanic rulers could take place at very distinct moments in time: while Quixicayo was conquering in 1372, his half-sister, 3 Alligator, was not even born. Such information has serious consequences for our understanding of genealogies.

When Coqui 6 Water died, he did not have children to succeed him and so his half-uncle, Lord 1 Grass, became coqui. He was of the same age as, and possibly younger than, Coqui 6 Water. As he was not the son of 6 Water, his enthronement probably caused some controversy and political opposition. Consequently, when
3.1 The genealogy of Zaachila according to the Codex Nuttall and the Lienzo de Guevea.
Coqui 1 Grass died, serious problems about the succession began within the ruling house of Zaachila. The result was a power struggle that ended with one part of this noble house going to Tehuantepec. We know that this move took place between 1440 and 1450 CE and that the founder of the new ruling house in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec was called Coqui Cosijopii (I). According to the sources that we have, around 1450 CE Cosijopii was succeeded by his son Cosijoeza (II), who in turn had a son, probably from a late marriage, in 1492. This son seems to have been called Cosijopii (II) like his grandfather. It was this Cosijopii who, as a child, succeeded his father on the throne of Tehuantepec in 1502 and who was still ruling at the time of the Spanish arrival. Later, Cosijopii II was baptized and received the name Don Juan Cortés, with which he is registered in the pictorial documents as first colonial ruler. He finally died in 1562 while being investigated for idolatry.

I have presented these detailed discussions of the ruling houses of Zaachila and Tehuantepec in order to demonstrate the existing difficulties in the genealogies and to make the problem of the first colonial ruler clear. We have seen that in 1260 CE, Coqui 9 Serpent founded the genealogy or dynasty of Zaachila and that the lienzos from Guevea and Santo Domingo Petapa show seven prehispanic generations (excluding 5 Flower and Don Juan but including 1 Grass). For seven generations, and to get to 1521, we have 261 years, or 37.3 years per generation, which is a very high average compared to that of the Mixteca. If we count until 1502, the year Cosijoeza died, instead of 1521, the average is only 34.6 years per generation. We could also include Lord 5 Flower, who did not rule but does represent a generation. This would bring us to an average of 30.3 years per generation. This average is still high but possible, especially considering the old age at which some of the rulers of this dynasty died. Yet, the problem is clear. The exclusion of the first colonial ruler can have significant consequences when we date events through genealogies, but in the case where there is not sufficient historical information about a genealogy it seems better not to include him in the count.

THE FOUR POSTCLASSIC ETHNOHISTORICAL PHASES IN THE VALLEY

Returning to the historical processes in the Valley of Oaxaca, we can recognize three moments of distinct foundations in the Bénézaa documents, from most recent to the earliest possible with the documents.

The Cuilapan phase (1440–1521 CE)

For the first (or most recent) group—that of one to four generations representing the Cuilapan phase—the additional information that exists makes it possible to identify the related historical events that occurred and caused these genealogies
to be founded. As was explained previously, the genealogy of Tehuantepec was founded by Coqui Cosijopii when his faction opted to leave Zaachila. In 1554, various witnesses swore under oath that it was Cosijopii who had conquered the region and who had founded Tehuantepec (AGIE 160b), and they furthermore said that his son Cosijoeza had succeeded him to the throne in 1450. The related year with Cosijoeza in the *Lienzo de Guevea* seems to be 1446 CE, but it is not clear if this concerns his succession or his birth. What is clear is that Cosijopii founded the ruling house of Tehuantepec shortly before or after 1440 CE, the year in which Moctezuma Ilhuicamina received the throne in Tenochtitlán and as *tlatoani* of the Mexicas conquered Oaxaca and various other places in the valley. At that time Cosijopii had already left Zaachila. His abandonment of Zaachila, together with many of his allies, left behind a chaotic situation in the valley (Oudijk 2000:102–112) in which the ruling houses and the members of the lineages that stayed behind had to reevaluate their alliances and look for new political relationships. In the meantime, the fights and wars between the different factions continued. The insecurity, which had made an important faction of the ruling house of Zaachila leave, now worked as an accelerator. This process was further stimulated when Cosijopii sent messengers to the Valley of Oaxaca to invite people to migrate to the Isthmus, the new land that had been conquered so recently (AGIE 160b:255v).

