

Tetzcoco in the early 16th century: the state, the city, and the *calpolli*

FREDERIC HICKS—*University of Louisville*

In central Mexico at the time of the Spanish conquest, there were a number of states in which the political hierarchy, concentrated in the civic or ceremonial centers, was supported by the labor and goods provided by lower-class producers. These producers were usually grouped into urban wards or small dependent hamlets that had a corporate character of some sort (Bray 1972; Caso 1956; Calnek 1976). In this paper I investigate the nature of these and other units and attempt to show in what manner, and how closely, they were integrated with the state apparatus. To do so, I examine one pre-Hispanic city, Tetzcoco (modern Texcoco),¹ with special attention to the territorial units of which it was composed and their relation to the political hierarchy. These relations involve *tribute*, which in Aztec Mexico was not only exacted by victorious states from the vanquished but was also the predominant feature of internal production relations (Carrasco 1978). Most tribute was in unskilled labor or agricultural products, but craft and service specialists also gave tribute. Because of the importance of such specialists in the urbanization process, they will receive special attention here.

The urban wards or small dependent communities were among the units of pre-Hispanic society that were often called *calpolli*.² Some investigators, concentrating on the occurrences of this word in the traditional ethnohistorical sources, have sought to construct models of the evolution of ancient Mexican society in which the *calpolli* play a prominent part. They are frequently presented as survivals of autonomous, kin-based landholding groups of an earlier time, which gradually lost their power and autonomy as society became increasingly stratified, state-organized, and urbanized (e.g., Kirchhoff 1955; Katz 1966:173–179; Kurtz 1978:174–176; Rounds 1979:74–76). But as many investigators have shown, the word *calpolli* did not refer to any one single kind of entity. It could refer to communities of various kinds, on different levels of organization, from an extended family to an ethnic or national group (Carrasco 1971a:363–364; 1976:30–31; 1978:37; Castillo 1972:73; Kirchhoff, Odena, and Reyes 1976:148; Reyes 1979). Thus we cannot assume that *calpolli*

Examination of the internal structure and system of tribute in the pre-Hispanic city of Tetzcoco, Mexico, indicates that the city contained several kinds of territorial groupings that received the services of commoners. These commoners were organized into calpolli, which were basically groups with common tributary obligations. They gave service either in food production, unskilled labor, or specialized skilled work, but it was usually part-time, compensated with lands for subsistence, and this gave the city a dispersed layout. [Aztec, calpulli, craft specialization, tribute, urbanism]

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refers to the same thing wherever it occurs. We will see that in Tetzco there were several kinds of groups that could, in the proper context, be called *calpolli*. Among them were the small tribute-paying communities that constituted the basic production units above the household level. But I think the data tend to show that these can best be understood as relatively recent, perhaps somewhat ephemeral, units created by the lords to serve their interests.

Tetzco and the kingdom of Acolhuacan

Located on the mainland in the eastern Valley of Mexico, Tetzco was one of the principal cities of Aztec Mexico, capital of the kingdom of Acolhuacan and a partner, with Tenochtitlan and Tlacopan, in the Empire of the Triple Alliance. Acolhuacan was centered in the eastern Valley of Mexico, but it extended far to the northeast, to Cuauhchinango (Huachinango) and beyond, some 90 km from Tetzco. Its supreme ruler was the king (*tlatohuani*, pl. *tlatoque*) of Tetzco, but it included 14 other cities, each with its own dependent communities and each with its own *tlatohuani*. All of them were, however, subject to the king of Tetzco (Gibson 1956; Hicks in press).

Since I must sometimes refer to historical antecedents, a brief synopsis is in order. The kings of Tetzco traced their lineage back to the Chichimec leader Xolotl, who entered the Valley of Mexico with a band of followers sometime in the 11th or 12th century. Xolotl's descendant Quinatzin (r. ca. 1272–1330) was the first to establish a headquarters in the Tetzco area, and it was maintained there by his successors Techotlatzin (r. 1330–1405) and Ixtlilxochitl (r. 1405–10). The city as it was known at the time of the Spanish conquest, however, was laid out by Nezahualcoyotl (r. 1431–72) after he recovered his kingdom from Tepanec domination. The Tepanec of Azcapotzalco had conquered Acolhuacan and most of the rest of the Valley of Mexico in the early 15th century; but by 1428, Ixtlilxochitl's son and heir Nezahualcoyotl, in alliance with the ruler of Tenochtitlan (modern Mexico City), overthrew the Tepanec and defeated Azcapotzalco. Now free of foreign domination, Kings Nezahualcoyotl of Tetzco and Itzcohuatl of Tenochtitlan jointly planned the rebuilding of their respective capitals, and initial construction was carried out with the assistance of workers and artisans from each others' kingdoms. The two cities thus shared many features, but they had different geographical settings and different political conditions to adapt to. Once their respective kingdoms were secured, the two allies began a series of conquests, in which they were soon joined by the small Tepanec city of Tlacopan (modern Tacuba), creating what has come to be known as the Empire of the Triple Alliance. Nezahualcoyotl was succeeded in Tetzco by his son Nezahualpilli (r. 1472–1515), and Nezahualpilli's son Cacama ruled at the time of the Spanish conquest in 1519 (Alva Ixtlilxochitl 1975–77; Torquemada 1975, I:77ff.; Dibble 1951; Carrasco 1971b).

Tetzco was evidently not a tightly nucleated city. Several early accounts indicate that the houses of the city were scattered over a wide area, extending from the lakeshore to the foothills beyond Tetzcotzinco, a distance of over 12 km (Motolinía 1971:206; Torquemada 1975, I:304; Alva Ixtlilxochitl 1975–77, I:323). I have attempted to trace the boundaries of the city proper on the map (Figure 1) by determining, insofar as possible, the locations of small communities clearly identified as "barrios" of the city of Tetzco (Table 1), as distinct from places that belonged to adjacent cities or which were towns "in their own right" rather than parts of Tetzco.³ The city's boundary in the northeast remains uncertain.

These data indicate that the city, at least in its political sense, had an area of just under 80 km². Somewhat over 100,000 people probably lived within this area (Hicks in press).

