ARCHITECTURAL FUSION AND INDIGENOUS IDEOLOGY
IN
EARLY COLONIAL MEXICO

A Case Study of Teposcolula, Oaxaca, 1535-1580, Demonstrating Cultural
Transmission and Transformation Through Negotiation and Consent In Planning a New
Urban Environment.

by

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ARCHITECTURAL FUSION AND INDIGENOUS IDEOLOGY IN EARLY COLONIAL MEXICO: A CASE STUDY OF TEPOSCOLOLA, OAXACA, 1535-1580, DEMONSTRATING CULTURAL TRANSMISSION AND TRANSFORMATION THROUGH NEGOTIATION AND CONSENT IN PLANNING A NEW URBAN ENVIRONMENT.

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(ABSTRACT)
This study demonstrates that by willingly entering a process of peaceful negotiation and consent the indigenous leadership of Teposcolula played a determining role in planning and building their new urbanization on the valley floor, relocating and resettling their community from its pre-Columbian mountain-top redoubt. The effect of changes in the total formal environment on the indigenous mental world is examined using a holistic approach suggested by the interpretation of Focillon and Kubler outlined in the Introduction. Chapter Two provides a highly compressed synthesis of what is known about pre-Columbian Mixtec culture. Chapters Three and Four examine early evangelization in Teposcolula in light of a letter from Domingo de Betanzos, considered here for the first time in English. A mystic tradition in the Dominican Order focused on Passion iconography and emphasizing mental prayer was transmitted into the New World, shaping the nature of the evangelization there. Dominican efforts to implant the practice of distinctly Christian forms of meditation and mental prayer by an architecturally transmitted
iconographic program are shown. Architecture was used as a medium for ideological integration, by the friars in the use of the Rosary beads over the arches, and by the indigenous leaders in iconographic elements on the church, fusing and transforming pre-Columbian and Christian meaning. Chapter Five examines of the use of the disk frieze spanning over seven hundred years in pre-Columbian and early colonial architecture. This is the first study ever to explore and interpret the meaning of the disk frieze. The evidence presented supports the case for negotiation and consent in the early colonial period because the continued use of clearly pre-Columbian iconography was permitted. The symbolic use of disk frieze ornament flourished even in conventos built for friars. Chapter Six shows peaceful negotiation and consent in planning and constructing a new urbanization in Teposcolula designed to focus attention and prestige on the new ceremonial center, the capilla de Indios, and on the royal palace directly facing it in a clearly intended ceremonial and symbiotic relationship.
DEDICATION

To my mother, Bessie A. Kiracofe, I dedicate this book in loving recognition of the unfailing generosity and patient hospitality she has provided to me during these long years of my work toward the doctoral degree.
Preface

My mother and father introduced me to a love of travel shortly after I was born, and to Mexico a few years later in 1956. But it was my brother, Dr. Clifford A. Kiracofe, Jr, who in 1987 first seriously proposed to me the idea of graduate studies focused on Mexico. At that time he was a senior member of the professional staff of the Committee on Foreign Relations in the United States Senate. Over and over again he found the formation of sound United States policy toward Mexico and Latin America frustrated by the astonishing cultural ignorance of policy makers at all levels and in all branches of our government. Sadly, this was but the natural outgrowth of a general public in our country largely ignorant of the rich and varied cultures of our neighbors to the south. Cliff persuaded me that unless we could, as a nation, overcome this monumental cultural ignorance we would be doomed to long term political and economic problems in our hemisphere. Inspired by his analysis and advice, I set to work on this problem by first addressing my own ignorance.

My undergraduate work at the University of Virginia, completed twenty odd years ago, was in the then new Department of Religion which encouraged an interdisciplinary approach. After completing the required hours in my own department, I found myself drawn into the orbit of the Department of Anthropology where Eugene Ruyle introduced me to the science of Anthropology. Over several years I learned a great deal from him, but perhaps the most important lesson of all was that we could strongly disagree on fundamental ideological points, but armed
with a healthy sense of humor we could still laugh about it, respect each other, and continue learning in a friendly, and enjoyable relationship.

Many years later, following my brother's advice, I entered Graduate Department of History at the University of Virginia where I had the extremely good fortune to work under the direction of William Taylor who, with his rigorous standards, introduced me to graduate studies and to the study of Mexico. His steady patience with a headstrong student completely new to the field was admirable and almost unfailing. Stephen Innes always made perceptive, constructive suggestions for improving my writing, which have been of memorable and lasting value to me through the years. Eric Middlefort taught me that the study of history should be, *must* be fun, and he provided me with a model for leading seminars I now employ with my own students.

While at Virginia I was also fortunate to have received a Summer Travel Fellowship for 1989 from the Graduate School and the Department of History which helped me to participate in a traveling seminar "The Romanesque Art and Architecture of the Medieval Pilgrimage Routes of France and Spain" offered by Syracuse University Department of Programs Abroad. The late Willie Meltzer led the seminar, and I owe much to the intensity of his faith and wisdom. Further generous assistance kindly provided by Wick McNeely enabled me to participate in this seminar and to travel extensively in Spain after the conclusion of the seminar.

Upon completion of the Master's degree at Virginia I knew that what I really wanted to study were the buildings of sixteenth-century Mexico. Almost by accident
I met Humberto Rodríguez-Camilloni while visiting a friend in the graduate Architecture program at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. By the end of the afternoon Don Humberto had invited me to apply for admission to work under his direction toward the Doctoral degree in Tech's interdisciplinary Environmental Design and Planning program. Nor was this the last door he opened for me. Over the years he has thoughtfully introduced me to an ever wider circle of his many friends and distinguished colleagues all over the world. He has been the ideal mentor and friend, always ready with quiet encouragement and good advice. Joseph Wang shared stimulating conversation about architecture, and always knew precisely the right questions to ask. The notes on theory and methodology in the Introduction are largely the result of my meditation on his question during my comprehensive examination. Linda Arnold served in the earlier historiographic stages of my work. Franke Neumann guided my studies of the pre-Columbian world with unfailing cheer and incisive insight. Through his kind introductions I have met many new friends and colleagues who have greatly contributed to my understanding of Ancient Mesoamerica. Joseph Scarpaci taught me how to organize and write a research proposal. Thanks to his guidance through successive revisions, my proposal won a 1994-1995 Dissertation Year Fellowship in the Latin American and Caribbean Studies competition administered by the Social Science Research Council and American Council of Learned Societies. I gratefully acknowledge the generous financial support of this fellowship from the Andrew Mellon and Ford Foundations. Also at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute I owe a special thanks to the professional
staffs of the Newman Library and the Art and Architecture Library. The Inter Library Loan Office regularly performed miracles too numerous to document.

On my first research trip to Mexico I found Robert Mullen's book on Dominican Architecture in a bookstore. It was a book that redirected my life, it seems. Years later we gave papers together at a symposium in Albuquerque organized by Humberto Rodríguez. Since then I have often relied on his insight and good advice. He is in many ways responsible for my sustained interest in the Dominican architecture of Oaxaca that eventually resulted in this work. Also at that Albuquerque symposium were Sidney Markman and Clara Bargellini. They have both been generous friends who have shared their knowledge and wisdom willingly and often. Sidney Markman's generosity has many times enriched not only my mind, but also my library in ways that will be of enduring benefit to my work. In Stockholm Clara Bargellini encouraged me to submit the paper that has been expanded here in Chapters Five and Six for review and publication in the Anales. In Mexico City she cheerfully welcomed me at the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, and made available to me its superb research collections and found time to answer my many questions.

Other scholars who have kindly assisted me include María Teresa Pita Moreda who shared her extraordinary knowledge of the Dominican Order during several long telephone conversations. Louise Burkhart was also generous in providing me with several papers and many valuable insights on religious drama in early colonial Mexico. In Puebla Eréndira de la Lama offered splendid hospitality,
stimulating conversation, and good advice. Franke Neumann introduced me to his many friends and colleagues at the Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian conferences, where I met Linda Schele. She gladly shared her paper with me, and put me in touch with a whole new constellation of colleagues, many with Texas connections, including Rich Phillips and Susan Webster. Rich Phillips made his remarkable dissertation and many other writings available to me, and has shared many hours of illuminating conversation on sixteenth-century Mexico. Susan Webster has kindly provided her writings and wisdom on sixteenth-century devotional processions in Spain and Mexico and much else.

