Ballads of the Lords of New Spain

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Commentary

In the following notes repeated reference is made to the essay On the Translation of Aztec Poetry (TRAN), above, cited in most cases by section number only. Thus (6.2), for example, means TRAN section 6.2. Only song I has been provided with phrase-by-phrase annotation; the remaining songs may be similarly glossed, using the Guide to the Vocabulary, above. Information on the usage of the netotilitzli as a whole will be found in the Cantares dictionary-concordance (DICT), where the vocabulary is organized with documentation, textual citations, and cross-references to synonyms.

Previous translations of the Romances may be found in Garibay’s Poesía náhuatl I (1964) and, for Romances songs XI and XXIII, in Karttunen and Lockhart, “La estructura de la poesía náhuatl vista por sus variantes” (1980). Selected readings are in León-Portilla, Fifteen Poets of the Aztec World (1992).

General comments. The overall purpose of the songs in the Romances is to promote warfare, especially between the Triple Alliance (Mexico, Texcoco, and Tlacopan), on one side, and, on the other, Huexotzinco, Tlaxcala, and Chalco (the Alliance’s regular enemies through much of the 1400s and Cortés’ enablers during the Conquest period, 1519–21). To this end warrior kings out of the past are summoned to earth along with their ghost legions, who enact imagined scenes of battle on the dance floor; or, a singer may simply issue a call to arms, praise the value of combat, or, frequently, deal with laggards and dissenters who require special encouragement.

It is assumed that all the songs— even if they borrow heavily from a pre-Conquest repertory—were put together in their present form in the mid-1500s, no later than 1582 (the date of Pomar’s Relación, to which the lost Romances original seems to have been attached, as is the extant copy).
Overview of the thirty-six songs. (Part 1.) I. Mexica allies and enemy Tlaxcalans are called to battle. II. Ally Nezahualcoyotl arrives with warriors. III. Allies arrive, submit to the war ethic, giving their lives. IV. A pro-war singer refutes a doubter. V. A presumed doubter complains that he has been unfairly accused, offers his life. VI. A fearful warrior submits, asks to be united with the dead. VII. Warriors arrive for combat in Mexico, prepare to die. VIII. Chalcan enemies arrive, prepare for combat. IX. Tlaxcalan enemies are summoned to be defeated in combat. X. Tlaxcalans arrive to be sacrificed. XI. Mexica warriors arrive to reenact the final battle against Cortés. XII. Pro-Mexica leaders arrive, restoring Mexico’s greatness. XIII. Warriors are brought to life, briefly, through music. XIV. Chalcan enemies are brought to life and defeated.

(Part 2.) XV. A musical call to arms. XVI. Past warrior-kings of Tlaxcala are summoned to be defeated. XVII. Warriors appear as “flowers,” briefly, before they “wither.” XVIII. A singer petitions the supreme spirit for fresh warriors. XIX. A doubter is heard among the incoming warriors. XX. Incoming warriors win “nobility and fame.” XXI. The supreme spirit provides warriors from the sky world. XXII. A pro-Mexica warrior-king arrives, resolves doubts. XXIII. A Mexica warrior-king summons enemies to be defeated. XXIV. Sacrificed warriors will be reunited in the sky world. XXV. A warrior-singer is summoned, who summons additional warriors. XXVI. An allied warrior-king arrives, bringing further warriors. XXVII. Montezuma’s warriors give their lives as fresh warriors descend from the sky world. XXVIII. A further exchange of dying warriors for incoming warriors.

(Part 3.) XXIX. Allied and enemy warriors arrive despite doubters’ objections. XXX-A. The supreme spirit descends, bringing warriors ready for battle. XXX. A singer promises to perpetuate a warrior’s fame. XXXI. Allies are encouraged to capture incoming enemy warriors. XXXII. Incoming “flowers” are produced by Nezahualcoyotl and the supreme spirit.

(Part 4.) XXXIII. An ancestral warrior-king arrives, bringing fresh warriors. XXXIV. Against the voice of a doubter, warriors arrive, seeking fame. XXXV. Voices of doubt and encouragement. XXXVI. Affirming the doctrine, a singer promises that all warriors will be “rich” in the other world.
**Commentary**

**Part 1**

**Song I (1:3–2:17)**

*Historical figures.* All persons named in the song were active during the Conquest period, 1519–21, except Tlacahuepan (d. ca. 1498), anachronistically summoned in stanza 3. These appear in three groups:

1. Tecayehuatzin of Huextozinco, Xicotencatl of Tlaxcala,
   Temiloteo[tacatl?] of Tlaxcala, Cuitlizcatl of Tlaxcala.
2. Tlacahuepan of Mexico Tenochtitlan.
3. Temilotzin of Mexico Tlatelolco.

*Synopsis.* A pro-Mexica singer issues a call to arms and summons both enemy and allied ghost warriors to enact a Mexica (or Triple Alliance) victory against the enemy Tlaxcalans and Huexotzincans (TRAN 22.2).

*Synopsis by stanza.*

Let’s go “sing” (make war) on the battlefield. Don’t be cowardly, Mexica.
Seek “flowers” (captives or comrades).
Tlaxcalan and Huexotzincan leaders “sing” (make war) against Mexico, producing warrior revenants as potential captives.
Mexican hero Tlacahuepan appears on the battlefield with “eagle” troops who pleasure themselves by taking captives.
Yes, these Mexican revenants arrive from the sky world, gladdening the supreme spirit with their war deeds.
God himself descends to the battlefield, bringing spirit warriors from the “house of troupials.”
God “adorns” himself with “flowers” (captives or potential captives), “whirled” (i.e., twisted, crafted) as garlands.
Mexican hero Temilotzin descends from the sky bringing further warriors, recklessly courting death (since life is brief).
Yes, Temilotzin, sent by God, comes to reunite with battlefield friends (to defeat Tlaxcalan and Huexotzincan enemies).

*Annotated English text.*

Friends [i.e., comrades in arms (concrete noun) (TRAN 7.4, 11.2–3)], let us sing [or make war (9.9)], let us go sing in the house of sun flowers [i.e., the sky world or the battlefield (2.5, 5.1, 7.3)]. And who [among you will not be cowardly (12.9) and thus] will seek them [i.e., seek the
“flowers” (2.1–3), the incoming warriors from the sky world, either as captives or allied comrades on the battlefield, who will meet them here beside the drum [i.e., on the dance floor or on the battlefield (8.1, 9.9)]?

“[Intending to elicit God’s pity (10.2–3)] I grieve in sadness for these flowers [i.e., in order to bring forth these “flowers” (10.6–10)], I, your poor [i.e., pitiable (10.6)] friend, Chichimec Lord Tecayehuatzin [of Huexotzinco, Mexico’s traditional enemy, at the time of the Spanish Conquest (CONC)]. Who among us will [dare to be so cowardly as to (12.9)] fail to entertain, to gladden God Self Maker [who will pleasurably receive the sacrificed captives we obtain in battle (2.3)]?”

