

MAYA INHERITANCE PATTERNS: THE TRANSFER OF
REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY
IN
EBTUN, YUCATAN, MEXICO
(1560-1830)

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The Titles of Ebtun (Roys 1939) is a collection of documents from the pueblo of Ebtun, Yucatan, Mexico. The documents were discovered by William Gates in 1917. Gates photographed the documents, then had them bound and returned to Ebtun, five kilometers west of Valladolid. Subsequently, the photographs were acquired by the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. They were first mentioned by Tozzer in 1921 (1939:iii) and were then published by Roys, who in 1939 printed transcriptions, translations, and supplementary material. This material consists chiefly of 285 documents (town records of Ebtun) of which the vast majority concern transfers of or titles to real estate. That the documents contain a wealth of untapped material is exemplified by my earlier research (Witschey 1986) in which I was able to demonstrate, by mapping the location of many of the tracts of land, that most of the property of Ebtun did not fall in a concentric zone around the town, but rather occupied a 90 degree cone which was west of the town, indicating by property ownership that Ebtun was not the home village for most of its inhabitants. Further, this research revealed internal evidence for some units of measure employed in northern Yucatan.

The purpose of this report is to utilize the documents in this collection to obtain ethnographic evidence for the characteristics of ownership and bequest among the Maya of Ebtun, during the period covered by the Titles (1560-1830). The

process was begun by utilizing a database constructed for earlier research to identify land transfers which occurred between family members as gifts or bequests and was extended to include other documents, particularly wills, which did not specifically refer to land transfers. The database contained sufficient information to identify the transferor and transferee of each parcel, where such information had been available in the documents. Appendix A contains summary notes about each of the relevant documents—a partial extract from each. For further detail, the reader is referred to the documents themselves (Roys 1939). The notes in Appendix A will be mentioned frequently in the analysis below, and are referred to here and in the appendix by their document number as assigned by Roys.

The transfer of personal property is mentioned in the following documents:

195, 224, 230, 233, 234, 235, 238, 239, 242. When this data is tabulated (Table 1), it shows the items of personal property in the estates of the Maya of Ebtun. Of particular interest in Table 1 is the expression of what the Maya owned and considered tangible personal property, and how values were expressed. Note the importance of beehives and bee-keeping equipment, a significant source of cash income to the Maya. Parenthetically, bee-keeping is still quite prevalent in the area around Ebtun as a source of cash income, yet a new strain of bees, which produce no honey, are slowly moving toward this area from South America by interbreeding with the stingless honey-producing bees of Yucatan. It is likely that in a very few years, the importance of beehives will have vanished. One's attention is also drawn to the relative infrequency with which large animals are mentioned: Document 195 mentions a horse and colt, and Document 230 mentions a cow and mule, but otherwise no large animals are mentioned.

Thompson (1978:111) uses the bequest categories of land, houseplots, livestock, plants, tools, household items, clothes and money.

Document 230 is a bequest to three daughters. Its tabulation below in Table 2 indicates the effort to divide the estate evenly among the three.

TABLE 1

*Transfers of Personal Property
Mentioned in Ebtun Documents*

(ranked by number of documents in which mentioned)

Item	Document number...									
	195	224	230	233	234	235	238	239	242	
beehives	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
chest	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
jars	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
silver spoon	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
flask	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
bed	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
bottle	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
arrobas	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
door & frame	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
plate	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
chair	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
money	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
small bars	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
table	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
metate	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
scarf	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
wire mask	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
horse	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
colt	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
rosary	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
cow	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
mule	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
corn	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
calabash cups	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
bench	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
cloth	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
thread	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
honey tool	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
skirt & huipil	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

TABLE 2

Terms of the will of Francisco Un

	wife	Maria	Micaela	Agueda
beehives	20	20	20	20
mecates of cornfields	50	—	—	—
door & frame	—	1	1	1
chest	—	1	—	—
plate	—	1	1	—
cow	—	1	1	—
he-mule (or goat)	—	—	—	1
bed	—	1	1	1
arroba	—	1	—	—
jar	—	—	1	1
flask	—	—	1	—
table	—	—	1	—
metate	—	—	—	1
wine bottle	—	—	—	1
chair, no arms	—	—	—	1
ground plot A	x	:		:
well	x	:	joint interest	:
ground plot B	x	:		:

