

SAMPLE OF THE KIND OF ETHNOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WHICH IS AVAILABLE IN THE ARCHIVES. DATA WHICH FOLLOW ARE ON THE CHOLTI TOWN OF LOS DOLORES DE LACANDON (SAC BALAM) 1605.

"The town of Sac Balam is situated in exposed country stirred by all winds with pleasing plains with abundant good pasture land, and closed in by a ridge of hills...The water is heavy for being from some little wells that the Indians have near the town, of such bad quality...although there is a river that passes by the town about 1 1/2 league away, and a creek that is 1 1/4 league away on the trail to San Mateo Istatan."

And there are one hundred and three [houses], including the three of community [use]. And all are spacious, and of good fabrication, with strong and thick wood which prop up and support the roofs. The roofs are of much straw recently tied down and rising regularly in height, to let the water run off the abundance of straw. The height of the roofs is for resisting the strength of the rains in the winter."

"And all the houses have their fronts open, and the sides and rear built up of stakes covered with clay. And inside those houses of private people there are rooms in which the Indian women cook and have the implements of eating and drinking. And with these excellent and curious stones, more polished and clean... And in each room there is a bed platform of wood secured on posts strongly driven into the ground, spacious enough for a minimum of 4 persons."

"And in some rooms can be seen fabricated at the sides, little shelves of thin, worked, and flush little cradles in which the infants are accommodated so that they will not defecate on the main bed platform, nor put themselves in danger of smothering. And in some halls there were 4 stakes about 3 quarters of a vara high driven into the ground and on them wrapped around tree bark so soft, like cotton, and so inver-woven like cloth, and some like chamois. And one comes to understand that inside said stakes they put the children... securing them with the cords of said bark, which they have everywhere."

"Cradles for babies were little crates of reed, very clean and well put together, and tied with such carefulness, hung on the hanging platforms at such a height so as to allow the mother, seated in her bed, to nurse the infant."

"And in two of said houses two large nets were found... with their floats, and for weights clay [balls] well sewn on."

"In the house of Ixquin there was a curtain of cane of reed grass linked together with such art that he gathered it all up, letting it fall until a very perfect lattice [was formed], because all the cane pieces were sewn from within with some very thin little string of century plant,"

"They found all the houses had been left full of provisions of maize, beans, many turkeys, enough chickens, some cotton, pots, flat bowls, well made comales, very curious weaving instruments of the women, many blow guns with the little net bags of pellets and their sockets for molding them made of turkey long bone, axes of stone, chisels and mallets of stone, and other things of rational people..."

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"Their little dogs were found to be very skinny. And there were many tame guacamayas. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, after having flown around, they came to roost on the ridge poles of all the houses, forming a delightfully beautiful landscape of various deep red colored clusters of flowers"

The intimate detail of these descriptions is surpassed by few other contemporary Spanish relations. For the Choltil-Lacandon we never have to rely on the word of a single person (such as is the case with Landa). Also, these descriptions of the Choltil are not based on the interrogation of indoctrinated, perhaps fawning informants. All of the above observations on Sac Balam are actual eyewitness descriptions by Spaniards who lived in the village. For any given aspect of Choltil life there are usually from two to three independent versions. One version may be from a military man, another from a civil servant, another by an over zealous friar. It is possible to crosscheck and weed the unreliable statement from the reliable.

#### SAMPLE SPANISH DESCRIPTIONS OF CHOLTI AGRICULTURE

"There are in the same town fruit trees, of platano, zapotes, jocotes, anonas of hot lands, guanabanas, trees of round gourds, some achiote trees, very sweet pineapples; and of all this they also have in their milpas and in them much camote, ayote, chayote, yuca, frijoles, and sweet sugar cane, and in some parts lemons. The huts of the milpas, although smaller, are as well built as those of the town. And in the milpas they have mud daubed granaries of maize"

"And having occupied their houses those [Spaniards] that resided in the town [of Sac Balam] considered [that the Lacandones in fact] lived rationally like human beings because they do not have more than one wife, who each assists and applies herself with care to the work of the milpas and sown places of maize, chile, and beans, in which they plant pineapples, platanos, potatoes, iicamas, jocotes, zapote trees, and other fruit trees. Being of the hot country they are more industrious than our pacified Indians because for the most part they have very large milpas, and because they are the more industrious because of all the large and small logs they must chop up with a hatchet of dark green colored stone, nicely worked, of which one finds some few... The land is humid and spacious and has two harvest And they change sites for the seeding places with which fruits they maintain themselves... And all raise chickens, and those that are the most abundant are turkeys... of which we found in the village many troops... They kill them by twisting their heads and putting a foot over them pulled [the heads] off the turkey. And later they threw them into a fire to burn off the feathers. Deplumed, they washed them and put [them] to cook."

