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Tarascan Ethnohistory and Archaeology

Translation of the Spanish by Eduardo Williams



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Table of Contents

[Abstract](#)

[Resumen](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Place Names Mentioned by the *Relación de Michoacán*](#)

[Procedure for Identification and Location of Places Mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*](#)

[Other Documentary Sources](#)

[Association between Places Mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* and](#)

[Archaeological Sites](#)

[The Database](#)

[Conclusions](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[List of Figures](#)

[Sources Cited](#)

Abstract

The history of the Tarascan empire, a rival of the Aztec empire in Late Postclassic Mesoamerica, is mainly known through the *Relación de Michoacán* (1540) and archaeological data. The *Relación de Michoacán* mentions 312 different place names, many of which can be identified with present towns in the states of Michoacán, Jalisco, Guanajuato and Guerrero, México; therefore, the archaeological sites near them can be related to the place names mentioned in the document and, accordingly, it is possible to link the ethnohistorical information with current archaeological data.

In an effort to provide a fast and efficient means of accessing both of these types of information, I have created a database which gathers the data given by the *Relación de Michoacán* about each of the 312 places mentioned, the geographical information that makes it possible to locate them, the references found in other documentary sources from the 16th century, and the information from the archaeological sites that can be related to them. The diversity of queries that can be made in the database allows the user to locate immediately the minimum information needed to plan and start both archaeological and historical research at given places or regions in the Tarascan area. I hope that the database described in this report will promote the study of Tarascan culture and, in the long term, contribute to a better understanding of its Prehispanic past.

Resumen

La historia del imperio tarasco, rival del imperio mexica en la Mesoamérica del postclásico tardío, se conoce fundamentalmente a través de la *Relación de Michoacán* (1540) y de los datos arqueológicos. En la *Relación de Michoacán* se mencionan 312 topónimos diferentes, muchos de los cuales se pueden identificar con localidades actuales de los estados de Michoacán, Jalisco, Guanajuato y Guerrero, México, por lo cual los sitios arqueológicos cercanos a ellas se pueden asociar con los topónimos mencionados en el documento y en consecuencia se puede vincular la información etnohistórica con los datos arqueológicos existentes.

Con la finalidad de crear un instrumento de consulta que permita acceder fácil y rápidamente a ambos tipos de información, elaboré una base de datos que reúne los datos que proporciona la *Relación de Michoacán* sobre cada uno de los 312 lugares mencionados, la información geográfica que permite ubicarlos, las referencias que se encuentran en otras fuentes documentales del siglo XVI y la información sobre los sitios arqueológicos que pueden asociarse a ellos. Las diversas consultas que pueden ejecutarse en la base de datos permiten conocer de inmediato la información mínima necesaria para planear e iniciar investigaciones, tanto arqueológicas como históricas, en determinados lugares o regiones del área tarasca. Espero que la base de datos descrita en el presente informe promueva el estudio de la cultura tarasca y contribuya a largo plazo a una mejor comprensión de su pasado prehispánico.

Introduction

At the time of the Spanish conquest the Tarascan kingdom or empire was the most powerful independent political entity in Mesoamerica after the Aztec empire. Formed in the Late Postclassic period (ca. 1450), the Tarascan empire came to rule over most of the area now covered by the state of Michoacán and part of the states of Jalisco, Guanajuato, and Guerrero in Western Mexico ([Figure 1](#)).



Figure 1. Michoacán within the Mexican Republic.

Our current knowledge about the Tarascan kingdom comes mainly from the combination of two kinds of information: archaeological and ethnohistorical. In fact, one of the salient characteristics of the studies about the Tarascans is the disproportionate weight given to historical documents to explain and interpret their Prehispanic past. Foremost among these sources is the *Relación de Michoacán*, a document written by a Franciscan friar in 1540, which describes several aspects of Tarascan society in Prehispanic times.

In recent years, however, the *Relación de Michoacán* has been read in a more critical way. The historical validity of its accounts has been questioned, particularly the second half of the document, which deals with the formation of the Tarascan kingdom. Likewise, doubt has been cast upon the fidelity of descriptions made by the friar who compiled the book, who in applying his own concepts and ideas portrayed a society which is very similar to the Castillian monarchy. On the other hand, the geographical information

contained in the *Relación de Michoacán* seems to be quite accurate. The survival of many Tarascan toponyms in Michoacán and adjacent states allows us to identify several places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* and to link them with modern localities, while several others can be approximately located thanks to the information in the *Relación de Michoacán* and other written sources. This allows us to locate archaeological sites linked with these places and, therefore, to directly link archaeological information with historical and ethnohistorical data.

With the objective of systematizing this body of data and of creating a research instrument which would permit easy access to the data, I put together a database which gathers information on each of 312 places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, including the necessary information to locate them on the landscape (Espejel 2004). Thanks to funds provided by FAMSÍ I was able to compile for each one of these places the references found within other colonial documents, as well as information about presently known archaeological sites which could be related to them.

Place names mentioned by the *Relación de Michoacán*

There are 312 different toponyms in the *Relación de Michoacán*, most of which are mentioned in the second half of the document, more specifically in the 30 chapters which contain the long account narrated annually by the high priest or *petamuti* during a feast known as Equataconsquaro. For instance, just in chapter 31, which mentions the conquests through which the kingdom was formed by Tariacuri's (the principal protagonist) nephews, there are 130 mentions of distinct places.

The complete list of toponyms mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* includes the names of whole regions, such as the Province of Michoacán or New Spain; of particular regions within and outside the Tarascan territory, such as the border with Mexico (i.e. Aztec territory), the Hot Lands, Pánuco or "Las Higueras" (i.e. Honduras), and specific places outside of the Tarascan territory, such as Toluca, Texcoco, Colima or Mexico (Tenochtitlán). Most of the toponyms mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, however, refer to settlements within the Tarascan domain, most of them in the state of Michoacán, although there also are names of hills (Tariaqueri, Arizizinda, Tupen, among others), of water springs and streams (Carupuvta in Pátzcuaro or Curinguen, near Upapo Hoato), of caves (Patuquen, near Tzintzuntzan), of temples (Puruaten and Quacari Xangatien in Jarácuaro) and of sites or fields within a settlement (Puque Huringuequa, where the baths of the goddess Xaratanga were or had previously been located in Tzintzuntzan; Arataquaro, a field near Zuangua's house in Tzintzuntzan; or Uanaquaro, a field near the temple of the god Querenda Angapeti, in Zacapu).