I especially wish to thank Ronald Spores who offered hospitality and wisdom on many occassions in Nashville and steady encouragement, guidance, good advice and a willing ear during my field work over several seasons in Oaxaca. John Monaghan found time to read and offer valuable comment on an earlier version of Chapters Three and Four. At the Archivo del Poder Judicial de Oaxaca Don Gonzalo Rojas Guerrero and his staff extended every possible courtesy and made my work there a success. Kevin Terraciano and Lisa Susa shared memorable evenings of stimulating conversation. Kevin provided me with a copy of his remarkable dissertation, and Lisa kindly read and commented on an earlier version of Chapters Five and Six. Also in Oaxaca, María Angeles Romero-Frizzly kindly wrote a letter of introduction for me to the municipal authorities and guardians of the convento at Teposcolula. Her letter opened many doors. Juan I. Bustamante Vasconcelos welcomed me to his institute and enthusiastically accompanied me to Teposcolula
in April 1995 to share his great knowledge on early colonial monuments. Dr. Bustamante personally intervened in obtaining for me the necessary permits for photography at several important sites in the Mixteca and has generously translated an earlier version of chapters Five and Six for diffusion in Mexico. Frank Hale kindly opened his extraordinary library to me and made valuable bibliographic suggestions which ultimately enabled me to offer an iconographic interpretation of the Casa de la Cacica. The Welte Institute of Oaxaca and the Instituto de Artes Gráficas de Oaxaca welcomed me and opened their extensive and complementary collections in Anthropology and Art and Architecture to me and provided exceptionally beautiful and quiet surroundings for reading and research which I will always remember with a special gratitude. Sam and Dot Edgerton offered refreshing hospitality and stimulating conversation overlooking the valley of Oaxaca. During visits to Teposcolula, Cuilapan, Coixtlahuaca and Yanhuitlán with me Sam provided not only an exciting drive in the country, but also many valuable insights from his years of study of Italian Renaissance painting and Pre-Columbian art and culture in Mexico. Tom Drain visited Teposcolula with me and invited me to accompany him on visits to many other important colonial sites in the valley of Oaxaca, sharing his extraordinarily profound knowledge of Christian iconography and iconographic history. The municipal authorities and people of Teposcolula, including especially the family of Lic. Delfino Cárdenas Peralta and Don Amencio Odriosola, generously offered their hospitality and knowledge of the history of their community. Over the last two years my students have been a constant source of inspiration and energy,
and in particular I am grateful to Daniel DiMarco for volunteering to join me in Mexico in March 1995, and for gladly bearing the heavy burden of a theodolite and its tripod back and forth from Virginia Tech. My old friend Bill Rice agreed to make time to critically read a late draft of this book when he was finishing one of his own, applying his sharp pencil and rhetorical skills to my wandering ramblings. I must especially thank Susan Webster, Rich Phillips, and Sam Edgerton for serving on my committee as outside readers and most kindly submitting their insightful written critical evaluations of the final draft. To all of these friends and colleagues, and to many more not mentioned here I give my heartfelt thanks. God bless you, one and all!
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INTRODUCTION

APPROACHING HISTORY THROUGH ARCHITECTURE: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE CASE OF EARLY COLONIAL TEPOSCOLULA
NEGOTIATION AND CONSENT

This dissertation is a case study which will demonstrate that in early colonial Teposcolula a sustained process of cultural change occurred through peaceful negotiation and consent between Spanish culture bearers, the Dominican friars, and the Mixtec cultural leadership. (fig. 1) The positive results of this process emerged over time in the decades between 1530 and 1580 and were expressed architecturally in a new urbanization and formal environment which included and transformed important elements of both cultures in a new fusion, deliberately and enthusiastically constructed with willing participation of those involved.(fig. 2) Other aspects of this process of cultural change were experienced and expressed liturgically in the regular performance of sacred drama and the Eucharistic miracle in a new, unprecedented temple-theatre especially designed and built with the cultural and logistical collaboration between the Dominican friars and the indigenous people of Teposcolula.(fig. 3) Concurrent with the construction of and in a symbolically strategic relationship with the justly famous open church, the Mixtec rulers erected a new royal palace for themselves combining traditional indigenous forms and symbolic ornamental programs with incoming European architectural technology.(fig. 4 & 5) As this study will demonstrate, the leaders of both groups drew inspiration from each other's culture to create the new forms in architecture they used deliberately to transmit their ideological agendas through time. The notion of willing cooperation I advance is something of a departure from much of the older scholarship. Moreover, my interpretation is at odds with much of the more recent
scholarship intent on identifying indigenous subordination and victimization by harsh Spaniards bent on domination.¹

The new contributions of the following study, found principally in the final two chapters, are based primarily on close, on-site examination, analysis, and interpretation of the surviving sixteenth-century urban fabric of Teposcolula. I have built up a synthetic context for this analysis and interpretation, found mainly in the first four chapters, by extensive research into the published literature in several disciplines related to the topic. Extensive travel for comparative on-site study in the Iberian Peninsula and in the areas of the Americas colonized by Spain in the sixteenth century has contributed to this synthesis as has consulting the few and scattered archival references which might shed light on the subject of my investigation. But above all it has been the on-site examination of the buildings themselves, conducted over several seasons, that has provided the most abundant new insights.

Architectural history, history as recorded in architecture, offers a window into the past especially valuable where other documents and artifacts are scarce. Moreover, architectural evidence is particularly useful in understanding and interpreting large scale historical, or more precisely, cultural processes that unfold over spans of time of longer duration than are typically represented by individual archival documents. The kinds of information recorded in buildings or urban plans are often quite different from what usually emerges from legal or administrative documents. Naturally different techniques and methodological approaches are
necessary for the useful study of architecture as a historical or cultural document from those used for the study of paper documents. These different methods and techniques, as might be expected, lead to different perspectives, different points of view and often different kinds of conclusions from those produced by other avenues of historical and cultural investigation. However, I hasten to add that these conclusions, different though they might be, need not be contradictory to conclusions reached from other approaches. Indeed they may be highly complementary and supportive, bringing into consideration other aspects of the processes under investigation not immediately apparent in archival sources.

The study I will present has drawn on scholarship from many disciplines, but always with a view to elucidating the process of urban planning and the construction of a new town and a new way of life in early colonial Teposcolula. At the core of this new way of life was a new way of approaching the divine. Indeed all of the vast amounts of labor and materials were concentrated on the construction of a new physical and formal environment whose purpose was none other than the transformation of the sacramental imagination of the inhabitants. The architecture and urban planning were the physical expressions of a deeper ideological struggle to integrate and reconcile two hitherto alien civilizations. Understanding how this complex process unfolded in Teposcolula is the goal of this study. The surviving sixteenth-century architecture and urban fabric must be understood, in so far as possible, as outward expressions of the inner life of those who built them. Much of what follows, then, will seek to illuminate and reconstruct the spirituality of the
participants, Mixtec and Dominican. This has been a challenging task. An impossible
task, some would argue. But, as I will show, the architecture and urban planning do
give us clues that can guide lines of inquiry and interpretation. And, yes, much of
what follows is, necessarily, my interpretation. In a case such as Teposcolula there
simply are no documents, no eye-witness accounts to tell us how it all came to be.
Only the buildings and the patterns they make in the sacred landscape survive, but
with patience and perseverance their mute testimony can tell us much. I hope to
show in what follows how a study of architecture and urban planning illuminated by
a holistic interdisciplinary approach can be of great value in reinforcing, or filling in
gaps, in an emerging point of view, or attitude toward Mexican colonial history
advanced by scholars from several disciplines including linguistics, social history,
and anthropology.

Throughout the research treating the several discrete components of this
study a larger question, always looming just beyond the edges of my immediate
consciousness, has been "What's so important about Teposcolula?" I successfully
avoided or evaded directly confronting this question through several years of study
and field work, confident that the answer would eventually emerge as my work
matured. On my first research trip to Mexico I, as many before me, was struck by
the remarkable open air church in Teposcolula, the scale and complexity of which
has no equal. Irresistible curiosity and the desire to understand the process that
produced this spectacular monument compelled me to learn more about the town.
Several years later Ronald Spores told me about a building in Teposcolula he
believed was important and endangered, the Casa de la Cacica. Within a few weeks I was able to fly to Oaxaca to visit the building and begin what has resulted in this study. The remarkable survival of two such extraordinary buildings in one town built in the early years of the Spanish colonial regime made it apparent to me that something important was taking place in Teposcolula during the first three generations after contact that could shed light on a larger issue.

Ultimately the most important conclusion emerging from my work has been that positive outcomes can result from what appear to be hostile cultural confrontations, and this says something important and encouraging about the potentials of human nature given the current troubles in our own world [I am thinking about places like Sarajevo and Palestine]. The key is identifying and understanding the process by which the positive outcomes manifest themselves. Adopting the necessary temporal framework is an ingredient crucial to successfully understanding the process in question: a long view is helpful. I believe I have correctly identified the process in Teposcolula as cultural change through peaceful negotiation and consent followed up by willing, creative and enthusiastic maximization of the resulting possibilities. It may be that understanding this process and gaining the ability to think in terms of the long duration might help to diffuse hostility and hatred which produce short tempers and unnecessary suffering by replacing them, as the Mixtecs of Teposcolula did, with alternatives more likely to lead to long term positive outcomes.

And I believe there is a great need to look for, to recognize, and to understand positive cultural outcomes that have occurred and can occur even amid
periods of extreme cultural or, perhaps more frequently, political hostility. It seems to me there is enough, if not too much, hostility or negativity already present in our world, and enough, if not too many, scholars eager to point it out, over and over again. I am thinking especially of the kinds of comments and attitudes which became fashionable or politically popular during the many academic events marking the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's arrival in this hemisphere. A notable peculiarity among many concerned with negative outcomes, identifiable in Latin American Studies with the Black Legend interpretation, is the application of twentieth-century morality to sixteenth-century behavior. While this anachronistic practice is used to heighten the sense of righteous indignation identified by Charles Gibson, it seems a strange lens indeed to be selected by professional historians.² For all of the posturing and posing, for all of the condemnations of those Bad Spanish, or those Bad Europeans, none of the poseurs, not even the most politically correct, has been able to alter the historical facts: Columbus did sail from Europe to America, and he was followed by many other Europeans who set in motion one of the most significant cultural transformations of all time.

In the case of sixteenth-century America no one will argue that much suffering did not occur. But precisely the same can be said with equal accuracy of fifteenth-century America, or anywhere else in any century. There seem to be some constants in human nature present in all periods in all ethnic and gender categories. Nevertheless, measuring degrees of guilt or victimization has become quite popular in some circles, and has focused on negative outcomes of cultural confrontation. But
by focusing on the negative aspects of Spanish presence in America these authors have failed to see or have obscured the countless positive accomplishments of indigenous agency in creatively adapting to a rapidly changing world. By energetically contributing to a complex process of cultural transmission and transformation, the indigenous people of Mesoamerica created a brilliant new fusion.