At flood’s edge [i.e., the battlefield (2.1)] yonder in Tlaxcala [in league with Huexotzinco (CONC)] let him [i.e., Tecayehuatzin] sing narcotic flower songs [i.e., produce irresistible “flowers,” i.e., warriors as potential captives (13.1–4)]. Let Xicotencatl [Tlaxcalan ally of Cortés (CONC)], Temilotzin [read Temilotecatl, a Tlaxcalan ruler in the time of Cortés (CONC)], and Lord Cuitlizcatl [Tlaxcalan chieftain who aided Cortés (CONC)] sing narcotic songs. Let us hear “ohuaya ohuaya [i.e., mournful song-weeping that produces warriors from the sky world (10.1–6)].”

In Eagle Tamoanchan [i.e., warriors’ paradise or the battlefield (2.5, 18.3)], the home of jaguar bells [i.e., warriors (9.7)], in Huexotzinco, where the dying is, there’s Dancer [alternate name for Tlacahuepan (CONC Mahceuhcatzin)]. It’s Tlacahuepan [of Mexico Tenochtitlan, heroic brother of Montezuma II, died fighting in Huexotzinco a generation before Cortés (CONC)]. His eagle flower princes [i.e., warriors under his command] find their pleasure in that house of green places [i.e., take Huexotzincan captives on the battlefield (7.3), or give their lives in battle and ascend to the paradisal Green Places (2.5)].

As cacao flowers [as incoming warriors from the sky world (2.2)] they come sounding the dance cry [or war cry (9.5)], finding flower pleasure [i.e., capturing “flowers,” or potential victims for sacrifice] yonder in the middle of the flood [i.e., on the battlefield (2.1)], come carrying their gold shield hand-slings [i.e., weapons, or accompanying warriors (4.4)], their fans [i.e., ornaments of the dance, or accompanying warriors (9.7)]. “With flood-flower eagle sadness, with plume banners we come entertaining [i.e., making war to gladden the supreme power]
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in this house of green places [i.e., the battlefield as it resembles the other world (2.5)]."

Jade gongs [warriors (9.7)] shrill [give war whoops (8.1, 9.8)]. A drizzling rain of flowers [i.e., incoming “songs,” the warriors (8.4)] falls to earth. From the house of troupiers [i.e., the warriors’ eternal home in the sky (2.1)], from the bosom of the [celestial] fields the Holy Spirit, God, descends.

From Green Places [i.e., paradise (2.5)] he descends. It’s Life Giver. He provides himself with song petals, he adorns himself with flowers [i.e., captives offered to him as sacrificial victims (17.2n)] here beside the drum. They’re whirled [i.e., crafted as garlands of twisted flower-ropes (15.5, 16.1)], they come from you, these drunken [i.e., insensate and therefore easily captured (13.1–4)] flowers [i.e., warriors (2.1–3)]. Be entertained [i.e., enjoy them, O Life Giver]!

“Friends, I’ve come [I, Temilotzin (see next stanza),] to string them as jewels (15.2), spread them out as trogons, make them stir as spirit swans [i.e., the warriors I produce (3.2, 3.5, 5.4–5)], twirl [i.e., create (16.1, 19.5)] them as gold, these comrades [of the sun (2.2–3)]. As plume-captives I’ll snare them [in order to bring them down from the sky world]. I’ll song-whirl [i.e., create as though songs (18.1, 19.1–5)] these companions, in this palace [i.e., the dance floor as it represents the battlefield (9.8)] I’ll [i.e., I the singer-ritualist will] bring them forth. Ah, all of us, then in a moment all of us will have departed for the dead land. For we only come to borrow them.

“I come, I appear! Friends, I come created as a song, come fashioned as a song [i.e, as an incoming warrior (8.1–3)]. God sends me here. I have flowers [i.e., accompanying warriors], I am Temilotzin [of Mexico Tlatelolco, tragic hero of the Spanish Conquest (CONC)]. I’ve come to assemble a company of friends [i.e., I’ve come to forge an alliance of earthly warriors and spirit warriors (7.4)].”

Remarks. The overlapping of historical figures from the Conquest period (Cuitlizcatl, Temilotzin, etc.) with a figure out of the deeper past (Tlacahuepan) recurs in the complex of song variants mentioned below in the commentary for song XX. The “Temilotzin” of stanza 2 is here read as a variant or error for Temilotecatl, following the rule described in “Rulers Named in the
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Romances” in the Introduction. Note that “Temilotzin” would be an allowable, apocopated variant of “Temilotecatl” (see GRAM 7.7a).

In the opening stanza the nonstandard to[n]cuicatacan ‘let us go sing’ may indicate that the singer is imitating the dialect of Tlaxcala (see DICT yauh 4). On the use of dialect in Mexica songs, see FC 8:45:13–23 but also CMSA pp. 93–94.

‘Captives’ in stanza 7 freely translates huixto, the combining form of huixtotli, plural huixtotin. In a sixteenth-century sky diagram the level immediately above the sun, labeled huixtutla (i.e., huixtotlan ‘place of the huixto[tin]’), has as its emblem a figure evidently representing the deity Huixtocihuatzl or a sacrificial victim dressed as that deity (Códice Vaticano 3738 1964:9 [pl. 1] and Nicholson 1971: fig. 7 and table 2; cf. Códice Telleriano-Remensis 1964: pl. 1 or 1995: 1r and Quiñones Keber 1995:139–40). Sahagún mentions a Gulf Coast people called Olmeca, vixtotin[n], whose ruler was named Olmecatl, vixtotli; and these vixtoti were said to be nonotzaleque ['they who have entities that are prayed to’, i.e., priests, magicians] (FC 10:192:28–30). By way of explanation the same author, elsewhere, writes of ‘a certain class of people who were something like hired killers, called nonotzaleque, hardened professionals who did the killing’ (vna gente que eran como asisinos los cuales se llamauan nonotzaleque, era gente vsada y atreujda, para matar) (CF lib. 11, cap. 1, para. 1, fol. 3v). Further, in the description of a sacrifice honoring the deity Huixtocihuatzl, Sahagún’s Nahuatl text designates the functionaries who perform the sacrifice as huixtotin[n] (CF lib. 2, cap. 26, fol. 47v) — yet his accompanying Spanish text has been repeatedly misread to mean that the captives themselves are the huixtotin (SIM 690; HG 1:173 [lib. 2, cap. 26, para. 11]; FC 2:88; Sahagún 1997:106n70; correctly read in Sahagún 1971:98). Thus, while Sahagún has it that the huixtotin were the officiants of sacrifice, not the sacrificed captives, the Códice Vaticano diagram is ambiguous in this regard, allowing the pictorial figure to be read as either the deity or the dressed-up surrogate. The song text at hand, presumably, means captives or potential captives rather than officiants. However, although the nicquetzalhuixtoyulpiz is clearly written (with a gap between huixto and ylpiz), the oddity of huixto-, even if plausibly analyzed, raises the possibility of corrupt transmission. By metathesis the huixto- might have sprung from xitto-, with an intrusive hu thrown in; and if a syllable were dropped (as often happens in this manuscript), the reading could be nicquetzalxi[t]o[mon]ilpiz ‘I’ll snare [or noose] them as plumes’, conveying the same meaning as ‘I’ll snare them as plume
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Captives’—bringing the text into conformity with CM. DICT xittomonilpia:tl. On metathesis, see GRAM 4.3; on intrusive characters, GRAM 3.9. On dropped syllables, see the note to the Translation at 1:12.