"... he wants to go to seed and cultivate his milpas, taking with him his wife that she may make his tortillas. He knows this proposition to be malicious because the milpas are but recently planted without even being harvested, and because for the seeding, labor, and cultivation they do not need to take their wives, because that which the Indian men are used and accustomed to do to a greater degree is to depart at daybreak with a supply of tortillas or tamales and return at night. Then they take their women to the milpas it is when they are needed to assist in guarding the plants of the fruit so [someone] does not abscond with it."

"...said trail serves for going to the milpa places of said [casique] Cabnal and of the Indians of his calpul, who make milpa in that territory, especially in summer time, for being humid land, and because of this good for the milpas of said summer, and around the whole circuit of the lake... there are... only milpa places of the Indians of this town of the calpul..."

Also available are many other descriptions of milpas, house side orchards, lists of all crops raised, seasons, yields, tools used in clearing milpas, methods of hunting and fishing, etc. Not only do we know how food was procured, we now know in what form it was cooked and consumed (most non-meat foods were drunk in a posole-like liquid concoction.

#### POSITIONING AND FUNCTION OF CEREMONIAL BUILDINGS

"This town has one hundred and three buildings, one hundred residential and three communal [the latter] larger than all the others. These [communal buildings] are in the higher part of the town... One of them serves as an adoratorio, for in it were found the signs of their sacrifices... The rear and the sides are closed by mud daubed wattle, and the fronts are completely open. Each [community building] looks out onto the others..."

"In the other two buildings, which both look out on the said adoratory, there are many planks hung up on which it seems that those who guard the adoratory sleep or rest. This other one was at one side of the antecedent and serves for assistance of the Indians when they give their meetings, fiesta \*and sacrifices."

"And [the third communal building], that fronts onto the first, was destined for the congregation of the Indian women at the said functions for the reason that the males separate themselves from the females.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ADORATORY AND CEREMONIAL PLAZA

The above description of the 3 community buildings suggests that we may be able to learn something about the possible function of Classic Maya groupings of ceremonial buildings from looking carefully at the ethnohistoric record. Below is a detailed description of the architecture and interim decoration of the adoratory. In 1695 the Choltil were using stone blocks analogous to the Classic Maya alters. There were upright sacrificial stones with some stela attributes.

"In the center of the said town there are 3 buildings... of 18 varas of length. These are communal structures. The one serves as an adoratory and place of sacrifice, and it is the more elegant and spacious. Its rear and sides consisted of paling of wooden slices daubed with mud... In order to find out that it had a wooden backing and was not a solid [clay] wall one had to scrutinize it carefully. The front of this house [and of the other two also] were left open and these open fronts looked out onto the interior courtyard."

"The place of their idols was a short room joined by a vail to the mud daubed side, made of wooden stakes, also mud daubed of 2 1/2 varas of interior space with its moldings so smoothed and extremities flush that they make a work so perfect that the construction forms a graceful looking work of art. This room is the size of a spacious closet. And in the middle of said little room it had a doorway ample enough for

one person, with a curtain of cotton cloth hanging from two stakes."

"Up ahead [inside said room] was a pedestal of one quarter vara of height in the style of a moveable platform made of clay, and on it in the two corners, two round pots also of clay of 1 vara of height, painted of diverse colors, and more than one armspan of thickness, diminishing in size from top to bottom... That they serve as braziers (is known] because they were found full of hot ash with some remains of copal that had been burnt, and on their rims one found fresh blood of the turkeys. It is said that the Indians are accustomed to sacrifice chickens and turkeys to the idols that they venerate inside said room, of which it was the tabernacle and for incensing. This blood was probably from Che turkeys which were found dead and decapitated in the courtyard and in other parts."

"And all along the edge of that pedestal there were other little pots sort of one geme high in the form of the large ones... The large ones were whitened by unslaked lime, and in them, as also on the upper part of that little room, there were two strips of reddish colored over white cloth. These cloths were found on all the walls where there are signs of idolatry, always two, and in all parts over the limes, of 2 by 4 of width."