Of the 312 toponyms mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, I have been able to identify only 145 with present localities, and therefore I have been able to locate them on the map. But the approximate location for virtually all places can be inferred from information provided by the *Relación*, as well as other documents. For example, 37 of the places not identified were around Lake Pátzcuaro, and seven of them were on or

near Tzintzuntzan, while 20 were south of the lake. Of those places identified with present localities, seven are in the state of Guerrero, six in Guanajuato, and three in Jalisco (apart from the cluster of towns collectively known as Pueblos de Ávalos or Pueblos Dábalos in the colonial era) (see [Table 1](#)).

Table 1. Identified and Unidentified Places Mentioned in the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i>		
Places:	Amount	Percentage
Mentioned in the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i>	312	100.0 %
Mentioned in Chapter 31 of the second part of the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i>	130	41.6 %
Identified	145	46.5 %
in Guerrero	7	2.2 %
in Guanajuato	6	1.9 %
in Jalisco	3	1.0 %
Unidentified	167	53.5 %
Located approximately	282	90.3 %
With associated archaeological sites	79/312	25.3 %
	79/145	54.5 %

The map made using these data clearly shows the limits of Tarascan territory ([Figure 2](#)). To the north, the Lerma River appears to have been a natural barrier which was not broached; to the south, the Balsas and Tepalcatepec Rivers likewise seem to have been a natural limit, as well as the Cutzamala River to the southeast. The places identified in the eastern end coincide with the sites recognized in the *Relación de Michoacán* and other sources as border sites between Tarascan and Mexica territories (Tuzantla, Taximaroa, and Maravatío, among others). The western limits are less clear, but the extension toward Jalisco represented by Tuspa (Tuxpan), Capotlan (Zapotlán) and Tamazula, together with the Pueblos Dábalos which were found in the western end of Lake Chapala, suggest that the intermediate area between these places in Jalisco and those in the western end of Michoacán were also part of the Tarascan realm.

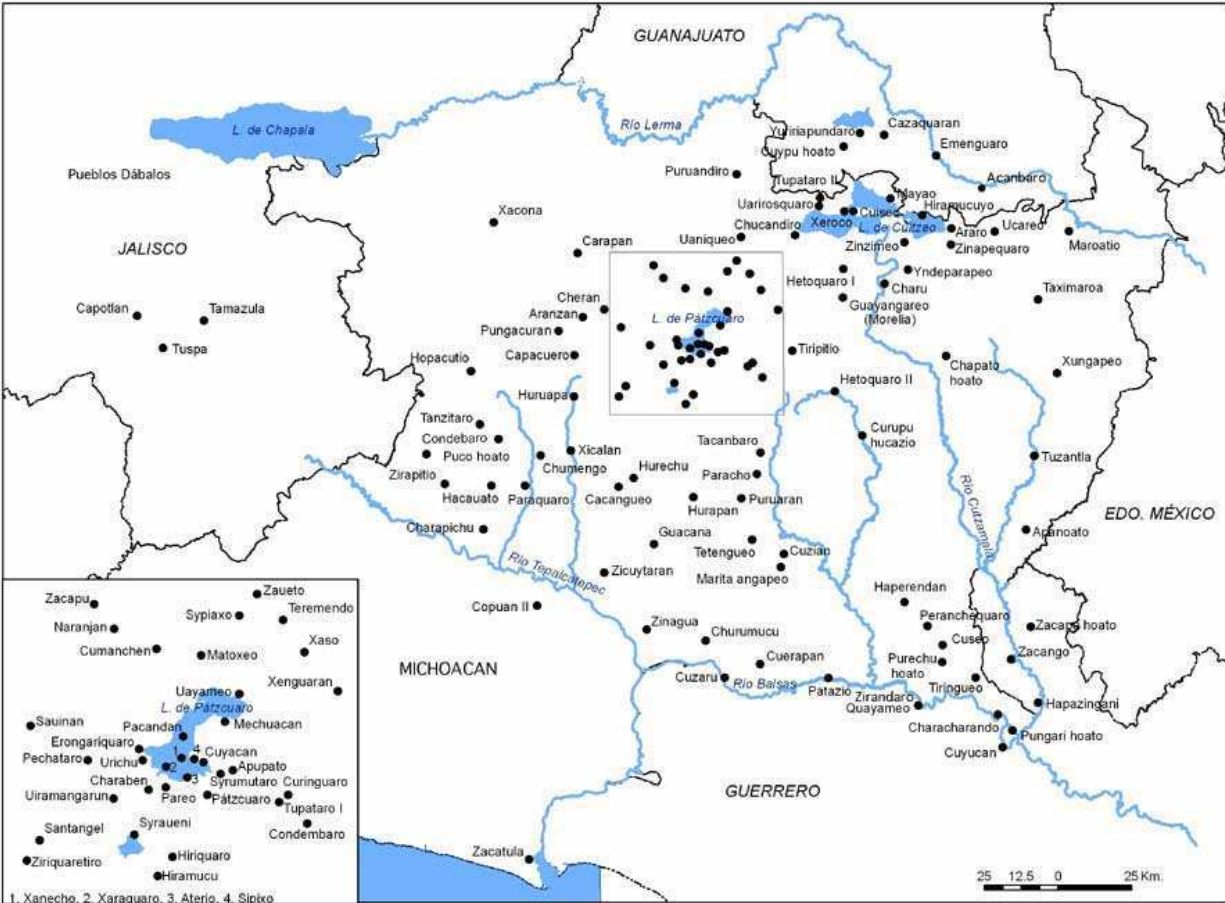


Figure 2. Map 1, sites mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

Most sites mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* were concentrated around Lake Pátzcuaro, to a great extent because that is where most of the story narrated by the *Relación* transpired. However, it is possible that this situation is a result of the fact that this zone indeed had a greater population concentration. The distribution of settlements around lakes in the highlands (Michoacán's northern sector) and along the rivers of the Tierra Caliente (the "hot lands," or southern Michoacán) is also evident in the map.