The crisis in the Valley of Oaxaca around 1440 CE seems reason enough to explain the foundations of new genealogies, which, according to the documents with one to four generations, took place outside of the valley. Two are in the Sierra Zapoteca and two in the Isthmus (see Figure 1.1). The fifth genealogy is from Quiaviní, a village on the border of the Valley of Oaxaca and the Sierra Sur. Documentation related to this village informs us that it was (re)founded “so they have an entrance and exit in the town of Tehuantepec [which] is where the founders and conquerors stay” (*Mapa de San Lucas Quiaviní;* Oudijk 2000:155–159, 284). The fact that founded Tehuantepec left Zaachila but did not forget the valley. In the great reorganization of the political relationships that took place in the valley, this faction continued to influence the señoríos with which it always had had ties and to found and recognize lineages, and it probably promoted the division between the different existing factions.

*The Zaachila Phase (1280–1440 CE)*

The group of documents with six to nine generations, representing the Zaachila phase, shows other dynamics. Whereas the foundations of the first group of genealogies took place as a consequence of times of crisis, the foundations of the second group were caused by the opposite: a policy of expansion and integration that resulted in a chain of señoríos related through matrimony and, surely, ties of reciprocity or clientelism.
As noted above, the genealogy of Zaachila, which forms part of this group, was founded approximately in 1260 CE. It is anomalous, however, due to at least two very long generations that we should not expect to find in the other genealogies of this group. If we consider the average as calculated above, the genealogies of Zoogocho, Yatzachi, and Etla were probably founded in the period 1356–1380. This period is relatively well-known. The coqui of Zaachila at that time was Cosijoeza 11 Water, whom we know developed a policy based on the establishment of alliances through matrimonial ties. The foci of his alliances were the ruling houses of the Mixteca Alta. This practice was not unprecedented considering that his grandfather, 5 Flower, was married to a noble woman from Teozacoalco and his uncle was the founder of the fourth dynasty in that same town after his marriage to a noble woman from Tilantongo. Thus, it is not surprising that Cosijoeza’s son, Quixicayo 6 Water, married a noble woman from Tlaxiaco and that one of his daughters went to rule in Teozacoalco after her marriage to the town’s ruler. What is new is that Cosijoeza, probably together with his son Quixicayo, used his alliances to initiate a campaign of colonization.

The documents from the village of Santo Domingo Petapa on the Isthmus suggest that various villages were founded during this campaign (ABCP, Libro 2). These villages, situated within a region dominated by Huaves and Mixes, were converted into fortifications and colonies in order to control the commercial route to Soconusco and Coatzacoalco. We know that during this campaign the region of Nejapa was also conquered and that fortifications were built at Quiacivicuzas, Quiegolani, Quiechapa, and Nejapa, creating a corridor between the Valley of Oaxaca and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (Burgos 1989, 2, ch. 65:236). Military campaigns and foundations of genealogies took place in the Sierra Zapoteca at the same time. At the least, Zoogocho and Yatzachi el Bajo were founded during Cosijoeza’s rule (AVA, Exp. 196:2r–4v; AGNC 390, Exp. 4:277r–v). The situation of Yatao is distinct, as it has nine generations and it is not clear if it concerns an early foundation or that its generations are actually short. If the latter is the case, its foundation may also have taken place during Cosijoeza’s rule. Unfortunately, there is very little information about this village, which no longer exists. It is interesting, however, to note that the three villages are located in the southern part of the Sierra Zapoteca—close to the Valley of Oaxaca. The genealogies of the first group (one to four generations) are located in the northern part. I would like to suggest, tentatively, that the villages of the second group were used as stepping-stones for the people of the first group on their way to conquering the northern part of the Sierra Zapoteca.

The last genealogy of the second group is that of Etla, a large and important village with powerful caciques during the Colonial period (Taylor 1972; Whitecotton 1990a). Etla’s early colonial and prehispanic history is quite enigmatic. At the
moment of its foundation, approximately in 1380 (1521– [6 x 23.5]), Coqui 6 Water was involved in wars in this part of the valley. In 1372, together with the ruler of Macuilxóchitl, he killed the rulers of Huitzo and Mazaltepec, which is probably an indication of the conquest of these towns. Both the alliance between Macuilxóchitl and Zaachila and the conquest of Huitzo and Mazaltepec appear to have incorporated the señoríos of the Valley of Oaxaca into a large confederation that extended at least from Tilantongo, Tlaxiaco, and Teozacoalco in the Mixteca Alta to Huitzo, Etla, Zaachila, and Macuilxóchitl in the valley.