Therefore, I believe enough, if not too much, has already been done in exploring the negative outcomes to convince us all that human beings can and do behave badly with discouraging frequency. This is, after all, rather an easy case to make, and every day's news offers additional evidence. I am not too sure just how knowing this, or proving this point, over and over again, serves to advance our gain from the social sciences. On the other hand, it seems to me not enough attention has been applied to understanding just how individuals, societies, and cultures transcend or overcome what appear to be impossibly negative circumstances and achieve something of lasting positive value. I believe that identifying and understanding how these positive outcomes occur has at least as much, if not much more, to offer as the easier and more popular victim-quests now occupying so much scholarly attention.

Since I have been working with the history of early colonial Mexico I have been struck with the magnitude and power of the cultural forces which collided, reacted, and transformed into something new. The release of this new energy indeed transformed Mesoamerica and the Europeans who came to live there. In the intense cultural reaction there was much suffering, and yet out of this there emerged
something of enduring beauty, something neither entirely Mesoamerican nor entirely European, but a distinctly different entity, seeking to recognize and express its own identity. The scale of the process and its results is overwhelming, and difficult to grasp in its entirety, but the case of Teposcolula seemed to offer in a microcosm all of the elements of the process and its outcome, on an approachable scale for comprehensive analysis and interpretation.

**A NOTE ON THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION**

My approach to the study of the built environment of early colonial Teposcolula owes much to the work of George Kubler and his mentor, Henri Focillon. It is appropriate at this point to briefly discuss their ideas to acquaint the reader with the underlying theoretical tradition of the study which follows. Those already familiar with the work of these two great historians may wish to turn to the next section on Organization.

Above all, Henri Focillon wanted to impart the notion that forms live, that they have a life of their own which moves through time. The key to this poetic idea is that the forms truly come alive first in the minds of the artists who conceive them initially and then in the minds of those who later perceive them and give them new expression in their own work. In this way the forms, or the objects of art, become links between the minds of artists often completely unaquainted and separated from one another by time and space. And yet through these minds the forms themselves live, and change in a continuous chain.

From this idea proceeds another important notion introduced by Focillon
which he described in terms of sequence and succession. The links made by the 
lives of forms in the minds of artists created what Focillon called "families" in which 
the forms undergo metamorphoses over time, but stabilized for periods of self 
definition by what he called the principle of style. Within this process he saw an 
evolution through phases of early experiment, classicism, refinement, baroque 
exhuberance, and finally of discard. In *The Life of Forms* Focillon often illustrated 
his thinking by references to Gothic architecture, his own particular specialization. 
In this way forms, which exist manifest in space, may take on a temporal life, as they 
are passed experientially from their true life in one mind to another moment of their 
true life in another mind from which yet another projection or permutation in a new 
form might take place at another point in time. Seen in this way, the forms are the 
meeting points of several present times, and from this may be understood his 
comment that time is not purely sequential, but a mobile structure with nodes or 
protuberances at irregular intervals suggesting the existence of periods of short-
wave time and long-wave time. An associated insight was that several styles could 
coexist simultaneously in the same region.\textsuperscript{4} He also observed that these styles 
created what he called a "formal environment" which was capable of migration as 
a whole. These formal environments he described constituted a holistic way of 
envisioning what today might be called the "built environment," and he pointed out 
that these "psychological landscapes" shaped human interaction at all levels, a point 
to which I will return.

While much more could be said about this challenging little book, it should be
apparent that Focillon was deeply concerned with the interior thought world of the artist and with the relationships through time of forms to this thought world. In my own work, I have applied his insights to the specific problem of religious conversion at the core of sixteenth-century Mexican urbanization in what I refer to as the sacramental imagination and the role of architecture and related visual arts in its transformation.

George Kubler's *Shape of Time* springs, without any doubt, from Focillon's work. But Kubler's relentlessly rational intellect works in quite a different mode from his mentor, and where Focillon's expression is highly mannered and richly emotional, Kubler's poetry of ideas emerges from a carefully reasoned and restrained prose sculpted with extreme economy revealing the irresistible logic of his thought with crystalline clarity. Nevertheless, in spite of these distinct differences, Kubler's work carried on that of his teacher, expanding and refining many of the concepts introduced in the *Life of Forms*.

As the title suggests, Kubler was above all concerned with the nature of time, but unlike Focillon who concerned himself primarily with artists and objects of art, Kubler sought to open out his theoretical approach, inclusively seeking the fructification of interdisciplinary research on the phenomenon of culture as a whole. For this reason he was concerned with what he called the "history of things" in which he included all those things made by man from highly utilitarian tools to the useless objects sometimes called art. This was the fulfillment of the promise offered by the nascent concept of the "formal environment" seen in Focillon's work.
Kubler was especially interested in bringing together the study of the ideas and objects related by their sequential emergence in time in a holistic approach to understanding cultural history. It was from Focillon's notion of "families" of forms linked by minds that Kubler's refinement grew. Kubler added the notion of problem solving to Focillon's term of experimentation, and with this he added the Prime Object to Focillon's scheme as a beginning point of seriation over time seeking solution of a shared problem. In this way Kubler envisioned the connection of ideas passing from one mind to another in a temporal sequence guiding the human action of replication, not just of objects of art, but of all that complex of man made things which together constitute a culture. He referred to these minds as "relays" and noted that the transmission would never be perfect from one to the next, but would always suffer some distortion and drift.

Nevertheless, with echoes of Focillon's notions of style, Kubler saw that replication tended to stabilize discernable patterns of process occurring over time. As work on the problem over time accumulates solutions, the problem itself is modified and in response so too the subsequent solutions expressed in things. Of course this idea echoes, but with refinement, Focillon's notion of endless metamorphoses. From these activities linked in this process Kubler saw the emergence of "the shape of time." He saw too that it was these solutions, which survive into our time as the residue of the past problem solving, that identify the very problems faced by past cultures. This holistic theoretical and methodological approach, then, opens a window into the daily life of earlier times especially valuable
when the cultures under investigation left few or no documentary records. Another refinement of Focillon's idea of evolution through sequence and succession was presented in Kubler's concept of "systematic age." Just as Focillon saw sequences having phases, Kubler too saw his solutions occurring serially, he called early energetic and simple efforts "promorphic" and more complex late solutions "neomorphic," and, as with Focillon, the series in Kubler's scheme ended with discard when the problem had been so modified through replication and drift as to require a fresh beginning with another prime object. Along with this conceptualization comes the awareness that within the duration of such an evolutionary sequence, the best opportunities for the creators of prime objects come at the beginning when the system is most energetic, brilliant minds may come later only to find "the feast is over."

The ability to identify systematic age by analysis of other examples of the same series is, again, extremely helpful in understanding the history of cultures which left no documentary records. Like Focillon, but much more explicitly, Kubler sought identification of heretofore invisible patterns as the fulfillment of the historian's calling. But perhaps the most famous idea advanced by Kubler perfected Focillon's earlier attempt to describe the shape of time. Where Focillon saw nodes or protuberances occurring in clusters at intermittent intervals, Kubler saw time flowing in the shape of fibrous bundles composed of strands of different activities of varying lengths or durations. Within this model then, emerging from Kubler's supremely rational mind, there is, nevertheless, plenty of room for flexibility or the
operation of unpredictable, mysterious, even enigmatic forces and processes.

Much of Kubler's career was devoted to the study of Mexico, both before and after the coming of the Spanish, and he took an opportunity at the end of his theoretical discourse in the *Shape of Time* to offer some practical applications of his ideas in the analysis of cultural transformation of Mexico in the sixteenth century. He introduced the category of "arrested classes" of forms resulting from neglect or conquest. In the case of Mexico after the victory of Cortes in 1521, the Spanish sought to replace the existing culture with their own, and as Kubler pointed out, many aspects of the Aztec culture had themselves only recently been introduced and were still in their early, energetic phase, only to be arrested by conquest. But Kubler stated that in this case native initiative in the continuation of their culture ceased soon after the fall of Tenochtitlán, disrupted by defeat and seduced by a superior culture. He went on to show that while the systematic age of the Aztec culture was then yet young, the Spanish culture imported in the 1520's was systematically old: late medieval and already outmoded Plateresque. So he saw a young art surrender to, cut off by an old art.

It is at this point that the significance of my own work becomes apparent in the application of much of Kubler's theory and the refinement, or correction, of some of his analysis. I am not persuaded that native initiative ceased so quickly, or that the evolution of indigenous forms was so neatly cut off as Kubler suggested, nor do I believe it was necessarily the Spanish or their culture which eventually succeeded in extinguishing the life of indigenous forms. In the case of the Mixteca Alta, at least,
I see this happening rather after the 1580's and as a result more of epidemic disease than of Spanish conquest. Indeed, my own research has focused precisely on the deliberate use of architecture and urban planning as a medium for the transmission of native form culture through time. There is substantial evidence, including the Casa de la Cacica in Teposcolula, to show that along with a lively interest in the new Spanish architecture, arts and crafts, there was too a deliberate persistence of interest in and transmission of pre-Columbian Mixtec culture across the conquest threshold into the new era. Furthermore, the evidence shows that this initiative was also flourishing in several areas of Mexico outside of the Mixteca Alta. What I am proposing is that there was a new, nascent, energetic formal sequence beginning AFTER the conquest, which was in fact energized by the exposure of indigenous traditions to the incoming European form culture. But what was being born in the years between 1521 and 1576 was something completely new, and, I believe, extremely vital. Most unfortunately, it did die, being born as Gruzinsky has said. But it died not at the hands of Spanish soldiers, it was smallpox which arrested the development of what promised to be a brilliant cultural fusion.