Procedure for identification and location of places mentioned in the Relación de Michoacán

In order to identify and locate the places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* I combined two basic criteria: (1) the coincidence of a place name in the *Relación* with the name of a present-day place, using as reference localities registered in the extant topographic charts (of 1:50,000 scale; Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e

Informática, or INEGI); and (2) the sites' approximate location, inferred from the context in which they are mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

The importance of the second criterion (above) is crucial, because we virtually never find an unequivocal relationship between the names mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* and present-day nomenclature. Sometimes the variation between ancient and modern names is minimal (e.g. Pazquaro= Pátzcuaro; Erongariquaro= Erongarícuaro; Charu= Charo; Aranzan= Aranza) or both are identical (Characharando, Zacapu, Cheran). The context of the narrative is the only factor that allows us to be certain that the present-day place is in fact the same as the one mentioned in the *Relación*. This criterion is even more necessary in those instances in which differences between both old and new names are considerable (for instance Curupu hucazio= Curucupatzeo; Curinguaro= Quiringuaro; Purechu hoato= Purechuchó), or when we find (as is often the case) more than one present-day town with the same name, or when the *Relación de Michoacán* mentions two or more different places that bear the same name. Lastly, in several instances I was able to confirm the identification of places thanks to information provided by other written sources ([Table 2](#)). Such was the case of Hetoquaro, one of the most complex examples of this situation (see below).

The toponym Hetoquaro (or Hetuquaro) is mentioned in six distinct passages within the *Relación de Michoacán*. In four of these instances the name seems to refer to a single place which was, according to data provided by the *Relación*, to the east of Lake Pátzcuaro, between Morelia and Araró. At present there is no place known as Hetoquaro or Hetuquaro in the surrounding areas of Morelia and Araró, however, other colonial sources mention a place called Yztapa, which in Nahuatl means the same as Hetoquaro, "place of salt," and has been identified with Tarímbaro (*Suma de Visitas, Libro de las Tasaciones*, among others; see Herrejón 2000 and Warren 1989). Therefore, it is highly likely that the Hetoquaro mentioned in the four passages of the *Relación* had been in or near the present-day Tarímbaro, north of Morelia.

The other two passages of the *Relación* where the toponym Hetoquaro is mentioned seem to refer to two other places which had the same name. Both are mentioned in the long list of towns that were conquered by Tiriacuri's nephews, and one of them can be provisionally identified with the town of Etúcuaro, in the municipality of Madero. The main criterion for establishing such association is the relationship between this Hetoquaro and a cluster of towns which are located relatively near the aforementioned Etúcuaro, to the south of Lake Pátzcuaro: Tacanbaro (Tacámbaro); Paracho (Parocho, south of Tacámbaro); Hurapa (Urapa, south of Tacámbaro); and Curupu hucazio (Curucupatzeo?). However, the identification of all these places is problematical because there is another cluster of towns with similar names west of Lake Pátzcuaro (Etúcuaro, in the municipality of Tangancícuaro, Uruapan, Paracho, and Corupo). Nevertheless, considering that conquest campaigns toward the Balsas River were launched from some of these places, it is more likely that the first identification is the correct one.

The other town known as Hetuquaro in the *Relación* seems to have been located in the same region where the following towns are located today: Hapérendan (Aparandan), Zacango, Cuseo (Cutzio), and Quayameo, that is to say in the corner formed by the Balsas and Cutzamala Rivers. At present there is no place known as Hetoquaro in this region, but several colonial documents mention places with this name: San José Etúquaro, a subject or *barrio* (quarter) of Sirandaro located on the margins of the Balsas River (according to the *Relación Geográfica de Sirandaro*; see Acuña 1987), San Juan Etúcuaro, related to Zirandaro and Guayameo (De la Torre Villar 1984), and lastly San Miguel Etúcuaro, a town that was subject to Pungarabato, present-day Ciudad Altamirano, Guerrero (De la Torre Villar 1984).

In summary, the *Relación de Michoacán* mentions three places named Hetoquaro, only one of which can be identified with one of two towns currently known as Etúcuaro in Michoacán, while the second one can be identified with enough certainty to the present-day Tarímbaro. About the third place all we can say is that it was found in the Tierra Caliente of Michoacán, probably near the Balsas River.

Other documentary sources

Several historical documents confirm the existence of places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, and in some cases provide important information to locate them at least approximately. The most useful sources up to now have been five fragments of the *visita* (i.e. official survey) made by Antonio de Caravajal to the province of Michoacán between 1523 and 1524 in order to get information which would be the basis for distributing *encomiendas* or land grants (Warren 1989), and the *Relaciones geográficas* compiled between 1579 and 1581 on orders of the Spanish crown (Acuña 1987, 1988). The data recorded by Caravajal in Espopyuta (Comanja), for instance, allow us to infer the approximate location of Zichaxuquaro in the general area of the current Cerro Tipicato, which therefore permits to link this place with the archaeological sites that have been located on that hill's lower slopes. Likewise, in the *relación* pertaining to Turicato several places are named which are also mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* (Chupingo parapeo, Casinda angapeo, Papazio hoata, and Tetengueo). This source also specifies the distance between these sites and Turicato (a place that is not mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, but which is currently found in the area), allowing to determine the area where these sites must have been located.

Apart from the documents mentioned above I consulted the *tasación* or tax survey made by the Bachiller Ortega in 1528 (Warren 1989), as well as the report on copper mines carried out by Vasco de Quiroga in 1533 (Warren 1968), the *Suma de visitas* compiled between 1547 and 1550 (Paso y Troncoso 1905), the *Libro de las tasaciones* that pertains to the second half of the 16th century (González de Cossío 1952), the diary of the journey made by father Alonso Ponce in 1586-1587 around Michoacán, Jalisco, and Colima (Ciudad Real 1993), the documents published by Ernesto de la Torre Villar (1984) on the Indian congregations in Michoacán, and lastly the *Lienzo de*

Jucutacato, a pictographic document made in the 16th century but dealing with events that took place in Prehispanic times (Roskamp 1998).

In some cases I noted the reference to specific documents mentioned in the bibliography. For instance, a document about Zacapu cited by Cayetano Reyes (1991) contains information about several places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* whose exact location is not known, but that were near Zacapu (i.e. Uiriguarapexo, Quaruno, Querequaro).

I have also checked documents from the 17th and 18th centuries, but have not integrated them into the database. As a complement I refer the reader to Peter Gerhard's book (1986), where one can find references to other useful historical documents, both published and unpublished. Lastly, I have also checked some old maps, primarily Beaumont's (1932), but I still have to integrate to the database in a systematic way the information from several colonial maps.