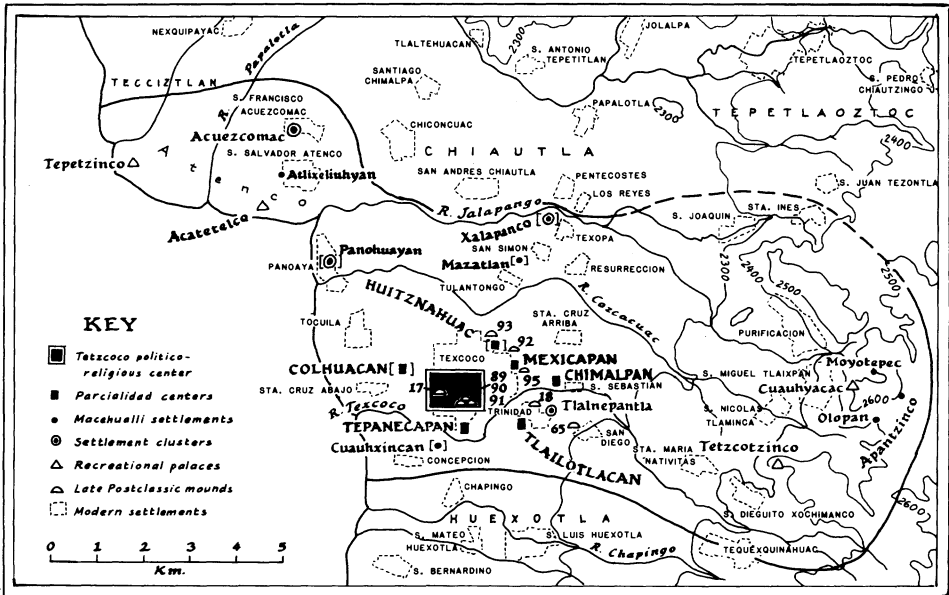


Figure 1. The city of Tetzco at the time of Spanish contact. Localities within brackets are approximate locations, probably correct within 2 km; others are probably correct within 1 km. (Base maps: Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto, Carta Topográfica 1:50,000, sheets 314B21 and E14B31, with lakeshore based on González Aparicio 1973.)

Although there was a tightly nucleated zone around the royal palaces, the city consisted for the most part of numerous small clusters of houses, with here and there a noble's establishment, distributed among cultivated fields. Parsons's (1971) settlement pattern survey supports the early Spanish accounts in this respect. Such a dispersed settlement pattern is not really unusual in preindustrial cities, as Trigger (1972) has shown. When we have seen what was within Tetzco's boundaries, I think it will be clear that this was the city in a functional sense as well as a political one, and that the relationship between the state, the city, and the *calpolli* was such as to make a dispersed settlement pattern necessary.

nobles, commoners, and *tequitl*

The Aztec economy was based primarily on tribute, which was given by commoners to nobles. Nobles (*pilli*, pl. *pipiltin*) were such by virtue of their birth into a noble lineage (*tlacamecayotl*). A noble had the right to control lands and to receive the services of commoner subjects, but only if they were granted to him by his king or other superior. All commoners were the subjects of nobles; if not to a particular noble, then to the king directly. The word for commoner, *macehualli* (pl. *macehualtin*), actually means "subject," and it can be applied to a noble if referring to him as someone else's subject. A *macehualli* could be advanced by his lord to a position of importance, but he could not have lands and subjects of his own. His lord could, however, assign some of his own subjects to work for him. *Macehualtin* were normally provided by their lords with lands to work for their subsistence (Carrasco 1971a, 1976; Carrasco and Broda 1978; Castillo 1972).

Tequitl refers to the set of obligatory tasks, or "job," that every person had, over and above such tasks as he or she might engage in for the family's subsistence or recreation. Theoretically, everyone in Aztec society had a *tequitl*, even kings: their *tequitl* was to rule.

Table 1. *Macehualli* settlements, settlement clusters, palaces, and other places in Tetzco.

Name	Type of settlement ^a	Principal references ^b	Remarks
Acatetelco	RP	(1)1:114; (8)	In Atenco, present Parque el Contador
Acatla	MS	(6):33r; (9)3:7v	In Tlaixpan region
Acapan		(8):44v	Barrio of a witness
Acomulco	MS	(8):245v, 258r	Subhead under Atenco in 1561 padrón
Acuecomac	SC	(8):45r, 258v	Heading with Atenco, Atlacatl, etc., in 1561 padrón
Ahuehuetitlan	NE	(1)1:121; (5):153v	Of son of Nezahualcoyotl; casa y tecpan in 1593
Amanaltenco		(7):12v	Barrio of a witness
Amatitenco		(10):16 Jan 1576	Barrio of a petitioner
Amatlan		(10):21 Jan 1576	Barrio of a <i>macehualli</i> petitioner
Apantzinco	MS	(6):45r; (9)8:17r	In Tlaixpan region
Atenco	SC	(1)1:90; (5): (8)	"Calpixcazgo" contained 8 to 11 MS
Atenpan		(10):1 Jul 1578	Noble of Teotlan sold houses in this barrio
Atepuzco	MS	(8):266r	In Atenco SC and "calpixcazgo"
Atlacatl	SC	(8):258v	Heading, with Atenco etc., in 1561 padrón
Atlixeliuhyan	MS	(8):117 etc.	Largest MS in Atenco SC
Calpulco		(10):20 Sep 1578	Barrio of a petitioner
Coatepec	MS	(8):266r	In Atenco SC and "calpixcazgo"
Cuauhxican		(2):51; (9)3:23r	Identifiable with Concepción, south of city
Cuauhyacac	RP and MS	(1):114; (6):29v, 32r	Hill with RP and MS, both in Tlaixpan region
Huexocalco		(9)3:7r	In Tlaixpan region, possibly adjoins Otlatlatic
Hueycalco		(9)8:21r	Possibly served Tepanecapan
Huitzcalco		(1)184	Two textile obrajes here in 1578
Ixtlahuaca	MS	(7):2r, 17r	Probably east of city
Izquitlan		(3):13v	Barrio of witnesses, possibly north of city
Mazatlan		(4):1r, 5r; (8):44r; (10)	Barrio of witnesses, north of city, associated with Tulantongo
Miltenco		(10):3 Jan 1578	Barrio of a petitioner
Metepec	MS	(6):34; (9)3:13r, 23r	In Tlaixpan region, served Chimalpan
Moyotepec	MS	(6):13r, 50r-51r	On slopes of C. Moyotepec, served Chimalpan
Ochpantenco		(8):45r	Barrio of a witness
Olopan	MS	(6):13r	On slopes of C. Moyotepec, maybe served Chimalpan

Table 1. (Cont.)

Name	Type of settlement ^a	Principal references ^b	Remarks
Otonteopan	MS	(7):2r, 17r	Probably east of city
Otlatlatic	MS	(6):38r; (9):3:7r, 15r	In Tlaixpan region, served Chimalpan
Ozotitcpac	NE, "barrio"	(11):323; (8):44r; (12)	Probably near lake; royal prince's NE, barrio
Panohuayan	SC	(8):258v	Heading, with Atenco etc., in 1561 padrón
Teotlan	NE, "barrio"	(11):168; (9):8:4r; (10)	Barrio of noble petitioners & witness; NE of prince
Tepetzinco	RP and MS	(11):114; (8):266r	MS in Atenco SC and calpixcazgo; RP
Tetzcotzinco	RP	(11):114, etc.; (13)	Well-known palace and gardens on hill east of city
Tezacacohuac	NE(?)	(6):41r; (9):3:29r, 31r, 8:19r	Called both <i>calpolli</i> and compound (<i>ithualli</i>) of noble
Tezcatzonco		(9):3:10r	Residence of two witnesses
Tlacatecco		(9):3:16r, 9:75r	Apparently contained a NE
Tlacuilocan	MS	(6):28v; (9):8:19r	In Tlaixpan region, served Chimalpan
Tlalnepantla	SC	(2):51; (8):44v; (9):47r, 75r	Modern Trinidad (?), possibly served Tlailotlacan
Tlaxomulco	MS	(7):2r, 17r	East of city
Tlillapan	MS	(8):266r	In Atenco SC and calpixcazgo
Xalapanco	SC(?)	(9):8:9r, 10r	North of city, SC or name of general region
Xaltzilhuacan	MS	(9):9:75r	<i>Calpolli</i> in Tlalnepantla SC

^a Abbreviations: MS: *macehualli* settlement; NE: noble establishment; RP: recreational palace; SC: settlement cluster. Space is left blank if type of settlement is not indicated in the source.

