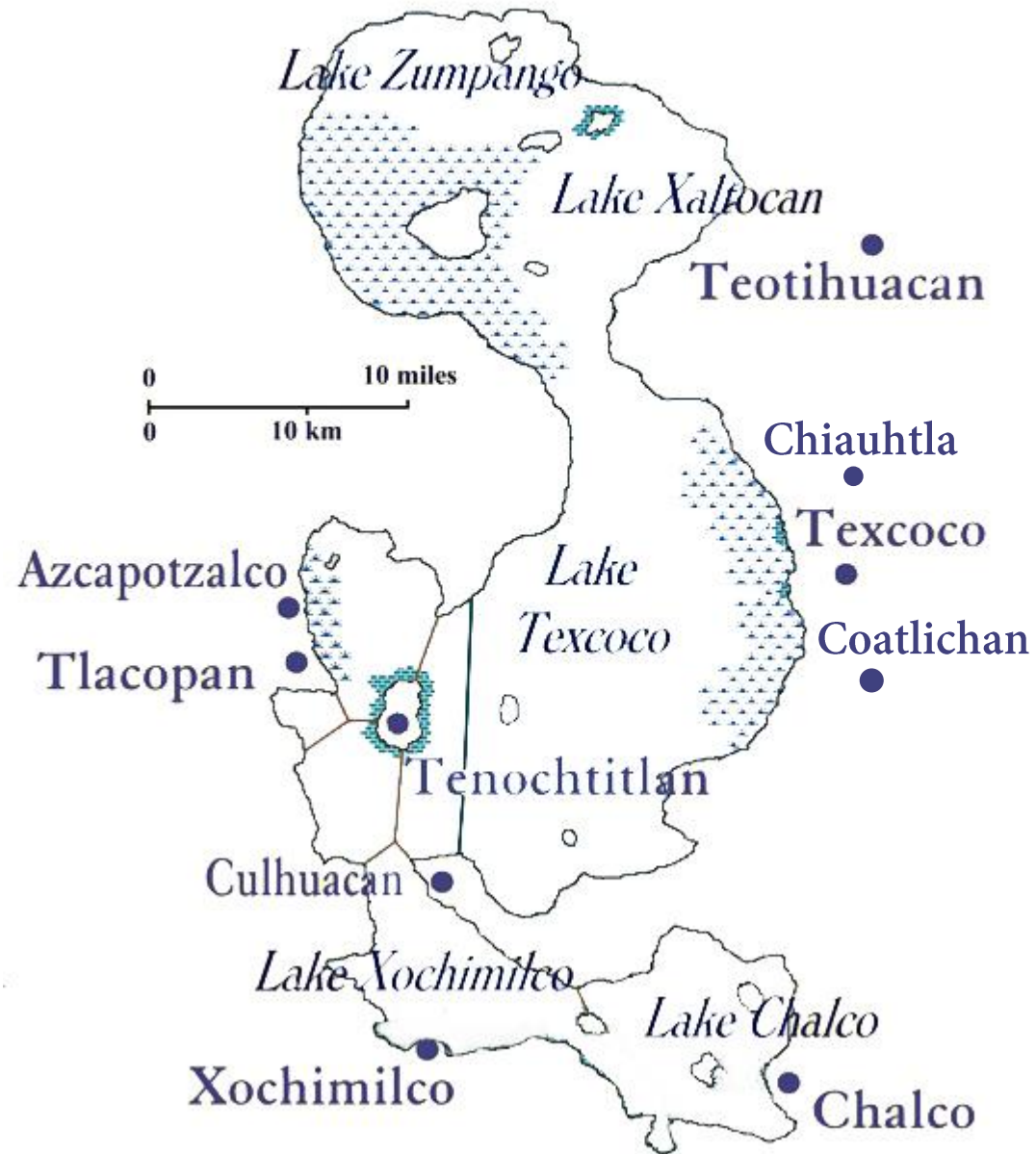


**Recalling memory to not lose
identity: the Texcocan
pictographic histories of the
XVI century**

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**Ateliers congrès IdA 2021
Workshop no. 4**