Song II (2v:1–3v:12) (= CM XXV [18v:16–19:10], and stanzas 3–4 again at CM 69:28–32)

Historical figure. Nezahualcoyotl, ruled 1431–72 as king of Texcoco.

Synopsis. Nezahualcoyotl (i.e., Yoyontzin) arrives from the other world, bringing “flowers” (i.e., warriors) to the dance floor (as it represents the battlefield).

Song III (3v:14–4v:10)

Historical figures. All persons here summoned from the other world were active in the mid-1400s (see immediately below).

Synopsis. A singer-warrior summons Nezahualcoyotl and his brother Tzontecocochatzin then summons Montezuma I and his brothers Ctitlacoatzin and Cahualtzin. The revenants arrive with their comrades in arms and submit to the war ethic (TRAN 12), thus remaining only briefly on earth before returning to the other world, i.e., the “place where all are shorn, the place unknown” (CONC Quenamihcan, Ximohuacan).

Song IV (4v:12–5v:8)

Synopsis. Two voices are heard: a war Enthusiast and a warrior who doubts.

The doubter’s points (enclosed by quotation marks in the translation): there is no paradise; no one can trust the supreme spirit (TRAN 12.12); there is no life in this world (“on earth”); life is brief; the supreme spirit clouds our minds (“makes us drunk”) with false promises of an afterlife; no one can escape death.

The enthusiast’s points: everyone makes “prayers and services,” i.e., makes war (9.9); everyone wants glory on the battlefield; the music of war (10.1 [ohuaya]) has divine authority (8.1 [origin of music]); the supreme spirit enjoys music; there is life in this world (“on earth’’); the supreme spirit
does make us “drunk” with desire for war (13.1–4), does rule this world—therefore submit.

Remarks. Ideas expressed in song IV are more explicitly stated in the somewhat similar eight stanzas of the second half of CM song XXXI. The doubter’s points, rejecting the old war ethic, are linked with the new values of Christianity in CM song VII: “It was thus in the old days. Here on earth he’d give you chalk wine and make you enter the place of danger. He’d order flood and blaze. He’d break you. He’d ruin you.”

Song V (5v:10–6v:18)

Historical figures. The singer-ritualist invokes Cacamatl, nephew of Montezuma II and ruler of Texcoco, who attempted to save Mexico from the Spaniards in 1520 but was apprehended and executed (López de Gómara 1964 or 1968, ch. 91). Using Cacamatl as the “agent” for the supreme spirit Life Giver (TRAN 3.1–3), the singer summons Cacamatl’s predecessors, Nezahualpilli and Nezahualcoyotl, who arrive on earth with their armies. (See the query about this Cacamatl in the Commentary for song XXVI.)

Synopsis. The ritualist quotes dissenters who scorn him for his adherence to the war ethic. Undaunted, he eagerly embraces combat, singing “ohuaye” (TRAN 10.1); and speaking as though he were Cacamatl, he summons ghost warriors from the other world (“swan feathers,” “flower bells”), offering himself as the payment (20.1).

Remarks. In stanza 5 the ghost warriors are called “God’s loved ones,” a term that also designates the Christian saints (DICT tlazohtli). All warriors are tlazotin ‘loved ones’ (FC 6:12:26); a Christian saint is itlaco in dios ‘God’s loved one’ (SPC 79:16); saints in heaven, or angels, are yn itlaco huā yn dios ‘God’s loved ones’ (Burkhart 2001:104). Here the inanimate plural, itlaçō dioss ‘God’s loved ones’, is appropriate since the incoming warriors, metaphorically, are (inanimate) flowers.

Song VI (7:2–8:14) (= CM XLVIII)

Historical figure. The singer’s inspiration, or “agent” (TRAN 3.1–3), is Tlaltecatzin (i.e., Totoquihuaztli), lord of Tlacopan (one of the cities allied with
Mexico in the so-called Triple Alliance) at the time of Cortés’ arrival. (This is probably not Tlaltecatzin of fourteenth-century Cuauhchinanaco as the CM glossator believes, writing “Song of Tlaltecatzin of Cuauhchinanco.”)

Synopsis. As ghost warriors arrive, the singer (using the voice of Tlaltecatzin) fears that he will need to give his life in battle as their payment. Accepting the inevitability of his own death, he asks that these revenants be sacrificed so that he and they may be united in paradise (see CMSA pp. 450–51 for a detailed paraphrase).

Remarks. In stanza 3, Santa María, the “fragrant woman,” is identified with the supreme power. From the Santoral en mexicano, an early-seventeenth-century Nahuatl manuscript, Burkhart translates oraciones addressed to Saint Mary that include the epithets tzopelichipahualizahuiaocatzintle ‘oh fragrant one of sweet purity’ (Burkhart 2001:54); tzopelicitl ahui-acatzinei icnohuacatzintle ‘oh sweet one, oh fragrant one, oh merciful one’ (ibid.:57); ahuiacaichpochxochitzintle ‘oh fragrant and maidenly flower’ (ibid.:90).

Drum cadence. Either the horizontal log drum, teponaztli, or the upright skin drum, huehuetl, can be used to perform the two-tone cadence; or the two can be “tuned,” if they are played together. Various intervals such as a fifth or a minor third are possible, depending on the length of the slits in the log drum and the tautness of the skin drum, which is struck with the hands at the center of the head (to produce the lower tone) or near the rim (for the higher tone). The notation, based on the syllables ti, to, ki, and ko, has only two vowels, which may be taken to represent the higher and lower tones, since the i is pronounced high in the mouth; the o, low. On the analogy of modern woodwind tonguing, which produces notes in a series of t-t-t-t in moderate tempo and t-k-t-k in faster tempo, the cadence tocoti tocoti, etc., may be read: ♬♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩, etc. (CMSA pp. 72–77).

Song VII (8:16–9:4)

Synopsis. Otherwordly warriors are summoned to combat in Mexico, also called atlixco ‘water face’ and anahuac ‘next to the water’ (DICT atlan 3, atlihtic 3, atlixco 2, anahuac 1—in reference to the Venice-like setting of
Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco). The warriors prepare to take captives and to become captives themselves.

**Song VIII (9:6–19)**

*Historical figure.* “Chalco’s come to fight” implies an imagined engagement in Mexico if the singer is there, as is most likely (TRAN 22.1–6), and the ‘spirit-owner lord’ (*teohua tecuitli*) of stanza 2 would therefore be a Chalcan leader (*teohua tecuitli* of Chalco Tlalmanalco) bringing hostile troops to the imperial seat. No more can be said with any certainty since the phraseology is formulaic. But listeners in the mid-1500s would undoubtedly have been reminded that Chalcans did come in 1521 to aid Cortés in the siege of Mexico, led by Chalcan lords including Omacatzin, *teohua tecuitli* of Chalco Tlalmanalco. Subsequently known as don Hernando de Guzmán (d. 1534), Omacatzin is the subject of CM song LXIII, composed after 1565, in which Cortés and his Chalcan allies are figuratively trounced and sent back to the other world; in that song the Chalcans are portrayed as “peepers,” batrachians whose raucous croaking was said to produce headaches (CMSA pp. 301–13, 469–70; DICT guzman 2).