^b Key to references: (1) Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975-77; (2) Vetancurt 1971, Trat. 2; (3) AGN, Tierras, 1525/4; (4) AGN, Tierras 1682/9; (5) AGN, Tierras, 1740; (6) AGN, Tierras, 2726/8; (7) AGN, Tierras, 2726/9; (8) AGN, Vinculos, 234/1; (9) INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc.; (10) INAH-AH, ANT; (11) Lewis 1977; (12) Cline 1972; (13) Pomar 1941.

The *tequitl* of *macehualtin*, however, was set for them by the nobles to whom they were subject and normally consisted of service to those nobles. Basically, *tequitl* consisted of labor, not goods (the word is formed on the same stem, *tequi-*, as the word for “work”), but the labor might consist of the production and delivery of goods. In return, the *macehualtin* had the right to lands for their subsistence, and there was an association between land tenure and service obligations in other ways, as well (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:90–91; Torquemada 1975, II:545–546; Castillo 1972:74–84; Dyckerhoff and Prem 1978). *Tequitl* is generally glossed as “tribute,” but there is another word, *tlacalaquilli*, that refers to tribute in goods. The tribute that a conquered state gave to its conqueror was most often *tlacalaquilli*, while a commoner gave *tequitl* to his lord; but lords did sometimes require *tlacalaquilli* from their *macehualtin*, just as kings sometimes required conquered people to give *tequitl*.

Linking the nobles with their commoner subjects were the *calpixque* (sing. *calpixqui*). These people, usually called “mayordomos” by the Spanish, served both as collectors and guardians of tribute in goods and as supervisors of *tequitl* labor. The people sent by kings to oversee the collection of tribute from the nobles of conquered states were also called *calpixque*, and they were nobles; but those who served on the local level, supervising the labor of commoners, were in most cases commoners themselves (Hicks 1978).

Within the city’s boundaries, there were three kinds of groups, each forming settlements of a sort, that had lands and *macehualtin* attached to them: (1) the politico-religious center, that is, the royal palaces and their support facilities; (2) six groups that I will call “sections”; and (3) noble establishments. All three were the receivers of tribute. I describe each of them in turn and then discuss the *macehualli* settlements—the givers of tribute—in more detail.

the politico-religious center

The focal point of the city in the early 16th century was the palace built by order of King Nezahualpilli and used also by his son and successor Cacama. The older and larger palace built by his predecessor Nezahualcoyotl continued in use, however. These two palaces contained—in addition to the residences of the king, his wives, and many members of the royal lineage—most of the institutions through which Acolhuacan was governed; in fact, they constituted the administrative center of the city. In their immediate vicinity were temples and other structures of a religious nature.

The palace and temple areas have been described in a number of sources (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:92–100, 150–151; Torquemada 1975, I:304; Pomar 1941; Motolinía 1971:353–355; Mapa Quinatzin in Robertson 1959). Alva states that the palace of Nezahualcoyotl measured 1234.25 by 978 “varas” (about 1032 m × 817 m) and contained 300 rooms. The palace of Nezahualpilli, he adds, was smaller but more sumptuous. The temple area is said to have contained over 400 temples, the largest of which were the twin temples of Huizilopochtli and Tlaloc, set atop a single pyramidal platform. The palaces included courts and council chambers, armories, guest accommodations, and a ballcourt. The two royal palaces plus the temple area may well have occupied an area almost as large as the most densely settled part of Aztec Tetzaco, as mapped by Parsons (1971: Map 14 and field map).⁴

Storehouses in the palace contained the tributes from Cuauhnahuac (Cuernavaca) and Chalco, the principal conquered areas subject directly to Tetzaco, while the city’s tribute from other places was kept in houses outside the palace, or in Tenochtitlan (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:96, 108). A number of Alva’s historical anecdotes indicate that “mayordomos” were always within easy call of the king, who occasionally instructed them

to dispense gifts or rewards from the royal stores. Although not specifically mentioned in the sources, it is likely that there was in Tetzco, as there was in Tenochtitlan (Durán 1967, I: Ch. 11, Par. 24; Sahagún 1950–69, Bk. 8: Ch. 14, Par. 4, 6), a place where those in charge of labor for the palace received their instructions. Next to Nezahualpilli's palace were granaries and a kitchen area, from which large numbers of people were fed. Pomar (1941:9; cf. Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:150) tells us that people on duty in the palace area were fed from the royal kitchens. Finally, the larger of the two principal plazas within the palace enclosure served as the city's only marketplace. It was in operation every day (Motolinía 1971:375), and from his quarters the king could look down on it (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:131). The politico-religious center was clearly the city's economic center as well.

The king also maintained recreational palaces outside the central city, in regions chosen for their natural attractions, and these too were served by communities of *macehualtin*. Tetzcotzinco is the best known, but there were others at Cuauhyacac, Acatetelco, and Tepetzinco (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:114).

All of this was supported by lands set aside to provide food. Settlements of *macehualtin* worked these lands and/or performed labor in the politico-religious center. These lands and *macehualli* settlements were distributed not only throughout the city of Tetzco, but throughout most of the kingdom of Acolhuacan. It was over these *macehualtin* that the state exercised its power directly.

the six sections

Tetzco contained six major units that the Spanish sources sometimes call *barrios* or *colaciones*, but more often *parcialidades*. I propose to call them “sections” in order to distinguish them from the kind of entity to which “barrio” more commonly refers. The names of the sections were Chimalpan, Tlailotlacan, Mexicapan, Colhuacan, Tepanecapan, and Huitznahuac. These names are derived from six ethnic groups that arrived in Acolhuacan at various times before the Tepanec conquest, each under its own noble leaders, and were given lands on which to settle (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, I:433, II:32, 34; Mappe Tlotzin in Aubin 1885:65). These same six groups played a prominent role in the histories of many parts of the Valley of Mexico (Carrasco 1971b), and place names derived from one or another of them were ubiquitous in the 16th century.

Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975–77, I:380, II:101) tells us that it was Nezahualcoyotl who divided Tetzco and the other cities of his realm into the six sections named, yet we know that much earlier Quinatzin and Techotlalatzin had assigned each group a place in which to settle. What Nezahualcoyotl seems to have done was to assign to each group a place to build its own ceremonial center and headquarters palace in the vicinity of the new politico-religious center. We cannot be sure of the precise locations of these section centers, but there are clues. In the early colonial period, there were church-centered “barrios” of Tetzco called San Sebastián Chimalpan, Santa María Tlailotlacan, San Juan Mexicapan, San Pedro Colhuacan, San Lorenzo Tecpan, and San Pablo Huitznahuac (e.g., Vetancurt 1971: Trat. 2, Ch. 1, Par. 102). The section names do not survive in Texcoco today, but barrios with some of the associated saint names do, and we can locate these. Parsons (1971:120) has located several small mound groups of the late horizon on the periphery of the modern city, which he believes were the section centers; and although their location is not the same as that of the barrio churches, the correspondence is close enough in some cases to give general support to this view. Their placement on the map (Figure 1) is based on this combination of archaeological and documentary data.⁵

In addition to having their own small ceremonial centers, each of the six sections seems

to have had its own nobility, its own dependent *macehualtin*, and lands for its support. In the 16th century, for example, there were several small communities of *macehualtin* in the Tlaixpan region working subsistence plots there, which traditionally owed service to the nobles of Chimalpan (AGN, Tierras, 2726/8, ff. 48r–51r). In other early documents, one finds some nobles identified as to their section affiliation (e.g., INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc. 3, f. 23r, Doc. 9, f. 47r), as distinct from nobles of the royal lineage, who were customarily identified as the “descendants of Nezahualpilli.” The nobles probably resided in the section centers, but the lands for their support were not necessarily located there.

I suggest that the function of the sections was primarily political. Basically, they were noble lineages which, because of their numbers and the size of their following, were potentially powerful. Earlier, they had been a source of some trouble for King Techotlalatzin (Torquemada 1975, I:85–89). What Nezahualcoyotl seems to have done in restructuring his kingdom was to organize the nobles of the sections, and their *macehualli* following, in such a way that they would be well served economically, would enjoy a measure of authority, and thus would be loyal to the king. But they were structured so that no single section would be paramount in any given region or sphere of activity, and thus their potential for power could not be realized. This was done by giving them complementary roles in a number of activities. For example, when Nezahualcoyotl established a new royal colony in Calpollalpan, in what is now western Tlaxcala, it was settled by colonists drawn from each of the six sections (Pomar 1941:7; AGN, Tierras, 3594/2, f. 2r). Each of the sections also had its part to play in the ceremonial cycle of the city (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, I:380), and it is likely that authority was delegated to them evenly in other ways as well.

It is not clear what Náhuatl word was used for “section” or *parcialidad*. They may have been referred to simply as “parts,” expressed by the locative suffix *-can* (cf. for Teotihuacan, AGN, Vínculos, 232/1, ff. 12r–14r) or the numerical classifier *-tlamantli* (Mappe Tlotzin in Aubin 1885: Pl. II). The same six groups that formed the basis of them have been called, in Náhuatl texts dealing with other regions, *calpoltin*, and occasionally *tlaxilacaltin* (Chimalpahin 1958:23, 58, 106; 1963:10), but there the word clearly refers to the group, not to its structure as a section. In nearby Huexotla, the “barrio” of Tlailotlacan is called a *calpolpan* (*calpolli*-place), or occasionally *tlaxilacalpan*, in a series of 17th-century wills (AGN, Tierras, 1520/6 [transcribed and translated in Lewis 1977]). On the other hand, there is a series of late-16th-century legal documents from Tetzaco, in Náhuatl, in which an individual is often identified as belonging both to a section and to a smaller community; in these, the smaller community is sometimes called a *calpolli*, but the section is not (INAH-AH, PEA 3–30, esp. Doc. 9).

the noble establishments

The palaces and support facilities of noble households were another feature of pre-Hispanic Tetzaco. The sources on Tetzaco actually give us very little specific data on the structure of its nobility, but if it followed the usual pattern (Carrasco 1976), a noble lineage or major branch thereof was headed by a noble of *teuctli* rank who was established in a headquarters palace (*tecpan*). Other nobles of the lineage (*pipiltin*) lived in or near the *tecpan*, but there were many who headed separate households in palaces of their own. In Tetzaco, the royal Chichimec lineage was especially numerous. It was headed by the king, headquartered in the royal palace (also called a *tecpan*), and had numerous branches headed by royal princes installed in their own palaces.

As Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975–77, II:169) explains, a noble could not build a palace for himself without authorization from the king, and this would not be granted until he had

achieved an appropriate degree of merit. Military merit is most commonly mentioned, but achievements based on political wisdom or even artistic skill might sometimes qualify a noble for such recognition (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975-77, II:121, 142, 162, 169). Apparently, this was tantamount to establishing a noble as the head of a lineage, a status which was thenceforth hereditary. Until he was granted such authorization, a noble continued to live in one of the royal palaces or, perhaps, in a house belonging to the royal palace. It may be that only members of the royal lineage needed the king's personal authorization to build a palace; others may have needed only the approval of their own lineage head.

There must have been a great many noble establishments in Tetzaco. Some were probably located near the royal palace, but others seem to have been distributed rather widely throughout the city and beyond (Hicks in press). Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975-77, II:101) tells us that Nezahualcoyotl ordered the construction of a large number ("over 400") of houses and palaces for those who attended his court, but not all of these were noble establishments; and of those that were, not all were within the city of Tetzaco. Additional palace construction was authorized by Nezahualpilli.

The noble establishments had lands for their support and normally had *macehualtin* to work them and to provide household service. These lands were not necessarily in the immediate vicinity of the noble house. In the 1530s, Carlos Chichimecatl (of noble *teuctli* rank), a son of Nezahualpilli, had a palace in Oztoticpac, near the politico-religious center (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975-77, I:363); but he also had lands in several regions, and at least one of them, in the vicinity of Tetzcotzinco, included plots assigned to *macehualtin*, evidently for their own support (Cline 1972). We also know that Nezahualpilli took lands in Teciztlan to give to his sons (Castañeda 1905:229; AGI, Justicia, 128/1, proc. 23 May 1537). There is no indication that they built palaces there, but people of Teciztlan were required to work these lands and possibly to serve in the princely households.

What were these noble establishments called? The palace itself was a *tecpan*, but that term was probably restricted to the headquarters palace of a noble lineage. It may be that when a noble establishment included the households of its junior members and their families and dependents, and so formed a small community, this community was called a *calpolli*. The clearest example of this comes from Morelos (Carrasco 1972), but we may also have one from Acolhuacan. There is an early colonial reference to a *calpolli* called Ixayoc, to which a noble named Juan de la Cruz Huexotzincatl belonged (INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc. 3, f. 30v-31r), and this may be the same as the palace called Ixayoc where a royal prince named Huexotzincatl lived in Nezahualcoyotl's time (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975-77, II:169).

The politico-religious center, the section centers, and the noble establishments were the receivers of tribute. Let us now turn to those who gave the tribute.