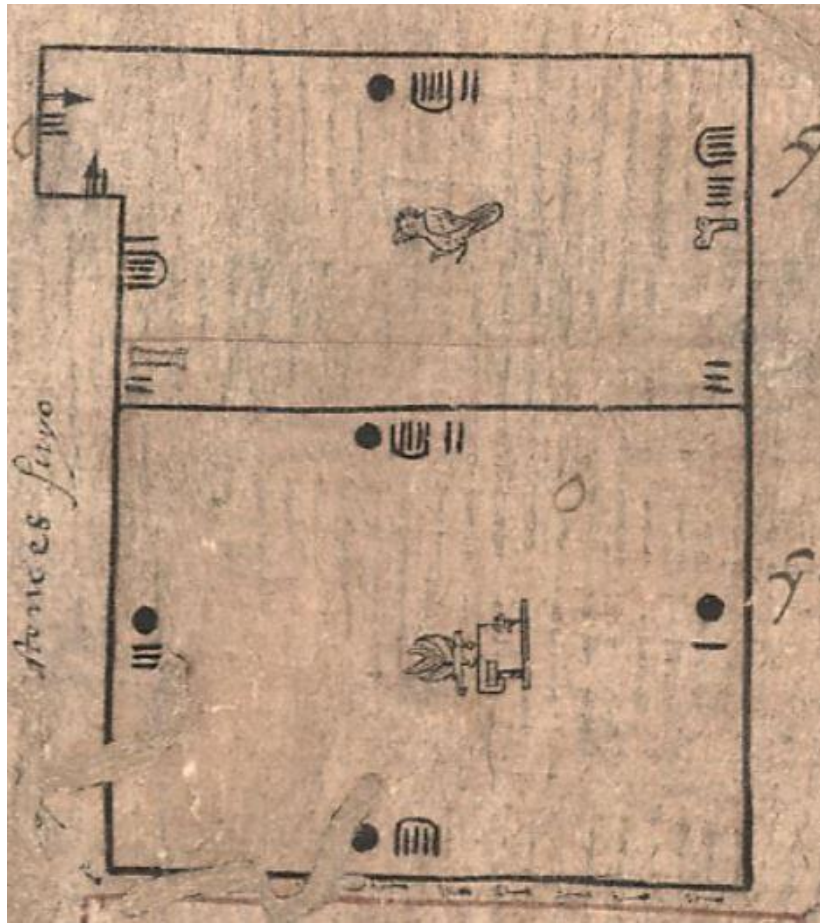
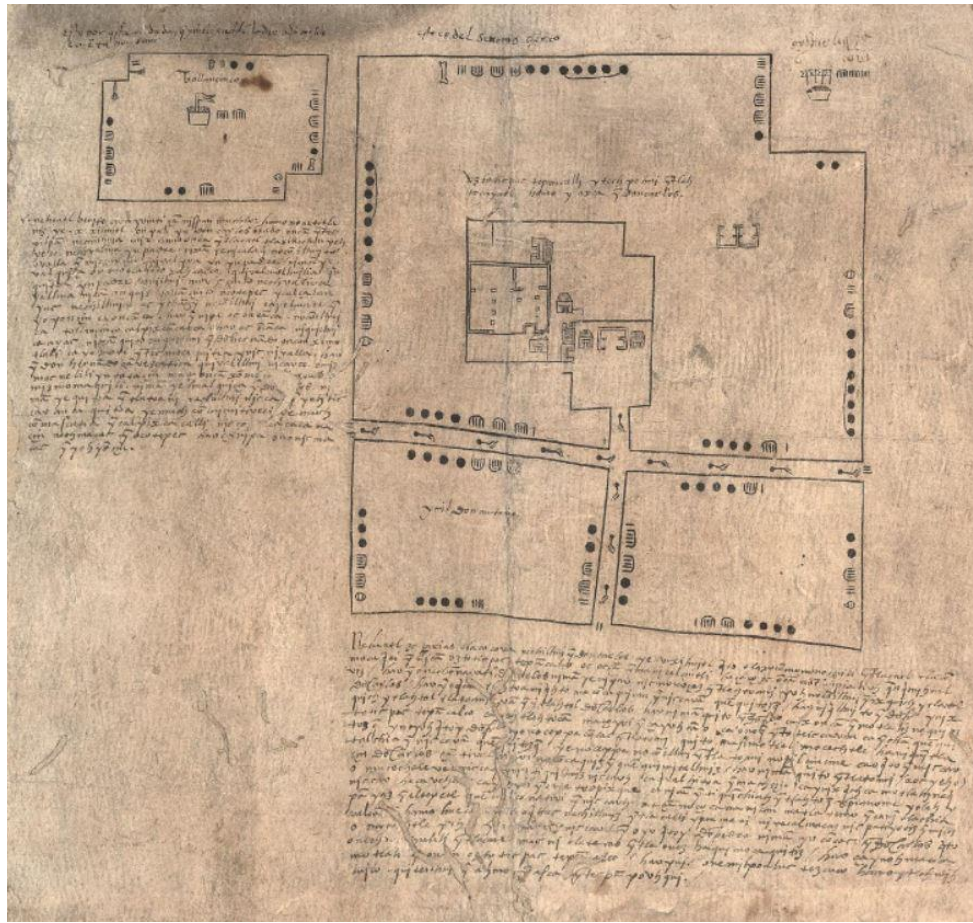