Inspection of the individual documents shows that in most cases, insofar as the available personal property permitted, male and female children were bequeathed essentially the same things. This is particularly evident in the number of beehives received, for instance. In documents 224, 234, 235, and 239 the equal standing of sons and daughters under the will is quite apparent. In documents 238 and 242 the differences which do show up may be more apparent than real. For example, in document 238, there seems to have been a preference to give metates to boys and jars to girls. And in document 242, a girl, naturally, received the skirt and huipil. I conclude that sons and daughters were being treated as evenly as the tangible personal property permitted under the terms of either mother's will or father's will.

Real Property passed from father to son in the following twenty documents:

155, 166, 168, 172, 177, 224, 226, 228, 229, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 240, 243, 246, 247, 257, 262.

Real property passed from father to daughter in the following 21 documents:

180, 181, 191, 192, 221, 223, 224, 226, 228, 230, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 241, 246, 247, 257, 260, 261.

This represents a rather equal occurrence of boys and girls inheriting from their fathers. Closer inspection reveals that of these forty documents, the following represent a transfer from father to *both* boys and girls:

224, 226, 228, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 246, 247 and 257.

The earliest of these is document 224 from c. 1811 and the latest, document 257, is from 1817. Thus by this time individual wills transferred property from father to sons and daughters. The extent to which care was taken to distribute the estate evenly among both male and female children is also well illustrated by document 224. Although the information is incomplete, it may be tabulated as follows in Table 3 for this document, with ellipses representing missing information.

The value of the ground plots is not known. However, in the preceding document (223) a ground plot was sold for 15 pesos, and in the following two documents (225 and 226) small forests are sold for six pesos and eleven pesos one toston respectively. Thus, I infer that Antonio Dzul most likely intended an equal division of property and that the difference between 43 and 38 pesos in the table above represents his evaluation of the ground plots which he bequeathed to Bernardino and Maria.

Further, the fragmentary nature of the document, especially just after the bequest to his wife, makes it difficult to tell whether there might have been even more children. If so, the parallel construction of the document leads me to believe that their in-

TABLE 3
Bequests to the Children of Antonio Dzúl

	son	son	Ber.	Maria
pesos	43	43	38	38
silver spoon ...	1	1	1	1
bar	1	1	1	1
beehives	10	10	10	10
arrobas	2	2	2	2
jars	...	3	[3]	3
chest	1	1	1	1
flask	1	1	1	1
ground plot	—	—	1	1

heritance would have been similar to one of the first two columns in the table above.

Further evidence for the use of equitable distribution between sons and daughters by a father occurs in the other documents mentioned. In documents 226 and 228, an inherited forest was divided evenly between a son and daughter. In document 233, there are three children inheriting equally — a son, a daughter, and one unidentified. In document 234 property is distributed equally between a son and a daughter. In document 235, father owns five pieces of property and bequeaths equal joint interests in each parcel to his six children, four boys and two girls. In document 238 the eight children (five sons, three daughters) of Antonio (or Martin) Couoh are given a joint interest in six different parcels of land. In document 246 a son and daughter receive equal shares of a tract of land. In document 247 land is divided among two daughters and a son. And in document 257, a tract is divided among two sons and two daughters.

Real property passed from mother to son in the following nine documents:

191, 195, 222, 223, 234, 237, 239, 242, 246.

Real property passed from mother to daughter in the following six documents:

195, 222, 227, 237, 239, 242.

From this it is obvious that fewer transfers by women are recorded in the documents. However, the number transferring to sons and daughters is comparable. Again, note the overlap of documents transferring real estate to sons and daughters:

195, 222, 237, 239, 242.

These documents span the decade from 1803 to 1813, as with the fathers' will above. In document 195, the mother transfers a forest to two sons and two daughters. In document 222 it is clear that five children, three boys and two girls, inherited a joint interest in property. In document 237, the mother transfers property to a son and two daughters. In document 239, several tracts of land are bequeathed jointly to three sons and a daughter. And in document 242, real property is left jointly and equitably to two sons and a daughter.