***macehualli* settlements**

Scattered throughout the city of Tetzaco and the rest of Acolhuacan were many small communities of *macehualtin*. All of them had lands, parcels of which were allotted to each household for its subsistence. Like all people of Aztec Mexico, however, they also engaged in some form of *tequitl* (obligatory work) for their noble superiors. Some such communities served the nobility of one or another of the sections, providing them with agricultural products, services, and other goods. Others served individual nobles or noble households in the same way. Those that were attached neither to the sections nor to individual nobles served the king directly, by providing goods or services to the royal palace or to the various state agencies to which they were assigned.

We cannot even estimate the total number of these *macehualli* settlements, which were

generally called “barrios” in Spanish accounts. From a variety of sources I have found mention of between 30 and 40 of them within the limits of the city, and these are listed in Table 1. It is not always possible to tell just what kind of settlement a given “barrio” is. In many cases, reference to them comes from 16th-century legal documents in which a witness or other person is identified as to his “barrio,” but no further information is provided, so all we have is a place name. In Table 1, a settlement is identified as to type only when the sources give us the necessary information. The list probably represents only a fraction of the total number of such settlements; further archival research would probably yield the names, and possibly the locations, of many more.

Of those *macehualli* settlements that served the king directly, not all served in the same way. Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, Torquemada, Motolinía, and some others have presented several lists of regions in Alcolhuacan having tribute obligations of different kinds to the politico-religious center (see Gibson 1956). There is quite a bit of overlap in these lists—the same place name sometimes appears on two or more lists as having different obligations—and I have elsewhere suggested (Hicks in press) that this was because these place names actually refer to regions within which there were some communities that had obligations of the kind specified. Some provided food and other goods to the royal palace, some provided labor for the palace or its associated institutions, while a few took care of certain places in which the king had a special interest.

Tetzcoco itself appears on two of these lists. One is a list of 8 regions in Acolhuacan that Nezahualcoyotl placed under *calpixque* and that were charged primarily with providing food for the palace. The other is a list of 30 regions that were charged with providing labor services plus some other goods to the politico-religious center. The region called Atenco appears separately from Tetzcoco on the first list, but not on the second. Yet Atenco was an integral part of the city; Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975–77, II:90) calls it “the part of the city that lies toward the lake,” and its settlements are referred to as “barrios” of the city (AGN, Vínculos, 234/1). What I think this means is that within Tetzcoco, different *macehualli* settlements had different kinds of *tequitl* obligations to the palace, administered through at least two different chains of command (cf. Dyckerhoff and Prem 1978:203–205).

The “calpixcazgos” (regions placed under *calpixque*) closest to the politico-religious center were charged primarily with providing food for the palace. Tetzcoco and Atenco each had to provide food for 70 days (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, II:89–90), plus some additional tribute. In the case of Atenco, data from a 16th-century legal dispute help to explain how the system worked (AGN, Vínculos, 234/1; Hicks 1978). There were at that time 8 small *macehualli* settlements, with a total of 141 families, which were obligated to cultivate a large landholding called Quetzalxalotitlan, measuring 500 × 500 “brazas” (about 156 ha), and to deliver the harvest to three large granaries for later delivery to the palace. (In Nezahualcoyotl’s time, the number of settlements was 11; they were undoubtedly more populous then and quite likely cultivated a larger amount of land.) They also gave as tribute turkeys, capes, cacao, shields, featherwork, and military insignias. They were supervised in all this by a staff of *calpixque*, apparently the descendants of a man named Tochtli, who was the *calpixqui* originally appointed to the post by Nezahualcoyotl. Tochtli, a commoner, was said to have been given this post as a reward for his military achievements. For their own subsistence, the *macehualtin* of these 8 settlements were provided with small plots of land (almost certainly *calpollalli* [*calpolli*-lands]) in their communities. There appear to have been no nobles in the Atenco communities that constituted the “calpixcazgo.”

Of the 30 regions charged with providing labor service, 15 were obligated for the first half of each year and 15 for the second half. Tetzcoco was among the regions obligated for the first half. Its specific obligations are not stated, but in general these regions gave

domestic service, to the temples as well as to the palace and its dependencies, although they also provided firewood, oak bark, and probably other products (Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975-77, II:114; Torquemada 1975, I:167). The king evidently could assign specific duties and reassign them as he chose. Nezahualpilli, for example, assigned the labor services of certain of the 30 regions (or more accurately, of certain lands or settlements within them) to his daughter as her dowry, and local *calpixque* supervised the delivery of these services (AGI, México, 203/2/15; regarding dowry lands, see Carrasco 1974). These *macehuallin* must surely have had subsistence lands in their home communities,⁶ but Pomar (1941:9) indicates that while they were serving in the politico-religious center they were provided with food by the “mayordomo” in charge of them. Some of the settlements in this group must have been located in the Atenco region but were not under the supervision of the *calpixqui* of Atenco. One such settlement may have been Acuezcómac, which is in that region and was called a “barrio” of Tetzaco but was listed separately from Atenco on an early tribute roll (AGN, Vínculos, 234/1, f. 45r, 258v); it may have been included within Tetzaco in the list of 30 service regions.

These small *macehualli* settlements were, above all, units with common tributary obligations. As economic units, they were under the direction of *calpixque* who, as far as we can tell, were appointed to their positions by the lords they served, although the position tended to remain in the same family over generations. They were also military units, and each apparently had a youths’ house (*telpochcalli*) where young men were trained in war. Military service was not *tequitl* and so was not likely to have been directed by the *calpixqui*; in Tenochtitlan, it was evidently directed, on the barrio level, by a “military master” called an *achcauhtli* (Alvarado Tezozómoc 1975, esp. Ch. 22, 71, 78), and this may have been the case in Tetzaco also. There were probably also shrines or other community structures where religious specialists would have been in charge (cf. for Tenochtitlan, Durán 1967, I:Ch. 9, 14; II:Ch. 21). But *tequitl* was the principal day-to-day activity, and it was the *calpixqui* who was in charge of this.

In Náhuatl documents dealing with Tetzaco, these settlements are called *calpolli* or, more often, *calpolpan* (INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc. 3, ff. 13r, 15r, 23r, 31r; Doc. 9, f. 75r). In documents from other Acolhua communities, or from elsewhere in the Valley of Mexico, *tlaxilacalli* or *tlaxilacalpan* is sometimes used for what seem to be comparable entities (AGN, Tierras, 1520/6, ff. 8r, 11r; numerous examples in Anderson, Berdan, and Lockhart 1976). The terms *calpolli* and *tlaxilacalli* seem to have been largely interchangeable in most parts of Aztec Mexico, although they may have had different connotations (Hicks in press; Reyes 1979).