"And when they give cult and veneration their priest enters into said adulatory and speaks out. And the certainty is that [the oracle] speaking with the devil was feigned, and when he hears a cry that rends the spirits and prostrates the bodies of those close by."

"And this house being destined for diabolical works it had in it perfuming pots of fine earthenware that in their molds they fabricated figures of alligators, ....., snakes, and other bad, disgusting reptiles."

"[In one of the communal houses] there were many clothes woven of cotton thread of diverse colors, and each one with four cords pendant from each of its corners with tassels, jackets without sleeves, and with little jacket skirts woven with the same bodies half of reddish colored thread and the other half of black thread. And other clothes in the form of maniples adorned with said tassels and cords, such that the Indians [put on] both dolls when they dance. And for these dances they have tepana, quastes, flutes, and other instruments inside of said house."

"In the interior courtyard, which is square, there are found five sort of squarish boxes of 3 quartas in height and one and a half vara of diameter made of stone blocks or thin flat stones without any mortar holding them together, but well put together and evenly laid. On them they put their pitch pine for lighting... And by the corner of the courtyard there are two pedestals in the same shape, with one large stone each one driven into the middle on which it seems that they decapitate the turkeys that they sacrifice because they find them stained with blood of turkeys and anointed with copal."

#### SPANISH DESCRIPTIONS OF CHOLTI POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Now that Proskouriakoff has discovered that Classic Maya sites could be ruled by dynasties, it is increasingly important to find out from 16th-17th century sources what were the many different types of political organization in vogue among the lowland Maya. Hellmuth has located in the archives new comments by the Spanish on Cholti political organization, both of individual villages and of whole regions. These fresh facts complements information already available from published (but infrequently cited) sources.

"The casiques or principal men of this town are Cabnal, Tunol, Tustecat, Quim, Bubahau, Sulabna, Chichel, Tzactzi, Cham cut, and Polom. And those that have people under their control and order are those said Cabnal, Tuxnol, Tustecat, and Quim, And the other principal men have very few [followers]. And that those that are heads and governors of all the principal men or casiques and of the Indians of their following are only those said Cabnal and Tuxnol."

"Regarding the point whether they have a king, they say that they have never known what this office might be; only their casiques are their lords, kings, priests, and confessors, without being paid any tribute or other profit. Simply as a token that they are their casiques, they celebrate a particular feast which they call... feast of the cigarettes... each family gives its casique a small bundle of cigarettes to signify that he is the master..."

"The casiques have no skill in anything except their idolatries, sacrifices, baptisms, marriages, confessions, divining whether they are to die or not, divining whether one work or another should be undertaken, casting lots with red beans or grains of maize, giving notice to the people when it is time to sow and to gather, and when a feast day comes, etc. But they do not punish as justices." (Tozzer ]9]3: 504-505).

#### DETAILS OF THE DESCRIPTION OF CHOLTI USE OF TOBACCO

There are few Spanish observations of daily life of any Maya which surpass the almost microscopic detail of some of the descriptions. Below is reproduced a miscellaneous

account which may not be of great ethnographic significance, but which shows the kind of intimate coverage of the everyday life of the Cholti.

"... the Indian... was occupied with puquietes which are some kind of cigar of more than 3 quartas of length, and about a thumb in thickness, fabricated of leaves of nance, and varnished with clay that looks like ochre, and on it painted or introduced other colores. These are stuffed with tobacco, and the tip which completes it. It was incorporated with it that begins so that it is not necessary to light it nor waste the tip of another nor even the ash, because with good dexterity and quickness the end is returned lit to the open mouth, and introduced into it, and giving a little tap on the teeth, they leave on the tongue the ash or embers. And they like it and swallow [the ashes?]. This was then the admiration of all [the Spanish]."

"There are in all [the houses] forms for fabricating cigars or puquietes that are some little sticks of wood, strong [and] curiously worked, of little less than a vara [of length] and of the thickness of a finger, diminishing in dimension from the head below, or from one to the other extremity. And in these they fabricate said puquietes with leaves of nance and covered by ochre or by a dirt that looks like it. They paint them with diverse colors and from said forms they pass them to another instrument that they have for taking them out; that is a short portion of clay like a sugar mold. And in it they introduce like one hundred in which they place them, and put the cigars in order to dry them. And there were so many there that we found that also I understand [that] they are not only for their use but also for selling like the black powder..."