The following ten documents involve more than one child receiving property:

195, 202, 224, 230, 233, 234, 235, 238, 239, 242.

Eight of these have been discussed already above. Document 202 does not clearly identify the children, but only discusses the interest in the property. Document 230 divides property evenly among three daughters. Of these ten, only document 224 gives any indication of a possible unequal distribution, but as I discussed above and illustrated with Table 1, it is clear to me that an equal distribution was also intended in this document. All of the others are either clearly using equitable distribution or are silent, usually in ways that permit equi-distribution to be inferred.

Thus, at the beginning of the 19th century, wills were being recorded by both men and women, and in all cases where property was left to sons and daughters, it was divided evenly

between them all. It seems clear that men and women were handling their estates identically at this time.

Real property passed from husband to wife in only four documents:

180, 195, 230, 235.

In document 180, the husband and one child are mentioned as deceased. Thus it seems likely that no other children were alive to inherit. But in document 195, four children are living, but two are small, and the others may still be quite young. In document 230, the wife inherits the cornfields, but the children inherit forest land. In document 235, the husband leaves 120 mecatres of cornfields to his wife and a joint interest in other properties to his children. In several other cases, the wife received personal property only and all the real estate was divided among the children.

Property passed from wife to husband only in document 242. As with several husbands above, this wife left only tangible personal property to her husband, and bequeathed all the real estate equitably among the children.

From the foregoing I conclude that bequests of real estate to spouses was unusual, and often accompanied unusual circumstances. Where real property was bequeathed, it usually took the form of cornfields being transferred from husband to wife.

The following cases are also of interest, but are too few in number to analyze:

In 191, from grandfather to daughter to son

In 192, from grandfather to daughter to daughter

In 211, from grandfather to grandchildren

In 221, from grandfather to daughter to daughter

In 222, from grandmother to daughter to children

In 223, from grandfather to daughter to son

In 245, from grandfather through daughter to daughters

There is only one instance in the Ebtun records of bequests going outside the immediate family. In document 224 two cous-

ins of the deceased receive 21 and 15 pesos each, and one receives a silver spoon. The record is not complete at this point.

Notwithstanding the lack of completeness of the document set and the fragmentary nature of many of the individual documents, the documents provide unequivocal evidence for some specific inheritance patterns and property rights in central Yucatan near the end of the colonial era. From the foregoing summaries, I conclude that:

(a) the Maya women and men of Ebtun had essentially equivalent property rights;

(b) both could own real and personal property in their own right;

(c) women and men were equally likely to inherit and own property. In 27 documents, males inherited, and in 28 documents females inherited;

(d) the most common bequest of tangible personal property was an equitable distribution of goods to all children, sons and daughters, with some personal property going to the spouse. This confirms Thompson's observation of a trend away from patrilineage holdings (1978:182-3) in two ways: patrilineal to bilateral ownership, and group to individual ownership. He says, "both these trends were manifested in a pattern that apparently was increasing in the eighteenth century — the habit of giving equal amounts of everything to all recipients, especially children, ...". Fox and Justeson say, of the Classic era (c. A.D. 300-900), "... the general Classic Maya population apparently practiced both matrilineal and patrilineal cross-cousin marriage."

(e) the most common bequest of real property was to all children equally as an undivided joint interest. Of ten documents with evidence of two or more children inheriting, only one shows any possibility of an unequal distribution of property, and as discussed, I believe equal distribution was intended. With the occasional exception of cornfields, a man's wife did not receive title to real property: it passed directly to his children. See Thompson's findings above.

(f) all property was bequeathed to the immediate family members: in only one case did a more distant relative receive a bequest. This is at some variance with Thompson's Tekanto

results (1978:157) that 9% of the bequests skipped daughter in favor of daughter's children. Thompson also notes (1978:158) patterns of apparent cross-cousin exchange in alternate generations through bequest.

In conclusion, the documents in *The Titles of Ebtun* provide a detailed view of the kinds of real property the Maya held and valued, the items of personal property which formed a part of everyday life, the mechanisms by which real and personal property were transferred within the family, and the relatively equal standing of men and women with respect to the inheritance and ownership of property. They may further document the trends noted by Thompson away from patrilineal group ownership.

