

**GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE PIPILS  
FROM THE PACIFIC COAST OF GUATEMALA:  
AN ETHNO-HISTORIC STUDY OF INDIGENOUS DOCUMENTS  
AND OF THE GENERAL ARCHIVE OF CENTRAL AMERICA**

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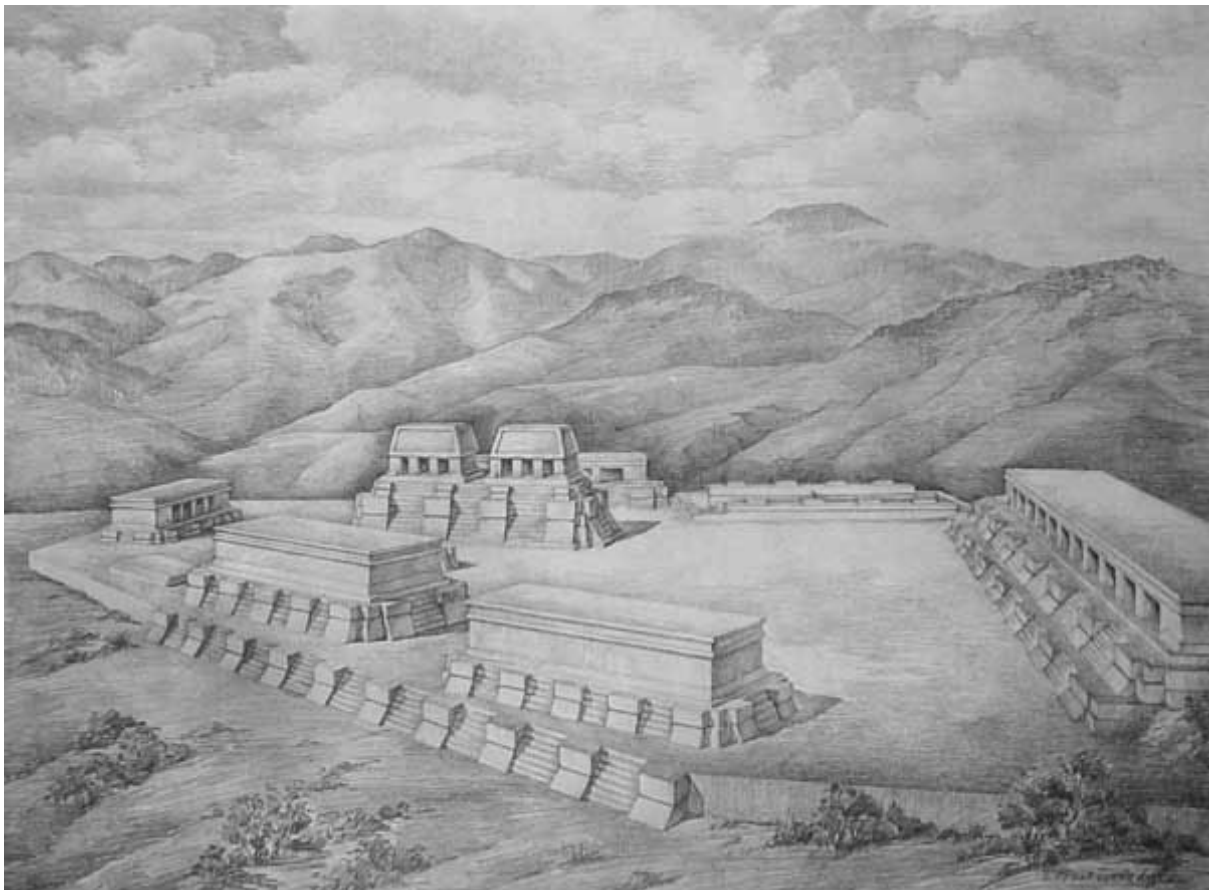
When talking about the Postclassic in Guatemala, many researchers still refer to the model set forth by Robert Carmack and his students in the decade of the 70's, in the past century. In short, this theory proposes that in the Early Postclassic period, the K'iche' migrated, together with the Tz'utujil, the Kaqchikel, the Rabinal' groups and several other tribes from the Mexican Gulf Coast or Chontalpa. Their apparent Mexican influence (also referred to as Toltec or Epi-Toltec), is likely an inheritance of the Chontalpa area, which was an amalgam of Maya and Nahua cultures (Carmack 1981; Fox 1987). However, that reconstruction does not reflect the true Postclassic history. The history shown in the indigenous documents is a history that was idealized and restructured in the XVI century, when the documents were written. Our understanding of the Postclassic period will be misled if we persist in analyzing it from the point of view of the confederation, that is to say, from the point of view of the K'iche' or the Tz'utujil peoples. The K'iche' confederation of the XI century is an alliance very different to the one mentioned in the indigenous documents (Van Akkeren 2000).

Van Akkeren has formulated a novel methodology called "Lineage History". The essence of the analysis was to start with the confederation level and then go down to its most elemental constituent parts, the lineages or groups of lineages called *chinamit* in the documents. A *chinamit* is defined as a corporate group of lineages sharing an identical interest, as well as the usufruct of the same property. The *chinamit* is the core of the Postclassic organization. The settlements consist of plazas which represent the different *chinamit* and reveal the number of individuals that are part of it (Figure 1; Van Akkeren 2003c). Likewise, the indigenous documents represent the voice of a lineage or *chinamit*. Specifically, it means to pay less attention to entities such as the K'iche' or Tz'utujil and to focus more on its integral parts like for example the *Kaweq*, *Nijaib'*, *Toj*, *Kooja*, *Tz'ikin*, etc.

With the new methodology, the Postclassic scenario was changed. One of the findings was that the Mexican influence of the Postclassic nations did not come from the Gulf Coast but from much closer: the Pacific Coast. Several key lineages of the K'iche' confederation were identified, which not only had their origin in the Coast but proved to be of Mexican origin (Van Akkeren 2000). The current investigation on the identity of the Pipils from the Pacific Coast has only reinforced this idea. It is not

possible at this time to present all the findings made with this investigation. Rather, it is more convenient to provide a synthesis, in the understanding that these results are only of a preliminary nature. Briefly, the image that emerges from the indigenous and colonial documents in the archives in regard to the Late Classic and Early Postclassic periods in the Coast is one that depicts a coexistence of Mexican immigrants of a Toltec, Nonoalca and Gulf Coast origin, and rather descending from Teotihuacan, together with Maya people.