It appears that a number of small *macehualli* settlements with similar *tequitl* obligations could be grouped together for administrative purposes into what we might call “settlement clusters.” Atenco, for example, was a tributary unit that included a number of small settlements. In a pictorial tribute record that was in the possession of the nobles of the royal house of Tetzaco in 1574 (described, but not included, in AGN, Vínculos, 234/1, ff. 258r-265v), the glyph for Atenco formed a heading, alongside glyphs for Acuezcómac, Panohuayan, Atlacatl, and others not named. Under Atenco were listed its smaller “barrios,” and it is likely that smaller barrios were also listed under the other headings in this record. Spanish accounts often use the term *estancia* for dependent communities that were either divided into barrios or had barrios dependent on them. In the document mentioned above, Atenco is sometimes called an *estancia*, although it refers not to a settlement but to a region containing a number of settlements, the largest of which was called Atlixelihyan. Other named places within Tetzaco that seem to have contained smaller settlements were Tlalnepantla (INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc. 9, f. 46r) and possibly Xalapanco (INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc. 8, f. 9r, 10r).

There are also documents that refer to what was probably a corresponding hierarchy of *calpixque*: a head *calpixqui* in charge of a large unit and subordinate *calpixque* in charge of smaller units within it. Such an arrangement is quite clearly described for early colonial Coyoacán (Carrasco and Monjarás-Ruiz 1976) and is strongly suggested by the data on Atenco, which had not one *calpixqui*, but a staff of *calpixque*. As centers for the administration of *tequitl* and/or the collection of *tlacalaquilli*, these settlement clusters would probably have included the headquarters of the *calpixqui* in charge, storage facilities, and perhaps other facilities of a political, military, or religious nature. I have not been able to determine what they were called in Náhuatl.

craftsmen and other specialists

According to Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975-77, I:444; II:101), there were separate “barrios” of craftsmen in Tetzaco. Nezahualcoyotl, he reports, recruited craftsmen from various parts of Acolhuacan and some regions beyond and placed each of over 30 different kinds of artisans in its own “barrio.” The specific craftsmen he mentions are metalworkers, featherworkers, painters (probably including picture-writers), lapidaries, “and many others.” The *Mappe Tlotzin* (Aubin 1885: Pl. II) illustrates this with pictures of seven artisans, who appear to be (1) a painter, (2) a lapidary using what may be a hollow drill, (3) a shield-maker (?), (4) a metalworker, (5) a featherworker, (6) a stonemason or sculptor, and (7) a woodworker (?). The accompanying Náhuatl gloss makes no mention of barrios but may imply that Nezahualcoyotl assigned them to four of the sections.⁷

No other source is as explicit as Alva Ixtlilxóchitl about craft barrios, but Sahagún (1950-69, Bk. 9, Ch. 18-20) describes barrios of merchants and featherworkers in Tenochtitlan, and one gets the impression from his account that a similar arrangement existed there for other kinds of specialists as well. He describes the featherworkers’ barrio as consisting of a line of houses, presumably where the work was done and the people lived; a ceremonial structure called a *calpulco*; and a *calmecac* where youths learned the craft. Featherworkers were brought here by King Moteuczoma, Sahagún tells us, and here “the feather artesans of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco mingled with one another.” Some of them produced for sale in the market, while others produced for the ruler or the treasury.

Craft barrios are not mentioned in other sources on central Mexico; rather, the impression is given that some artisans or service specialists, of different kinds, were to be found in most barrios. Cortés (1865:541-542), referring to all trades but specifically mentioning the “mechanical” trades, hunting and fishing, and certain ritual specialists, states that many barrios “and even some private individuals” were obliged to support, with their lands, a certain number of specialists “for the work and the ceremonies which the lord might want to carry out.” Even in Tetzaco, as we have seen, there were some shield-makers and featherworkers among the people of Atenco. In an archaeological survey of Huexotla, Brumfiel (1980) found no clear evidence of craft specialization by barrio.

What does seem clear is that specialists gave tribute by work in their specialty. This is stated by Zorita (1941:142, 147) and indicated by Fuenleal (1870:255-256), who says that specialists were exempt from tribute, by which I believe he means that they did not fulfill their *tequitl* requirements by unskilled labor, as ordinary *macehualtin* did, but by work in their trade. In the early colonial period, this was also the case in Xochimilco (Scholes and Adams 1958:107, 110).

Whether or not craftsmen resided in separate settlements, they were identified by their specialty in the tribute rolls maintained by the lords or their *calpixque*. From Huexotzinco, in the Valley of Puebla, we have a barrio-by-barrio census for 1560 (*Martrícula de Huexot-*

zincó 1975) in which we can see that many small *barrios* had some craftsmen or specialists and, in some cases, that the specialists of several *barrios* were grouped together and listed separately, by profession. Thus, a ruler, through his *calpixque*, could readily contact specialists of a given kind whenever their services were needed. In Tenochtitlan, when a large number of specialists of many kinds were needed to work on preparations for the coronation of King Ahuitzotl in the late 15th century, the royal advisor Tlacaelel ordered the *calpixque* of "all the *barrios*" to set their craftsmen to work and to bring the products needed. At least some of these craftsmen worked under conditions where they could be closely supervised, apparently in groups (Durán 1967, II:Ch. 42; cf. Alvarado Tezozómoc 1975:Ch. 69).

In Tetzaco, it would appear that there were both specialist *barrios* and *barrios* that included a few specialists among their members. The latter would appear to describe the situation in the "*calpixcazgos*." When not providing craft items or specialized services to their lords, they very likely offered goods and services in the market or tended their fields. This may have been the situation in the communities that owed labor service as well, at least part of the time. I suggest that in the case of these communities, when the time came for them to perform this service, specialists were separated from others of their settlement and grouped with others of their profession, drawn from various settlements, to form a specialized work contingent—a group of people with common tributary obligations. But skilled craftsmen—whether composers of songs, makers of gold ornaments, or even hunters—if they work as a group, would best be supervised by someone skilled in the same profession (Sahagún's account suggests that this was the case). Such a specialized work contingent, therefore, would probably have been under the supervision not of the *calpixqui* of their home settlement (who in any case would be occupied supervising the unskilled labor) but of an experienced member of their profession. For the period of their service they might, if the nature of their work made it practical, be housed together, in the vicinity of the palace or elsewhere if their duties so required, forming in effect a "*barrio*." When the period was up, they would return to their home communities and be replaced by another contingent.

In most relatively small states, and even in larger states in the case of some professions, this arrangement would have been sufficient. If there was no work for the specialists to do, they could perform their labor service in other ways or tend their fields (cf. for colonial Xochimilco, Scholes and Adams 1958:107). But in a large and powerful center like Tetzaco, whose tribute empire ensured a steady supply of the necessary raw materials, whose rulers frequently dispensed lavish gifts and rewards and generally maintained a display of opulence, and whose market was in continuous operation, it would have been feasible to maintain some specialists in permanent palace service, constituting permanent specialist *barrios*. When special needs arose, the king, through his *calpixque* and their tribute rolls, could mobilize all the craftsmen.

the *calpolli*, the state, and the city

From the foregoing it seems clear that the small *macehualli* settlements were, as most investigators have noted, the fundamental economic units above the household level. But how did they function in the economic and political system as a whole?