APPENDIX A

What follows is a partial extract or summary of the contents for each document applicable to the inquiry, referenced by its document number assigned by Roys, date, and citation.

(Documents 1 - 152 deal with land agreements, sale of the Tontzimin tract, and a lawsuit over the Tontzimin tract, and contain no relevant information. The references are chiefly to transfers between towns, not individuals.)

Document 153 [1561] (1939:240-241).

This acknowledgement for a tract at Kochila by Diego Huch'im, Juan Kuk, Juan Canul, and Pedro Huch'im ends with "U tidroil in yum yan kochila" which Roys gives as "The title of my father"; it is at Kochila.

It is not possible to say what the facts are here, save that these individuals considered Kochila to be "inherited", i.e. passed down among the townspeople, if not directly inherited by one or more of the owners.

Document 155 [1632] (1939:240-242).

In this acknowledgement Antonio Chi gives a Chichan Cruz tract to his son ("in mehen") Juan Chi. Since A. Chi says "I

have long been the most sinful of mortals here on earth;...? we may infer that this is the living bequest of an elderly father.

Document 166 [1696] (1939:252-253).

In this acknowledgement, Marcos Chan, the seller, describes property which belonged to his older brother ("in sucun"), Luis Chan, and given by Luis to their father ("in yum"), Lorenzo Chan, who left the property to Marcos Chan upon his death. We thus have this property going from son to father to a second son.

Document 168 [1708?] (1939:258-259)

In this acknowledgement, Gaspar Nauat sells a forest which he inherited from his father ("in yum").

Document 172 [1713] (1939:262-265)

In this affidavit, Lorenzo Tus and his eldest [son] ("u nohol ... pablo tus") Pablo Tus testify and we hear that (a) this is an inheritde forest, and that (b) Lorenzo's father ("in yum") said it was an inherited forest when he gave it to Lorenzo. One bequest is clear. We don't have enough information to document the prior one(s). Similarly, we learn of a second forest which Lorenzo Tus inherited from his father.

Document 177 [1722] (1939:288-271)

This petition shows, in its complaint, a long succession of father-to-son transfers: "For it is the forest of Antonio Un, the father of Diego Un, Bartolome Un, the father of Cristobal Un, his son, and the town (of) Castillo". ("u kax antonio un = u yum gaspal un u yum diego un = baltume un u yum xpobal [Un] u mechen yt cahob caxtio").

Document 180 [1741] (1939:272-275)

This somewhat complex acknowledgement has several items: first, Ventura Alcocer (likely not Maya) sells back to Ebtun a

forest which her father had bought from a man of Ebtun. Second, Maria Candelaria Tus sells a forest. She mentions burying her husband and child, and we may infer that the forest passed to her upon her husband's death. The transfer of a third forest is mentioned, but its title history is unclear.

Document 181 [c 1742] (1939:276-277)

In this acknowledgement Tomasa Chi sold to Ebtun "an inherited forest, the property of my father ("in yum") Domingo Chi".

Document 191 [1803] (1939:288-289)

The acknowledgement for the sale of a forest by Don Feliciano Kak contains:

It was in a way inherited by me. Pedro Cime of Ebtun sold it to Diego Huh for fifteen pesos, and then my maternal grandfather ("in mam"), Gaspar Kantun, purchased it.

Thus, we cannot determine whether the land passed directly to Kak (unlikely), or passed via his mother and father both (likely, see Document 192).

Document 192 [1769] (1939:288-291)

This acknowledgement contains a gripping family biography in miniature. Pascuala Chi, who is selling Oxtun, says:

I, Pascuala Chi, . . . , sell the forest which was the gift of my father ("yn yum") Gervasio Chi, given to him by my maternal grandfather ("yn mam"), Don Pedro Noh. This is the forest which he gave to my father ("yn yum") when he married my mother, and when he occupied it under the hand of my grandfather ("in mam") in order to serve him. Then when my grandfather ("in mam") died he delivered all his forests and ground plots and all my grandfather ("in mam") had to my father and mother ("in tata y in mama") (Note the use of modern terms) (1939:290 fn b). The principal men of the town saw also how they served my grandfather ("in mam") during as many years

as my father ("in yum"), Gervasio Chi, enjoyed the gift of the forest.