The Maya people were the majority, and they belonged to two ethnic groups: the Mam and the Achi', this latter a branch of the K'ichean family. During the Late Classic and the Early Postclassic periods, there was an abandonment of the Coastal centers, and a migration of the noble lineages to the Altiplano. There, they joined the local Maya and other Maya groups that had come from the Lowlands. These three groups were to give birth to the Postclassic confederations, namely the K'iche, the Mam, the Tz'utujil, etc. Because there was a larger presence of Maya groups, the Pipils lost their Mexican identity to such a degree that they changed their names from Nahua to Maya.



**Figure 1. The Chwi Tinamit plaza, Rabinal. Each extended house represents a lineage and a member of the *chinamit* of this plaza. The lineage of the most extended house gives the *chinamit* its name.**

This is not the first time that the issue of an integration of the South Coastal Pipil with the Mayas from the Altiplano is approached. Thompson (1948), in his studies of Cotzumalguapa, had already suggested that the Pipils of this site, after its fall, blended with local Maya people. Franz Termer (2000) tried to show that the Achi'



For a long time now, researchers have reflected about the ethnicity of the people who inhabited large centers like Tak'alik Ab'aj, Xoqola (Chocola), Palo Gordo or Cotzumalguapa, located at the boca costa, or those of Ixtepeque, Montana or Balberta in the lower coast (Hatch 1989; Chinchilla 1998; Bove and Medrano 2003). We are not trying to say that this work will provide all answers, but it is important to acknowledge that the historic processes of peoples and confederations tend to unfold slowly, and that their integrants will always seek new patterns of incorporation and reproduction. In other words, peoples and towns do not just disappear or cease to exist from one day to the other. Even with the arrival of the Spaniards, who brought with themselves weapons and lethal diseases, the K'iche', Tz'utujil or Kaqchikel groups lived on, each in the pursuit of a new way of life. They abandoned their former settlements to live in the *reducciones*, the colonial towns imposed by the Spanish, and now each ethnic group had more members than ever before. It would seem that the Pipil nucleuses of the lower coast were the only ones who could not survive the Spanish fury and were wiped out, annihilated with the same weapons and diseases, or became blended with new immigrants like the Spaniards, the black people, the mulattos and the *pardos*.

A dramatic change was observed in the Pacific Coast during the Late Classic and Early Postclassic periods: the abandonment of the cities for reasons that have not yet been detected in their entire variety. The argument is that the inhabitants probably abandoned their places; but in no way they ceased to exist, and were most probably to be found among the new political configurations emerged during the Postclassic period in the Altiplano. And this is what was happening, according to the sources. To mention just one example, the Tz'utujil of Lake Atitlan, next to the boca costa, had two dominant lineages: the *Tz'ikinaja* or House (the lineage of the Birds), and the *Saqb'in* or Weasels. Concerning the *Tz'ikin*, all documents claim that they were Mexican, and according to the *Relación Geográfica* of the area, they would call themselves *Tecpan Tototl* (Acuña 1982). Until the K'iche' and Kaqchikel groups took away from them part of their territory in the XIV, XV, and XVI centuries (a process that was to continue in colonial times), the Tz'utujil were dominant in the boca costa, from Zapotitlan to Patulul.

Notably, this territory was adjacent to the south to a Pipil territory called *Miahuat(l)an*. It ran from west to east from the Nahualate River to almost the Coyolate River. *Miahuat(l)an* stands for *the place of the maize spike*; its Maya equivalent is *Tz'utuj(il)*. This suggests that members of the Tz'utujil confederation came from the Pipil area of *Miahuat(l)an*. The second dominant lineage of the Tz'utujil, *Saqb'in* or Weasel, probably came from the Classic center close to Cotzumalguapa. Chinchilla (1998) revealed that the Maya name was precisely *Saqb'inya*, or river of the Weasel. Chronologically, the abandonment of Cotzumalguapa (around 1000 AD) is consistent with the beginning of *Chiya-Atitlan*, the Tz'utujil capital (Lothrop 1933; Fox 1987). The *Chiya* architectural style has been classified like an "Acropolis-style" that resembles the architecture of classic cities located at the boca costa and Coastal regions, characterized by their huge Acropolises.

It is surprising to realize how abundant is the information still to be found in indigenous documents about the ancient times, not too openly unfolded perhaps, but instead hidden in myths, cults, toponyms and proper nouns. The roots of this type of

information are to be found at the geographical and social levels which change very slowly, as shown by the French school of history in “Los Anales”. The name *Kanek'*, a renowned family among the Maya Itza', has been written in stelae since the VI century (Pusilha), then in Chichen Itza, it appeared later as the last ruling dynasty of the Itza's from Tayasal, and is still a family name in Peten (Van Akkeren 2003a). There are cultural phenomena that are, par excellence, entities that adapt themselves and consequently manage to live on. Christianity has had countless faces throughout two millennia, but it is still alive. The *Tojil* cult introduced in the Altiplano by the *Toj* lineage was syncretized with *X'Balan Q'e*, and following the Spanish arrival, *Tojil* was transformed into Saint Paul (Van Akkeren 2000, 2002a); how many pieces of information found by contemporary ethnographers could be easily applied to the prehispanic Mayas? A certain degree of skills is needed, inasmuch as putting data together is like working with a puzzle, though results can be very satisfactory.

For example, the titular god of the *Tz'ikin* was called *Saqiwok*, “White Hawk”, while *Kaqix Kan* was “Sky Macaw” (Acuña 1982; Orellana 1984; Recinos 1984). *Wok*, after *saqiwok* is also found in texts in the form of *wak*, probably a borrowing from the Nahuatl: in that tongue, *huactli* stands for “hawk”. This means to say that the neighbor village of Atitlan, Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan, contains the same name of White Hawk: after *Itza*, white, and *huacan*, the place of the hawk. In early colonial times, Santa Catarina formed one single town with Nahuala and Santa Clara de la Laguna, as stated in the indigenous document *Título de Santa Clara* (A1 Leg. 5942 Exp. 51997; Recinos 1984). This is interesting because it is in this area where there are a number of hillocks called *Kaqix Kan* and *K'aqb'atzulu* (Figure 3).