#### LINGUISTIC AND OTHER CULTURAL INFORMATION FROM PERSONAL NAMES

Much demographic information can come from censuses. There is not enough space to reproduce a whole census. Instead, below in alphabetical order are listed- just the personal names, without the associated ages, spouses, and children given. Even from the bare list of Cholti names below we can tell that the Cholti names are significantly similar to Chontal Maya personal names. Chontal and Chorti together are significantly unique and together differ from all their immediate Mayan neighbors.

Nahua names are marked with an asterisk.

-AHAU or AJAU	BIN BUB	CALI* NIS
AH CANAN AHAU	BIN TUZ	CALI* NU
CANAN AHAU	-BIN	CALI* TUH
NIS AJAU	AY BIN	CALI* TUHNOL
QUESAL* AHAU	CAUIL BIN	CALI* XUL*
YSQUIN* AHAU	CHAN BIN	CAMA
AH BIN	PAPA BIN	CANAN
AH CAAC	TABIN	CANAN AHAU
AHCALI*	TACBIN	CANAN BUB
AH CANAN AHAU	UX BIN	CANAN CUHTZ
AH CAUIL	BOLAC	CANAN CHICH
AH CAUIL CHICH	BOLOC	CANAN CHICHI*
AH CAUIL XUX	BIBAAO	CANAN POI
AH CUAT*	BOLON	CANAN QUETZ*
AH CHAB	BOLON CHAC	CANAN QUIN
AH HOL	BOLON CHI	CANAN SUL
AH ITZ NAB	-BOLON	CANAN TO
AH ITZQUIN*	CAGUIL BOLON	CANAN TUHNOL
AH ITZQUINUETI	-BUB	CANAN TUM
AH MAS	CABIL BUB	CANAN TUS
AH MEN	CALI* BUB	CANAN TZ
AH NAUI*	CANAN BUB	CANAN TZI
AH NIGUAN	CUAT* BUB	CANAN XOL
AH POO	CHAC CHAN BUB	CANAN YIIT
AH QUE CHUL	CHUNUN BUB	CANAN XUHCANAN OCEB
AH QUES	HITZNA BUB	-CANAN
AH QUETZAL* POI	ITZQUIN* BUB	JUN CANAN
AH QIN	MASA BUB	CANAL IXQUIN* CHICH
AH QUI	MATZA BUB	CAQUIL
AH QUIN	PAX CHAC CHAN BUB	CATI
AH TINUNUN	QUESAL* BUB	CAUIL
AH TOL	QUETZAL* BUB	CAUIL BIN
AH TUNAL* C[?]o	TZALUT BUB	CAUIL CHEL
AH TZIN TUHNOL	TZQUIN BUB	CAUIL CHICH
AH TZOC	TZUNUN BUB	CAUIL POI
AH TZUM	BUN TAN	CAUIL TUZ
AH TZUNUN	CABAC CHAN	....
AH TZUNUN CHO	CABIL BUB	....
AH TZUNUN TUZ	CABNAL	PAB ZIS
AH TZUTZ	-CABNAL	PAH COM
AH UCH	QUETZAL* CABNAL	PANUN
AH UET	TUNUN CABNAL	PAN HUN
AHUNSE	TZUNUN CABNAL	PAPA BIN
AH XUCHIT*	TZQUIN* CABNAL	PAPA CHAC
AJEB	CACAO	PAPA QUETZAL POI
AJUL	CACAU	PAPA TZUNUN BU
ALQUI	CACAU CHU	PAP TZEL
AMAY	CAGTEI	PASEB QUIN
AMAL	CAGUIL	PASUL
APO	CAGUIL CANIJA	PAS QUEZ
ASCACUIL*	CAGUIL CHICH	PAX CAUIL
ASQUIN	CAGUIL TZI	PAX CO POI
AYBIN	CAGUIL BOLON	PAX CON
AYBUN	CAION	PAX CUATZUZ
AYYGNAB MANIGODO (Sic)		PAX CUA XUX
BAC	CALI*	PAX CUIL FU
-BATEB	CALI* BUB	PAX CHAC CHAN PUB
CANI BATEF	CALI* GHANA	PAX CHAN CHAM BU
BATZ*	CALI* JOT*	PAX CHIN
	CALI* MIZ*	PAX LOB
		....