This shows (a) that a woman inherited from her father, and (b) her father had inherited from his wife's father (c) after a bride price service arrangement.

Document 194 [1784] (1939:294-295)

This quitclaim covers two transfers to the town by descendants of the owners: (a) from Pablo Huch'im, last of the lineage ("u kilacabil") of Don Juan Huch'im and (b) Norberto Pot and Martin Noh, last of the lineage ("u kilacabilobb") of Juan Dzul.

Document 195 [1785] (1939:294-297)

This is the first will which appears in the documents. In it, Rosa Camal states that all she has, she inherited from her husband ("yn uichame") Gaspar Dzul. She is transferring the property to her children ("yn ualob") Juan Ventura Dzul and Pedro Dzul, small boys, and Pascuala Dzul and Petrona Dzul. The will has many gaps in the text. However, we note the bequest of personal property (one horse, one colt, ten beehives, one chest with its lock, one flask) which is to be apportioned among the children, and that her single rosary of coral and gold is to be sold. Real property, at least an interest in a forest, appears to have been delivered to her younger brothers for the account of the children. This forest was inherited from her husband who had purchased it. We may also see in this document that many of the items of personal property once owned by Rosa Camal were lost "...in a time of great poverty."

Document 202 [1790; trans. 1795] (1939:302-305)

This acknowledgement indicates the concern for children's rights to inherit, as the purchaser of (land and) ebano trees records his interest in order that the seller's (Marcos Uc) children could not "...talk about it in time to come."

Document 211 [1792] (1939:310-311)

This is acknowledgement for Manuel Pech, who purchased a ground plot in Ebtun. "This was an inherited lot, the lot of Alonso Noh; and he left it to his grandchildren ("u mamob"), Diego Noh, Fabian Uc, Domingo Un and Lorenzo Dzul."

Document 221 [1808] (1939:324-325)

In this acknowledgement, Juana Un (seller) describes the sale of a subdivision of an inherited ground plot saying: "It was an inherited lot, the gift to my mother ("in Mama"), Fabiana Dzul, from her father ("u llum") Marcos Dzul."

Document 222 [1809] 1939:324-327)

This acknowledgement speaks for itself well:

I, Luisa Cutis, together with my younger brothers and sister ("in uidzinob"), Josef Cutis, Juan Pablo Cutis, Juan Clemente Cutis, Maria Cutis, am selling a subdivision of a lot, which was a gift to my mother ("in mama"), Luisa Noh, from her mother ("u Na"), Maria Dzul.

Document 223 [1811] (1939:326-327)

This acknowledgement indicates that Manuel Chi is selling a property which was inherited from his maternal grandfather ("in mam"). However, between the time of the inheritance (which probably passed to his mother first) and this sale, the property was sold (by Luisa Idzincab to Gaspar Dzul) and then later redeemed by Manuel Chi.

Document 224 [c 1811] (1939:326-329)

This will of Antonio Dzul describes the bequest of both personal and real property. To his wife he leaves two score pesos, one chest, and three jars. A portion of the text is missing, but it appears that no real property was left to her.

The fragmentary nature of the document makes the number of children, and their bequests uncertain. The following are

mentioned by name as children: Leonicia Dzul, Manuel Dzul, Bernardino Dzul, and Maria Isabel Dzul. It contains:

Likewise I give to my son ("in meh[en]") ... two score and three pesos in money ... one small bar and ten beehives, also two arrobas (1939:329 fn 4) ... jars and one chest and one flask. This [is for] my daughter ("in uixmehen"), Leonicia Dzul, and my son ("in mehen"), Manuel Dzul ... no one shall take it from them.

Likewise I give to my son ("in mehen") ... two score and three pesos in money and one silver spoon ... [a] bar, ten beehives, two arrobas, three [jars], one chest and one flask.