**Synopsis.** Chalcan warriors, summoned from the other world, prepare for combat “here” in God’s “home” on earth, i.e., the battlefield (TRAN 2.5).

**Song IX (9:21–10:4)**

*Historical figures.* Two figures are named, Coatecatl and Iztac Coatl, both associated with the early history of Totomihuacan in the Tlaxcala-Huexotzinco region (Totomihuacan is linked with Huexotzinco and Iztac Coyotl in CM 8v:9–14).

**Synopsis.** The (presumably pro-Mexica) singer, appealing directly to the supreme spirit, summons Huexotzinca and Tlaxcalan ghost warriors to be defeated in combat (presumably by Mexica warriors) and returned to the other world, concluding that this military action has been decreed by God (TRAN 12.11).

*Remarks.* In the final stanza God is identified with both Christ and Santa María (see “Dating the Songs” in the Introduction).
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Song X (10:6–11:8)

Historical figures. Calmecahua, Matzin, and Temaxahuitzin, who aided Cortés in the Conquest of Mexico, are lords of various polities in the Huexotzinco-Tlaxcala region. They are joined by “Xayacamach,” a name attached to at least half a dozen historical figures from the same region (see CONC). Anachronistically, Itzcoatl, king of Tenochtitlan, and his relative Nezahualcoyotl (also called Yoyontzin) are summoned from a deeper past to engage these foes in symbolic combat.

Synopsis. Identifying alternately with both sides, the singer-ritualist produces ghost warriors representing pro-Mexica forces as well as enemy forces from the region of Huexotzinco and Tlaxcala. The locale is Tenochtitlan, at the Eagle Gate on the south side of the main square (CONC Cuauhquiahuac). Revenants of both sides arrive from the Place of Duality (CONC Ome-yocan), the Huexotzincans and Tlaxcalans to be defeated (i.e., to become “thrashed ones”), to be “chalked” for sacrifice.

Remarks. Note that Tenochtitlan is called “Huexotzinco” (CONC Huexotzinco 2) at the end of stanza 3. However, the “of Huexotzinco” in stanzas 2 and 8 and at the beginning of stanza 3 means Huexotzinco per se. In CM the Eagle Gate is named only in songs that overtly deal with the siege of Mexico, mentioning the capitán (i.e., Cortés), Malintzin (the interpreter for Cortés), and other unmistakable figures and incidents (CM songs LXVI, LXVIII, XCI).

Song XI (11:10–12:18) (= CM song LXIX, canto C)

Historical figure? The designations “Chichimec,” “Tenitl” (freely, “Barbarian”), and “Arbiter” do not include a personal name and could refer to the supreme spirit or, more likely in this case, a fictional warrior king serving as the “agent” of supreme power (TRAN 3.1–3)—or, if “Teni(tl)” should be read as “Telitl,” a fourteenth-century king connected to the Triple Alliance (see the note to line 11:13).

Synopsis. Warriors from the other world arrive on earth, ready for combat (against Cortés; see “Remarks,” below).

Remarks. In CM this is merely the third canto in a six-canto song, which
opens with the humiliations suffered by Mexico’s fourteenth-century founders as compared with the suffering of the Mexica in 1519–21 (“Once again we’re to be destroyed in our city”). The fourth canto is treated below, as RSNE song XXVII; the sixth and final canto, also below, as song XVIII. A detailed commentary of the entire song is in CMSA pp. 486–90.

Drum cadence. See commentary for song VI, above. Thus the cadence for song XI ("tototi tototi") would read: \(\text{♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♩♫

Song XII (12v:2–13v:2)

**Historical figures.** The three kings Axayacatl of Tenochtitlan, Chimalpopoca of Tlacopan, and Nezahualpilli of Texcoco were the Triple Alliance rulers in the 1470s.

**Synopsis.** Triple Alliance kings are summoned from the other world along with warriors destined to be “shattered” in battle. Once again provided with “mesquites,” “ceibas,” “cypresses,” i.e., great leaders (TRAN 4.3), Mexico, itself like a protective tree, gloriously “spreads a crown of jade” (cf. 22.4).

Song XIII (13v:3–14v:4)

**Synopsis.** A singer-ritualist is assembling icniuhotl ‘comrades’, coayotl ‘companions’, i.e., incoming warriors from the other world (note the abstract nouns and see TRAN 11); thus the dance floor, or “flower house,” would become a place inhabited by “flowers,” i.e., potential victims on the battlefield (TRAN 2.1–3). The ritualist has crafted (15.5), or “twirled” (19.5), these “flowers,” these “garlands” (16.1–2). These “pleasure flowers,” i.e., potential victims (cf. 7.3), are “just like the flowers on earth”: we enjoy them, “adorn” ourselves with them (17.2n), only “briefly” (12.8). Soon we will be leaving for our “eternal home” (cf. 5.1), leaving our “flowers” behind. Weeping, grieving, the singer makes himself “sad,” pitiable (10.8–9), implying that he deserves consideration (10.6).

**Remarks.** The ambiguous term onnequechnahualo ‘there’s mutual embracing’ may refer to the grappling of warriors in combat, as apparently in CM 18:26–27–18v:8–9: Quauhhotica oceloyotica ma onnequechnahualo antepilhuani ycahahuaca yn chimallin cohua ma’limani […] yxtlahuacă yaonahuac
'Let there be mutual embracing of eagles, of jaguars, O princes. Shields, companions, are shrilling. Let them stand upon this flood [...] on the field of battle'. (For ma’limani read ma ahlimani = ma atlimani ‘let them [i.e., the shields] stand as a group flood-wise’. DICT atl 2.)

Song XIV (14v:6–15v:16) (stanzas 3–4 = CM song LI, stanza 33, i.e., CM folio 33, lines 22–25)

**Historical figures?** The five who are named in this song appear to be stereotypes applicable to Chalcans in general. Two of them, perhaps, are figures of opprobrium: Coacuech (Rattlesnake Rattle) and Tlacamazatl (Bestial Person). For details see CONC Chalchiuhtlatonac, Coacuech, Cuateotl, Teohuhtzin, Tlacamazatl.

**Synopsis.** A (presumably pro-Mexica) singer calls on departed Chalcan leaders to bring down their troops from the sky world (TRAN 3.1–3), the Chalcans imagining that their losses on the battlefield will produce further Chalcan revenants, i.e., that their “hearts” (4.5) will “return,” thus relying on the doctrine of exchange (20.1). The Chalcans do “believe” this but are deceived (DICT neltoca:mo). Instead, as “the earth rolls over” and “the sky shakes,” signaling the moment of exchange, or payment (20.3), the Chalcans (for example, Tlacamazatl) are simply “forsaken,” i.e., lost in battle (DICT cahua:te), without producing further revenants of their own kind. The revenants who do arrive are Chalco’s enemies (see Remarks, below). The revenants who do arrive are Chalco’s enemies (as in CM 32v:14, 67v:24, etc.).