But returning to Focillon, an idea he discussed has taken on life in my mind, and perhaps had a greater influence on my thinking even than Kubler's theoretical writing. As I noted above, Focillon spoke of the "formal environment" in ways which have illuminated for me what Robert Ricard meant when he said long ago that the friars sought to transmit a "whole" Christianity. I have travelled extensively in Mexico over the last 8 years, visiting many of the towns built during the sixteenth
century, and I have always been struck by the suddenness and totality of the transformation of the visual, formal, or built environment. A major issue in the literature examining the phenomenon of cultural confrontation and change in Mexico has to do with whether the Indians really became "Christian," or merely adopted certain Christian practices. Of course much of this has to do with how "Christianity" is defined, but I believe the answer lies locked within the sacramental imagination of the Indians. And a key to understanding the process by which this imagination was furnished and nourished may be found in Focillon's *Life of Forms*. As the formal environment was totally transformed, the built elements of the pre-Columbian world were systematically dismantled, re-cut and re-used, or dispersed. As this old formal world vanished from the landscape it ceased to transmit through time the signals necessary to sustain the life of its forms in the minds of the people. Instead, a completely new form culture with new meanings was physically created by the hands of artists and artisans working all over Mexico. These new "things," to use for a moment Kubler's term, began to transmit new meanings from one mind to another, giving life, within the minds or within the sacramental imaginations, to new families of forms. Seen in this way, it is hard to imagine how the old cult could continue in the minds of most people, though some certainly persisted in the clandestine practices of paganism, but now in hidden, secret, unfamiliar venues. Whatever life these pagan forms might then have had would have been quite different from their previously public prestige.

Until recently it has been extremely difficult to gain access to the mental
world of the 16th-century Indians of Mexico. But now, with the publication of two major works by James Lockhart, a window has been opened by the translation of many important documents originally written in native language using Spanish alphabetical script and phonetic conventions. From this work it has become apparent that rather than a pattern of resistance to Spanish or European forms or "things," including items of everyday use, they were often used matter-of-factly, without a second thought, and entered quite naturally into common usage by Indians from all levels of society. These items, European type shirts, tableware, clothes chests, household items, entered into and took up life within the formal environment as easily as if they had always been there.

Returning to the question of the acceptance or rejection of Christianity, then, it seems that by applying Focillon's insights to Lockhart's evidence, a convincing case can be made suggesting that the acceptance of Christianity into the internal thought world, or sacramental imagination, could have occurred with as little difficulty or resistance as the many other items of daily life seen and talked about quite naturally in the Nahuatl documents. Furthermore, a central goal of the massive building program was to construct a new urban form, or total environment, in which the daily patterns of Christian life could unfold and with practice be perfected over time. Considering this goal in light of Ricard's remark about a "whole" Christianity becomes infinitely more meaningful when understood in terms of Focillon's conceptualization, enhanced somewhat by Kubler, and hopefully by my own work.

A NOTE ON ORGANIZATION
Having introduced the theme, general methodology, and theoretical heritage of this study it is appropriate to say something here about the organization of the presentation. The chapters are arranged in a sequence designed to build the necessary background or context for the principal argument concerning the process of urban planning in early colonial Teposcolula. The opening chapter places my study in the context of the related literature by briefly reviewing the general works related to Oaxaca and the Mixteca Alta in the sixteenth century. This is followed by a second chapter offering a general discussion of Mixtec culture before 1520 with a closer examination of pre-Columbian urbanization in Teposcolula. The Dominican friars were the principal bearers of European culture to the Mixtecs and understanding their mental world is crucial to understanding what happened in Teposcolula in the sixteenth century. The third chapter, therefore, presents the development of Dominican spirituality in early sixteenth-century Spain and their evangelical technique developed in the Caribbean prior to coming to Mexico. Chapter four examines Dominican urbanization in Mexico and offers an interpretive reconstruction of their early work in Teposcolula. Chapter five explores the development and persistence over time of the Mesoamerican disk frieze as a ledger architecturally transmitting specific meaning both before and after Spanish contact. Finally, in chapter six, the meaning of the Casa de la Cacica will be interpreted in the context of the process of urban planning in early colonial Teposcolula itself. The regionally distinct experience of Teposcolula will be highlighted by comparison with Dominican urbanization in Chiapas and elsewhere. An interpretation of surviving
standing buildings and their relationships will reveal the process by which the Mixtecs deliberately manipulated the incoming Spanish form culture and political culture and succeeded in using European technology, architecture, and urban design to advance their own ideological agenda. The final chapter is followed by a bibliography listing sources cited.
NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION:

1. I have written elsewhere on the topic of Black Legend scholarship. For a comprehensive and in-depth, step by step study chronologically treating the work of numerous scholars by systematically citing and analyzing specific passages from their work see my extended review article "The Black Legend Lives: Deconstructing Ideologically Driven Scholarship of the Twentieth Century," Occasional Paper #1, 1995. Available upon request from the Inter-American Institute for Advanced Studies in Cultural History, P.O. Box 93, Free Union, Virginia, 22940.


   In fact there has always been something strange about time in Mexico. ... So Mexico has always enjoyed a chronological anarchy. ... One of the things we have to throw away as a result of these temporal peculiarities is the idea that style can be used to organize and explain art. When you begin to talk — in a situation at once provincial and primitive — of setting up an Early Christian mission and when you use amateur designers and builders who are more or less familiar with Classical, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Mudéjar, Isabeline, Manueline, and the earliest baroque styles in half a dozen European countries — working with craftsmen trained in alien and exotic forms — it is obvious that the resulting artifact cannot be described by any one of these names.

   About the peculiarities of time, I would add that it often seems as if the lingering suspension of the movement of actuality through time permits in Mexico a longer moment, and a moment wrapped in mystery.


8. I have compiled elsewhere an extensive, 100 page, thematically organized "Bibliography of Items Useful for the Study of Sixteenth-Century Mexico" including sections on Mesoamerican pre-Columbian, Iberian, and early Colonial period topics. The manuscript is available upon request at the Inter-American Institute for Advance Studies in Cultural History, P.O. Box 93, Free Union, Virginia, 22940. A much expanded version of this bibliography, including sections treating Iberian cultural interactions in other areas of Latin America and Asia, is currently being prepared for publication in a collaborative effort with other scholars.
CHAPTER 1

THE LITERATURE REVIEW
This brief review of the literature is included to acquaint the general reader with an overview of the more important works in the field. Throughout the following chapters a more comprehensive review may be found by reading the notes. While Spanish/indigenous relations during the colonial era have been discussed in numerous studies drawing on archival and other written records, no published work that I am aware of has ever aimed at an interpretation of surviving standing buildings as primary sources illuminating indigenous agency in the process of early colonial urban planning. Kubler’s monumental 1948 study, Mexican Architecture of the Sixteenth Century, certainly provides an encyclopedic coverage of all the major monuments and an extensive treatment of urbanism. But Kubler was convinced of the superiority of Spanish form culture and its overwhelming impact on indigenous civilization. This was a prevailing view for many years, and indeed it was only with the pioneering work of Charles Gibson that scholars began to see the extent to which indigenous culture survived the conquest. The penetrating insights of Gibson’s work were somewhat obscured by his ideological framework with which he sought to demonstrate at every opportunity that the "subordinated" Indians were "dominated" by the Spaniards. More recently, James Lockhart has published the results of more than twenty years of research drawn exclusively from native language documents, which finally fulfilled the early promise of Gibson’s breakthrough, and liberated it from its ideological limitations. In many ways what I have done in my own work presented here has been inspired by Lockhart’s approach and refreshing attitude. Where Lockhart and his students have interpreted
documents written by native hands, I have tried to interpret buildings built by native hands. In many ways the results are mutually reinforcing. We will return to Lockhart's all important contribution at the close of this brief review, but let us now turn to works more closely related to Oaxaca.

In 1881 José Antonio Gay published his *Historia de Oaxaca*, the first comprehensive survey of the state's history.⁵ It is still in print and useful as a general reference. First published in 1954, Barbro Dahlgren's *La Mixteca: Su cultura e historia prehispánicas* still offers what may be the best overview of pre-Hispanic Mixtec culture based upon archeology and anthropology with a reliance upon the surviving *codices* for clarification.⁶ Dahlgren treated antecedents, satisfaction of vital necessities, social life, and religion and intellectual life as separate areas of focus. The 1990 edition provided a chapter updating the recent scholarship through 1983. John Paddock's classic *Ancient Oaxaca* appeared in 1966 offering an anthology of articles by leading scholars which located Oaxaca in a Mesoamerican context, and treated the major monuments specifically with an explanation of the periodization emerging from archeology.⁷

In 1967 Ronald Spores presented his first major published work on the Mixteca Alta, *The Mixtec Kings and Their People*.⁸ In this book Spores outlined the principal features of Mixtec culture on the eve of conquest and then discussed continuity and change based on the archeological record which he and others accumulated. He also presented a further discussion based on the surviving archival documentation. A general treatment of native rule in sixteenth century Mexico was
followed by his elaboration of patterns of royal succession in the Mixteca Alta. A specific example is developed with the case of the Kingdom-cacicazgo of Yanhuitlán. He concluded by describing the changing role of the Ruler-Cacique in Mixtec culture.

Spores based his reconstruction in large part on judicial proceedings involving the several sixteenth-century caciques of Yanhuitlán. From testimony of witnesses who knew the system of rulership in pre-Columbian time emerged a picture of land, labor and tribute entitlements due the royal family. Spores pointed out that while the absolute authority of pre-contact times ended with Spanish administration, the cacique continued to be the most wealthy, most powerful, most respected individual in Yanhuitlán in 1600. Spores stressed the aggressive, persistent pursuit of power and prestige by the Yanhuitlán caciques in which they displayed intelligence and creative adaptability in the manipulation of their subjects and the Spanish system to their maximum advantage. Spores specifically stated that his research was aimed at viewing a society in a fluid state of adaptation through the contact period and beyond rather than breaking the continuum up into a sequence of time denominated compartments.