Likewise I give to my son ("in [mehen]"), Bernardino Dzul, thirty-five and three pesos in money, one silver spoon, one bar, ten beehives, two arrobas, [three] jars, one chest, one flask, and one ground plot.

Likewise I give to my daughter ("in uixmehen"), Maria Isabel Dzul, thirty-five and three pesos in money, one silver spoon, one bar, ten beehives, two arrobas, three jars, one chest, one flask. Also the ground plot I bought from Martin Noh.

The document goes on to describe gifts to two first cousins ("in mam").

Document 226 [1811] (1939:330-331)

In this acknowledgement of Maria and Lorenzo Camal, there is testimony that they inherited a forest from their father. It was divided equally and marked by the town fathers, and subsequently, Lorenzo sold his half to Maria.

Document 227 [1811] (1939:332-333)

This document is an acknowledgement by Rosa Uc for a sale of a lot to Lorensa Nauat in which she states that she inherited the lot as a gift from her mother ("in Na").

Document 228 [1811] (1939:332-335)

This document contains an acknowledgement for the sale of a lot to three Camal brothers. Appearances are made by Ignacio Dzul and Feliciana Dzul (who has children), and their

mother Andrea Tus, to say that there is an old acknowledgement for the forest and that they have the right to sell it. Because of the wording, in which it is apparent that Ignacio and Felicianita testify but that their mother does not, and that Ignacio was instrumental in the sale, I conclude that the two children have already inherited the property from their father, Andrea Tus did not inherit the land (see document 224) and that Andrea Tus was present simply to acknowledgement the earlier rights of the family in the property.

Document 229 [1811] (1939:334-335)

Ignacio Dzul and his mother again appear to acknowledge the sale of a second piece of property. It says "I, Ignacio Dzul, with my mother, Andrea Tus, give the acknowledgement for the forest ground plot *I am selling*" (emphasis mine). This lends further support to the argument that Andrea Tus holds no interest in the property at this date.

Document 230 [1811] (1939:334-337)

The will of Francisco Un (articulated in the council chambers by his eldest son-in-law ("u nohol u jaan")) divides his personal property between his wife ("in uatan") and three daughters ("in uixmehen"), leaves his cornfields to his wife, and leaves a joint interest in two pieces of real property to the three daughters.

Document 231 [1811] (1939:338-339)

The fragmentary nature of this document makes it impossible to establish any more than that a forest tract near Halakal was inherited over two or three generations: Elena Huch'im to ... (???) ... to Juan Camal.

Document 232 [1811] (1939:338-341)

This acknowledgement is complete, but omits detail which would be helpful. There may also be an error in the original (1939:339 fn 5). Correcting for the error, it describes an

"inherited forest" which was sold out of the Noh family by Fabian Noh, but later redeemed by Alonso and Juan Noh. Unfortunately, we don't know whether Alonso and Juan were sons of Fabian or some more-distant relatives.

Document 233 [1811] (1939:340-341)

The will of a daughter of Ambrosio Couoh, though quite fragmentary, indicates that the forest her father ("in tata") gave her is to be the joint property of her three children (Dionisio Huch'im, Maria, and ...). The personal property divided among the three consists of beehives, silver spoons, chests, beds, and jars.

Document 234 [1811] (1939:340-343)

The town officials distribute the property ("make the will") of Dionisio Huch'im, who died intestate, to all his children. To Juan Bautista Huch'im go "seven of the beehives of his father, one chest, one chair without arms, one small table, one jar, one bottle." To Juana Huch'im go "seven beehives, one door with its frame, one chest, one jar, one bottle." The next sentence of the will is most interesting: "Likewise the five hives given me by my mother ("in Na"), with the silver spoon and the jar written in her will, I leave to the possession of my wife ("in uatan"), Felipe Un, for my two children ("mehen")." It indicates that Dionisio inherited from his own mother, that his mother had a will, and that his wife is receiving a lifetime interest in the hives, spoon, and jar which he is bequeathing to his children.