12.* Tiene esta ciudad de Tezcuco á México á la banda del Poniente á distancia de tres leguas, porque solo esto hay por vía derecha por la laguna que está entre ambas ciudades, en medio de la cual termina la una con la otra, corriendo la línea y mojonera de Norte á Sur. Navégase por esta en canoas, de la una ciudad á la otra; y para ir de Tezcuco á México por tierra hay dos caminos: el uno es saliendo hacia el Norte y dando vuelta sobre mano siniestra, bojando la dicha laguna: es camino de siete leguas, llano y que se anda con carros; y queriendo ir por la parte del Sur, á la ribera de la dicha laguna y bojando por mano derecha, hay espacio de ocho leguas, llano y de carros, y más apacible por la frescura de las fuentes de agua dulce de los pueblos por donde se pasa. El pueblo de Chiauhtla cae de Tezcuco á la parte del Norte, á menos de media legua, y otro tanto más adelante por la propia vía está el pueblo de Tetzoyucan, visita de la doctrina de los frailes de esta ciudad, y á una legua de ella está el pueblo de Tepetlaoztoc, que tiene en encomienda el Br. Juan Velázquez de Salazar. Entre el Norte y el Oriente y por la parte del Sur tiene á Huexotla; dista de ella menos de media legua, y adelante, por la propia derecera, está Cohuatlichán como media legua. Camínase á todos ellos por caminos muy llanos y derechos, á pie y á caballo, aunque con trabajo, especialmente en tiempo de aguas, por la aspereza de la serranía que se atraviesa en medio.

In central Mexico, right after the Spanish conquest, one of the most urgent concerns within the indigenous nobility consisted in trying to preserve all those privileges they had and maintained in the past several years.

With the transition to the colonial regime, the newcomers at first tried to keep the old indigenous system of inheritance and dynastic succession unchanged allowing, in the numerous political realities that existed around Lake Texcoco, the noble lineages to keep ruling as they did before the conquest. However, despite a fairly simple political theory, it is clear that already after these first years, the viceroys of New Spain were forced to face multiple administrative problems that resulted in a large number of lawsuits over inheritances, territorial possessions and especially the political - administrative positions.

In this unstable climate, the political struggle between the various Texcocan nobles reached peaks of notable violence: in 1539, one of the most important *pipiltin* in the city, Don Carlos Ometochli, was executed at the stake under the accusation of having continued to practice idolatry, thus rejecting the new evangelical message arrived with the Catholic cross of Spain. Without going into detail, we see, especially by reading the letters of the inquisitorial process initiated by the bishop of Mexico Juan de Zumárraga, how a strong competition begins to emerge between the different members of the Aculhua elite and a first quite delineated and defined family stratification.