Association between places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* and archaeological sites

Once I identified the places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, I could gather the archaeological information pertaining to each one of them. The main instrument used to compile this information was the catalog of archaeological sites found in the Dirección de Registro Público de Monumentos y Zonas Arqueológicas del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (Direction of Public Registry of Archaeological Monuments and Zones of the National Anthropology and History Institute), which consists of almost 1,800 entries. However, because the archaeological information available for each site in the catalog is rather limited (basically the UTM coordinates for each recorded site, the number and height of architectonic structures, and occupation dates if known), it was necessary to also check the technical reports for several archaeological projects, which are on file in the Archivo Técnico de la Coordinación Nacional de Arqueología del INAH (Technical Archive of the National Archaeological Coordination, INAH) (Sapio y López 1983; DIAENAH n.d.; Peña 1983; Michelet 1984; Fernández 1992; Cárdenas 1992, 1993; Pulido *et al.* 1997; Grave 1998; Silverstein 1999; Pollard 2000, 2005, among many others). I also had to check several publications (Moedano 1946; Gorenstein 1985; Michelet 1992; Cabrera 1995; Pulido *et al.* 1996; Healan 2004; Esparza 2004, among others). In order to further broaden the information about each one of the sites, it would be necessary to also go through the complete information produced by several archaeological projects, which in several cases includes longer descriptions, photographs and sketches made in the field, among other things that were not integrated into the final report.

Archaeological sites have been recorded in 79 out of the 145 identified places ([Figure 3](#)). This doesn't mean to say that the remaining places do not have archaeological features, but rather that the regions where they are found have not been formally explored by archaeologists. In fact, my experience shows that very likely archaeological

sites would be found in those regions, if archaeological investigations were undertaken. There is a very high likelihood of finding archaeological sites near the places mentioned by the *Relación de Michoacán*.

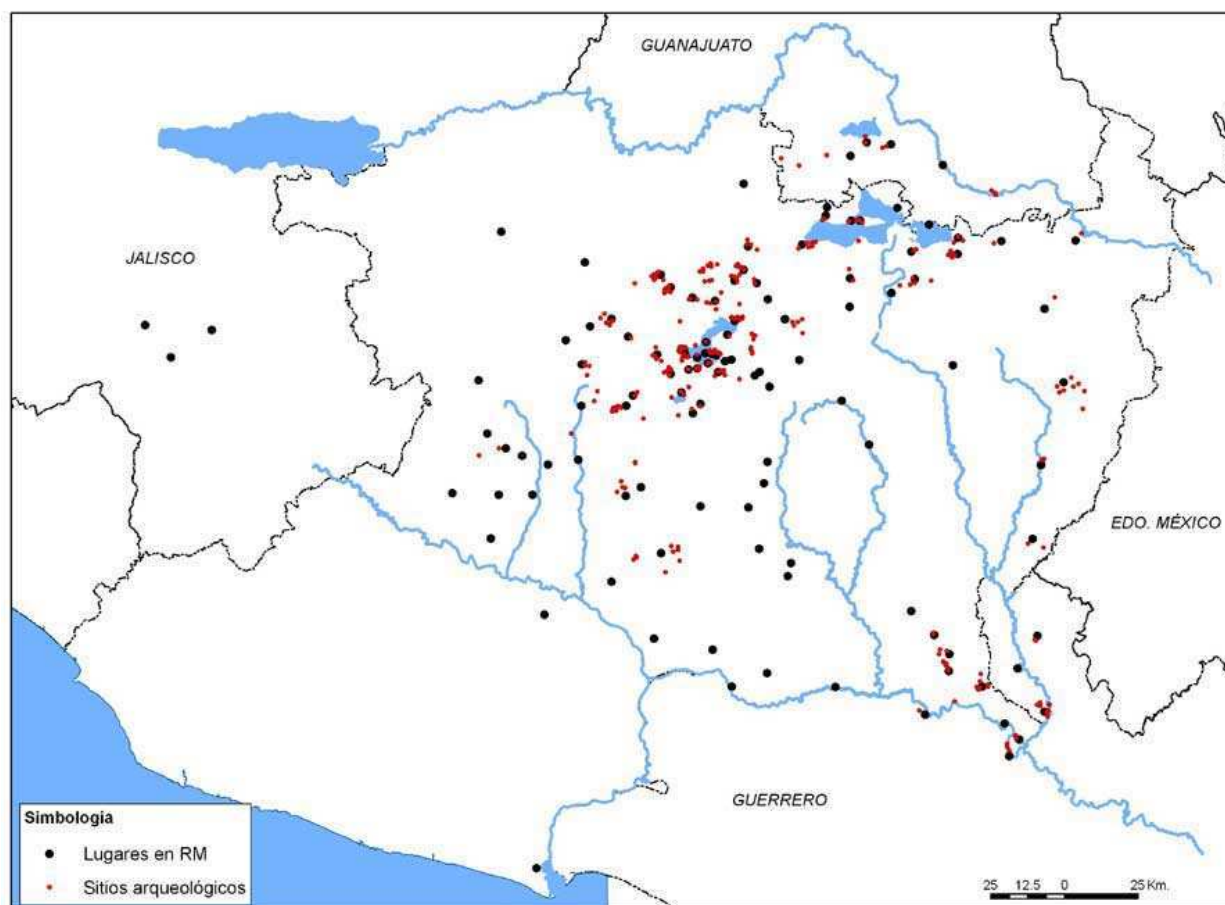


Figure 3. Map 2, archaeological sites linked with the places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

The map in [Figure 3](#) shows the archaeological sites associated with places identified with current localities, but in the database I also included sites found in areas where some unidentified places may have been. Altogether I have integrated into the database the information for a total of 448 sites, 344 of which can be linked to some of the places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

Several striking blank areas in the map are due to the fact that I have not yet integrated to the database all the available information, such as the known sites within the Tamazula, Tuxpan, Zapotlán and Sayula areas of Jalisco. Also lacking are the data that have recently been recorded for the Tepalcatepec River region, as well as the Zamora-Jacona valley and the area around Tiripetío, which still are under analysis, and lastly several sites mentioned in the bibliography whose geographical coordinates I have not

yet figured out. Another striking blank area in the map is due to the lack of archaeological fieldwork, for example in the area around Tacanbaro (Tacámbaro), Hurapan (Urapa), Puruaran, Tetengueo (Tetenguio) and Cuzian, which was a very important region according to ethnohistorical data. Another very important region still waiting to be studied is the one around Curinguaro, Tupataro and Condembaro, east of Lake Pátzcuaro.