William B. Taylor published Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca in 1972. By studying land tenure in the Valley of Oaxaca, Taylor showed that unlike the Valley of Mexico, land remained largely in Indian hands throughout the colonial era, and the Oaxacans thereby avoided the large-scale Spanish owned hacienda system. Taylor’s careful research demonstrated that an in depth regional study can
overcome the distortions of time honored generalities developed in one area but
incorrectly applied elsewhere. Though congregaciones are not a central topic in this
work, Taylor pointed out that "Congregaciones in the Valley of Oaxaca were
remarkably short lived. Most had broken down into their constituent communities by
the end of the seventeenth century." Taylor devoted an entire chapter to Colonial
Cacicazgos. He stated that "retention of substantial landholdings and high social
prestige is a distinguishing feature of colonial society in the Valley of Oaxaca."
Another important observation was that "Peaceful conquest spared the Valley of
Oaxaca the loss of life and grave social and psychological dislocations experienced
by the Aztecs in the Valley of Mexico." As he also pointed out:

The nobles' loyal service in the years immediately after the conquest ensured
a peaceful transition to colonial rule and kept the native social structure
largely intact. There is good evidence that valley caciques were crucial in the
consolidation of Indian towns in the early sixteenth century—a process the
Spaniards saw as essential to political control and mass religious
conversion. Because of their leadership in the formation of congregaciones,
the caciques won the firm support of the Dominicans... Caciques were also
valuable as tribute collectors and military leaders in Oaxaca. Spanish officials
willingly turned to the caciques as straw bosses and tax collectors.10

Taylor noted that the "exquisite signatures" of the caciques suggests that they were
literate, and that "the many documents confirming noble titles and landholdings
indicate that the Valley's caciques quickly grasped the importance of written law and
the niceties of Spanish legality.11

All of Taylor's points here generally correspond to the situation in the Mixteca
Alta region, adjoining the Valley of Oaxaca to the north and are useful as guidelines
for inquiry. Still, in spite of Taylor's admirable attention to detail, there is missing from his discussion an exposition of the process of urban planning. Though Taylor made it clear that Indian leaders certainly willingly participated in the decision to congregate, he did not take the final step to show the extent of their participation in the layout and arrangement of the towns. Limitations of evidence or scope may have contributed to this omission. While not specifically stated, here as elsewhere the impression conveyed is that the details of the urbanization program were in the hands of Spanish authorities, be they civil or religious.

In 1974 Taylor published another discussion of land and labor issues, "Landed Society in New Spain, a View from the South." Drawing on his earlier research, Taylor critiques the work of François Chevalier, _La formation des grandes domaines au Mexique: Terre et Société aux XVI-XVII siècles_, published twenty odd years earlier, but still a dominant feature of the literature. The article explores the origins of the hacienda system, a complicated and controversial issue. In his article Taylor drew attention to Oaxaca, but also pointed to southern Mexico and Guatemala as useful comparisons noting the similarities in these three regions: 1.) No major deposits of precious metals, agriculture and labor were the source of wealth, exports were produced—including clothing and craft goods, wax, cochineal, indigo, cacao—without absorbing all the energy and resources of the Indian population; 2.) the structure of society was similar: the most important political and economic unit was the individual community; there was diversity in the labor pool beyond simple agricultural workers which included hereditary nobles, traders,
mayeques, slaves, artists, builders, metal and stone workers, and weavers; and 3.)
the Spanish presence was quite limited at a time when Indians began to acquire
written title to their lands.

Life in the highlands of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guatemala and the interior of
Yucatán centered upon the closed community where the core of Indian
culture was contained within the boundaries of the town. While this village
identity was present throughout the southern highlands, it tended to be more
exclusive in Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Guatemala than in Yucatán, where
regional identities have been fairly strong. ¹⁴

In addition to these similarities, however, Taylor also pointed out that where
the conquest in Oaxaca was peaceful, in Yucatán it was not, though in both areas
Indians remained largely in control of their lands, to which they had written title.
Responding to José Miranda's contention that it was the Spanish who introduced
individualism and materialism, Taylor retold the story of the priest of San Martín
Tilcajete in the Valley of Oaxaca who, in 1777 came to the bedside of a dying
woman:

In a last effort to save the woman's life as well as her immortal soul, the priest
ordered that a hearty broth be prepared from a chicken he found in the
woman's dwelling. The priest opened the woman's mouth and administered
the broth; his effort was rewarded for she recovered strength, confessed, and
received the Holy Sacraments. A week later, the woman came to see the
priest, but not, as he expected, to thank him for saving her life. She had
come to collect two reales, the value of the chicken the priest had
slaughtered, and would not leave until he paid her. ¹⁵

Taylor noted a particularly "aggressive economic preoccupation,... private
and communal" among the highland Indians of southern Mexico, and attributed the
persistent and effective litigation in land disputes to this characteristic. Comparing the disruptive effect of the "Conquest" in the Valley of Mexico with the relatively easy transition in the south, Taylor pointed out that Valley of Mexico was highly urbanized with a highly developed, centralized government, where in the south there were no large urban centers nor elaborately centralized government to disrupt. Moreover, the Valley of Mexico became the Spanish colonial center, while the south was only lightly colonized. Pressure from incoming Spaniards for land and labor was greater in the formative early years at the urbanized center than in the remote periphery, so the disruption of land ownership was greater. While this article did not touch on the topic of congregaciones, it did contribute valuable insights on highland communities, as well as introducing a comparative analysis between the several southern regions and the Valley of Mexico.

In 1973 Mercedes Olivera and María de los Angeles Romero published "La estructura política de Oaxaca en el siglo XVI." This extended article surveyed the history of the contact period and focuses on changes in the political and economic life of the native population resulting from the Spanish administration. The many abuses of the encomenderos were carefully reviewed together with an economic analysis linking their activities in capital formation through the exploitation of native labor and the concentration of this capital in commercial trading enterprises with overseas connections. They pointed out that the encomenderos were concerned mainly with the regular receipt of tribute payments and profits from their commercial operations, and that little attention was given to investment in local agriculture during
the early period. They suggested that capital formation for developing the European economy was extracted from the native Americans and exported to purchase goods then sold back to the natives. They noted that this type of extractive economic system is persistent, and suggested that it may account for the underdevelopment of the area.

Olivera and Romero detailed the colonial political system at the local level and pointed to its similarities to and changes from the pre-contact period. In particular, they described at some length the kinship mechanisms whereby senior individuals in extended family groups, Mandones, associated with geographical locations, or barrios, exercised a leadership position within the group and represented the interests of the group at higher decision making levels. In pre-contact times the caciques were absolute in their power, but the Spanish introduced a democratic system in which these family heads were the electors for the local cabildos. As the political power of the caciques waned, these Mandones became relatively more powerful, destabilizing the hereditary rulers and nobles.

The most significant general change brought about by the colonial administration was a shift from a horizontal to a vertical power structure. In the pre-contact era each community was politically autonomous, but linked to other communities by ties of kinship in the ruling elite, the colonial system linked each community separately to a multilayered hierarchic political system, beginning with the Indian Cabildo and moving up through the Corregidor, the Alcaldía Mayor, the Viceroyalty, the Audiencia and finally reaching the King. By separating each
community from its pre-Hispanic kinship connections and integrating them separately into the Spanish system, Olivera and Romero argued that the localities lost their autonomy and Spanish took political control through the introduction of the elective system. It is clear from this article that in the judgement Olivera and Romero the arrival of the Spanish in Oaxaca was not a happy event.

Further research in the field by Spores resulted in the publication of The Mixtecs in Ancient and Colonial Times in 1984. Building on his previous volume, this new book enabled Spores to push our knowledge further, and sharpen the focus on population issues, the religious enterprise, the economic system, and multilevel government. Again careful archival research coupled with archeology was the key to the new knowledge.

Spores, (1984, 95-6) gently, politely, but completely and finally dismantled volumes of work done by Cook and Borah on pre-Columbian and early colonial population estimates. In a page and a half Spores demonstrated the impossibility and gross exaggeration of Cook and Borah's calculations. For all the apparent sophistication of their technique, for all the voluminous documentary evidence they cited in their complex formulations, Spores demonstrated that they were wrong by 400,000 in their estimate of 700,000 native inhabitants in the Mixteca. Spores, recalling Cook and Borah's estimate of 54,000 people at Tejupan, cited Byland who said "if Cook and Borah’s figures were anywhere near accurate for the cacicazgo of Tejupan, the residents would "had to have lived virtually shoulder to shoulder throughout the habitable areas of the cacigazgo." The archeological evidence clearly
demonstrates that such a demographic "crush" never occurred in the Tamazulapan Valley." Thus, in spite of the majesty of their many volumes of speculations on population size and decline, Spores here finally, and mercifully, put to rest this threadbare tissue of statistical hocus pocus by showing that when subjected to testing against the results of applied archeological and archival research, Cook and Borah's exaggerated numbers are in error by more than 100%.

Furthermore, for the period up to 1576, Spores depicted a period of economic florescence in the Mixteca Alta and an increasing population recovering from the epidemics of the 1540's, contradicting the straight line decline to nadir theory advanced by Cook and Borah. Concerning the church, Spores demonstrated that in the Mixteca Alta it was the means of survival of Mixtec society rather than the instrument of its annihilation.