**The Quelatini Phase (1100–1280 CE)**

The last group consists of the documents with genealogies of 12 to 17 generations which represent the Quelatini phase. Based on the established average, we get the period 1121–1239 CE. Three of the genealogies (from Tetipac, Juan Ramírez, and San Bernardo Mixtepec) simply begin without giving information about the place of origin of their founders, and we do not have other information that we can use to say anything about these foundations. The genealogy of Quiachila, or San Mateo Mixtepec, is derived from the genealogy of Quialoo, or Santa Cruz Mixtepec (Oudijk 2000:177–181), as the second son of the founding couple of Quialoo left to found his own genealogy in 1168 CE, according to my calculations. There is more information about the genealogy of Quialoo. Three “brothers” went to Zaachila to ask for a lord to rule their village. After reaching an agreement, the three returned to Quialoo carrying Pechetene, a new lord and ruler, on their backs. Pechetene married a Xonaxi, initiating a genealogy (ibid.:158–171). Obviously, the role of Zaachila is important here because it shows that the foundation of the Zaachila genealogy was actually that of a dynasty rather than a ruling house. Furthermore, the house of Zaachila clearly legitimated rulers and their genealogies. It is a function well-known from the Ñuu Dzavui documents in which Tilantongo has the same role.

Before continuing, it is important to point out that all the genealogies of this group are from the Valley of Oaxaca, the place of origin of the Bénižàa. The founding ancestors must also have come from somewhere. For example, the founder of the genealogy of Macuilxóchitl is associated with a gloss that explains that he came from quilatinizoo, or Lagoon of Primordial Blood. It concerns a typical place of origin, a sacred place, which can be compared to those represented in the Ñuu Dzavui codices, where the founders are born from trees, hills, and rivers, or the Nguigua lienzos, where they are also born from rivers. There is one Bénižàa pictorial example that refers to this Lagoon of Blood: the *Genealogy of Quiaviní* (Figure 3.2). It shows a founding ancestor who not only originated the genealogy included in the first group discussed above but who seems to be a much older founder who came from the Lagoon of Blood. He also comes from billegaa (Cave Nine) and
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3.2 Cave Seven, Cave Nine, and the Lagoon of Primordial Blood according to the Genealogy of Quiavini.

billehegache (Cave Seven). Chicomoztoc, as it is known in Nahuatl, is mentioned and depicted numerous times as place of origin of various Nahua groups or as one of the places the Mexicas passed through during their migration to the Valley of Mexico. In the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca (Kirchhoff et al. 1989), the barbarian Teochichimecs leave their place of origin (Chicomoztoc) to go to Cholula; during the migration they go through a process of transformation toward civilization, which is marked by the consumption of corn and, related to this, Nahuatl speech. So from the Oaxacan point of view, on the one hand, Chicomoztoc is related to Nahua speaking groups, civilization, farmers, and artists, and, on the other hand, is it related with Chichimecs, barbarians, hunters, and warriors. We also see this ambivalence reflected in the Mexica-Tenochcas who identified themselves as Culhua-Chichimecs, or descendants of the Toltecs and the Chichimecs, taking the best of both worlds.

In documents from the Mixteca we also encounter representations of Chicomoztoc. The Lienzo de Tlapiltepec shows that the descendants of Atonal, founder of the genealogy of Coixtlahuaca, came from Chicomoztoc. In this case, the place is related to Nahua groups because we know that Atonal came from Tamazolac in the Valley of Mexico. Another case is depicted in the Codex Nuttall; page 14 depicts a number of primordial places of the Ñuu Dzavui, one of which is Chicomoztoc, where we see the primordial couple, Lord 5 Flower and Lady 3 Flint, emerging from one of the caves (Anders et al. 1992:118). Here, however, Chicomoztoc seems to be related more with the concept of “place of origin” or “beginning” than with Nahuas of Chichimecs.
The importance and possible exchange of information with Nahua groups in the Mixteca has been demonstrated by a number of investigators. The *Lienzo de Tlapiltepec* is an extraordinary example showing that the arrival of the founder Atonal and the establishment of his ruling house in the Coixtlahuaca region are closely related with the presence of a warrior called 4 Jaguar (Doesburg and van Buren 1997:114–116; Jansen 1996). It was this Lord 4 Jaguar who helped the famous Lord 8 Deer Jaguar Claw take control of Tilantongo and began a large expansion with the objective of uniting the whole region under his rule. Jansen (ibid.) has made clear that Lord 4 Jaguar, identified by him as a Toltec, came from Cholula (also known as Tollan-Cholula). I refer to Tollan, with its connotations of important and sacred place, as a legitimator of power, whereas “Toltec” refers to a person from such a place (real or perceived). Famous “Tollans” were Teotihuacan, Tula (Hidalgo), and Tenochtitlán, as well as Cholula (Chapters 1 and 9).