With respect to landholding, it is true that the *calpixqui* in charge distributed land among the members, but this land, which was worked by the people for their subsistence, was assigned to them by their lord, theoretically in compensation for the *tequitl* they gave him. In Atenco, it was explicitly stated that the subsistence plots of the various *macehualli* set-

tlements were provided by the king in return for the cultivation of certain royal lands (Hicks 1978:135–136). As Zorita (1941:100) put it, land functioned like a salary; as such, it was held and controlled by the lords. Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975–77, II:91), describing the categories of landholding in Acolhuacan, defines *calpollalli* (*calpolli*-lands) as lands of a community, which the people cultivated for their subsistence and tribute; but he goes on to say that these “belonged to the heirs of the kingdoms and lordships [*señorios*] and to no one else.” This seems to have been the case generally in the Valley of Mexico (Dyckerhoff and Prem 1978:195–196). As two nobles of Xochimilco explained to a Spanish court in 1568, a commoner has no right to own land; only the lords have that right, and when a lord gives a commoner land, it is only in order that he can serve that lord (AGN, Tierras, 1525/5, ff. 32v–33r).

Although the craft and merchant *calpolli*, at least of Tenochtitlan, have been compared to guilds (Berdan 1978:81; Calnek 1978:103), I doubt that they should be regarded primarily as pressure groups guarding their economic monopolies. As Sahagún (1950–69, Bk. 9, Ch. 20) states with respect to the featherworkers of Tenochtitlan, they were formed into *calpolli* by their lords.

It seems unlikely that the *macehualli* settlements had their own native leaders. We know very little about local military or religious leaders, since their functions were abolished immediately after the Spanish conquest. Only the *calpixque* remained, but they were clearly the lord’s representatives in the settlements, placed there by the lords; they were not the representatives of these settlements to the lords. I have found no mention of any formal positions of leadership that were regularly filled by persons drawn from the native population of these communities. If they were “corporate” groups, it was only in the sense that any group with a specifically defined membership is “corporate.” It seems fairly well established (Carrasco 1961, 1976; Castillo 1972:73) that they were not kinship groups, as once was thought.

I know of no sources that explain in general terms the processes by which these small settlements came into existence, but bits and pieces of history that come from one or another part of the Valley of Mexico tend to support the view that they were creations of the lords, who could restructure and resettle them much as they saw fit. For example, when the lord of Tlatelolco came into the possession of unoccupied land on the mainland north of the city, he sent some of his subjects to form settlements there (AGI, Justicia, 123/2, proc. 7 May 1535), and Nezahualcoyotl did much the same thing to settle the Calpollalpan region (Pomar 1941:7). It is also reported that *macehualtin* from diverse regions came to live on lands provided by the lord of Tlatelolco, to serve him (AGI, Justicia, 124/5, ff. 161v–162r), and a noble of Tetzcoco testified in 1536 that this sort of thing was common in pre-Hispanic times (AGI, Justicia, 124/5, f. 172r). Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1975–77, II:32, 36) also mentions lands being provided in Acolhuacan for groups of immigrants, and similar practices are reported from the Chalco region (AGN, Tierras, 1768/1; Anunciación 1940:262). In early colonial Xochimilco, a native lord granted *macehualtin* to a noble and at the same time provided subsistence plots for these *macehualtin* (AGN, Tierras, 1525/5, ff. 32r–32v). Finally, in 1509 the Mexica king sent two entire *tlaxilacaltin* from Tenochtitlan to Chalco to serve his daughter, who he had given as wife to a king of Chalco (Chimalpahin 1963, 7th Rel., year 1509; 1965:231). Most small settlements doubtless remained stable for long periods, but there are a number of instances of a lord reassigning their service obligations from one master to another (Carrasco 1974:236–237; AGI, México, 203/2/15; AGI, Justicia, 134/1, proc. 18 May, 20 May 1534, 11 Jan 1541; AGI, Justicia, 164/2, ff. 26v–27r, 28v). We do not know what sense of attachment these *macehualtin* may have had to their settlements, but certainly in the early colonial period families showed little reluctance to move from them to take advantage of better conditions elsewhere, as numerous documents attest (Gibson 1964: 136–137). There are also accounts of people fleeing harsh conditions in pre-Hispanic times (e.g., Alva Ixtlilxóchitl 1975–77, I:342, II:36; Chimalpahin 1965:188).

I see nothing in the structure or function of the small *macehualli* settlements in Tetzco that would suggest that they were the lineal descendants of autonomous landholding communities of a prestate era, as some have proposed. If there were any groups that might conceivably be seen this way, it might be the six sections. They had their own noble leaders, were given control of lands, and had subjects. The history of Acolhuacan suggests that they were occasionally in a struggle for power with the Acolhua rulers (Torquemada 1975, 1:88–89). But this is a history of immigrant groups and their relations with the established order, not an account of the evolution of society. As for kin-based groups, the nearest thing is the noble lineages, the *tlacamecayotl*. In a stratified society, as Carrasco (1976:34) has noted, large kinship units and the cohesion these may provide are more likely to be found at the top than at the bottom of the social pyramid.

Why, then, have the *calpolli* so often been viewed differently? One reason, already mentioned, is a failure to recognize that “*calpolli*” can refer to different kinds of communities or social groups and that what is true of one kind of *calpolli* is not necessarily true of another. A second is the tendency to rely too heavily on Zorita’s (1941) *Breve y sumaria relación* as the primary, if not the only, source on the *calpolli* of the Valley of Mexico.

Zorita (1941:86–90) referred to the *calpolli* as a “barrio of people known [to each other?] or of ancient lineage,” with a head “who had to be one of them and not from any other *calpolli*”; and this leader, which he called “*calpullec*” was in charge of the *calpolli* lands. However, Zorita’s account of the *calpolli*, like his account of the *teteuctin* that precedes it, almost certainly does not come from the Valley of Mexico. In a somewhat different manuscript version of his work in the Biblioteca del Palacio Real, in Madrid, Zorita credits Fr. Francisco de las Navas as the source for virtually all of his data on the *calpolli* (BPR, Mss. Amer. II-59, esp. ff. 186r, 242r; see also Reyes 1979). Navas’s experience was primarily in the Puebla-Tlaxcala region. He spent some time in Tecamachalco and Tepeaca and arrived in Cuauhtinchan in 1553. It was in Cuauhtinchan that he undertook ethnographic investigations, and he must have been there when he provided his information to Zorita (Baudot 1976:433–461). It is most probable, therefore, that this part of Zorita’s (1941:85–91, 142–145) work refers to the Cuauhtinchan region and not to the Valley of Mexico. Fortunately, Cuauhtinchan is one of the most amply documented regions of central Mexico (Kirchhoff, Odena, and Reyes 1976; Reyes 1977, 1978). There, the term *calpolli* was evidently restricted to a type of unit, of Tolteca-Chichimeca origin, that held lands in common, was internally ranked on the basis of kinship, was headed by an elder of the lineage, and did not give tribute to specific nobles (Reyes 1977:115). This fits well with Zorita’s account, as Reyes has noted; but by the 16th century, there appear to have been no such entities in the Valley of Mexico.