The database

The system of related databases I designed includes the following information for each one of 312 places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*:

1. General data
 - a. Place name
 - b. Known variants for name
 - c. Possible meaning
2. Summary of information provided for each site by the *Relación de Michoacán*
3. Geographical Data
 - a. General location
 - b. Current location
 - c. Geographic and UTM coordinates for present locality
 - d. Cartographic references (1:50,000 INEGI topographic chart)
4. Associated archaeological sites
 - a. Site name
 - b. Site reference in the catalog of the Dirección de Registro Público de Monumentos y Zonas Arqueológicas (INAH)
 - c. Archaeological project that first reported the site
 - d. Site number as provided by project
 - e. Site's UTM coordinates
 - f. Period of occupation
 - g. Site description (number of structures, size, fieldwork done at the site, etc.)
5. References
 - a. Folios of the document where the site is mentioned and page numbers for the principal editions; part and chapter within the document; period, stage and event within the account
 - b. Other documentary sources where the site is mentioned

c. Related bibliography

6. Graphic material (photos, sketches, plans, etc. ([Table 3](#), [Figures 4](#) and [5](#), below, [Figure 6](#), [Figures 7](#) and [8](#), below).

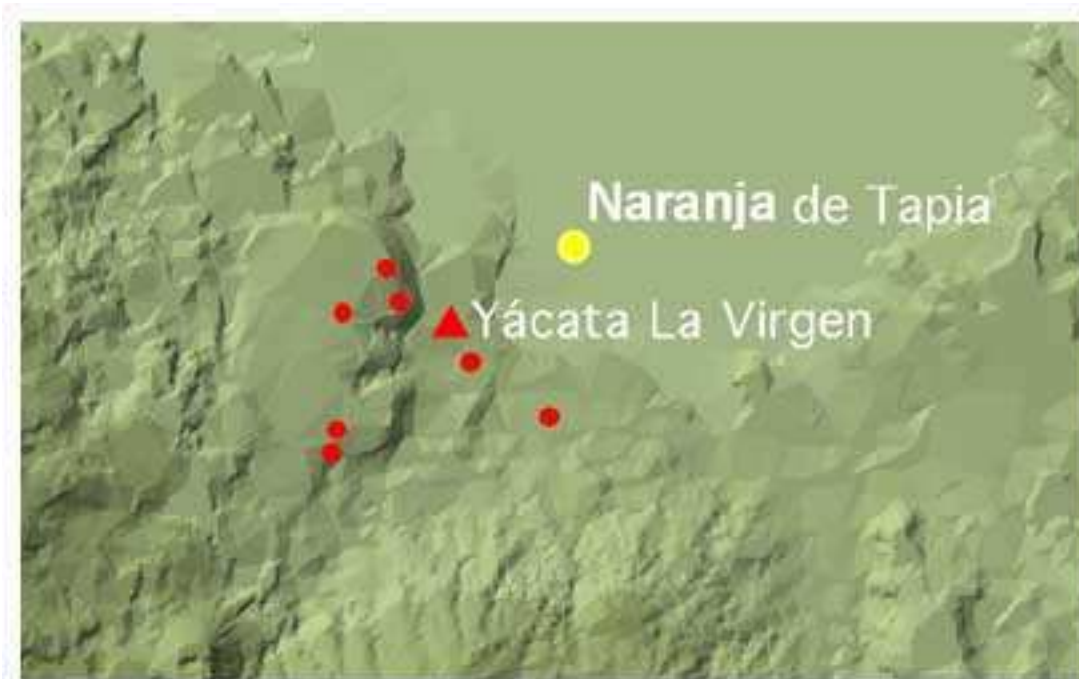


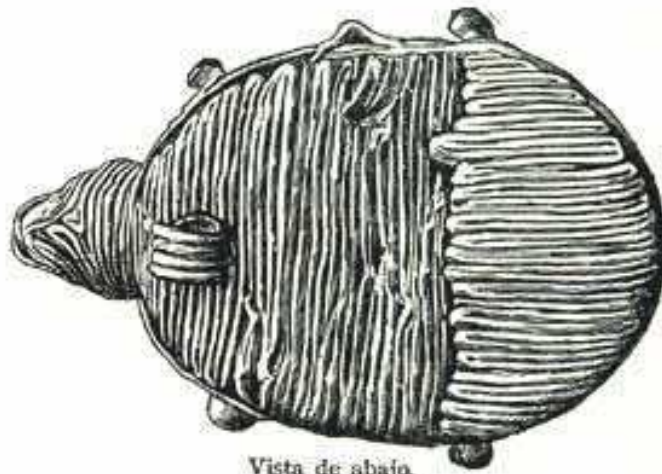
Figure 4. Archaeological sites linked with Naranja.



Vista de arriba.



Vista de costado.



Vista de abajo.

Sonaja antigua en forma de tortuga, con una tortuguita sobre la espalda. De Naranja, cerca de Zacapu. Longitud, 9.4 cm.

Figure 5. Bells from Naranjan, drawn by Carl Lumholtz (1986 [1904]).