These hills are the scenery of a mythical and historical tale described in the *Memorial de Sololá* (Anales de los Kaqchikel; Mengin 1952; Recinos 1980). It refers to the arrowing of a powerful and dreadful creature called *Tolk'om*. This takes place in the earlier times of the K'iche' confederation, when it was not still officially established (XI century). When K'iche' warriors encountered the *Tolk'om*, none of them dared to confront him. Only the future founder of the confederation fought him and defeated him. The prisoner was taken to the *K'aqb'atzulu* hill where he was executed in a ritual, Mexican-type dance, the human sacrifice with arrows (Figure 4). And that is the reason why of its name, *K'aqb'atzulu*, “the Place of the Arrowing” (after *Zulu*). Next, the body of *Tolk'om* was cut into pieces and tossed into Lake Atitlan. Then, the K'iche' took possession of the north part of the lake. In an act of appropriation, the founder of the K'iche' descended into the water and transformed himself in a cloud serpent, best known as *Mixcoatl*. This is precisely the Mexican god associated with the arrowing (Recinos 1980; Van Akkeren 2000).



Figure 3. Map of the area of Atitlan, Santa Catarina Iztahuacan and Xoqola.

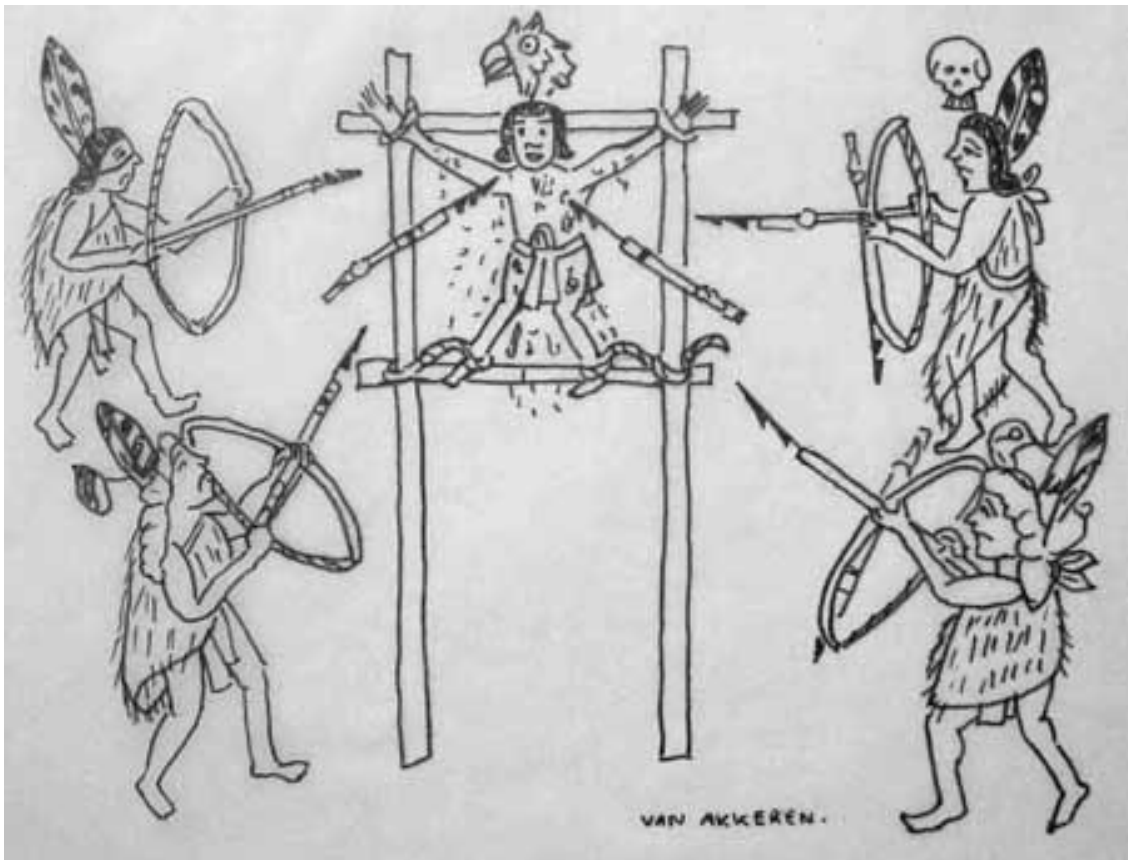


Figure 4. Arrowing scene from the Codex of the Toltec-Chichimec History (Kirchhoff et al. 1989).

But, who was this *Tolk'om* and why was he so feared? When the encounter takes place, the creature says “*I am the son of the trembling mud; this is my house and it belongs to me*”. One of the words for “mud” in the K'iche', Tz'utujil or Kaqchikel languages is *xoqol*. This is remarkable, because the village of San Pablo la Laguna used to be called *Zoquitlan* during the early conquest, a word that in Nahuatl means “The Place of the Mud” (Orellana 1984, 1995). In Maya language, it would be *Pa Xoqol* or *Xoqola*. And now things begin to be interesting, because downstream of the Nahualate River, in that which during colonial times was a territory of Santa Catarina, is found precisely the archaeological site of Chokola or Chocola. A document was found in the Central Archives of Central America (AGCA) in regard to this region, with a reference to this “*cimyentos antiguos*” (ancient foundations) (A1 Leg. 5934 Exp. 51891).

Another name for the place where these foundations were located is *Q'alib'al Ab'aj*, “Throne Stone”. The same toponym appears in the *Memorial de Sololá*, precisely in the passage of the defeat and arrowing of *Tolk'om*. The name of “Throne Stone” is used because it is there where the ancestral father of the *Sots'il* was inaugurated as a lord. It has been shown how these sacrificial dances and the arrowing of *Tolk'om* were part of the festivities for the enthroning of the lords (Van Akkeren 2000). According to several documents, it is there where the lord *Sots'il* received his scepter with two serpent heads at the ends, a family scepter of the Classic Maya lords. The *Sots'il* are best known as one of the two dominant Kaqchikel lineages, but at that time they were still integrated with the K'iche'. About these *Sots'il*, the documents say that they descended from a lineage called *Kaqix Kan* or “Sky Macaw” (Mengin 1952; Recinos 1980).