**Remarks.** The song is a much abbreviated restatement of CM song LI, interpreting the fifteenth-century Chalcan War as a glorious victory for Mexico, more glorious than it actually was (CMSA pp. 235–41, 451–52). In that song the trickery of the unexpected exchange (see above) is spelled out with greater clarity, as the singer announces: cequi yan quauhtlia ocelotl cequiya mexicatl acolhua tepanecatl o mochihua in chalca ‘Multiple eagles and jaguars, multiple Mexicans, Acolhuans, and Tepanecs, do the Chalcans become’ (CM 33v:3–5). It may be supposed that mid-sixteenth-century Mexica audiences hearing either of these songs, CM LI or RSNE XIV, would be reminded
more of the Conquest of 1519–21 (in which Chalco aided Cortés) than of the fifteenth-century Chalcan War. Cf. the Commentary for song VIII.

Part 2

Song XV (16:2–17:1) (pt. 2, song 1)

Synopsis. A musical call to arms. The theory of music (TRAN 8.1) and the theory of war death (2.2, 5.1–3) are constantly interchanged. Using the concrete term antocihuan ‘friends’, the singer repeatedly addresses his fellow musician-ritualists, while referring to the incoming warriors by the abstract term icniuhyotl, translated ‘comrades’ (11.2).

In the “house of green places,” i.e., the dance floor or the battlefield (2.5 and 9.1–9), the singers await God’s “words,” i.e., the incoming warriors. What does God want? Songs per se, as musical offerings, but also “songs,” or “sorrows,” that are war captives to be sacrificed as human offerings. What will God give? Songs per se, as a musical answer from the sky world (TRAN 8.1–3), but also incoming warriors returned to the battlefields of earth. These come “whirling” (17.5–7, 18.1, 19.1–4) as “flowers,” “drums,” “rattles” (9.7).

Our pleasure on the battlefield, or the dance floor, is brief (12.8). We’ll enjoy these otherworldly comrades while we can (21.3).

Song XVI (17:3–18v:8) (pt. 2, song 2)

Historical figures. Rulers representing the traditional enemies of Mexico are named in four groups:

1. Tenocelotzin of Huexotzinco (fl. before 1430), Tlaltzin (unidentified), Chiauhcoatzin of Huexotzinco (fl. before 1430?).
2. Xayacamach of Huexotzinco (or Tlaxcala?), Coatzin of Tlaxcala, Tlacomihuatzin of Tlaxcala (14th or 15th century).
3. Tlaltzin (again), Ayocuantzin (of Huexotzinco or Chalco?).
4. Tenocelotl of Huexotzinco (again).

Synopsis. The (presumably Mexica) singer calls on past rulers of enemy nations, who bring down their armies from the sky world, knowing that they will be annihilated on the battlefield.
Remarks. On “ear and hand flowers,” mentioned in the third stanza, see TRAN 4.5.

Song XVII (18v:10–19v:15) (pt. 2, song 3)

Historical figure. Nezahualcoyotl.

Synopsis. The singer appeals to Nezahualcoyotl, whom he envisions as creating, or “painting” (TRAN 15.1, 15.4), “flowers” (2.1–3). Nezahualcoyotl is only the surrogate, or agent. Actually it is God (3.1–3) who “brings down” the flowers (from the sky world) and “spreads them out” on the dance floor, i.e., the imagined battlefield (9.8). The “flowers,” naturally, will soon “wither” (2.2, 12.8).

Remarks. On Nezahualcoyotl as putative author, see the Commentary for songs XIX and XXII.

Song XVIII (19v:17–21:7) (pt. 2, song 4)

(= CM song LXIX, canto F)

Synopsis. A singer petitions Life Giver for a distribution of incoming warriors, uncertain of success, since the supreme spirit is intractable (TRAN 12.12). Yet the “loved ones” do arrive as “flowers,” “jades,” “swans.” Eventually, in exchange (20.1), we ourselves must die (in battle), as Life Giver “requires” (12.11).

Remarks. In CM this is the sixth and final canto in a six-canto song on the theme of the Spanish Conquest. The third canto is treated above, as RSNE song XI; the fourth canto, below, as RSNE song XXVII. See the Remarks for song XI. Regarding the “loved ones,” see the Remarks for song V.

Song XIX (21:9–22v:7) (pt. 2, song 5)

(= CM song XVIII, stanzas 17–22)

Synopsis. The singer adopts the voice of a doubter among the incoming warriors.

Remarks. The passage at hand is only eight stanzas out of the 55-stanza song in CM, where the voice of doubt is eventually overwhelmed in the excite-
ment of combat (TRAN 21.1–2). Not here, however. Yet the inner meaning may well be the unspoken reply (12.13), which would of course negate the doubter.

The glossator’s idea that the eight-stanza passage in RSNE is “of Nezahualcoyotzin when he was fleeing from the king of Azcapotzalco” finds no justification either in RSNE or in the full text in CM. A clue to the glossator’s thinking lies in the numbering that he has added to the stanzas beginning on folio 18v, line 10 (first stanza of pt. 2, song 3), extending through folio 26, line 11 (the last stanza of pt. 2, song 8). Evidently he sees pt. 2, songs 3–8, as especially worthy of study, and perhaps he imagines that the entire group belongs to Nezahualcoyotl, taking the opening stanzas of song 3 (= song XVII), “your words, my prince, you, Nezahualcoyotzin,” as a prefatory attribution. Coming to the passage that constitutes RSNE XIX, with its unrelied negativity, the glossator links it with the major traumatic episode in Nezahualcoyotl’s life as it has been portrayed in native annals: his flight from the henchmen of Azcapotzalco’s king, who had hoped to have him murdered and did indeed drive him into exile. A version of the story is told in pictures on plate 9 of Codex Xolotl (Castillo 1972:87–103); another version, not in pictures but in words, is in Codex Chimalpopoca (CC 34:33–39:52)—a topic much rehearsed by Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (IXT passim).

The concluding song in the supposed Nezahualcoyotl group is XXII (pt. 2, song 8); but in order to read XXII as a composition of Nezahualcoyotl the glossator would have to interpret folio 25v, lines 2–3, not as ‘I, Tizahuatzin, am grieving here’ (çâ nihuallaocoya çâ nitiçahuaci huiya) but as something like ‘I, the chalk owner, am grieving’ (cf. Garibay 1964:65, 133). The name Tizahuatzin, however, is attested in the netotiliztli not only in RSNE song XXII but in CM 21:1–2: ohuaye o ayyee xichoca oon Chimalpopocatzin tacolmitzin oo titicahuatzin ‘Weep, Chimalpopoca, and you, Acolmiztli, and you, Tizahuatzin’. Following his usual practice, the glossator, if he had noticed the name in the text, would probably have labeled the song “de Tizahuatzin.”

Song XX (22v:9–23v:12) (pt. 2, song 6)
(= CM song LXXIII; also CM song LXXXII, canto D)

**Synopsis.** A singer identifies with Life Giver, who descends to earth bringing a distribution of “marvels” (TRAN 14.3), “cacao flowers” (2.2, 4.6, 13.1), and
“swans” (5.5), spurring them on to combat. In battle these “eagles,” these “jaguars,” will win “nobility and fame,” sacrificing their lives, as Life Giver “takes” them back to the sky world as his “comrades” (2.1–2).