John Chance's *Conquest of the Sierra, Spaniards and Indians in Colonial Oaxaca* interprets events in another mountainous region, adjacent to the Mixteca Alta. Published in 1989, Chance's work considered a complex area inhabited by five distinct ethnic groups. Chance intentionally selected this poor, geographically isolated zone where few trade items were produced and little interregional trade existed to focus on "life on the outskirts of colonial southern Mexico". He was particularly concerned to discover regional differences distinguishing this remote, lesser known, less developed peripheral backwater from "more advanced, better documented, and more glamorous regions like the Valley of Mexico, the Puebla-Tlaxcala region, Tarascan Michoacán, the Mixteca Alta, or the Valley of Oaxaca," to which other scholars "flock." The region he studied never had more than a few
hundred Spaniards during the colonial period, but their activities had a significant impact. As seen in other peripheral areas, Spanish goals in the Sierra Zapoteca—exploitation of native labor in production of cochineal and cotton goods for export into the world market—did not benefit the local inhabitants and were achieved by force, systematically applied.

Chance did study settlement patterns, and showed that villages moved frequently, but few disappeared altogether after the sixteenth century. He observed that "few towns, it seems, lack oral traditions about their former pueblos viejos, and many can show the visitor the remains of earlier sites" most of them "on tops of mountains and other inaccessible places."22 The extremely steep terrain influenced the urbanization:

Most communities are situated on mountain slopes in tierra templada (the temperate zone), though municipios frequently encompass some Tierra fría (cold country) and Tierra caliente (hot country) as well. Pueblos themselves often seem vertically constructed, as in Rincón, where a drop of two to three thousand feet between the highest and the lowest houses is not unusual. For this reason the Spanish grid pattern of streets was never successfully imposed in the region (except in Villa Alta) and most towns are still irregular in plan.23

Chance stated that "Congregaciones were ...quite extensive throughout the Sierra Zapoteca, despite the remoteness of the region. There is no doubt that the Indian population was severely affected and suffered greatly."24 The first program of colony wide congregación of 1550-64, did not affect the Vila Alta district because Spanish administration was still being set up at that time. Congregaciones did not get under way until about 1572, "the principal instigators behind this enterprise were

33
the Dominican friars" for the usual reasons. While Chance did not aim at
reconstructing specific instances of congregación, he did observe that:

In general, the cabecera-sujeto pattern was not well developed anywhere in
the Villa Alta district, a reflection of the Sierra's lower degree of socio-political
development as compared with the Valley of Oaxaca, the Mixteca, and
especially central Mexico. Spanish colonial officials in the district preferred
to deal with each town as an independent pueblo, and this is how records
were kept in the office of the alcalde mayor. The policy reflected an element
of the time honored strategy of divide and conquer, but this administrative
style was also influenced by indigenous forms.

Chance's research showed that while congregación did create nucleated towns
where none had existed before, soil exhaustion of agricultural lands severely
restricted by the steep terrain was a limiting factor to their survival in some
instances, and a gradual return to dispersed settlement resulted. Summing up his
findings on congregaciones Chance noted that the influence of the Dominicans was
pervasive: Many, if not most, of the congregaciones were planned and executed
with the desires of the friars clearly in view. Furthermore, the Dominicans
relocated villages and later changed cabecera-sujeto relations to suit their needs.

The Indians were forced to adapt to a Dominican inspired administrative
superstructure that was always subject to change. This superstructure rarely
coincided with indigenous concepts of ethnicity and political relations, but it
was nonetheless an important determinant of relative economic, political and
ceremonial status of Indian pueblos throughout the colonial period.

Chance devoted an entire chapter to the complex issue Christianization of the
Sierra. He noted that the Dominicans had more impact in terms of social
reorganization than in conversion. He thoughtfully discussed the persistence of
native religious practices along with Christian forms. He drew parallels to Farriss's
findings of syncretism in the Yucatan. The major problem faced by the friars, according to Chance, was their failure to understand the religions and languages of the people of the Sierra Zapoteca, and consequently indigenous beliefs and practices persisted there long after they had disappeared or merged with Catholic forms elsewhere in Mesoamerica. A more thorough, comparative consideration of his findings in relation to the experience in the Mixteca Alta will be presented later in this study.

Chance declared that his study "does not fit the established molds constructed for other parts of Oaxaca" though he saw its similarity to other peripheral Sierra regions, perhaps alluding to García Martínez's work. An important guiding principle in Chance's work was his belief that "A balanced understanding of colonial Mexico can be achieved only through study of as many regional variants as possible—both core and peripheral—and the factors and mechanisms that combined to create and maintain them." 29

In 1990 María de los Angeles Romero Frizzi published an expanded consideration of the same general area, though this time she called it Economía y vida de los españoles en la Mixteca Alta: 1519-1720. 30 Again she aimed at the Spanish and the economic system they brought. Though, in spite of the title, there is also a consideration of the Mixtecs themselves. She described their society with a precision refined since her previous article. She preferred to refer to the layers of social stratification in the Mixteca as "estamentos" or states or conditions rather than using the term Spores uses, classes. She understood by class an unequal
distribution of economic, political, and social power between identifiable strata of a society, but preferred here to use the concept of estamento because, in her view, the mobility between one strata and another was almost impossible. She wished to reserve the term class for societies where even though there are great differences, movement is possible.

She showed that there were, at contact, four layers: the yya, or later called cacique, the tay toho, or nobles or principales, the tay ñuu, or common people or macehuales, and in the richer kingdoms, like Teposcolula, Tututepec, Yanhuitlán, Tecomaxtlaahuaca, etc, there were tay situndaya, who were landless but tied to the lands of the local lord. Beneath these there were chattel slaves who did house work and were used for human sacrifice. They were part of the tribute system, were war captives, or born in the cacique’s house, and they could be bought and sold. She defined Tequio as work on the common land of the community, which was shared labor, and notes shared labor was used for the construction of temples, clearing new common lands for cultivation, terracing and so on.

Elaborating on her earlier work, she argued that the early encomenderos, in spite of their extractive practices, did little to reshape village life or autonomy, and so did not significantly alter the culture. Important cultural changes did not, therefore, begin to occur until the mid to late 1530’s when the Dominican friars arrived and began work on their permanent establishments. She specifically stated that not everything the friars did was bad, allowing that the introduction of certain European crops and animals was beneficial, as was the introduction of the plow and
other European agricultural technologies. Furthermore, many of the most abusive encomenderos were removed by the Second Audiencia, while other early encomiendas failed to produce the hoped for gold, and reverted to the crown for one reason or another. These became corregimientos, or zones where the tribute flowed directly to the crown administered by a corregidor, an official appointed by the crown for a limited term. It was this change in administrative apparatus which began to reshape native society in significant ways. As in her earlier work, she stressed that this led to a shift from a horizontal to a vertical power structure.

But a crucial observation she made, and to which this study will return, was "Y claro está, mucho dependió de la capacidad de los mixtecos para incorporar en su cultura los nuevos conocimientos." The issue of the capacity of indigenous people to incorporate the new knowledge brought by the Spanish into their cultures is a primary concern of this study. Lockhart's recent examination of this theme in the Nahua zone of central Mexico offers many profound insights relevant to this investigation of the Mixtecs of Teposcolula. Because his work presents conclusions parallel and reinforcing to my own, and because his work marks an important new direction in the literature to which I wish to contribute all possible encouragement, I will now offer an extended review of his central arguments.

James Lockhart's monumental achievement in the 1992 publication of Nahuas After Conquest, and its 1991 companion volume Nahuas and Spaniards, is the culmination of two decades of endeavor in Nahuatl philology.\textsuperscript{31} The work presented in these volumes will become a turning point in the progress of contact
period studies, offering welcome relief to scholars long fatigued by the increasingly
distorted, ideologically driven publications of the last decade. And while his praise
of Gibson's contributions is certainly enthusiastic, it is also clear that Lockhart
understood their limitations:

The fact that he worked less on the eighteenth century than on earlier times
left him more inclined to such views of the matter than he might have been
otherwise, but in any case, though he successfully minimized its impact on
the body of the book, he was always more than a little sympathetic to the
Black Legend, and identification with a group of downtrodden was an
important part of his motivation, so that the tenor of the conclusion might
have been much the same even if the research had taken a different course.
Whatever the reason, the variance or discrepancy remains. The conclusion
does not do justice to the multitude of congruent insights revealed in the body
of the study. It seriously retarded general comprehension of The Aztecs and
even now often trips up readers who stumble upon the book unprepared.32

In fact, Lockhart argued that Gibson demonstrated, without explicitly so stating, that
Nahua culture survived the conquest more or less intact and that the Nahua went
on to be not only active participants in, but often the controlling force in
Spanish/Indian relations and colonial policy and cultural fusion:

The great contribution of The Aztecs, compared to anything that went before
it, was its display, on a very large canvas, of the lesson that Indian structures
and vitality survived the conquest in a major way, affecting and often almost
dictating whatever measures the Spaniards planned or enterprise they
undertook.33

These positive aspects in Gibson's work have guided Lockhart's efforts, and
produced, finally, a remarkably comprehensive yet balanced overview of the nature
of colonial society. Lockhart's great advance, indeed giant leap, is to once and for
all, let us hope, get beyond an ideologically driven view of Spanish/Indian relations
distorted by moralizing posturing. By removing the hostility, if not hysteria, from the
discourse, Lockhart's dispassionate honesty and compelling authority permits us to
get back to the business at hand.