And now we are back again where we initiated the search for this investigation. Why is it that “Sky Macaw” and “White Hawk” were the names of the titular god of the *Tz'ikin*, a Mexican lineage? Identical terms were found in the neighbour territory of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacan, whose name stood for the “Place of the White Hawk”, and which included the *Kaqix Kan* hillock in its own township. *Xoqola*, the “Place of the Mud” belonged to the same village, at the moment under the command of the lord *Tolk'om*. For a long time, Van Akkeren has been trying to identify the meaning of the name *Tolk'om* believing it was a Maya name, but finally it proved to be another Nahuatl borrow. It derives from *tolcomoctli*, “a bird of the hawk species which the Spanish called *night herons* (Siméon 1996:712), another bird that seems to be a variant of the titular god of the *Tz'ikin* and probably an ancient title for the lords of the “Place of the Mud”. For what it seems, *Xoqola* has nothing to do with chocolate (it may also be translated as “Place of the Mud”, perhaps making reference to a pottery center).

This is not an isolated find. There are plenty of references to the archaeological sites located at the banks of the Nahualate River, and therefore there is no doubt about their significance for the later Postclassic confederations. One could object that *Xoqola* is a Preclassic site. True, although for the moment we must wait for the results of the recent excavations. It is probable that the name remained, throughout the centuries, just like the Q'eqchi' name of Rabinal was maintained, even when

there was a switch, respectively, from the Q'eqchi' to the Poqom language, and then to the K'iche' (Van Akkeren 2000, 2002b).

In the Xoqola context, we should refer to the *Uchab'*, a lineage from Sacapulas. The *Uchab'* left a short text saying that their place of origin was precisely Xoqola (Carmack 1979). They wrote that it was a Toltec territory, to which they belonged. They claim that the image of a bird was present there; could it possibly have been "White Hawk", "Sky Macaw", or *Tolk'om*? The image of the bird recalls two local monuments: Monument 1 of Xoqola, showing a lord disguised as a bird, and Monument 1 of Palo Gordo, with a bird-type character featuring a macaw beak and the ears of a hawk (Figures 5 and 6; Jones 1986; Termer 1973). Both monuments are no doubt Preclassic, and Julia Kappelman (1997) has compared them with the Popol Vuh myth of "Seven Macaw". Considering these findings altogether, it would seem that the cult to White Hawk/Sky Macaw is extremely old, perhaps rooted in Preclassic times, though it still continued to exist during the Classic in Xoqola-Palo Gordo, and in the Postclassic with the Tz'utujil of Atitlan and the K'iche' of Santa Catarina.

Now, the discussion could be expanded to other important lineages of the Coast, observing for example that families of the same *Uchab'* of *Xoqola* lived among the Pipils of XVI century *Esquintepeque* (A1.43 Leg. 6083 Exp. 55029). Or to take a look at the *Toj* and *Q'anil* lineages, who introduced the two prominent cults of *Q'umarkaj'-Utatlan*, and that referred to *Tojil* and the Feathered Serpent; they both originated in the Coastal region (Van Akkeren 2000). We could also mention *Kooja*, a Mam lineage of the highest nobility, and the hypothesis that *Kooja* was no less than the ancient name of Tak'alik Ab'aj. But all this would take plenty of time. For the moment, we shall focus on the following question: if many of these lineages were Mexican or Pipil, what was their origin before they settled at the Pacific Coast?

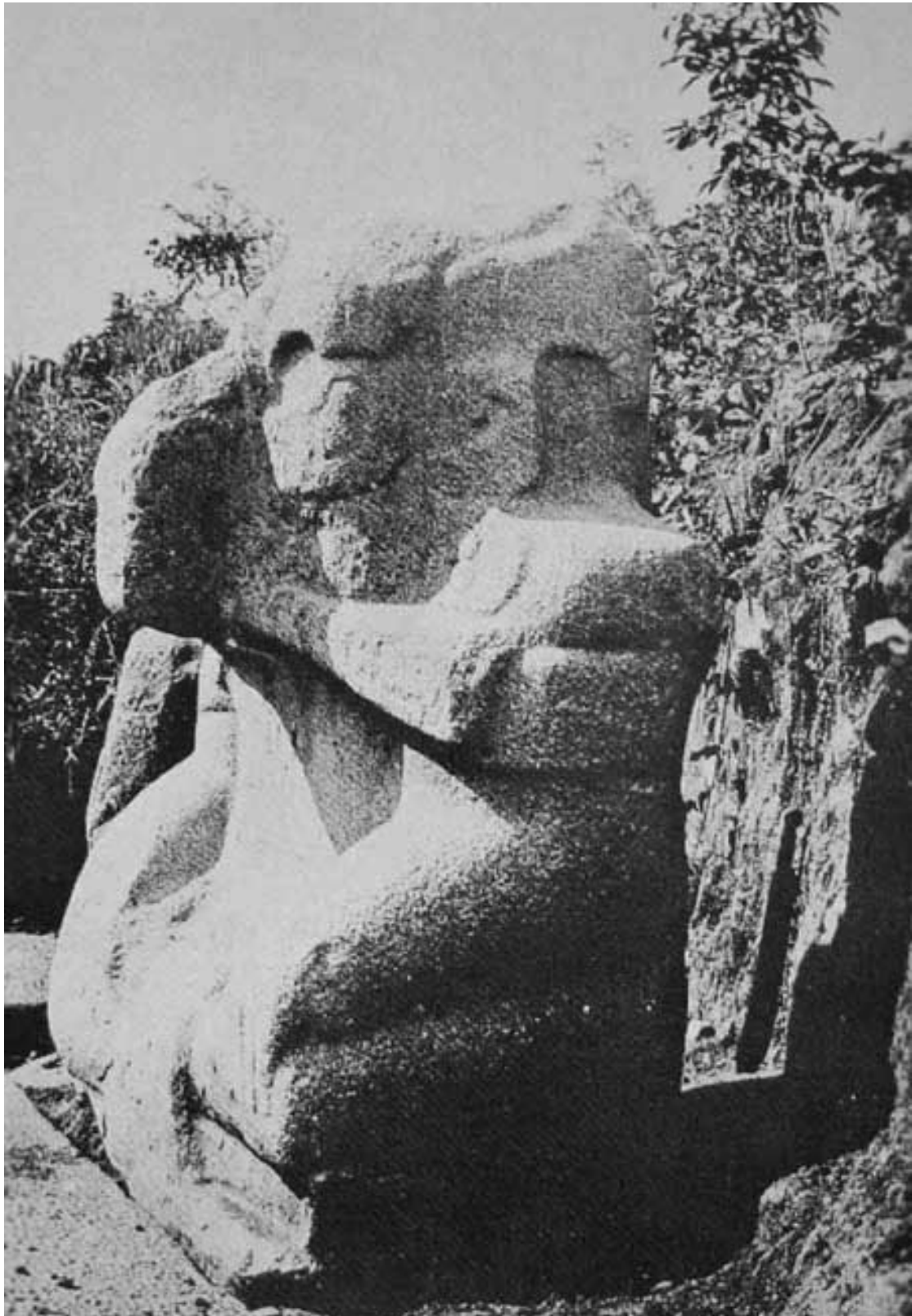




Figure 5. Monument 1, Chokola (Xoqola).

