

NOTES

[N60 III:4] SOME SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE CHERAN AREA.¹

"About the period from the founding of the original settlement of Cherán until 1910 there are few data, documentary or traditional" remarks Beals.² Since the same writer insists³ on the need of historical documentation for the understanding of ethnic situations, it may not be amiss to point out a few unexploited sources for the history of the Cherán area.

We know that in the Middle Sixteenth Century, Cherán, Aranza, Pamocoran, (Pomacuaran) and Aran (Arantepacua) belonged to the encomendero Juan Infante. The four towns bordered Chilchota to the north, Periban to the west and Uruapan to the south. The eastern border probably lay near Lake Pátzcuaro, where the island of Xaracuaro formed the "cabecera de los pueblos de Joan Ynfante". An estancia of Cherán ("Sabiñan" or Sabina, now Sevina) confined with Xaracuaro. At that time (Ca. 1550), Cherán had eighty two houses with 401 inhabitants, not counting children. Its annual tribute was 91 pesos 2 tomines, a milpa of seven and one half hanegas of seed, 12 Indians for service, and the service of another Indian half the year.⁴ We learn from the *Title of Cherán Hatzicurin*⁵ that the cacique of rán about this time was named Putzuua or Puntzuua.

From towns in this greater Cherán area we have various paintings (codices) of historico-topographic content: the Sevina (from the estancia mentioned) treats of violence between the regular and the secular clergy and contains paintings of Indians (some naked, some armed and carry-

¹ This unpublished note, found among the papers of the late R. H. Barlow at Mexico City College, may serve as an appendix to the Tarascan text published in the preceding issue of *Tlalocan*. (F. H.)

² *Cherán*, 12.

³ *Memoria de la IV Mesa Redonda de Antropología, México*, 1948.

⁴ *Suma de Visitas* (Papeles de la Nueva España, 2a. Serie, T. I.) Nos. 459, 813.

⁵ See *Tlalocan* III:2.

ing flowers), local towns, *yácatas*, etc. This codex, known at least since 1892, still awaits publication.⁶

The Codex of Nanahuatzen stems from a source even nearer to Cherán, and has, indeed, been called the Cherán Codex. It mentions Sevina and other nearby towns and hills, and records historical matters — the native rulers and the arrival of the Spaniards. It likewise has lain unpublished and unstudied during the half century since Troncoso called attention to it.

Aranza, a short distance east of Cherán, was ruled by one Tariacuri in 1539 or thereabouts⁷ and the town has also left a pictorial history.⁸

Finally, and forming the principal subject of these notes, we have the land-title of adjacent "Cheranastico" — more properly, Cherán Hatzicurini, written in Tarascan in the early Sixteenth Century, in the time of Bishop Quiroga and the great linguist Maturini Gilberti. Both of these personages figure in the document,⁹ the one as "Don Pas de rroroga" and the other as Fray Matorini or Fray María torino.

The Tarascan original of the Title of Cherán Hatzicurini is accompanied by a translation into rather original Spanish, made at the date of the original document. The main concern of the Title is, of course, the limits of the town lands: its principal neighbors were Cherán el Grande on the south and Aranza on the west. The Title states that originally, its authors lived in Vanaxo. In 1522, when Cristóbal de Olid irrupted into Tzintzuntzan with the Holy Faith, the cacique of Vanaxo and his wife, together with all their children, hastened to receive baptism, emerging as Pedro Xhamondanque and María Quezcu.¹⁰ Seven years later came the terrible invasion of the psychopathic Nuño de Guzmán, as he burned a trail across the West. Quiroga came in 1539 and gathered the stricken Tarascans. The new Bishop moved the people of Vanexo first to Aranza and thence to Cherán Hatzicurini. This

⁶ On this and other Tarascan codices, see Mateos' convenient resumé in the *Memoria de la IV Mesa Redonda*, cited above.

⁷ See *Tlalocan* III:2.

⁸ Mena, Ramón. Nuevo Códice Tarasco. Pictografía de Arantz. *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística*, 5a. Epoca, Tomo VI, 1913, pp. 341-343.

⁹ See *Tlalocan* III:2.

¹⁰ An annotation on the manuscript states that "I received Holy Baptism at the hands of Fr. Maturino (Gilberti)" who also witnesses the title. It is not clear whether Pedro Xhamondanque is the author of this annotation.

is clearer in the Spanish text than in the Tarascan. On August 6, 1539 (3. speaks of 1519, which is impossible, but 66, mentions 1539 and of the presence of Don Vasco, when the Title seems to have been formulated) the town notables gathered to write the Title to their landholdings.

Perhaps the most interesting item in these titles, is the catalogue of the seven lords who built *yácata* in the region, as a bit of unique archaeological autobiography concerning a *yácata* Xhamondanque built himself. These data are condensed and garbelled in the Spanish text, which is shorter than the Tarascan throughout, but with the aid of Sr. José Ramos B., a native speaker of Tarascan, I venture to translate the passage as follows:

39. Each king staked out his claim, 40. forming *yácatas* which he owned, 41. Lands in all the town: 42. a king called Chupitan, 43. another king called Vipichuhan, 44. another king called Harame, 45. and another, the King Guzmán (sic!) 46. and another king was called Tzitzichan (Tariacuri in the Spanish text) 47. and another king was called Phancuarequa 48. and another was called Ytzipetacua. 49. Then the son of the king (the prince?) Guzmán made a *yácata* in Ihuatzio, 50. then the son of the king (the prince?) Xhamondanque made his *yácata* in Curintayrechao ("Breadville", "Tlaxcala"). 51. Thus likewise I made the *yácata* on the hill called Tampúuata Hatzicurin.¹¹ 52. And I took possession of all the lands included in this title.

The writer has numbered the sentences in the Tarascan original and in the severely mangled Spanish translation. A modern version of the title, with its wealth of old personal and place names, can be undertaken only by a qualified Tarascan scholar; the aim of the present paper is merely to make the text available for such a translation and to point out a few other sources for Cherán history, of which the Archivo General de la Nación should afford many more. [R. H. Barlow]

¹¹ A hill which divides Cheranastico from Ahuiran today.

[N61 III:4] RECENT FINDS AT TLATILCO

Several artifacts of a type new to archaeology were purchased in February 1953 at the brick-making center of San Luis Tlatilco, state of Mexico. These novel pieces were unearthed by the workers of Tlatilco, about two meters below the present altered surface. The men mentioned the fact that the pieces came from a hole in the clay wall, adding that perhaps parts of the broken stone objects were