Lockhart's book is an update, or revision of the viewpoint Gibson advanced,
building on the best Gibson had to offer but enhancing it with rich new insights
gained from the Nahuatl records. Because he used exclusively Nahuatl sources,
Lockhart found much more creative adaptation and positive participation by the
Indians after contact and gave us a more realistic picture than Gibson's frequent
characterizations of domination and subordination. But without hammering on the
point, Lockhart's text reminds the reader of the fact that the Aztec regime was brutal,
and does so at strategic moments wherein some of the tougher aspects of the
Spanish regime are necessarily discussed. That is to say Lockhart maintained
throughout his exposition a parallel, realistic awareness of Nahua life before and
after conquest which is balanced, comparative and genuinely useful. This is a
significant improvement on Gibson's attitude. Lockhart, then, was neither seeking
to advance the Black Legend, nor to whitewash the Spanish regime. His text is not
marred by moralizing indignation about the Spanish, nor patronizing pity for the
Indians. Lockhart's work is more balanced and thus ultimately more constructively
persuasive. In this Lockhart offers a model for the next generation of students of
Mexican history. An example of Lockhart's approach may be seen in the conclusion
to his summary of the current state of research in the field:

As things now stand, then, it has become apparent that straightforward
clash, simple displacement, and indigenous survival through isolation are modes more characteristic of areas on the fringe, where Spanish immigrants were few and indigenous people less than fully sedentary, than of a core region such as central Mexico. ...the crucial factor is not so much the particular modality of contact as the simple degree of contact, measured in distance, frequency, or hours spent, as a vehicle for interaction, regardless of whether that contact is construed as hostile or friendly, harmful or benign. The presence of Europeans among Indians unleashed a long series of vast epidemics that had nothing to do with the intentions of either party, but resulted from the combination of the historical attributes of both sides. Likewise, in the cultural sphere, the degree of contact between the two populations helped shape centuries-long processes combining gradual transformation with deep continuities, depending on the relative attributes of the two. Wherever human beings come into touch, there will be both conflict and cooperation, both congregation and avoidance; some things on both sides will be strongly affected, others less so. In the central areas, contact was relatively close from the beginning, and with a quickly and steadily expanding Hispanic sector, it grew ever closer in a cumulative trend covering centuries.³⁴

Rather than dwelling on hostile resistance, or issues of who was dominating whom, Lockhart preferred to speak simply of the process of rapprochement. Among the many benefits flowing from the study of a history at last liberated from ideological servitude, is that common sense may once again play a methodological role in shaping our interpretations of the facts and surviving evidence. As will be seen in the study which follows, seen in the right light, elements of the 16th century built environment provide a vast reservoir of knowledge and insight. In a most refreshing example of the application of the common sense method, Lockhart pointed out that:

...it was not only the Spaniards who wanted to see a splendid monastery church built in each aitepetl. Just as all the tlatilcalli had the same relationship to the tlatoani and viewed him as their own, so too they had, in preconquest times, a common ethnic god and central temple that represented the sovereignty and power of the aitepetl; not only the biased reports of approving friars but the internal logic of the situation lead to the
interpretation that the people of the entire altepetl must have sympathized with the construction of a general altepetl church in the sixteenth century, and the task itself must have been a unifying factor. Once that task was finished, the construction of churches in each tlaxicalli could proceed, helping refocus both energy and loyalties toward the smaller unit.\textsuperscript{35}

And he went on to disarm or defuse, or debunk if you will, earlier notions bearing on the all important religious issue:

The religious history of postconquest Mexico has often been seen in terms of successful or unsuccessful resistance to a Christian conversion campaign. In fact, conscious, overt indigenous resistance was not utterly lacking from the picture, and it is not entirely inappropriate to speak of some effort on the part of the Spaniards to convince or "convert" the Indians in the manner of evangelists of our own times. But neither category, conversion or resistance, truly hits the mark. As in politics, existing Nahua patterns were what made the quick apparent success of Spanish modes possible; the altepetl was as important in religious as in political organization. One can hardly speak of an indigenous inclination to disbelief in Christianity. For the people of preconquest Mesoamerica, victory was prima facie evidence of the strength of the victor’s god. One expected a conqueror to impose his god in some fashion, without fully displacing one’s own; the new god in any case always proved to be an agglomeration of attributes familiar from the local pantheon and hence easy to assimilate. Thus the Nahua after Spanish conquest needed less to be converted than to be instructed. Spanish ecclesiastics seem to have taken much the same view of the matter, since they spoke mainly in terms of instruction or indoctrination rather than conversion, and never referred to themselves as missionaries, the word so many modern scholars have anachronistically preferred.\textsuperscript{36}

In these few, succinct lines, Lockhart matter-of-factly dispensed with decades of silly fussing and feuding by the application of the common sense method operating in an ideologically neutral atmosphere. Returning to the issue of the built environment, Lockhart’s method permits the basis for a reasonable understanding and explanation of the planning and construction process of the monastic complexes
which were to transform the landscape within a few decades of the conquest. In a passage with particular relevance to Teposcolula where the grandest of all Capillas de Indios was built, he points out that:

The monastery churches, which though often not completed until far into the sixteenth century, were usually planned or begun quite early, were normally built near the old main altepetl temple, sometimes literally on the same site. Whether it was in the same place or not, the Nahuas took the Christian church as the analogue of the preconquest temple. They enthusiastically participated in its construction and decoration in the same spirit as with its predecessor, looking to magnify the central tangible symbol of the altepetl's sovereignty and identity. The nobles of the altepetl expected to and did serve as officials involved in seeing to church operation, as they had supervised the functioning of the temple before the conquest. Following established preconquest precedent, altepetl officials used labor and tribute mechanisms to supply the church's needs and make sure its public rites were well attended. Since one church, however large, was not enough to serve an entire altepetl district in the long run, secondary churches or chapels without resident priests...soon began to be created...37

Finally there is a scholar of major importance who has the honesty and courage to state the obvious, if until now politically incorrect, conclusion concerning the massive program of church construction that so characterized the sixteenth century. He is not afraid to say that Indian participation in Christian Church building was enthusiastic, a statement long overdue, but avoided by those too concerned to correctly posture and pose themselves within the fashionable ideological model. Lockhart argues that the Indians were concerned about the relative power of the religious orders within the Spanish regime, and often felt the Franciscans to be the most powerful, and wanted, for that reason, to have Franciscan friars in their town rather than others. In other words, this was a calculated political decision the Indians
made concerning the prestige and power of the altepetl, rather than a romantic fondness for the friars as Ricard suggested.

We would be naive to believe, as the friars maintained and as Ricard tended to accept, that indigenous actions and reactions in the matter of order affiliation had primarily to do with the order's popularity or an indigenous group's devotion to it or to certain of its members.38

In his conclusion he reiterated a central contention emerging from his linguistic studies: his three stages, schematization, or periodization of Nahua response to European culture:

...the three stages of the general postconquest evolution of the Nahuas run as follows: (1) a generation (1519 to ca. 1545-50) during which, despite great revolutions, reorientations and catastrophes, little changed in Nahua concepts, techniques, or modes of organization; (2) about a hundred years (ca. 1545-50 to ca. 1640-50) during which Spanish elements came to pervade every aspect of Nahua life, but with limitations, often as discrete additions within a relatively unchanged indigenous framework; and (3) the time thereafter, extending forward to Mexican independence and in many respects until our time, in which the Nahuas adopted a new wave of Spanish elements, now often more strongly affecting the framework of organization and technique, leading in some cases to a true amalgamation of the two traditions.39

His periodization pertains not only to linguistic responses, but also to most aspects of social life, including especially Spanish/Indian labor relations, an all important consideration in a colonial society.

Furthermore, Lockhart emphasized this complex pattern of Nahua/Spanish interaction as overall more significant in shaping post-conquest society even than the relationships between the friars and the Indians, noting that the general level of cultural interaction increased proportionally as the Indian population declined and
the Non-Indian population grew:

Notions of a planned and directed selective acculturation, conceived in the minds primarily of Spanish ecclesiastics, are inadequate, or to put it more strongly, are false, for ecclesiastical policies and campaigns account for only a tiny proportion of what happened and cover an equally tiny proportion of the range of concepts and mental processes involved.40

At the theoretical level, Lockhart demonstrated the need for a fundamental reconceptualization of the nature of Indian response to European, or as some would have it, Afro-European contact. This revision of thinking he called for is necessary for the advance of serious scholarship, and his accumulated insights and conclusions permitted a dramatic demonstration of this need that swept away at a stroke decades of unproductive, distorting, patronizing attitudes characterized by notions of resistance or domination and subordination:

Much the same objection attaches to explanations emphasizing indigenous resistance. One could no more have resisted Stage 2 or Stage 3 than one could have opposed High German sound shift. At any rate, it is perfectly clear that the Nahuas, after an initial twenty year period about which we know relatively little, were not for the most part in a mood of active resistance. The Spanish manner of using and building on the altepetl adequately met Nahua expectations and short term interests. In one domain after another we see that the Nahuas had no doctrinal distaste for Spanish introductions as such but related to them pragmatically as things they might make their own, according to criteria of familiarity, usability, and availability. If resistance is to be integrated meaningfully into the explanation of the broader process, it must be reconceptualized so as not to make a conscious decision to accept or reject something foreign the crucial factor. If a Spanish concept, practice or organizational mode was too distinct from indigenous equivalents at a given time, the Nahuas would fail to understand it or see its utility, and in a sense would "resist" it. The advancing three-stage process could gradually change Nahua culture to the point of overcoming such "resistance." Seen in terms of compatibilities, boundaries, and changing thresholds, perhaps resistance can be salvaged as a theoretical tool, but it must be handled gingerly and remains problematic.
Finally, Lockhart offered a long view interpretive model of the fundamental nature of the relationship between the Nahuas and the Spaniards, and how it evolved and resolved over time:

At the root of cultural interaction between Nahuas and Spaniards was a process I have called Double Mistaken identity, whereby each side takes it that a given form or concept is essentially one already known to it, operating in much the same manner as in its own tradition, and hardly takes cognizance of the other side’s interpretation. Each could view Indian town government, the monastery complexes, mural painting, land tenure, and many other phenomena of the postconquest Nahua world as falling within its own frame of reference. Under the unwitting truce thus created, Nahua patterns could continue indefinitely in a superficially Hispanic guise that was sometimes no more than a label. Then over the centuries, without much obvious surface change, a rapprochement took place in many spheres, often leading to forms that cannot be securely attributed to either original parent culture, but that were accepted all along as familiar to both. Even when the end result looked more Hispanic than indigenous, the Nahuas, without second thoughts and with good reason, regarded the concept, pattern, or institution as their own.41

Much more could be said of Lockhart’s monumental contribution, and no doubt will be for decades to come. But these remarks and citations are sufficient to show how his work will mark a longed for turning point in our field, which will permit a return to a more reasonable tone and atmosphere in which the operation of common sense will once again steadily advance our understanding.