**Remarks.** The RSNE version has been generalized. In the CM variants the sixth stanza names Mexica heroes (in place of Life Giver), who act as Life Giver’s surrogates, or agents (TRAN 3.1–3), arriving on the scene with troops ready for action. In CM LXXXII the surrogates are Tlacotzin and Oquiztzin (who were captured by Cortés during the Conquest); in CM LXXIII they are Ixtlilcuechahuac and Tlacahuepan, brothers of Montezuma II and Mexica heroes par excellence (FC 6:13:2–3), killed in combat a generation before the Conquest. See DICT Tlacotzin, Oquiztzin, Ixtlilcuechahuac, Tlacahuepan.

**Song XXI (23v:14–25:6) (pt. 2, song 7)**

(= CM song LXIV, stanzas 9–11)

**Synopsis.** The supreme power, God, acting through the voice of the singer-ritualist, “shakes” down (TRAN 8.4) a distribution of sky warriors as “flowers” (2.1–3), “roseate swans” (5.5), “riches,” “favors,” destined to give their lives in battle.

**Remarks.** The first two and last two stanzas of this song recur together in the middle of a 20-stanza song in CM, where the city of Mexico, ultimately, is glorified (“lies shining”) in a shower of incoming warriors called “angels,” “mist,” “new ones.”

**Song XXII (25:8–26:11) (pt. 2, song 8)**

**Historical figure.** Tizahuatzin, fifteenth-century lord of Tolltitlan (part of the Tepanec sphere) and son of King Itzcocoatl of Tenochtitlan.

**Synopsis.** Adopting the voice of Tizahuatzin, the singer song-grieves (TRAN 10.9), producing warriors ready for combat (10.10). Raising the usual doubter’s objections (cf. 12.7–8), he nevertheless concludes with the essential question, “When I’ve gone, will I have put an end to this [God’s] pain and suffering?” — to which the answer, though unexpressed, must be yes (1.8, 12.1–6).
Remarks. This is the last in the series of six songs laboriously numbered and renumbered, stanza by stanza, by the pro-Texcoco glossator (see the transcription), who evidently believes that all six are compositions of the Texcocan king Nezahualcoyotl (see the Remarks for XIX).

Song XXIII (26:13–27v:5) (pt. 2, song 9)
(= CM song XLIII; CM song LXII, canto C)

Historical figure(s?). The only named figure is, or should be, “Cuauauhtzin,” presumably the Cuauauhtzin (d. 1409?) who was the first king of Mexico Tlatelolco. In the third stanza the singer replaces this “Cuauauhtzin” (so named in the two CM variants of the same stanza) with an unexpected “Yoyontzin” (alternate name for Nezahualcoyotl), suggesting that he is adapting a Mexica song to conform with an interest in Texcoco matters.

Synopsis. (The song makes better sense if the stanzas are rearranged according to the sequence in CM. Thus RSNE stanzas 1–8 should be ordered 3–6, 1, 2, 7, 8. And the “Yoyontzin” of stanza 3 should be replaced with “Cuauauhtzin,” as in CM.) The singer identifies with Cuauauhtzin, who appears on earth as a warrior, blowing his “conch” to summon further warriors, evidently enemies. The enemies complain (TRAN 12.7–8, 21.1–2), but Cuauauhtzin prevails, announcing his intention to “pluck” these “flowers” (2.3–4), inviting his comrades to seek the “Green Places” of paradise (2.5).

Or, following the RSNE author, Cuauauhtzin is aided by Yoyontzin, both representing the Triple Alliance, as they summon enemy warriors, etc.

Remarks. The siege of Mexico, 1521, ended with a desperate battle in the borough of Tlatelolco, whereas the history of Tlatelolco began with the reign of old King Cuauauhtzin. An irrelevant observation, seemingly. Yet the contrast between the heroic founding of Mexico and its tragic downfall forms the basis of the longest song in CM, the great atequilizcuicatl ‘water-pouring song’, which runs to 114 stanzas (CM song LXVIII). It is also the theme of another of the major songs in CM, the xopancuicatl ‘song of green places’ (CM song LXIX), running to 51 stanzas.

In CM the song at hand appears as the third canto in a suite of three cantos of obvious Mexica orientation. The Romances glossator, however, helped along by the singer’s emendation (see above), thinks our song pertains to
a Cuacuaughtzin who was lord of Tepechpan (a minor community under the control of Nezahualcoyotl, i.e., Yoyontzin, king of Texcoco). Probably the glossator has been influenced by the verb “grieve,” which simply means “sing” or “make war” (TRAN 9.9, 10.9), imagining that Cuacuaughtzin has been aggrieved by “Yoyontzin.” The matter is discussed in “The Texcoco Connection” in the Introduction.

The ambiguous second stanza apparently refers to Tlatelolco, literally ‘mound place’ (Códice Ramírez 1975:34 [Tlatelulco, que quiere dezir lugar de terrapleno]). The more benign reading of the second sentence would be: “Let me be jade, gold [i.e., a warrior (TRAN 15.2, 18.1, 20.2)]; I’ll be smelted and drilled [i.e., created, brought to life (9.1, 15.2)] on The Mound or in Mound Town [i.e., in Tlatelolco].” But “smelted and drilled” can also be rendered “ignited [blown upon] and drilled [as with a fire drill],” suggesting dedicatory rites (CC 81:15–37) or a calendrical ceremony (FC 7:27:1–7:28:13) at the summit of a temple mound, where fire is drilled in the opened breast of a sacrificial victim.

Song XXIV (27v:7–29:2) (pt. 2, song 10)
(= CM song LXXXII, canto C)

Synopsis. A singer summons “comrades,” “flowers,” “songs,” i.e., fellow warriors (TRAN 2.1–3, 8.1–3), from the sky world. As payment for their arrival (20.1), we on earth must depart, taking their place in the sky world—where eventually all will be reunited.

Remarks. In CM the song is the third in a four-canto sequence, of which the final canto is a variant of RSNE XX (see above). As noted in the commentary for XX, that final canto as it appears in CM describes the glorious, if momentary, return to earth of Tlacotzin and Oquiztzn, who had been captured by Cortés during the Conquest.

Song XXV (29:4–30:5) (pt. 2, song 11)

Synopsis. The singer summons an unnamed “singer” from the sky world (TRAN 3.1–3), who in turn produces “jewels,” “plumes,” “eagles,” “jaguars,” i.e., sky warriors (15.1–3, 2.1–2), who will be merely “borrowed” (12.7–8), on the “field,” i.e., the battlefield (2.2, 2.5).
Historical figure. Cacamatl, king of Texcoco, is clearly featured in this song as in song V (see above). Oddly, though he is worthy of being treated as a native hero of the Conquest (having been put to death by Cortés), he is not mentioned in CM. The term cacamatl ‘baby maize ear’ does appear in CM as a figure of speech designating the warrior newly returned from the sky world; and two or more historical figures named Cacamatl—among Mexico’s traditional enemies, not as the ruler of Texcoco—also appear in CM. It may be asked whether the pro-Texcoco informant, or informants, who supplied the texts could have adapted Mexica material in putting together both V and XXVI, deliberately giving these pieces a Texcoco flavor.