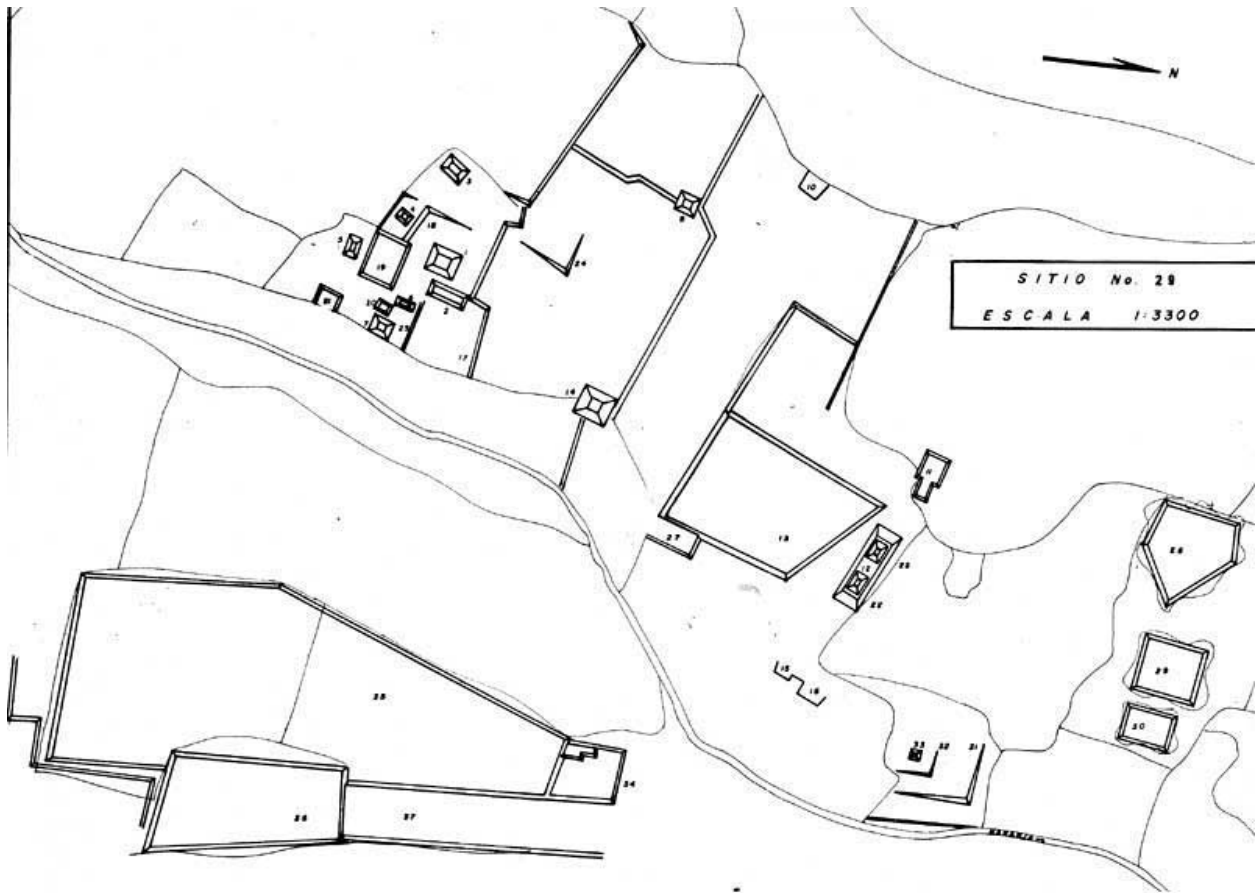


Figure 6. Sketch map of the La Virgen site, linked with Naranjan (map made during the Pátzcuaro-Cuitzeo Project, DIAENAH).



Figure 7. Recent photo of the La Virgen site, linked with Naranjan.



Figure 8. Recent photo of a partially destroyed yácata (mound) in the site of La Virgen, linked with Naranjan.

One can make searches in the database (currently in Access and Filemaker format) under different criteria. For example, one can search for the entry for a specific place according to the name mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán* with its variants, or according to the current name of the present-day locality. It is also possible to select clusters of entries, for instance the places mentioned in specific passages of the *Relación* (according to the folio, the chapter or the event within the narrative in which place names are mentioned), or the sites found in a specific region (according to their general location, the INEGI chart where they appear, or by establishing specific ranges for geographical coordinates). It is also possible to select the records of those places that have been identified and those that have not been identified, as well as places that can be linked to archaeological sites, or those that are mentioned by a specific documentary source distinct from the *Relación de Michoacán* ([Table 4](#)). The related database that gathers information for the archaeological sites can also be searched independently under several criteria (archaeological project, region, and so on). However, it is important to bear in mind that this database does not include all extant or available archaeological information.

Lastly, I should point out that the database's design allows for adding information in a systematic and orderly way, in order to expand it in various directions. The compilation in related (or independent) databases of the information contained in other documents, for instance, will allow us to integrate the geographical, economic, demographic, linguistic, and political-administrative data contained in these records, not just for the places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*, but also for many others that we will be able to link with specific archaeological sites. All this will allow us to create a complex

geographic information system to generate diverse cartographic material, and to analyze data with several perspectives and methods.

Conclusions

The use given by scholars to this search instrument, which I hope to make available to the interested public in the near future, will be its ultimate proof of efficiency and functionality. For the time being I can point out several advantages offered by the possibility of accessing quickly and easily all the gathered archaeological and ethnohistorical data.

For instance, the combination of both types of information immediately reveals certain areas where it would be convenient to undertake archaeological research, such as the already cited case of the region around Turicato, where apparently the *caciques* (i.e. chiefs) who launched the conquest of the Tierra Caliente (i.e. the hot lands, or Tepalcatepec River basin) were concentrated, and where the rich copper mines were found. Likewise the area around Curinguaro, which according to the *Relación de Michoacán* was one of the most powerful chiefdoms prior to the formation of the Tarascan kingdom. By the same token, it is evident that several places were linked with each other, therefore the relationship between several archaeological sites could be studied as a cluster, such as the places between Curinguaro and Araró, which were conquered by Chapa (Tiripitío, Hoporo, Hetoquaro, Xenguaro), or the places southwest of Uruapan where *Nahuatlato*s (i.e. Nahuatl speakers) lived (Hacauato, Zizupan, Chumengo, Copuan). The study of these relationships would perhaps enable us to detect subtle regional differences between clusters, reflected on architecture and other archaeological materials. The investigation of the cluster of sites linked to the goddess Xaratanga (Sipixo, Uricho, Uiramangarun, Santangel), together with the exploration of the area south of Lake Zirahuén, for example, could help to locate the place where Tariaran was found, one of the foremost characters in the account contained in the *Relación de Michoacán*, to which I have found no reference in other documents. On the other hand, the dating of specific sites (for instance Uayameo, Zichaxuquaro, Hoataro pexo or Yziparamucu) would probably allow us to establish a more detailed chronology and to detect the great movements of population, if such was the case, described in the accounts found within the *Relación*. Lastly, the information gathered so far in the database provides in an immediate and individualized fashion the minimal documentary and bibliographical references to start the investigation of a specific site or region.

Until now the study of the Tarascans has been based primarily on the accounts and descriptions found in the *Relación de Michoacán* and in the information provided by other documentary sources. Undoubtedly historical information will continue to play an important role in this research, but archaeology still has a story to tell. I hope that the diffusion of the search tool presented here will stimulate interest about the Tarascan culture, one of the most important cultures of the Late Postclassic period of Mesoamerica, as well as promote new research that in the long term will contribute to a better understanding of the Tarascan people's Prehispanic past.