Document 235 [1811] (1939:342-345)

The will of Manuel Un divides a small amount of personal property among his six children ("in Palilob"), Manuel, Ildefonso, Juan, Guillermo, Valentina, Maria Gregoria, Bernardina, and his wife ("in uatan"), Manuela Camal, including beehives, jars, flasks, chests, silver spoons, and measures of corn. Of much greater import is that he leaves 120 mecates of cornfields to his wife, and five pieces of real property to the

children in joint interest. The properties include: a forest he purchased from his mother, Pascuala May, for three pesos; a second forest he bought from his mother for five pesos; a forest he "...bought jointly for three pesos and one toston ..."; a ground plot given to him by his mother; and a subdivision of a groundplot he bought from his father for one peso. It is interesting that his wife gets cornfields, while the children get forests and ground plots, and even more interesting that the interests were not divided, as should have been relatively easy with so many properties in the estate.

Document 236 [1812] (1939:344-345)

This is a further acknowledgement of document 226.

Document 237 [1812] (1939:344-347)

This acknowledgement is for an inherited forest belonging to Jose Camal. The document indicates that Jose divided the property among his children, of whom one may be Manuela Camal, and that Manuela Camal gave the property to her children ("u yalob"), Juan, Micaela, Anselma, and Simona Balam. Roys notes that these children are the nephew and nieces of Lorenzo and Maria Camal (1939:345 fn 3) as mentioned in documents 236 and 226 above, and other cross references and possible transcription errors (1939:347 fns 1,2). Document 245 confirms that Jose Camal was the maternal grandfather of these four children.

Document 238 [1812] (1939:346-349)

The will of the son of Antonio Couoh (probably Martin Couoh [1939:347 fn 3]) distributes personal property rather equitably among eight children ("in Palilob") and his wife ("in uatan"). The goods include beehives, chests, metates, arrobas, jars, bottles, headscarves, and a bed and a wire mask. The real property includes several tracts, all given in joint ownership to the children: the forest of Uxal, purchased from Angela May for six pesos; the ground plot where he lives, purchased from Andrea Couoh; a well; his father's forest on the Pixoy road;

the Bubul forest of his father; and the subdivision of a ground plot given to him by his father.

Document 239 [1812] (1939:348-351)

In the will of Rosa Balam, dictated to the town officials, she bequeaths her personal property by item to her four children, Manuel, Victor, Vicente, and Gregoria. It includes hives, chests, chairs, cups, and jars among other things. The real property includes several tracts, all given jointly to the children: "the forest of my ancestors named Tixcanalum..."; "...another forest named Cisil..."; "...another forest named Tcahum..."; and "...the forest of my ancestors at Samal...". Clearly Rosa Balam inherited two of these tracts.

Document 240 [1813] (1939:350-353)

In this acknowledgement there is a subdivision of some properties by Manuel Chi for his son Hermenegildo Chi, which also says that the properties were "...of Diego Chi, and he left it to Pedro Chi. When Pedro Chi died he left it to Manuel Chi." We don't have assurances that Diego was the father of Pedro and the grandfather of Manuel, although this seems reasonable. The property includes a ground plot on the Uxal road, a forest plot, and a forest on the Saci road.

Document 241 [1813] (1939:352-355)

This acknowledgement mirrors document 240 and shows a similar set of subdivisions being made for Calista Chi out of the same three properties.

Document 242 [1813] (1939:354-357)

The will of Felipa Couoh (sister of Martin Couoh, document 238) leaves items of personal property to her husband Buena-ventura Un, and equitably to her children, Leonicio, Cipriano, and Maria Isabel. These include beehives, pieces of cloth, and spoons, among others. The real property appears to have been left jointly to the children. Felipa herself held a joint interest

in this property (document 238). She names a forest, the Bubul forest, the forest on the road to Pixoy, and the well Actunch'en.

Document 243 [1813] (1939:356-357)

In this acknowledgement, Francisco Camal notes his sale to Lorenzo Camal of the subdivision of a ground lot in Ebtun. He says: "...given to me by my father, Pablo Camal, when he died. The is one subdivision to my younger brother, Juan Tomas Camal, also sold to Luis Camal, since we two are together." I read this as the bequest of Pablo, subdivided for his two sons. Francisco Camal further states that: "My children have nothing to say about it." That is, they don't object (1939:357 fn 3). This clearly indicates the importance which the town fathers placed upon children not being disenfranchised by having their birthright land sold without their consent.