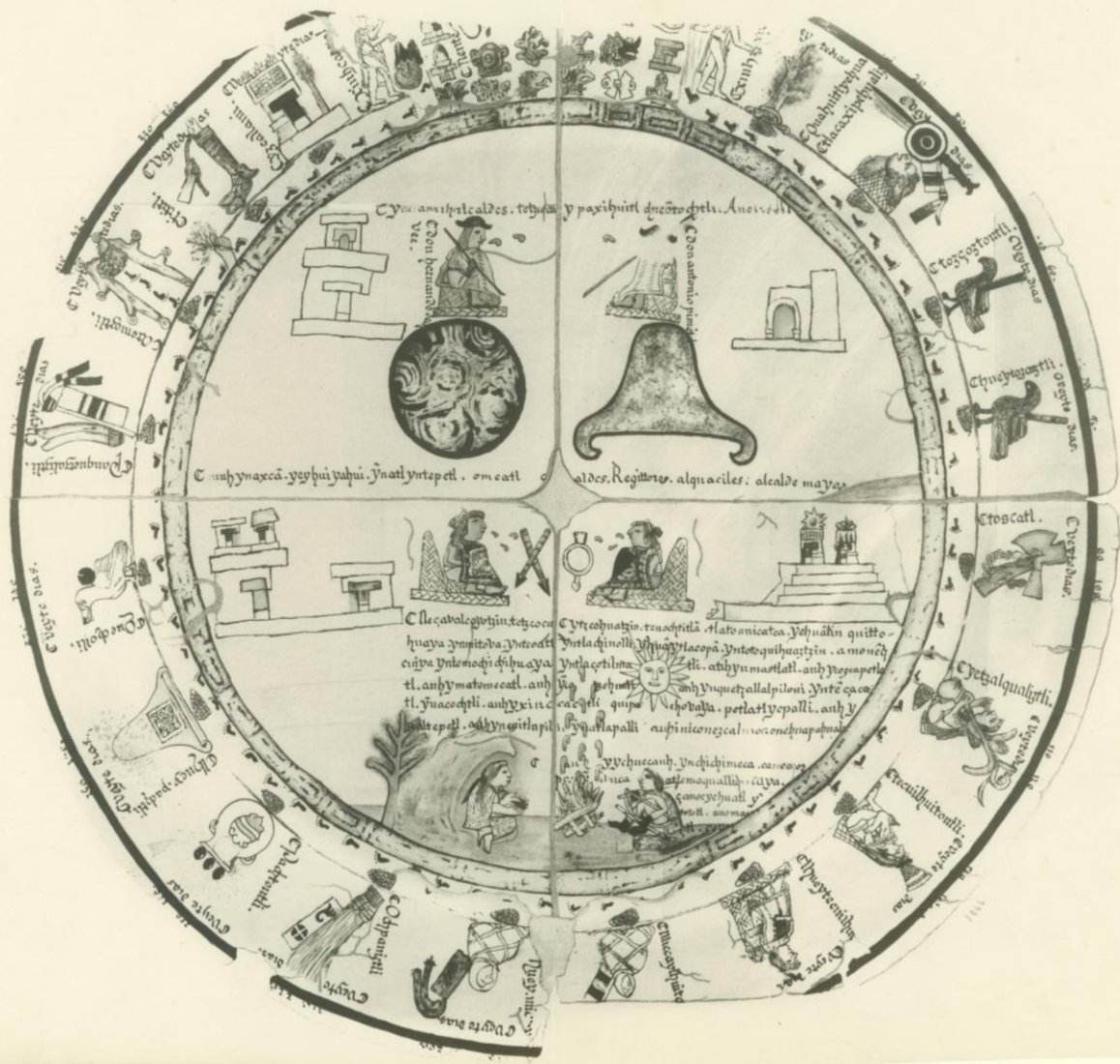


esto es de los mra. paires

esto es de don carlos q
se lo dio don p^o

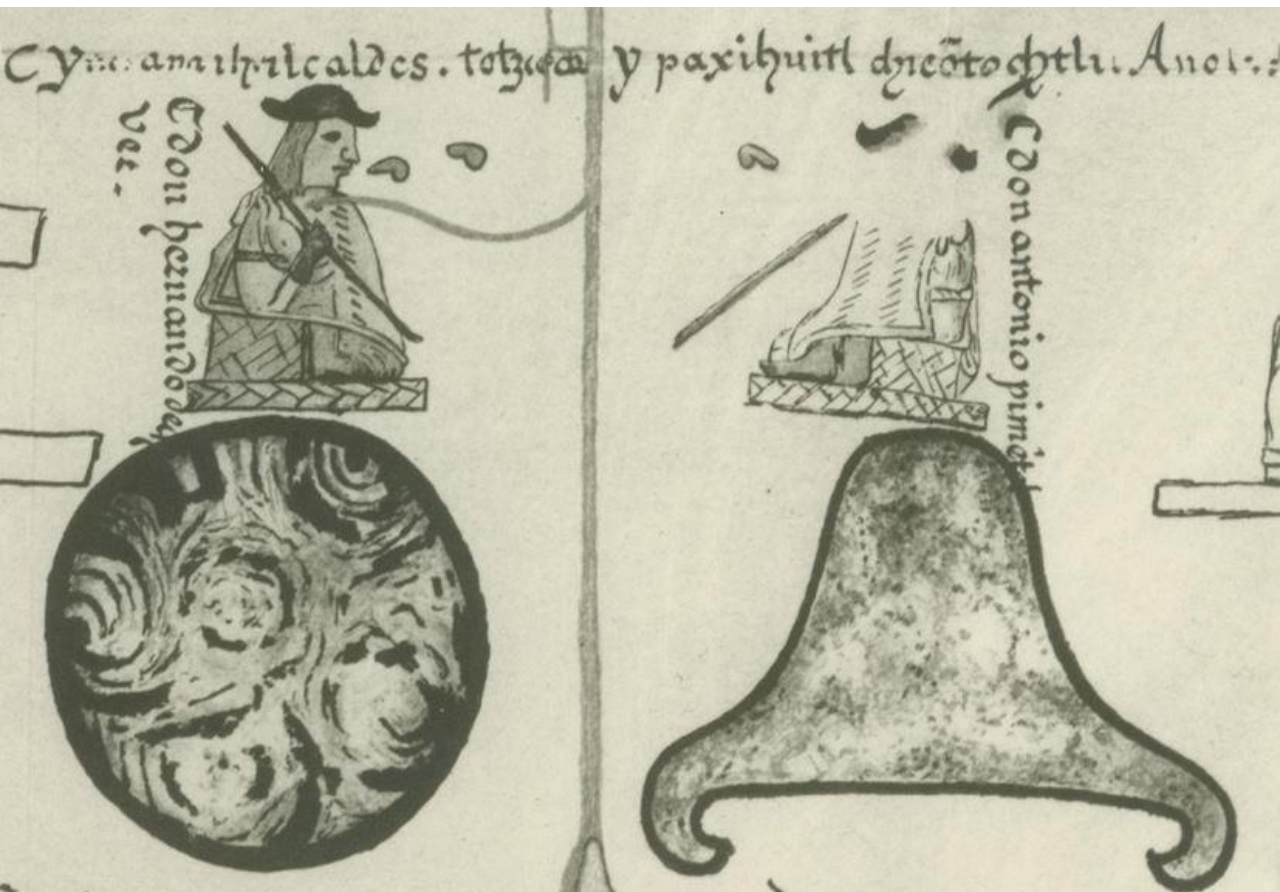


The Oztoticpac Lands Map (together with its paired Humboldt Fragment VI), shows all these territories, precisely measured and calculated in their length and width, combining two ways of communication, that is to say the indigenous one, pictographic with the images conveying the crucial message, and the western one, written in alphabetic scripts or glosses that were spread all over the document, recalling either stories about each parcel or the dynastic belongings of each ruler, whose rights were often lost amongst the mists of time. The main actor and protagonist in this litigation was don Antonio Pimentel Tlahuilotzin, another *pilli* or noble, but descending from a cadet line, as his mother was not one of the principal wives of the old ruler Nezahualpilli.



To back up his position in front of the *cabildo* don Antonio had to strongly work on two sides: firstly, he had to convince the indigenous nobles that he had all the rights to rule and therefore present himself as a legitimate candidate for the cacicazgo; secondly, he obviously needed to strengthen his role even in front of the Spanish's eyes. In order to achieve all this don Antonio began and financed a huge promotional campaign in which he presented himself as the great leader of the community as well as the most legitimate in the rulership, the only one able to enhance the position of Texcoco.

The Boban Calendar Wheel, painted in 1538 when don Pedro Tetlahuehuetzquitzin was the tlatoani of Texcoco, is a perfect example of all this. In this amazing document, we can see inside a calendrical route that framework the page three different images that synthesize the history of the altepetl of Texcoco, culminating in the final message who needed to be propagated.