Whereas the arrival of Atonal in the Coixtlahuaca region took place during the period 1086–1096 CE, the alliance with Lord 8 Deer began in 1097. In order to consolidate his alliance with this Toltec ruler, 8 Deer organized marriages between some of his family members with people from Cholula. Due to these kinds of relationships, corridors of contact were established between the two regions that were based on the exchange of people, ideas, beliefs, and goods (Pohl 1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c; Pohl and Hook 2001:12). Cultural expressions extended across large regions, ignoring ethnic boundaries.

Considering this exchange of people and ideas, we can try to relate this third group’s period of foundations with a historical process. Various elements of the discussed documents suggest that the foundations of this group are related to migrations that began during the process of decay and fall of Tula, which continued over a long period. More specifically, they seem to be related to the arrival of Lord 4 Jaguar in what today is known as the state of Oaxaca. There is no information about Lord 4 Jaguar in the Valley of Oaxaca, but there are indications suggesting that the foundations under discussion here took place at the time the “Toltecs” arrived in the valley. In the *Genealogy of Quialoo*, the son and successor of the founder bothered the people of Zaquita. Zaaguita is the Bënizâa name of Mexico City and can be translated as “Place of Reed”—Tollan. Obviously, at the time these events took place Tenochtitlán was not yet a place of any importance. Thus, the Tollan to which those of Quialoo are referring is probably Cholula, which was going through a process of expansion at that time.

Furthermore, there are indications that the Lagoon of Primordial Blood—place of origin of the founders of Quialoo and Quiaviní—is a reference to a conceptual place related with foundations, places of origin and beginning. In litigation between Santo Domingo Yojovi and Santa Catarina Yetzelalag, their authorities presented a *probanza*, which begins with the following text:
I have presented the important and corresponding parts in italics. The Tíchazàa text literally reads “here in Yaggahua, the Lagoon of Blood, here in Tollan,” which is translated as “there in the court of Mexico.” That is, neither the word yaggahua nor yelarene are translated. Yaggahua is a bit difficult to translate but seems to mean “my tree” (= my throne?). I have not encountered this term in any colonial or modern vocabulary or in any other alphabetical text in Tíchazàa. The second time it is used in the text, yelarene is translated as “Lagoon of Blood.” There is a totally regular change from tini in Valley Tíchazàa to rene in Sierra Tíchazàa. The context of the text suggests that this lagoon is situated close to Mexico City, but it seems more probable that it actually is a conceptual place like Chicomoztoc or Tollan and that it is related to such a place of origin.

The 1581 Relación Geográfica of Cholula is accompanied by a painting of the city in which one block is called “Tollan-Cholula” (Figure 3.3). This is where the
The Postclassic Period in the Valley of Oaxaca

pyramid is located; at its foot we see reeds growing out of water, that is, Tollan. A series of red scrolls is represented atop this water, which in Mesoamerican pictography means blood. Thus, Tollan is related to a place of water and blood. A similar yet much clearer representation is depicted on folios 16r–v of the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca. Folio 16r shows the scene of Chicomoztoc, place of origin of the (Teo)Chichimecs. We also see a Colhuacan, or “Curved Hill,” and a scene of New Fire, all elements of beginnings and origin. The painting on folio 16r continues on the verso (Figure 3.4), where we see more places of beginnings and origin. The central scene is Tollan, or Place of Reeds, plants growing in a lagoon of which the water is divided into two parts. One side is blue and the other side is red—again, an association of Tollan with water and blood. Trees are depicted on both sides of the lagoon. If we now read the Tíchazàa text again, it is clear to what the author was referring: “Here in My Tree, in the Lagoon of Blood, here in Tollan.” So it seems that the Bënizàà of Macuilxóchitl, Quiaviní, Yatzachi el Bajo, and Yoyovi are indicating that they have their origins in Tollan. That is, they are Toltecs, or civilized people. Such claims make sense if we consider them within the historical events of the eleventh and twelfth centuries when various Oaxacan ruling houses were established with help of the “Toltecs.” Torquemada (1969, book 3:ch. 7) informs us:

[Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl] came to Cholullan, where he lived many years with his people; whom he sent from there to the provinces of Huaxyacac [Oaxaca] to populate them and all of the Mixteca Baja and Alta, and Zapotecas. And these people say that they built large and sumptuous Roman buildings in Mictlan, which means “hell” in the Mexican language, which certainly is a building worth seeing, because it is claimed that those who made and built it were people of very great understanding and greatness and of very great strengths.14

If this indeed concerns the same phenomenon as that recorded in the Nguigua and Ñuu Dzavui pictorials, we could conclude that the Bënizàà foundations of the group of twelve to seventeen generations began at the end of the eleventh century or the beginning of the twelfth and were related with the arrival of “Toltec” lords.