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I would like to express my thanks to FAMSI for its financial support to undertake this research; to Eduardo Williams for his advice in the preparation of the project; to the Colegio de Michoacán, the institution where I am currently employed, for providing the ideal conditions for this research, as well as a space to present and discuss the preliminary results of the project; to Miguel Medina, Manuel Pérez Rivas and all the staff of the map section of the Dirección de Registro Público de Monumentos y Zonas Arqueológicas del INAH for their assistance during the consultation of the archives; to Efraín Cárdenas, Igor Cerda, Rodrigo Esparza, Eugenia Fernández Villanueva, Armando Trujillo and Hans Roskamp for the data, much of them unpublished, that they provided; to Marco Antonio Hernández, who made the maps and suggested the possibility of converting the database to a geographic information system; and very specially to Mario Rétiz and his nephew Fernando, who came to the field with me.

List of Figures

[Figure 1](#). Michoacán within the Mexican Republic.

[Figure 2](#). Map 1, sites mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

[Figure 3](#). Map 2, archaeological sites linked with the places mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

[Figure 4](#). Archaeological sites linked with Naranjan.

[Figure 5](#). Bells from Naranjan, drawn by Carl Lumholtz (1986 [1904]).

[Figure 6](#). Sketch map of the La Virgen site, linked with Naranjan (map made during the Pátzcuaro-Cuitzeo Project, DIAENAH).

[Figure 7](#). Recent photo of the La Virgen site, linked with Naranjan.

[Figure 8](#). Recent photo of a partially destroyed *yácata* (mound) in the site of La Virgen, linked with Naranjan.

List of Tables

[Table 1.](#) Identified and Unidentified Places Mentioned in the *Relación de Michoacán*.

[Table 2.](#) Summary of the Database.

[Table 3.](#) Example of entry in the database.

[Table 4.](#) Example of search: towns conquered by cacique (i.e. chief) Utucuma.

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RM	I	Present Locality	AS	LJ	C	O	VQ	SV	LT	RG	AP
Camuqua hoato											
Capacuero	X	Capacuaro	X	X	X						
Capacurio											
Capotlan	X	Ciudad Guzmán, Jal.				X		X	X	X	X
Carapan	X	Carapan	X							X	
Caropu hopansquaro	X	Pátzcuaro									
Carupuvta		Water Spring in Pátzcuaro									
Casinda angapeo					X						
Cauingan											
Caxuruyo											
Cazaquaran	X	Casacuarán, Gto.	X							X	
Changueyo											
Chapato hoato	X	Chapatoato									
Charaben	X	Charahuen	X								
Characharando	X	Characharando	X								
Charachutiro											
Charandauchao											
Charapichu	X	Charapicha									
Charimanguero											
Charu	X	Charo									
Cheran	X	Cherán	X		X			X			
Chucandiro	X	Chocándiro	X			X		X		X	
Chumengo	X	Chonengo		X							
Chupingo parapeo					X						
Churumucu	X	Churumuco		X			X			X	
Chutio											
Colima	X	Colima				X				X	
Condebaro	X	Condébaro	X	X							

Condembaro	X	Condémbaro						X		X	
Copuan I											
Copuan II	X	Cupuán del Río;									
Cuerapan	X	Cuiripan									
Cuinuzeo											
RM	I	Present Locality	AS	LJ	C	O	VQ	SV	LT	RG	AP
Cuiris quataro	X	Hill in Pátzcuaró									
Cuiris tucupachao											
Cuiseo	X	Cuitzeo	X			X		X		X	
Cumanchen	X	Comanja	X		X	X		X			
Curimizundiro											
Curinguaro	X	San Simón Quiríngaro								X	
Curinguen		Stream near Upapo hoato									
Curupu hucazio	X	San Diego Curucupatzeo									
Cuseo	X	Cutzio	X	X			X	X		X	
Cutu											
Cuxaran										X	
Cuyacan (Coyoacán)	X	Coyoacán, D.F.		X							
Cuyacan (Ihuatzio)	X	Ihuatzio	X								
Cuyameo											
Cuynaho	X										
Cuypu hoato	X	Rancho Nuevo de Cupuato, Gto.	X		X						
Cuyucan	X	Coyuca de Catalán, Gro.	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Cuyxéo											
Cuzaru	X	Cuzaru								X	
Cuzian	X	Cutzian Chiquito or Cutzian Grande					X				
Ebarizan uiuio											
Echuen	X										
Emenguaro	X	San Antonio Emenguaro, Gto.	X					X		X	

Pánuco	X	Pánuco, Ver.										
Papazio hoata					X							
Paques hoato												
Paracho	X	Parocho										
Paranzio												
Paraqua hacuparaca												
Paraquaro	X	Parácuaro								X		
Paraxu												
Pare xaripitio												
Pareo	X	San Bartolo Pareo	X									
Patamuangacarahó												
Patazio	X	Pataceo										
Patuquen		Cave near Tzintzuntzan										
Pátzcuaro	X	Pátzcuaro	X	X				X		X	X	
Pechataro	X	San Francisco Pichátaro	X		X			X				X
RM	I	Present Locality	AS	LJ	C	O	VQ	SV	LT	RG	AP	
Peranchequaro	X	Petáchicuaro	X									
Petazequa	X	Cliffs in Pátzcuaro										
Peuendao												
Piruen		Pátzcuaro										
Provincia de Mechuacan	X											
Puco hoato	X	Puco	X							X		
Pucunda hacurucu												
Pucuri equatacuyo												
Pueblos Dábalos	X					X			X	X	X	
Pumeo												
Pumuchacupeo												
Pungacuran												
Pungari hoato	X	Ciudad Altamirano, Gro.	X			X	X	X		X		