Reference has been made to the *Toj* lineage, the introducer of the most widely spread cult in the Postclassic Altiplano: the *Tojil* cult. In previous occasions we have shown that the god *Tojil* was a blend of the Mexican gods *Xiutecuhtli*, *Mixcoatl*, and *Itzpapal Totec* (a version of *Xipe Totec* disguised as the Blade of Sacrifice; Van Akkeren 2000). The entrance of these gods in the Maya area of Peten and Chichen Itza was verified around the Terminal Classic (Taube 1992; Schele and Mathews 1998). It is not simply that they show resemblances with these gods; they even come with Mexican names and symbols. *Toj* is one of the twenty days of the Maya calendar. Its equivalent in the Nahuatl calendar is *atl*. *Toj* families integrated the dominant *chinamitales* of the Postclassic confederations, as priests of the cult to *Tojil*. Among the ruler *chinamit* of the *Kawek* there is a lineage called *Ajtojil*. In the Late Postclassic Rabinal, the *Toj*, besides their vocation as priests, became lords. They were the Rabinal *Toj* who created the famous dance-drama of *Rabinal Achi'*, a sacrificial dance that ends with an arrowing. Like we said, with the arrival of the Spanish *Tojil* was transformed into Saint Paul, the patron saint of the village of Rabinal. Today, the cloak on the image of Saint Paul is covered with Mexican symbols of the day *atl* (Figure 7). In the quarter of San Pablo he was known as *Jun*

*Tixac*, “One Blade Flint” (Van Akkeren 2000). The Mayas from Rabinal still speak a version of the K’iche’ they denominate Achi’, a branch of the K’ichean family of the Coast.



**Figure 6. Monument 1, Palo Gordo (Termer 1973).**

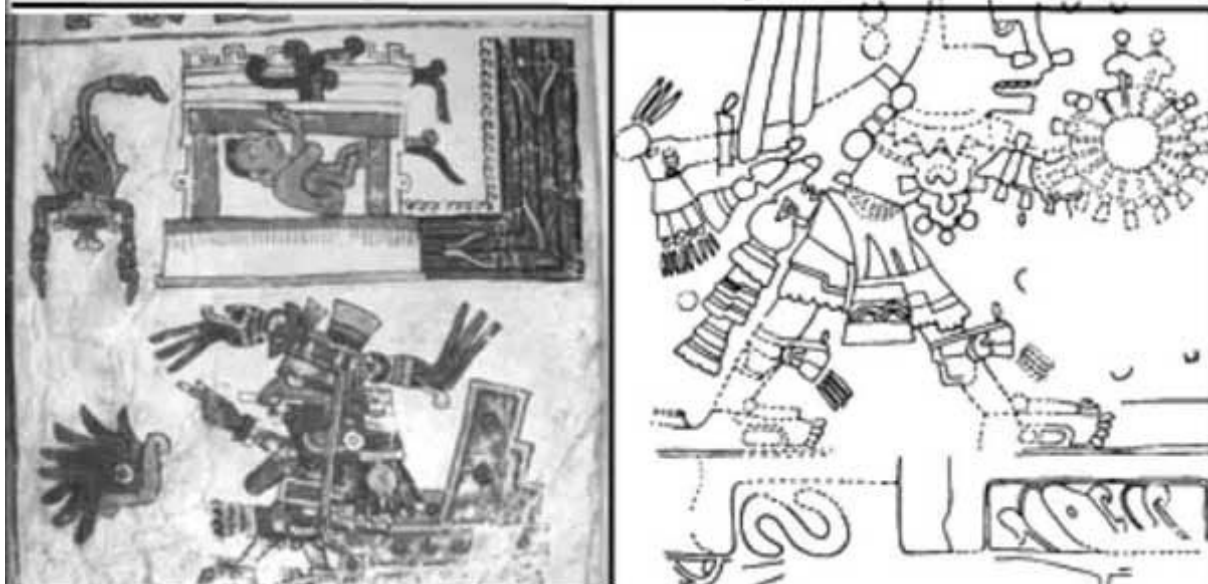


*Imagen de San Pablo con signos Atl.*

*Simbolo de Nube en el borde del vestido de San Pablo*

*Dia Atl y su patron Xiuhtecuhtli del Codice Borgia*

*Mural de Utatlan con imagen de Tojil y el simbolo de Nube*



**Figure 7. Saint Paul's cloak, with the *atl* signs. Clockwise: 1) Image of Saint Paul showing Atl signs. 2) Symbol of the Cloud in the edge of Saint Paul's costume. 3) The Atl day and its patron Xiuhtecuhtli from the Codex Borgia. 4) Wall of Utatlan showing a Tojil image and the Cloud symbol.**

We now want to posit that the *Toj* are descendants of the Toltec lineage of Atonal. *Atonal* means “the *atl* day”, which in Maya stands for *toj*. From the Atonal lineage, one may trace a whole itinerary from Tula to El Salvador, and in each region their descendents were left in the position of chieftains, priests, notaries or merchants (Figure 8). The *Atonal* come from Tula or *Tollan Xicocotitlan* (Van Zantwijk 1977). After its fall, the *Atonal* families moved and settled in *Cuauhtitlan*, at the banks of the *Tzumpango* River.



Figure 8. Map of origin of the ‘Mexican’ lineages of the Pacific Coast.