The Tanipaa Phase (963–1100 CE)

Finally, the earliest phase of my proposed ethnohistorical chronology—the Tanipaa—is still shrouded in obscurity. Information from the ethnohistoric sources begins at 963 CE (3 Reed), which is based on the year the War of the Stone Men took place (Codex Nuttall, pp. 3–4, 20–21). Traditionally, this war is supposed to have taken place in the Mixteca Alta, but the latest investigations by Jansen (1998, 2001) and Jansen and Aurora Pérez Jiménez (2007) suggest it was actually related
with the place of Monte Albán and what probably were the last remnants of the state. Some of the communities on the hills of Monte Albán seem to have obtained some of the legitimating aspects of this old powerful center. Of course, this does not mean that at this time Monte Albán was still a powerful polity controlling the Valley of Oaxaca. Rather, the opposite seems to have been true. At no time is Monte Albán represented as an all pervasive polity, but it is rather related with ritual and ceremonies, which could be an indication of its role in the Early Postclassic sociopolitical landscape. In fact, it seems that the War of the Stone Men represents the end of what was left of the power of Monte Albán (see also Chapter 4). For more than a century after these events, no ethnohistorical record exists for the Valley of Oaxaca, until the foundations of the Quelatini phase began and the suggested relation with Cholula became apparent.

3.4 Tollan and the Lagoon of Primordial Blood according to the Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca.
CONCLUSION

The pictorial information from the Valley of Oaxaca shows four distinct phases, and during three of them certain circumstances made it possible or necessary to found new ruling houses. About the first phase hardly anything is known besides the War of the Stone Men, in which the last rulers of Monte Albán possibly played a determining role. The second phase, called Quelatini, concerns the eleventh century, when “Toltec” lords entered the Oaxacan region. There they established alliances with the local rulers and, as such, created a corridor of contacts that included the Nahua ruling houses of the Tlaxcala and Puebla regions, Nguigua rulers from the Coixtlahuaca Valley, and ruling houses from the Mixteca Alta and the Valley of Oaxaca. Although the nature of the relationships between the Bénizàà rulers in the Valley of Oaxaca and Nahua lords is not yet clear, the arrival of the latter clearly created a favorable situation for the foundation of houses in Quiaviní, Quialoo, San Bernardo Mixtepec, and Teticpac.

Almost 200 years later another period of foundations began—the Zaachila phase. In this phase, the rulers of Zaachila established a large confederation that extended well into the Mixteca Alta. The army of this alliance made a first entrance into the Isthmus of Tehuantepec under the leadership of Coqui Cosijoeza, lord of Zaachila. Furthermore, this confederation colonized the southern part of the Sierra Zapoteca and took over power in the Etla arm of the Valley of Oaxaca, which made necessary the foundation of new ruling houses in these regions whose rulers are registered in documents like the probanzas of Zoogocho and Yatzachi el Bajo, the Genealogía de Yatao, and the Genealogía de Etla.

Finally, the last phase—the Cuilapan—was of a very different character. Dynastic problems in the ruling house of Zaachila around the mid-fifteenth century caused chaos and continuous battle to take place in the Valley of Oaxaca, producing massive migrations from this region to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and the northern part of the Sierra Zapoteca. Once these migrating groups arrived at their destiny, they founded new ruling houses, which are represented in documents like the Lienzo de Guevea and those of Santo Domingo Petapa, Tabaá, and Tiltpec.

NOTES

1. Although our interpretations, translations, and paradigms are totally different, the importance of Joseph Whitecotton’s work for Bénizàà historiography is considerable. His 1977 book The Zapotecs is up to now the only volume that considers Bénizàà history from prehispanic times until the present. Furthermore, it was Whitecotton who initiated the systematic study of glosses in pictorial documents, clarifying the system of calendar and personal names. These are the foundations on which we are working today.
2. Another genealogical document called the *Lienzo de Santa Catarina Ixtepeji* exists, but it is not included here since it only contains colonial information (Doesburg 2000).