Moreover, the passage yhuitlo ye moççêlohuaya ao can ixpanni y cacamatlo ay huizitzeptpetl ‘feathers are scattered before Cacamatl at Thorn Knife Town’, while not impossible, is suspect. The CM usage, at least, is huitziltepeltl ‘Hummingbird Town [or Hummingbird Mountain]’, evidently a name for the warrior’s paradise, where the supreme spirit dwells (or a name for the battlefield or the dance floor as it represented that paradise); and ixpan is a stock term in CM, almost always and repeatedly meaning ‘before [or in the presence of]’ God. For example, ixpan in Dios […] nicyatzezeloa ‘before God I scatter them’ (CM 22v:3–4); quitzetzelohuaya […] yxpani yn ipalnemohuani ‘he scatters them before Life Giver’ (CM 68v:8–9). The singer would seem to have taken a phrase in which God, or Life Giver, is named and inexpertly substituted “Cacamatl” (DICT cacamatl, huitziltепетl, ixpan).

For other examples in which the RSNE singer has changed or suppressed names, see the Commentary for songs XX (suppressed) and XXIII (changed).

Synopsis. Using Cacamatl as agent for the supreme power (TRAN 3.1–3), the singer brings down a “scattering” (8.4), or “sprinkling,” of incoming warriors from the sky world, destined to give their lives on the “field” of battle.

Historical figures. Montezuma II and his brother, the proverbial war hero Tlacahuepan (see the Commentary for songs I and XX).
Synopsis. Warriors, called “shields” and “blaze-smoke,” rise to the upper world as they are killed in battle, serving as the payment (TRAN 20.1) for an incoming multitude of sky warriors “raining down” as eagles and jaguars. It is Montezuma who makes this payment, “reciting” the incoming warriors as though they were songs (8.1–3), himself ascending to an apotheosized Mexico in the sky (22.4), leaving the new arrivals behind as “reed flowers.” Among the Mexica warriors claimed by the sun is the past hero Tlacahuepan, or a substitute for Tlacahuepan, whom “God” comes to “shear.” (“God” here replaces the sun, called “Ascending Eagle” and “Turquoise Prince” in the more unacculturated CM variant.)

Remarks. The glossator sees this as a song commemorating the war with Huexotzinco, ca. 1498, in which the hero Tlacahuepan was killed (or captured and sacrificed). However, the CM variant belongs to a larger song that clearly treats the siege of Mexico, 1521. The symbolic mention of “Tlacahuepan,” who died a generation earlier, is a typical anachronism (see also RSNE song I), as is “Montezuma,” who actually died before the siege and did not lead troops in battle against Cortés as implied here.

Song XXVIII (32v:7–?) (pt. 2, song 14)
 (= CM song XL; CM V)

Historical figures. These are named in two groups:

(1) Nezahualcoyotl and Montezuma I, mid-fifteenth-century kings of Texcoco and Mexico Tenochtitlan, respectively.
(2) Tezozomoc and Cuauhuahtzin, fourteenth- through early-fifteenth-century kings of Azcapotzalco and Mexico Tlatelolco, respectively.

Synopsis. A singer states the doctrine of exchange (TRAN 20.1), by which an incoming distribution of “flowers,” i.e., warriors (2.1–3), must be paid for by a sacrifice of equivalent “flowers,” or “songs” (8.1–3), then assumes the role of Yoyontzin (i.e., Nezahualcoyotl), who voices a typical objection, lamenting that his time on earth will be brief (12.8, 21.3). The singer ignores the objection and directly summons both Nezahualcoyotl and Montezuma. Doubts are expressed by these two, whose “grieving” (10.9) has the wanted effect of producing further revenants, “turquoise-swanlike flowers,” including Tezozomoc and Cuauhuahtzin.
Remarks. The glossator’s “Cuauhtzin” probably picks up an error in the RSNE text, now incomplete on account of the missing folio. “Cuauhtinzin,” as in CM, is the better reading, though “Cuauhtzin” (see CONC) is remotely possible in this context.

Attempts to square the song with old chronicles and legends portraying Tezozomoc as a despised tyrant and enemy of Nezahualcoyotl (and of Montezuma) would seem doomed to failure. All four figures mentioned in the song are merely symbols, here representing the glorious past of Mexico and its allies.

Part 3

Song XXIX (?-35:1) (pt. 3, song 1)

Historical figures. Montezuma I, Cahualtzin, Citlalcoatzin, and Cuauhtlahcoatzin are all sons of King Itzcoatl of Tenochtitlan, ca. 1430; and Nezahualcoyotl (also called Yoyontzin), said to be the nephew of Itzcoatl (IXT 1:404, cf. DHIST 73), is here also included among Itzcoatl’s “children.” On the other side are the indeterminate representatives of the enemy Tlaxcalans-Huexotzincans, Xayacamachan and Temaxahuitzin. It is here assumed that the textual “Temayahuitzin” is a variant of the “Temaxahuitzin” attested in Muñoz Camargo 1892:102 (lib. 1, cap. 12) as a Tlaxcalan captain who aided Cortés.

Synopsis. (The first stanza is missing.) A singer, using the voices of Montezuma and Citlalcoatzin, dismisses the often heard objection that our lives are “never twice [lit., not twice],” proclaiming, “Let it not be ‘never twice’” (TRAN 21.5). Thus Montezuma and the other ancestral Mexica (including Nezahualcoyotl) arrive on earth as part of an influx of “popcorn flowers, cacao flowers” (2.2, 4.6), despite continuing objections (12.7–8, 21.1–5). Arriving also, at last, are the enemy leaders Xayacamachan and Temaxahuitzin. The stage, then, is set for combat.

Remarks. Comparison shows that XXIX is a variant on the theme more clearly expressed in song X, with which it shares the same two final stanzas. As noted in the commentary for X, the mention of Eagle Gate in that song suggests the siege of Mexico, 1521. The anachronistic summoning of ancestral Mexica ghosts out of a deeper past accords with the ritual technique already seen in previous songs (I, X, XXVII).
Here, as elsewhere, the theory of song production (TRAN 8.1–2) overlaps with the theory of resurrection (2.2, 5.1–6), allowing the piece to be read as though songs per se were being obtained from the sky world.

Song XXIX-A (35:2–36:10) (pt. 3, song 1-A)

**Synopsis.** Through his words the singer brings the supreme power to earth as a means of “hatching” (TRAN 2.1–2) eagles and jaguars (abstract form), i.e., producing warriors from the sky world (11.4), giving “outline” and “colors” (15.4) to these “companions” (abstract form); he issues a call to arms, urging the incoming warriors to “create,” or “weep for,” further eagle-jaguars, i.e., further distributions of sky warriors ready to engage in combat, ready for death.

**Remarks.** To be hidden in a coffer or wickerwork evidently means to be killed. Cf. DICT petlacalco 1.

Song XXX (36:12–36v:14) (pt. 3, song 2)

**Synopsis.** The singer promises an unnamed warrior that his death in battle—or, if captured, by sacrifice (“knife death”)—will result in songs that perpetuate his fame (TRAN 8.1–3, 12.10).