*Cuauhtitlan* was a prominent trade center which even under Aztec control was entitled to trade directly with the large trade center of *Tochtepec* in the Gulf Coast, a privilege that only the traders of the Triple Alliance of the *Anahuac* enjoyed. From *Cuauhtitlan*, members of the *Atonal* migrated to *Amecameca*, where they expelled the *Xicalanca-Olmecs* (Davies 1977). Around the XI and XII centuries, the *Atonal* founded the great *Chocho-Mixtec* trade center of *Coixtlahuaca*. Still in the times of *Moctecuzoma* I, the *Atonaltzin* lord of *Coixtlahuaca* held the same title of the Aztec ruler: *Hueyi Tlahtoani* (Van Zantwijk 1977; Van Doesburg in Van Buren 1997). In the Mixtec Codex Nuttall, one lord *Nine Atl* leads the famous Mixtec hero *Eight Deer* in his trip to the temple of the sun (Codex Zouche-Nuttall 1987). One of the names for *Tojil* for the Kaqchikel was precisely *9 Toj 1 Tijax* (Recinos 1980).

At Chiapa de los Indios, in the XVI century, there was a ruler, Juan Atonal, who was the leader of a movement of resistance (Megged 1991). In El Salvador, *Atonal*, according to their official legend, is one of the national heroes and the name of the

captain who stopped and wounded Pedro de Alvarado when he entered in the Pipil area of *Acajutla*. In the Postclassic nations of Guatemala, the *Atonal* had already adopted the name of *Toj*. At Rabinal, they had offices in the government and as notaries, both in prehispanic and colonial times (Van Akkeren 2002b). But at the same time there were families with the name of *Atonal*, apparently in the remaining Nahua-speaking area. There was a notary with the name of *Atonal* among the Pipils of *Esquintepeque*, and one *Atonal* is mentioned in one of the documents of *Izpantzay* (A1 Leg. 6062 Exp. 53957). In the latter text, it seems that this *Atonal* was from Cotzumalguapa, which still in colonial times was partially a Nahua-speaking area (Chinchilla 1998).

Again, the case of the *Toj* lineage is not an isolated one. In order to show some connections, the *Toj* appear in the texts paired with the *Q'anil*, another lineage from Sacapulas. The *Q'anil* introduced in the Altiplano the cult of the Feathered Serpent. *Q'anil* is another one of the 20 days: *Q'anil* is day 8, while *Toj* is day 9. The god of the *Q'anil* is Quetzalcoatl, while that of the *Toj* is *Mixcoatl*, his father. In their document *Título de los Señores de Sacapulas*, the *Q'anil* claim that they came from the Pacific Coast, from the city of *Four Hundred Ceiba Trees Four Hundred Temple-Pyramids in the Nahualate River* (Acuña 1969; Van Akkeren 2000). In early colonial times, it was known as *Tzentsontepetl*, Hill/City of the Four Hundred (Acuña 1982), and identified by Fred Bove like the site of Ixtepeque, “a very powerful regional capital during the late [Classic] epoch” (Bove 1989: 49). The *Q'anil* claim to be the founders of *Four Hundred Ceiba Trees Four Hundred Temple-Pyramids*, and Toltecs. Their leaders had titles that include the name of “rabbit”, and the equivalent *q'anil* day of Mexicans is the day *tochtli*, “rabbit”. It is argued that the *Q'anil* people are from *Tochtepec*, a large trade center in the Gulf Coast and post station for all the caravans of merchants that travelled from the Valley of Mexico to Yucatan, Peten, the Pacific Coast of Chiapas, Guatemala, and beyond (Carrasco 1999: 341-2).

*Tochtepec* itself appears like one of the first stages of the migration of the *Nonoalca* from the Gulf Coast to Central Mexico, to establish the Toltec nation of *Tula*, dated to the IX century. One or three centuries following the fall of *Tula*, the *Nonoalca* founded a new confederation at *Teotitlan del Camino*, in the vicinities of *Coixtlahuaca* and close to *Tochtepec* (Davies 1977: 142-51, 309-10, 383, 390; Kirchhoff et al. 1989). The confederation was called *Cuzcatlan*, apparently formed by *Cuzcas* families. The *Cuzcas* were probably the founders of the *Cuzcatlan* Pipil of El Salvador (Fowler 1989). Also, there were *Cuzcas* families in power positions in XVI century *Esquintepeque* (A1.43 Leg. 6083 Exp. 55029). In the *Relación Geográfica del Teotitlan del Camino* it is written that the town traded cotton blankets with the coast of Suchitepequez, Guatemala (Acuña 1984). And according to Edmonson, the solar calendar of both the K'iche' and the Kaqchikel show influences of the *Nonoalca* calendar of *Teotitlan del Camino* itself (Edmonson 1995).

The present investigation is part of an interdisciplinary project about the Late Postclassic Pipils of the department of Escuintla. The excavation of their sites is in the hands of the archaeologists Fred Bove and José Vicente Genovez. We have tried as well to examine the colonial documents of AGCA, as well as the different indigenous documents. The challenge of such an interdisciplinary effort consists in trying to integrate the archaeological data with the ethno-historical information. Now,

the historic processes described above are mostly from a different epoch than that of the settlements excavated by Bove and Genovez. The movement of lineages and Toltec, Nonoalca and Gulf Coast groups as well as their subsequent integration with the nations of the Altiplano must have taken place in the Early Postclassic period, that is to say, during and after the reign of Tula (900-115 AD). They may have been even one of the causes that led to the disintegration of the Classic cities in the Pacific Coast.

Changes in the Classic/Postclassic transition are documented for the K'iche' and the Tz'utujil areas (Lothrop 1933; Wauchope 1975; Brown 1985; Fox 1987; Ichon 1992, 1993). In the context of Guatemala, one should always take into account that in no way a Toltec replica is to be expected at the Altiplano as was the case of *Cihuatan* in El Salvador (Fowler 1989). For the majority of the Maya presence, the process of integration must have initiated at the Coast, and then, in the Altiplano, these lineages of a Mexican origin and already accultured, once more were to face other Maya groups, local or descendants from those originated in the Lowlands of Peten. In the process, their Nahuatl name was lost. However, in many cases, the Mexican lineages preserved traits of their ancestors, as in the case of Atitlan or Sajkab'aja (Fox 1987; Ichon 1993).