This discussion of pre-Hispanic production relations enables us to shed some light on the nature of Aztec urbanism. As stated earlier, I believe the entire area within Tetzco’s political boundaries (Figure 1), an area of nearly 80 km², must be considered as the city. It had a densely settled “downtown” area, which contained the royal palaces, the temple area, the section centers, and institutions closely and permanently associated with one or another of these. It also had a residential area, where most of the people who worked in and depended upon the “downtown” area lived. This residential area had a rather dispersed settlement pattern, with groups of houses built among cultivated fields. It had to be this way because of the rather unusual form that occupational specialization and compensation for labor took in Aztec Mexico. In the first place, most labor was compensated not with a money wage but with land that the workers farmed for their subsistence. In the second place, much nonagricultural labor, whether skilled or unskilled, was part-time, delivered through the *tequitl* system, as it had to be in order to leave the workers time to work their land (Rojas 1977; Hicks in press).

Price (1977:217) has expressed doubt that an area this large could have functioned as a single community. In the absence of modern forms of transport and communication, she believes, urbanizing situations “tend to involve sharply increasing internal densities rather than urban sprawl.” I suggest that Tetzcocho was able to function as a single community while retaining its “urban sprawl” by three means: (1) the requirement that many of the *macehualtin*, of all parts of the area, give periodic labor service in the politico-religious center; (2) periodic religious ceremonies held in this center, designed to attract the people as spectators if not as participants and thus give them a sense of community identity; and (3) the market, which was located in the palace enclosure, where all exchange among the people of the city was supposed to take place. Probably most central Mexican cities had a similarly dispersed settlement pattern (Tenochtitlan and Classic Teotihuacan would seem to be the principal exceptions).

summary and conclusions

The ethnohistorical data on pre-Hispanic Tetzcocho give us a picture of a developed, stratified society in which the basic means of production and sources of livelihood—the land, the water, and the natural resources they contain—were controlled by a noble aristocracy which, as in any stratified society (Fried 1967:185ff.), was able to withhold from others access to these sources of livelihood. The small *macehualli* communities that formed the basic producing units were firmly integrated into this state-centered economy.

Although this picture is at variance with some, in which the *calpolli* appear to retain a greater degree of autonomy, it should come as no surprise when we consider that central Mexico has had a stratified, urbanized, state-level society at least since the Early Classic, a thousand years before the Spanish conquest (Sanders and Webster 1978:288; Sanders, Parsons, and Santley 1979:302, 392; see also Parsons 1971:206–208; Charlton 1973; Calnek 1973).⁸ The process of state formation invariably involves measures to subvert the solidarity of local corporate groups and to make them dependent on the state and its dominant classes for the necessities of life (Cohen 1969). At least in the Valley of Mexico, this process had reached an advanced stage by the time of the Spanish conquest.

notes

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¹ Throughout this paper, “Texcoco” will be used to refer to the modern town, “Tetzcocho” to the ancient city.

² *Calpolli* is derived from *cal-* (house) + *-pol*, augmentative, + *-li*, absolute suffix, hence “big house.” The phoneme generally written *o* has an allophone that is often written *u* (Seiler and Zimmerman 1962), hence in some texts the word appears as *calpulli*. But the more phonemically sophisticated Nahuatl writers, such as Chimalpahin, generally use *o*. In Nahuatl, only those nouns that refer to animate beings have separate plural forms. When *calpolli* appears in a plural form, *calpoltin*, it refers to a group of people, not a place.

³ I have included Atenco and Acuecomac within the city for reasons given in the text, but Teciztlan seems to have been beyond the city’s limits, even though it lacked a noble ruler of its own (AGI, Justicia, 128/1). The limits of Chiautla, which bordered Tetzcocho, have been delineated by Carrasco (1961). A number of barrios in the foothills to the east can be quite accurately located, thanks largely to a 16th-century sketch-map in AGN, Tierras, 2726/8. I have drawn the boundary with Huexotla between the Texcoco and Chapingo rivers because Concepción belonged to Texcoco and Chapingo to

Huexotla in the colonial period (AGN, Padrones, 14/2). The 16th-century lakeshore line is drawn following González Aparicio (1973).

⁴ Dr. Parsons kindly made available to me his field map of sites in Texcoco.

⁵ Central Tetzaco was rebuilt with a rectangular grid pattern shortly after the Spanish conquest, so it is unlikely that barrio churches were built right on the sites of the section centers. They may have been built closer in. San Juan, San Sebastián, San Pedro, and San Lorenzo still exist. San Pedro is to the west, and Colhuacan may be represented by Parsons's Tx-A-49, west of that barrio. San Lorenzo is to the south. San Juan is to the east, and either Tlatel 92 or Tlatel 95 may represent Mexicapan. San Sebastián is a detached barrio farther east. I place (Santa María) Tlailotlacan to the southeast of the city because both Tlalnepantla and San Diego, in that area, have been associated with either Santa María or Tlailotlacan in colonial documents (INAH-AH, PEA 3-30, Doc. 9, f. 75r; AGN, Padrones, 14/2); Tlatel 18 may represent the section center. I am inclined to place (San Pablo) Huitznahuac in the north because there is a mound there (Tlatel 93) and no other sections can be placed there.

⁶ Dyckerhoff and Prem (1978:203–205) have suggested that these *macehualtin* were the ones called *tecpanpouhque* by Torquemada and Alva Ixtlilxóchitl and that the lands they worked for their subsistence in their home communities were *tecpanlalli* (palace-lands), so that the people were in a sense tenants ("terrazgueros") on royal lands. The subsistence lands of the commoners of the "calpixcagos," they believe, were *calpollalli* (*calpolli*-lands).

⁷ This gloss reads, "Yehautl in Nezahualcoyotzin quincennechico diablos, quincaltin in nauhtlamantin, ihuan quincencho in izquitlamantin tlachichihue in tolteca" (Nezahualcoyotl united the devils [i.e., gods], built houses for the four groups, and assembled the artists and craftsmen in as many groups). The same page, just before this, depicts the arrival, in the time of Techotlalatzin, of "four groups" (*nauhtlamantin*): Mexitin, Colhuaque, Huitznahuac, and Tepaneca.

⁸ It is true that after the fall of Tula in the 11th century, immigrant groups entered the Valley of Mexico and took lands; among them were the ancestors of the royal lineages of Tetzaco and Tenochtitlan. The native chronicles sometimes give the impression that these were primitive groups entering a nearly unpopulated valley. Although many of them (such as the Chichimeca of Xolotl) were depicted as dressed in skins and engaged in hunting and gathering activities, they were also depicted as having nobles and commoners, the capacity for conquest and city building, and forming marital alliances with established noble lineages (Dibble 1951; Mappe Tlotzin in Aubin 1885; Calnek 1973). Archaeological investigation indicates that this Middle-Postclassic land taking occurred not at a time of cultural devolution or demographic decline but at a time of political fragmentation, when no state in the Valley of Mexico was powerful enough to control incoming groups (Parsons 1971:206–208; Charlton 1973). The contact-period states were thus the heirs of a tradition of stratified, state-organized society that was essentially uninterrupted since Early Classic times.

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