**Remarks.** “Flowers” that are “jade, gold” here seem to be songs per se. But throughout the netotiliztli “jade” and “gold” also denote the warrior himself. Accordingly, there is a suggestion in the first and last stanzas that warriors, or “flowers,” from the sky world will “come forth” as “jade” and “gold” to replace the warrior(s) lost in battle. Cf. 7v:14 et seq.: “My flowers are gold [...] these jades [...] Could they be my payment? It is thus that I’d be born in future time!” For similar allusions to “jade” and “gold” see 6v:13, 10v:16, 26v:2, 29:17–18, 36:7–8.

In the fifth stanza the imagined warriors come “pouring” out of the sky as “shield dust” or “spear mist” (TRAN 4.7, 8.4). In CM, ‘dust’ teuhtli is apparently a play on ‘lord’ teuctli (see DICT teuhtli).

“The flower of knife death” (second stanza), as also in song XXXVI, is “the beauty of knife death”—one of the rare netotilitzli usages in which the term “flower” does not denote either the song or the warrior. See the note to the translation at 36:16.
Song XXXI (37:1–38:10) (pt. 3, song 3)

**Synopsis.** A singer exhorts his comrades to “arise” (as warriors in battle) and take advantage of incoming “flowers,” i.e., potential captives (TRAN 1.12, 2.1–3). A disconsolate voice is heard, grieving (in order to produce these revenants?)—see 10.2–9.

Song XXXII (38:11–39v:12) (pt. 3, song 4)

**Historical figure.** Nezahualcoyotl.

**Synopsis.** A singer addresses the supreme power, who produces songs that scatter down as “flowers” (TRAN 1.12, 2.1–3, 3.2, 8.4); addresses Nezahualcoyotl (3.3), who continues producing “flowers” that now “lie in our hands” (13.4), with which he “adorns” himself (17.2n). These “flowers” come from the Place of Duality, i.e., the other world where human life is created (14.2; CONC Omeyocan).

**Remarks.** The bird *coxcox* ‘chachalaca’ here seems to be identified with the supreme power as master musician, as are various other birds in the *netotitlitzli*. See DICT coxcox, huitzilin, quechol. Cf. 30v:17 “the soaring Egret Bird Life Giver.”

Part 4

Song XXXIII (39v:14–41:10) (pt. 4, song 1)

**Historical figure.** Acolhuatzin, a founding “prince” of the Acolhuan nation (see CONC).

**Synopsis.** A singer calls upon ancestral Acolhuatzin, who starts to sing, or “grieve” (TRAN 10.6–10), producing “flowers” (2.1–3), “hearts” (4.5), “flower garlands” (15.5–16.1), “jewels” (15.1–2), for his fellow Acolhuans. The “flowers” “walk abroad [or march along, i.e., as warriors (2.2)],” to be taken as captives, or “hand flowers,” with which the Acolhuans will “entertain” themselves, “adorn” themselves, or “crown” themselves (17.2n).

**Remarks.** The glossator evidently thinks that Acolhuatzin is an alternate name for Nezahualcoyotl, perhaps because the latter is a Texcocan (i.e., Acolhuan); and he calls the song a *xopanuicatl* ‘song of green places’ prob-
ably because he sees ‘house of green places’ in the sixth stanza. The Nezahualcoyotl = Acolhuatzin might not be impossible, but it is unlikely and unattested; the phrase “house of green places” by no means requires that a song in which this term appears be called a *xopancuicatl* (cf. CM usages, passim).

RSNE XXXIII does not have a surviving variant, but CM XX (and no other) shares its opening phrases, *xiahuilompehua xiahuiloncuica* ‘begin in pleasure, sing with pleasure’ (treating the *om* or *on* as a vocable), and the two songs have a few other locutions in common: “in this flower house,” “be pleasured,” “borrow,” “flower tree,” “scatter,” “parcel out”—not enough, and not distinctive enough, to demand comparison, although the opening phrases might catch one’s attention. CM XX is the first in a group of twenty-four songs said by the CM glossator to be “plain songs [*melahuac cuicatl*]” that are “of three kinds: flower songs [*xochicuicatl*], eagle songs [*cuauhcuicatl*], and bereavement songs [*icnocuicatl*] all run together” (CM 16v:4–6). CM XX includes the names of Nezahualcoyotl and Montezuma (“I, Prince Nezahualcoyotl”; “your words, O princes, O Nezahualcoyotl, O Montezuma”).

**Songs XXXIV, XXXV, XXXVI**

(41:12–42v:14) (pt. 4, songs 2–4)

*Historical figure.* Cuatlecoatzin of Mexico Tenochtitlan, rewarded by King Itzcoatl for services in the Tepanec War, ca. 1430.

*Synopsis.* (These last three songs may be considered together, though in the manuscript there is no indication that they form a suite, as do many groups of three or more songs in CM.)

In XXXIV a singer summons “jades” and “gold”, i.e., warriors (TRAN 15.2, 18.1, 20.2) from the other world. They arrive as proof that death is vanquished here on earth, that the warrior’s fame—the warrior himself—lives on through the power of music. We warriors are to “adorn” (17.2n) ourselves with these “flowers,” we’re to “enjoy” them, i.e., we’re to take them as captives in battle. But the voice of a doubter is heard, arguing (contrary to the doctrine) that there is no lasting enjoyment, no life in the hereafter (“Our Home”), no supreme spirit who can be “known” there.

Song XXXV, as if bridging XXXIV and XXXVI, continues with the
doubter’s objection (“War is not your joy”), then abruptly contradicts it, asserting that the long-deceased war leader Cuatlecoatzin “knows God” (despite the doubter in XXXIV who suggests that a supreme spirit cannot be “known” in the hereafter).

Song XXXVI, as if a triumphant finale, affirms the doctrine in terms that are most shocking to Western sensibilities, offering the supreme spirit his “chalk” and “plumes” (i.e., sacrificial victims) (5.1, 20.1), promising all warriors that the “flower of knife death” (i.e., death on the stone of sacrifice) will make them “rich” (12.1).

Remarks. In XXXIV the singer, after apparently giving the doctrine a fair hearing, goes on to express an even more contemptuous negativity than in the seemingly despairing XIX (but see TRAN 12.13). Songs are merely songs, he now says, and never mind the false promise of resurrection for warriors who sacrifice their lives. In the last two stanzas he rejects the notion that a supreme spirit can be “known” in “that place” (i.e., the warrior’s paradise most probably, not the heaven of Christianity); rejects the idea that this spirit, or any spirit, can “recall” dead warriors to life; rejects the dogma of perpetual or continued life in “Our Home” (here again most probably the warrior’s paradise, though in the sixteenth century the term “Our Home” had come to mean the hereafter of Christianity). Here again, as in XIX, the inner meaning may be the unspoken reply (TRAN 12.13).

(Song XXXIV could be reinterpreted as a dialogue between a voice of doubt and a voice of affirmation, using quotation marks as was done with song IV. In that case the opening sentence in the fifth stanza would be assigned to the affirmative voice and the question mark removed.)

The two final songs, which bring us back to the native—or, more precisely, nativistic—doctrine are curiously terse. But the three-stanza song VIII may be compared; also two songs in CM, the three-stanza XLIIX and the one-stanza LIV-A.