Around the mid-Postclassic times and in the areas dominated by the *Toj-Atonal*, *Q'anil-Tochtli* and *Kawoq-Quiahuitl*, in other words in Rabinal, Sacapulas and Sajkab'aja, appeared settlements with twin temples, no doubt a Mexican inheritance. This type of structures leads to the Pipil sites of the Late Postclassic in the South Coast, where one such construction was found at the site of Carolina, La Gomera.

Prior to discussing the origin of these Pipil groups, we shall present a map showing the location of their villages resulting from the study of the AGCA documents (Figure 9). It should always be taken into account that what we are showing are preliminary borders. In several cases, it was not even clear where was it that the territory of a village ended and the next one began.

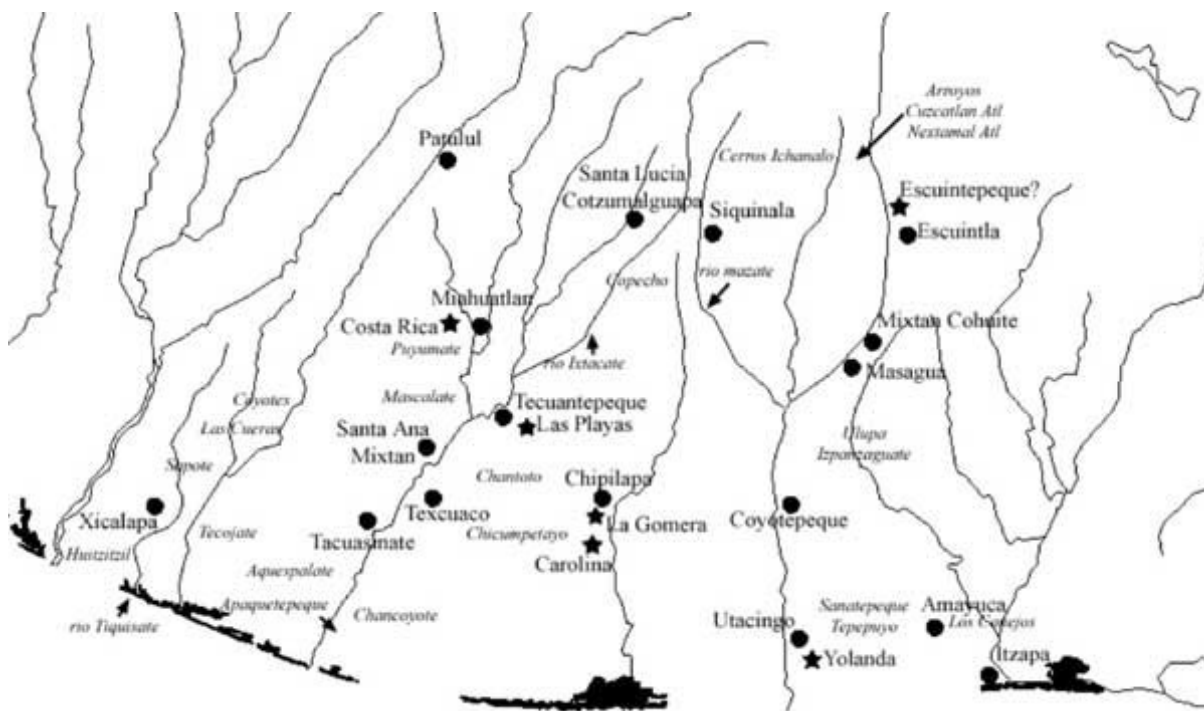


Figure 9. Map showing Pipil towns at the time of contact.

Our impression after examining the documents is that there were two Pipil groups at Escuintla. One group between the Nahualate and Agüero rivers, with Xicalapa, Santa Ana Mixtán, Miahuatlan, Texcuaco, Tecuantepeque and Chipilaba, among others. For example, we verified kinship relationships between Miahuatlan and Xicalapa, or people from Texcuaco that moved to Xicalapa or the other way around (A3 Leg. 2774 Exp. 40022). And then the other group, south of *Escuintepeque*, at both sides of the confluence of the Guacalate and Achiguate rivers. Masagua, San Juan Mixtán, Izpanguazate, Coyotepeque, Utacingo, Amayuca and Itzapa are among them. At the time of excavating their settlements, Bove and Genovez found a rather short occupation which did not exceed 150-200 years, before the Spanish arrival. Where did these people come from? Are they the descendants of earlier Pipils? And should this be the case, where are their Early Postclassic cities? The absence of the Early Postclassic is notorious for the Coast. We are all familiar with the theory according to which there were multiple waves of Pipils and other peoples originated in what today is the Mexican territory (Fowler 1989). Then, these Pipils must be the last wave of migration; from the Soconusco?; maybe, but we are always looking west. The fall of *Cihuatán* in El Salvador may have produced shifts of Pipils towards the Coast and west.

However, the answer is not that easy and probably there is more than one explanation. A number of colonial towns of Pipils are mentioned in Early Postclassic contexts, and even earlier ones. For example, there is no doubt that the Tz'utujil were closely related to *Miahuatlan* to the point of sharing their name, in a way that many of their lineages probably come from the Classic and Early Postclassic *Miahuatlan*. The territory of *Miahuatlan* was wider at that time (A1. leg. 2811 exp. 24781). The Tz'utujil individuals in the XVI century boca costa show a clear Pipil origin (Acuña 1982). The Tz'utujil were located adjacent to *Miahuatlan*. In other

words, there is a fluent transition of the Pipil peoples of *Miahuatlan* with the Tz'utujil individuals of Atitlan. That would reflect a coexistence of over two centuries. *Xicalapa* represents one additional example, a case narrated in the context of a K'iche' conquest which took place in the XII century (Recinos 1984).

On the other hand, the Coast was not devoid of problems for the entrance of the Pipil peoples. It was an area with valuable products such as cacao, cotton and indigo, much appreciated by the Altiplano confederations of the K'iche', Mam and Tz'utujil. Several documents describe how the policy of the new confederations of the Altiplano precisely consisted in dominating the Coast down to the sea, as well as its products. By the beginning of the XV century, for example, the K'iche' chieftain *K'iq'ab'* conquered the Coast. When he made it to the beach he transformed himself into an eagle and started to fly above the surface of the sea. According to the text, this was an act of appropriation of the sea and its products. There are other examples of this kind of actions, which in addition took place in previous centuries (Recinos 1984).