Document 245 [1814] (1939:360-361)

This document is an acknowledgement for the subdivision of a ground lot to Anselma and her younger sister ("yidzin"), Simona Balam, which lot was once owned by their maternal grandfather ("u mamob").

Document 246 [1814] (1939:360-363)

This acknowledgement is a complex description of the inheritance and subdivision of a ground plot.

It is an inherited lot, a gift to her (Ines Balam) from her father, Juan Balam. There is (the part of the original plot) for Maria Balam from her father, Bartolome Balam. One part of the plot is the gift of Maria Lucia Tun to Barbara Balam. Inasmuch as I have seen it, there is the true testimony of the will given to Barbara Balam by Maria. There is the lot coming down by inheritance to Juan Balam and Maria Balam, a gift from their father, Bartolome Balam. This is an inherited plot, the gift of Bartolome Balam from his mother, Andrea Dzul.

Roys says, "There appear to be two persons named Juan Balam, one the nephew of the other. The translator is unable

to trace all the various relationships." (1939:363 fn 1). What does come through clearly is Ines did inherit from her father, and Juan and Maria inherited from their father Bartolome Balam, and Bartolome Balam inherited from his mother, Andrea Dzul.

Document 247 [1814] (1939:362-365)

This acknowledgement covers the subdivision of a plot owned by Micaela Balam. It was a gift from her father ("u yum") Carlos Balam. He apparently acquired a portion as a gift from his father ("u yum"), Felipe Balam, and a portion he purchased from his older brother ("u sucun"), who had inherited it. Later in the document we find that the lot has been divided in three for Micaela Balam, Juan Balam, and Maria Balam (brothers and sisters).

Document 248 [1815] (1939:364-367)

This acknowledgement has some portions missing, including some quotations from the will of Lorenza Uc, whose son, Juan Uc, appeared for the acknowledgement of a ground plot she gave him. Enough survives to infer that her son inherited the plot under the will.

Document 257 [1817] (1939:376-379)

In this acknowledgement, Domingo Un appears in order to affirm the sale of his property. A portion of the document is confusing, and a portion is poignant:

There appeared Petrona Un, of the lineage of Baltasar Un, in order that we should make an acknowledgement for a forest subdivision situated south of Hanbin. This is an inherited forest; it was purchased by Baltasar Un, and he left it to his children. After that Maria Un and Monica Camal, the wife of Manuel Un, appeared in order to sell it to Choirmaster Jose Idzincab for four pesos. Then Buenaventura Un and Petrona Un redeemed it for two pesos each, which they paid him. Then they settled on (the land) which they jointly redeemed, with Domingo Un and Juana Ventura, the daughter of Manuela Un. The four (children of)

their father were settled there, when Domingo Un sold his inheritance for three pesos.

and,

I, Domingo Un, ... sold my entire inheritance ... since it was the property of my ancestors. Since I have no children to take it away (from Petrona Un), this is the reason I sold it: that I may eat up its price, in my poverty.

The text permits me to conclude that Baltasar Un's four children inherited an undivided joint interest in his forest, and the forest was subsequently subdivided.

Document 260 [1822] (1939:382-383)

In this acknowledgement, Manuela Cutis states that she is delivering to her daughter ("in ual"), Maria Petrona Dzul, the acknowledgement for the ground plot willed to Maria by their father ("in yumob"), Pedro Dzul.

Document 261 [1822] (1939:382-385)

This acknowledgement, on the same day as the preceding one, confirms the transfer to Maria Petrona Dzul and her husband, Silvestre Balam. It mentions the agreement at the time of both Manuela Cutis and Maria's older brother ("u secunob"), Bernardino Dzul.

Document 262 [1822] (1939:384-385)

This acknowledgement parallels document 260 in that Manuela Cutis delivers a subdivision of a ground plot to her son ("in ual"), Faustino Dzul, to whom it was bequeathed by his father, her husband ("in uichan"), Pedro Dzul. Roys believes that Pedro Dzul purchased the land from his mother ("u mamail") (1939:385 fn 1) because her acknowledgement is presented also.