In the upper part instead, is it possible to see two different figures: don Antonio Pimentel and his nephew don Hernando Chavez, respectively represented as *alcaldes*, seated on their thrones with these resting on a depiction of a mass of water and of a mountain. The graphic diphrasism of these two glyphs below (a typical expression of the Nahuatl language) represents the words *in atl in tepetl*, a metaphor meaning, ‘the altepetl’, that is to say the representation of the “state” of Texcoco with the two *alcaldes* staying over it in a position of power, almost as rulers. This very strong image, together with the rest of the document, could hint us that up to that time there was an internal struggle within the city as the real governor was indeed don Pedro Tetlahuehuetzquititzin as stated before. Later on, the two of them will achieve their purposes as they will become the future rulers between 1539 and 1565, despite belonging to a cadet line as mentioned above.

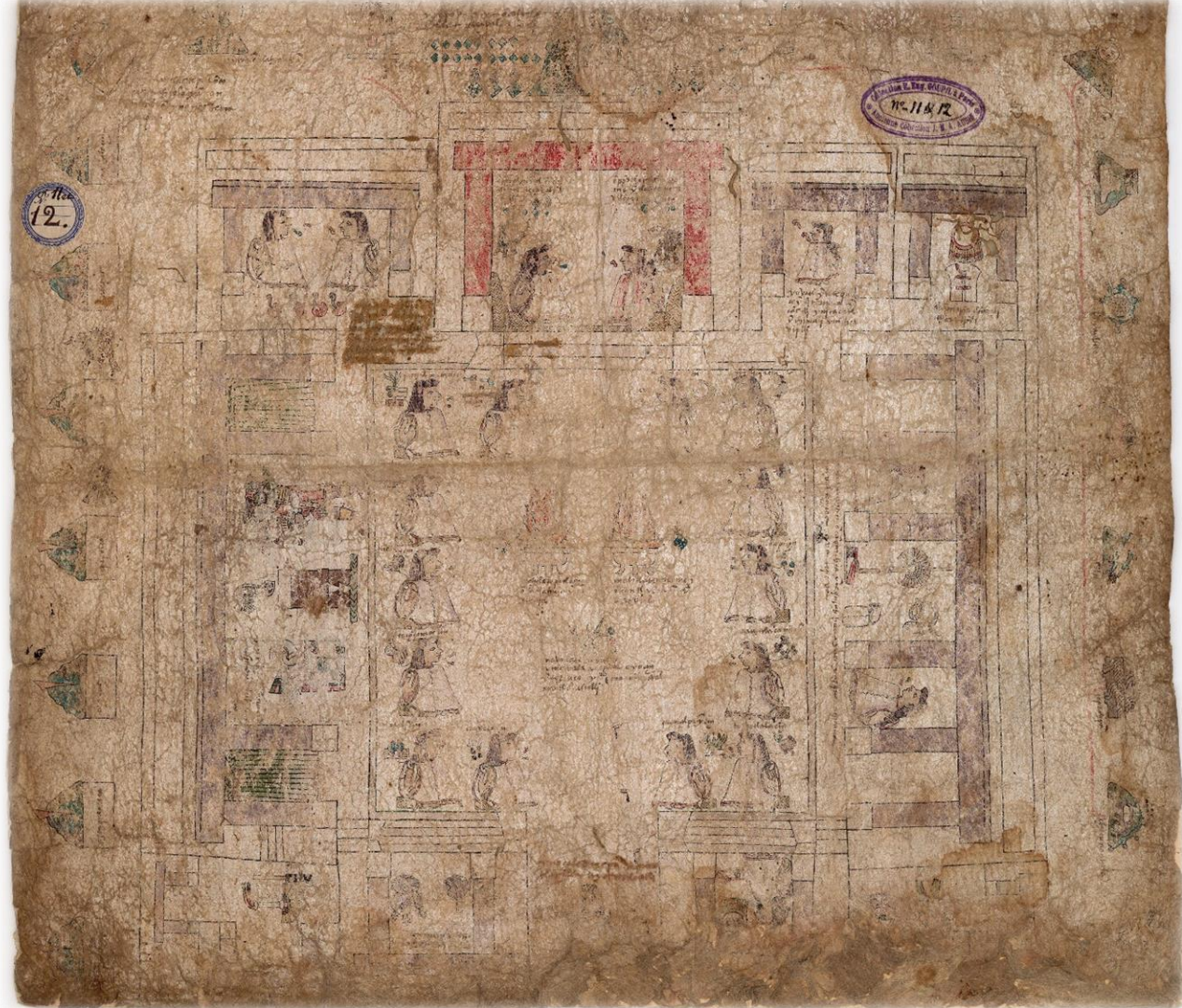
TESTIMONIO ¹

QUE DAN EL GOBERNADOR, ALCALDES Y REGIDORES DEL PUEBLO DE SAN SALVADOR QUATLACINCO, DEL AÑO DE 1608, EL DÍA 18 DE NOVIEMBRE Á DON FERNANDO DE ALVA CORTÉS, APROBANDO SU HISTORIA QUE ESCRIBIÓ DEL ORIGEN, GRANDEZAS Y HAZAÑAS DE LOS TULTECAS, CHICHIMECAS Y NACIONES SUJETAS Á ELLOS, HASTA LA CONQUISTA DE MEXICO Y PACIFICACIÓN DE LAS TRES PROVINCIAS; DECLARANDO QUE DICHA HISTORIA CONCUERDA CON LAS QUE TIENEN LOS PUEBLOS DE OTUMBA, CON MUCHAS OTRAS PARTICULARIDADES.

“Todo lo que contienen los diez libros de la dicha Historia y Crónica ha salido muy bueno y verdadero, sin ningún defecto; y la relación que los principales de la ciudad de Texcoco le dieron, está también muy cierta y verdadera.”

Still in 1608, the castizo chronicler and historian from Teotihuacan (a racial classification used to refer to people who were three-quarters White by descent and one-quarter Amerindian) Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, presented in front of the *municipalidades* of San Salvador Quahltatzinco and of Otumba a whole bunch of sources he used to write his masterpieces as the so-called *Relaciones* and the *Historia de la Nación Chichimeca*, two works in which he tried to back up his position: he needed to “legalize” his sources because he built up