In this context, we should also refer to the so-called policy of subject-creation. In order to control the Coast, the confederations of the Altiplano sent their citizens to the boca costa region and farther down, in order to found settlements: a policy of subjects. This policy was still in force at the time of the Spanish arrival (A1. leg. 2811 exp. 24781). In such a historical reconstruction of political control from the Altiplano, imagining Pipil invasions during the Late Postclassic period may not prove an easy a task. But archaeological reality shows without doubt that there were Pipil centers like Carolina-Chipilapa, Las Playas-Tecuntepec, Costa Rica-Miahuatlan or Yolanda-Utacingo, with a significant population and with an occupation that did not last more than two centuries. The sources are still being investigated, to find solutions. The Pipil villages south of *Esquintepeque*, for example, could have been the result of a same subject-policy and control on the side of *Esquintepeque*, as revealed by their rivals, the Tz'utujil and the Kaqchikel. Unfortunately, the AGCA information about Escuintla is very scarce. For the moment, few indications point towards a domination on the side of *Esquintepeque* over towns like San Juan Mixtan, Masagua, and the lower Utacingo and Itzapa. It is mentioned that Masagua and San Juan Mixtan were "visiting towns" for the priest of *Esquintepeque* (A1.39 leg. 1751 folio 272v), and it was found that one Pipil family from *Esquintepeque* was the owner of salt mines in the town of Itzapa ( A1. leg 5967 exp. 52376).

With the results of this ethno-historic investigation, the first outlines of the towns located at the Pacific Coast are beginning to be revealed. These people, known always simply as the Pipil, little by little will begin to show their faces and names, like those of *Atonal*, *Cuzca*, or *Tochtli*. Further studies will hopefully allow us to penetrate deeply on their identity, their origins, their location in the Coast itself, and their destiny among the later confederations of the Altiplano.

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<b>Maya Lineage</b>	<b>Postclassic Confederation</b>	<b>Nahua Name</b>	<b>Provenience, Pacific Coast</b>	<b>'Mexican' Origin</b>
T'zikin (Bird)	Tz'utujil	Tecpan Tototl?	Nahuatcat-Nahualate-Tapaltec	Tototepeque-Oaxaca? (because of chieftains' title of 8-Deer)
Saqb'in (Weasel)	Tz'utujil Kaqchikel	Cozahtli or Cusamatl	Cotzumalguapa (Saqb'inya)	Cosumalhuapa Gulf Coast
Several Tz'utujil lineages	Tz'utujil	Miahuatan	Miahuatan	Miahuatan near Teohuacan?
Sots'il (Bat)	Kaqchikel	Zinacan	Kaqix Kan Xoqola-Palo Gordo	??
Toj (Pago)	Priests, Tojil cult in all nations, Rabinal, Escuintepeque, Kaqchikel	Atunal	400 Ceiba Trees-400 Temple-Pyramids Cotzumalguapa	Tula Cuauhtitlan Coixtlahuaca
Q'anil Ajtoltec (Rabbit-Toltec)	Q'uq'kumats Priests of K'iche' Sacapulas (K'otuja) Mam-Quetzaltenango Tz'utujil, Escuintepeque	Tochtli Toltec	400 Ceiba Trees-400 Temple-Pyramids	Tochtepeque
Kumats (Serpent)	Sacapulas	Coateca	Coatlan in Nahualate	??
Saqik/Saq Calpolli (White)	Sacapulas K'iche'	Izta Calpul?	Iztacapa Xowola-Palo Gordo 400 Ceiba Trees-400 Temple-Pyramids	??
Chumil (Star)	Sacapulas	Citlaltec	Nahualate area?	Citlaltepelt Pico de Orizaba?
Ucha (Opossum?)	Sacapulas Mam-Quetzaltenango Escuintepeque	??	Xoqola-Palo Gordo Tacuasinat?	??
Kawoq (Rain)	Sajkab'aja Zacualpa	Quiahuitl	??	Quiahuitlan Gulf Coast

Cuzca (Nahua) (Cozcatl)	Escuintepeque	Cuzca	??	Cuzcatlan- Nonoalca Teotitlan del Camino
Tecuani (Nahua) (Jaguar)	Escuintepeque	Tecuani	Tecuntepeque	Tecuntepeque- Oaxaca?
Mixtec (Nahua) (Cloud People)	Pipil	Mixtec	Mixtlan (San Juan and Santa Ana)	Mixtlan Gulf Coast
(Nim) Ch'okoj (Anteater Bear)	Xipe Priest K'iche'	Cuetlachtli	??	Cuetlachtlan Gulf Coast
Nijaib' (Palace People)	K'iche' Momostenango	Tepanec	??	Ahuilizapan- Pico de Orizaba
Yax (Crab)	Totonicapan	??	Cotzumalguapa, For integrating the crab lineage	??
Kooja (Moon's Halo)	Mam- Quetzaltenango Zacualpa Tz'utujil	-	Takalik Abaj	-
Chewes(?)	Mam- Quetzaltenango	-	Chewes River- Nahualate	-

Saqiwok/Sakiwak = White Hawk

Kaqix Kan (Sky Macaw/Serpent Macaw)

wak → huactli = hawk

Santa Catalina Iztahuacan → alter izta = white and huachan = the place of the hawk

K'aqb'atzulu = the Place of the Arrowing (Tzulu's)

Zoquitlan = the Place of the Mud

Tolk'om = kingfisher/heron

Table 1. Lineages of the Pacific Coast. Their names, locations in the coast, their 'Mexican' origin and their destiny among the Postclassic confederations.

Figure 1 The Chwi Tinamit plaza, Rabinal. Each extended house represents a lineage and a member of the *chinamit* in this plaza.

Figure 2 Map showing the migrations of several lineages from the Coast to the Altiplano during the Late Classic and Early Postclassic periods. For a better legibility not all movements were included.

- Figure 3 Map of the Atitlan area, Santa Catarina Iztahuacan and Xoqola.
- Figure 4 Arrowing scene, from the Codex of the Toltec-Chichimec History (Kirchhoff et al. 1989).
- Figure 5 Monument 1, Chokola (Xoqola).
- Figure 6 Monument 1, Palo Gordo (Termer 1973).
- Figure 7 Saint Paul's cloak with the *atl* signs.
- Figure 8 Map of origin of the 'Mexican' lineages from the Pacific Coast.
- Figure 9 Map of Pipil towns at the time of contact.