3. The number of generations of Tiltepec is in parentheses because I am not sure if it is correct. The lienzo shows four consecutive lords, but the *Lienzo de Tabaá*, which is identical in format and internal organization, also represents other lords. In the case of the Tabaá, we have additional information that demonstrates it does not concern consecutive generations but rather brothers who ruled together—a kind of governing organization that seems to have been common in the Sierra Zapoteca (Chance 1989:128). It is thus possible that the “generations” of the *Lienzo de Tiltepec* actually also represent brothers, but there is not sufficient information to verify this possibility.

4. The number in parentheses does not mean doubt here: the lineage of Zaachila is represented in the *Lienzo de Guevea*, the *Lienzo de Santo Domingo Petapa*, and the *Codex Nuttall*. The last seems to register six consecutive lords, but one did not rule and the last one is the uncle of the penultimate. That is, a new lord does not necessarily mean a new generation. Furthermore, the lineage, or maybe the dynasty, terminated two generations before the Spanish Conquest as is clearly represented in the lienzos from Guevea and Santo Domingo Petapa.

5. Obviously, at the moment we are going to date historical events based on the Tenochca genealogy, we have to present the real relationship that existed between these two personages. In any analysis one has to use all existing information.

6. The date of 1260 CE is based on the marriage of the son of this couple, Lord 5 Flower; see Oudijk (2000).

7. It is possible that he had more wives, which was common for prehispanic rulers. The *Codex Nuttall*, however, only shows two of them.

8. These two lords are 3 Alligator and 7 House from Mazaltepec and Huitzo, respectively. Their capture and deaths are registered in the *Codex Selden* 12.IV–13.I and in the *Genealogía de Macuilxóchitl*. The *Codex Selden* also gives the year in which this took place; see Oudijk (2000:132–135).

9. We have to take into account the possibility that two consecutive rulers died at an age of seventy. In that case the genealogy would jump four generations.

10. The effect is even more significant if the first colonial ruler was at an advanced age when he was baptized. For example, if Don Juan had been 55 years old at the time of the Conquest instead of 29, the average would have been 29.4 years per generation instead of 34.6.

11. The genealogy called *Tabaá 3* is that of the village of Tabaá itself whereas the so-called *Tabaá 2* is that of the town of origin, Teticpac. These denominations are based on an analysis of the *Lienzo de Tabaá* (Oudijk 2000:185–208). The Tabaá 3 only has one prehispanic generation and it does not seem likely that it was founded in the period 1440–1450. It is possible that the first colonial ruler was at an advanced age at the time of the Conquest, which would solve the problem. Furthermore, we can imagine a scenario in which the people of Tabaá did not leave the Valley of Oaxaca during 1440–1450 but endured the explosive situation for five or ten years more before leaving for the Sierra. It is easy to imagine that the people of Tabaá, through communication with others who had already migrated to the Sierra (Tiltepec?), knew what they could expect in the new region. Such a situation is quite common among migrants today as it probably was in the past.
12. “[P]ara que tengan entrada y salida en la villa de Teuantepeque [que] es a donde quedo los fundadores y conquistadores.”

13. Palabra de la Generacion, y Probanza: Comienza en paz y conformidad. Se nego-
cio la palabra alla en la corte de Mexico, fue mucho pezar y sentimiento quando vinieron
los españoles, llamado Cortes, vino a ganar el cerro y Pueblo de Mexico, cogio a todos los
Caziques valientes con sus soldados fue, y siguio la Laguna de Sangre, fue de mucho pezar,
fue la palabra hasta que murio el Rey de los Yndios.

14. [Nacxitl Topiltzin Quetzalcoatl] vino a Cholullan, donde habitó muchos años con
sus gentes; de las cuales envió desde allá a las provincias de Huaxayacac a poblarla y a toda esa
Mixteca Baja y alta y tzapotecas. Y estas gentes dicen que hicieron aquellos grandes y sum-
tuosísimos edificios romanos de Mictlan, que quiere decir “infierno” en la lengua mexicana,
que ciertamente es edificio muy de ver, porque se arguye de aquellos que lo obraron y edific-
aron ser hombres de muy gran entendimiento y para mucho y de muy grandes fuerzas.

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Abbreviations:
ABCP Archivo de Bienes Comunales de Santo Domingo Petapa.
AGIE Archivo General de Indias, Ramo Escribanía
AGNC Archivo General de la Nación, Ramo Civil
AVA Archivo de Villa Alta, Archivo del Poder Judicial del Estado de Oaxaca
BNAH Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia

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