a whole narrative in which he presented himself as the legitimate successor of his great grandfather don Hernando Cortés Ixtlilxochitl and thus putting himself in the picture of becoming a valid candidate for the most important offices in the city. In order to this, as mentioned, he used as his sources some of the most famous Mesoamerican codices that we know nowadays, as the Codex Xolotl, and possibly the Mapa Quinatzin and the Mapa Tlotzin.






esta Relacion he sacado Excelentísimo Señor de los nueve
 libros que estoy escribiendo de cosas de la tierra, de más de dos
 mil años á esta parte ^{según está en} ~~de~~ ^{facada por la} ~~de~~ ^{original y}
 de los señores de esta tierra ^{conforme los que se pretado}
 y los viejos ^{personas principales y doctos} con quien yo he comunica-
 do q para quien lo entiende es tan claro como nuestras let-
 ras es para quien no entiende ^{este pequeño servicio y se acuerde de}
 los pobres descendientes de estos Señores cuando se ofrezca
 ocasión q ^{allegamos para que sea un beneficio q}
 V. E. escriba á S. M. que en ello recibiremos mu-
 chos bienes. Humilde criado de V. E. que S. M. B.

Don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl

Esta Relación he sacado Excelentísimo Señor de los nueve
 libros que estoy escribiendo de cosas de la tierra, de más de dos
 mil años á esta parte, según está en la original historia de los
 Señores de esta tierra conforme lo he interpretado y los Vie-
 jos, personas principales y doctos con quien yo he comunica-
 do, me lo han declarado; que para quien lo entiende es tan cla-
 ro como nuestras letras.

Suplico á V. E. reciba este pequeño servicio y se acuerde de
 los pobres descendientes de estos Señores cuando se ofrezca
 ocasión, y V. E. escriba á S. M. que en ello recibiremos mu-
 chos bienes. Humilde criado de V. E. que S. M. B.

DON FERNANDO DE ALVA IXTLILXOCHITL.

The background of the slide is a light beige color with a repeating pattern of faint, grey line drawings. These drawings depict various human figures in different poses and activities, such as sitting, standing, and carrying items, along with some abstract shapes and objects. The overall style is reminiscent of traditional folk art or a textile pattern.

**Merci beaucoup pour
votre attention**

Daide Tamburrini