Table 3. Example of Entry in the Database

General Information		Geographical Information							
ID number: 5	General location: South of Zacapu marshlands								
Name: Naranjan	Current Location: Naranja de Tapia								
Variants: Naranjan, Naranxan, Zizanban	Topographic chart INEGI 1:50,000: E14A11								
Meaning:	Coordinates	E	N						
Identified: yes	Geographical	101 45.6	19 46.5						
Archaeological site(s): yes	UTM	210805	2189148						
Information in the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i>									
<p>When Ticatame, the leader of the Chichimecs, arrives at Uiriguaranpexo [event with which starts the account of the second part of the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i>] he marries Ziranzirancamaro's (lord of Naranjan) sister. In spite of Ticatame's warnings, the women of Naranjan during the feast of Uapansquaro take to their town a deer that had been struck with an arrow by Ticatame, where their brothers quarter it and tear its skin. Upon learning about this, Ticatame gets angry and kills some of his brothers in law and moves to Zichaxuquaro. His wife comes with him and when passing near Querequaro decides to take the god Uazoriquare, who henceforth "dwelled" near Curicaueri, Ticatame's god. Some time afterwards, Naranjan's inhabitants ally with those of Cumanchen and kill Ticatame. Because of this his son Sicuirancha migrates with his people to Uayameo. Many years later, when Hiripan and Tangaxoan occupy Michoacán, they get beans and maize from Naranjan, "which were very good." Before Tariacuri's death, Hiripan and Tangaxoan conquer Naranjan (cluster 3 of conquered towns). Later, to satisfy Nuño de Guzmán's demands, Zinzicha requests and receives gold from Naranjan. Apparently Naranjan was also called Zizanban, which would explain why the inhabitants of Naranjan were called Zizanvanachan.</p>									
Notes									
<p>There is an interesting contrast between some customs of the inhabitants of Naranjan and those of the Chichimecs, for instance the former did not know how to quarter deer and did not use deer skins to wrap the gods. Likewise, they fought with sticks rather than with bow and arrow. The date of occupation during the Classic period and the apparent abandonment in the Postclassic of the La Virgen site, according to the analysis carried out by CEMCA, does not coincide with the information provided by the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i>.</p>									
References in the <i>Relación de Michoacán</i> (original manuscript and main editions)									
ff Ms	1956	1977	1980	1988	2000	2001	Chap.	Period	Event
62v	14	14	19	54	340	366	2.2	I,1,a	Arrival at Uiriguaranpexo
63	15	15	20	56	341	367	2.2	I,1,a	Ticatame's wedding
77	43	43	58	89	372	395	2.10	II,1,a	Tariacuri's education
116	121	121	154	172	475	469	2.23	II,4,d	Michuacan Occupied
131	151	151	195	208	519	498	2.31	III,1	Conquered Towns 3
55v	270	270	344	331	684	355	3.28	V,4,b	Guzmán's demands
Archaeological Information (INAH's complete code number includes chart and state E14A11-016-)									
Code	Name	Project	no.	X	Y	Period			
041	Yácata la Virgen	CEMCA	56	209700	2188275	Classic			

Description: 10 structures, *yácatas*, mounds, terraces. Surface ceramics, 1 2x2 m test pit, March 84 C14 date INAH 710 (bottom of test pit, level 4): B.P. 1449 +/- 49; uncalibrated 501 +/- 49; calibrated 557-644. The test pit was located on an artificial terrace NE of the main pyramid. Four levels were excavated to a depth of 1 m, the material found was generally scarce. Occupation starts in the Jarácuaro interphase (A.D. 550-600). During the La Joya phase (Terminal Classic, A.D. 850-900) the site is still occupied and could have an important position in the Zacapu basin's settlement hierarchy. Toward the Palacio phase (Early Postclassic, A.D. 900-1200), when the *malpaís* is first occupied, El Palacio (Zacapu) seems to become the ruling site in the basin, perhaps replacing La Virgen, which no longer has evidence of occupation.

Code	Name	Project	no.	X	Y	Description
153	La Virgen	PPC-2	29	209850	2187950	33 struct. under 2 m, 4 struct. 2-5 m. Sketch map.
105	Naranja de Tapia II	PPC-2	27A	208600	2187200	5 struct. under 2 m.
104	Naranja de Tapia	PPC-2	27	208750	2188425	6 struct. under 2 m, 3 struct. 2-5 m.
107	Naranja de Tapia III	PPC-2	30	208650	2187400	1 struct. under 2 m.
108	Buenavista III	PPC-2	31	209250	2188500	2 struct. under 2 m, 1 struct. 2-5 m.
109	Tiríndaro	PPC-2	32	210530	2187450	6 struct. under 2 m.
013	Loma del Jacal	CEMCA	18	210400	2189450	CL
014	Yácata de la Mesa	CEMCA	19	209150	2188800	3 or 4 struct.: 1 <i>yácata</i> , 3 mounds. Surface ceramics.
039	Yácata Mesa de Lorenzo Silva	CEMCA	54	288600	2186850	1 <i>yácata</i> and other structures.

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Other documentary sources

Caravajal: Espopoyuta (Maranja or Naranja, subject to Espopoyutla)

Tasación de Ortega (Naranjo or Naranja)

Libro de las Tasaciones: Comanja and Naranja: Seuinan

Cf. Gerhard (Valladolid)

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Table 4. Example of Search: Towns Conquered by *cacique* (i.e. chief) Utucuma

Toponym in Relación de Michoacán	General location	Current Location	INEGI Chart	East	North	AS	Notes
Paranzio							
Zinapan							Repeated in two distinct conquest groups.
Zirapitio	Northwest of Apatzingán	Zirapetiro	E13B48	102 28.7	19 09.5		Repeated in two conquest groups.
Taziran							
Turuquaran							
Urechu ambaquetio							
Euaquaran							There is a hill called Eguacuaro. Perhaps Euaquaran was nearby, although it is too far to the north of

							the region where the other towns are located.
Charapichu	South of Apatzingán	Charapicha	E13B48	102 21.3	19 01.0		
Paraquaro	Northeast of Apatzingán	Parácuaro	E13B49	102 13.1	19 08.8		Check sites from Tepalcatepec project.
Paques hoato							
Tiristaran							
Puco hoato	West of Apatzingán	Puco	E13B39	102 38.8	19 12.9	yes	
Tanzitaro	Southwest of Uruapan, north of Apatzingán	Tancitaro	E13B38	102 21.7	19 20.2	yes	There is only one site recorded in the Tancitaro municipality, but according to the RG the present town was built on top of Prehispanic structures.
Eruzio	Northwest of Tomatlán	Could be Querusto	E13B48				According to Peter Gerhard Tepalcatepec was the Nahuatl name for Eruzio.
Ziramaratiro							
Copuan II	Southeast of Apatzingán, near the southern margin of the Río Grande (Tepalcatepec)	Cupuán del río	E13B59	102 11.2	18 46.6		No recorded sites.