It is beyond the scope of this study to comprehensively apply or compare every aspect of Lockhart’s findings for the Nahua case to the Mixtecs of Teposcolula. But what I hope will become clear from my work is that the Mixtecs of Teposcolula did willingly, enthusiastically engage in a process not only of church
building but of urban planning and construction in which they were not dominated or subordinated by the Spanish, but rather through which the rapprochment Lockhart speaks of began to be physically worked out and expressed architecturally in the new built environment of Teposcolula. Moreover, I will show how this rapprochment, began through a process of cultural integration through willing negotiation and consent, providing an opportunity for the Mixtec cultural leadership to selectively and creatively apply elements of the incoming Spanish form culture and architectural technology to the advancement and transmission of an indigenous ideological agenda. While my own modest effort here lacks the monumental scale of Lockhart's achievement, it will, I believe, become clear that the two studies — while methodologically quite different, drawing on two distinct types of evidence: written documents and standing buildings — are nevertheless mutually reinforcing and complementary in their conclusions. This not only justifies my methodological approach, but also argues for further studies along the same lines.

Before considering the case of cultural transmission and transformation in sixteenth-century Teposcolula, it will be helpful to first review what is known about Mixtec civilization before European contact. The following chapter will provide a highly compressed synthetic overview of pre-Columbian Mixtec culture based on published studies and my own field work.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1:


10. Ibid. p. 38.


18. The issue of population statistics in contact period Mexico remains a heated center of controversy. For the best comprehensive, if highly analytic and critical literature review and bibliographic overview of the contending models and studies published to date see: Whitmore, Thomas M. Disease and Death in Early Colonial Mexico. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press Dellplain Latin American Studies, No. 28, 1992. Like others in the past, Whitmore argued here that catastrophic population collapse occurred in the first century after contact. What is new about his work is his simulation methodology and conclusions showing much smaller initial aboriginal population than other studies.


20. Ibid. p. xiv.

21. Ibid. p. xiii.

22. Ibid. p. 69.

23. Ibid. p. 70.

24. Ibid. p. 74.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid. p. 76.

27. Ibid. p. 88.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid. p. xv.


33. Ibid. p. 173.

34. Lockhart. Nahuas After Conquest p. 4.

35. Ibid. p. 55.

36. Ibid. p. 203.

37. Ibid. p. 206.

38. Ibid. p. 208.

39. Ibid. p. 429.

40. Ibid. p. 443.

41. Ibid. p. 445.
CHAPTER II

THE MIXTECS BEFORE EUROPEAN CONTACT
They had many books made from paper or fabric from the special bark of trees that are found in the hotlands. They tanned and prepared them like bundled parchment, all about the same width. Others were cut and glued together in one piece as long as was needed... The historians inscribed them with characters so abbreviated that a single page expressed the place, the site, province, year, month, and day with all the names of the gods, ceremonies and sacrifices or victories that they celebrated... They were kept by the sons of the lords, having been instructed by the priests since infancy on how to form the characters and memorize the histories.¹

I have heard some elders explain that they fastened these books of cosmography along the length of the rooms of the lords for their own aggrandizement, valuing them and referring to them in their assemblies, in the same way that many Catholics have done with the lives of the saints, adorning their walls with lienzos and figures though more out of interest in the painting than out of their religious devotion.²

Fray Francisco de Burgoa, O.P., 1679.

Introduction

This three-part chapter will briefly review the development of Ancient Mixtec culture and history as we know it from archaeological and documentary sources. Part One presents the mythological perceptions of prehistory and a sketch of dynastic activities and interactions with Toltec and Aztec people to the north. Part Two reviews the religious beliefs and practices current in the Mixteca at the time of European contact. Part Three generally summarizes the development of pre-hispanic social organization, settlement patterns and urbanization in the Mixteca Alta, with a more specific examination of the case of Teposcolula.
Part I

Mixtec Myth and History
from Screenfold Pictorials and Colonial Sources

In the Valley of Mexico during the sixteenth century Bernadino Sahagún and other early Mendicant friars devoted themselves to a systematic study of the pre-contact culture of the Aztecs. This body of knowledge collected and preserved by the friars has been, in spite of some shortcomings of scientific technique, a rich resource for later scholars. Unfortunately, it seems no such systematic study of the pre-contact civilization was conducted in the Mixteca, and our knowledge of it must be based on interpretation of the few ancient codices which have survived, scattered references found in the work of some of the Dominican chroniclers such as Father Burgos, hearings before the Inquisition, and archeological evidence.

Today there is a growing body of scholarly literature attempting to penetrate the enigmatic Mixtec Screenfold accounts of history and ritual. These eight surviving pre-contact documents are made of animal hides, glued or stiched together in a long continuous series of folding panels. The hides have been carefully prepared for a gesso-like coating on which the pictorial sequences are painted. These pictorial texts recorded information concerning the mythology, geneological history, and ritual performance by means of a system of symbolic representation including a calendric scheme, place identification and iconographic conventions. By artistically combining these features, it was possible to record narratives involving distinctly differentiated individuals interacting with each other in time and place specific sequences.
However, these screenfold pictorials were not the reservoir of recorded history of the Mixtecs, only the guidebooks for its ritual enactment. The reservoir of the knowledge was in the minds of the living participants in the oral tradition, and in spite of the best efforts of eminent and dedicated scholars over a century of intensive study, the rich treasure of that living tradition has been irretrievably lost. The few surviving examples of these mnemonic guides, after generations of modern research, have nevertheless, yielded much useful information. Used together with the results of archaeological and historical investigation, they have permitted a partial reconstruction of Mixtec history, mythology and religion. The following discussion has been woven together from the work of many scholars, and attempts to present a coherent impression of the general outlines of Mixtec culture before contact.

In the year and on the day of darkness and mist, before there were days or years, when the world was in great obscurity and everything was chaos and confusion, the earth was covered with water. Only mud and slime were on the face of the earth. In those days appeared visibly a God, named 1 Deer "Lion Serpent" and a gentle and beautiful Goddess, named 1 Deer "Jaguar Serpent." These two deities, they say, were the beginning of the other Gods. After appearing visibly in the world, in human shape, they made and founded in their omnipotence and wisdom a huge rock, on which they constructed with great skill luxurious palaces, their seat and abode on earth. On top of the house and dwelling of these Gods there was a copper ax, the edge turned upwards, on which the sky rested. This rock and these palaces of the Gods were on a very high mountain, near the town of Apoala, in the province called Mixteca Alta. In the language of this people the rock was called Place where Heaven was.³

Writing at the Dominican Convento at Cuilapan, Oaxaca, at the beginning of
the 17th century, probably working from a now lost screenfold, Fray Gregorio García recorded this fragment of a creation myth which actually mentions a specific location, a town which still exists. Another of the first to write on the subject of Mixtec culture was the Dominican Friar Antonio de los Reyes, who in 1593 published *Arte en lengua Mixteca*, a grammar of the Mixtec language as spoken in Teposcolula, where he lived and worked at the monastery of Saints Peter and Paul. Concerning Mixtec mythology for the origins of the dynastic geneologies he observed:

> It was a common belief among the native Mixtec speakers that the origin and beginnings of their false gods and rulers was in Apoala, a town in the Mixteca, which in their language is called *yuta tnoho*, which is "river where the rulers come from." because they are said to have been split off from some trees that grew out of that river and that have special names. They also call that town *yuta truhu*, which is "river of the lineages," and this is the more appropriate name and the one that fits best.

Decades later, Fray Francisco de Burgoa spent time in Oaxaca City and Zaachila, near Cuilapan. He passed on another fragment of the Tree Birth story saying that the Mixtecs:

> ...attributed [their] origin to two trees...on the riverbanks of ...Apoala... With the underground water of this river, the trees grew that produced the first native rulers, male and female...and from here each generation grew and extended, populating a great kingdom.

This Tree Birth legend—noted by the three early Dominican chroniclers, who may have been sharing a no longer extant codex, or who may simply have independently come into contact with what was, evidently, a commonly held belief among the Mixtecs—is corroborated in three of the Mixtec codices we know today, *Vindobonensis I* (or the Vienna Codex), Seldon and Bodely.
Recent work by Mark King has shown that "the structure of Mixtec symbolism is... supported by two dominant mythological concepts, sacrifice and Rain." He argues that the Mixtec view the universe as two halves, a feminine Earth and masculine Sky whose cyclical, intimate relationship is expressed by the crucially important mythic metaphor: rain. Recalling the epoch of primordial darkness when all was but mud and slime, and, undifferentiated, Earth and Sky were one. This was a time before Rain. But as is recorded in the Vienna Codex, Lord 9 Wind, son of the creator pair 1 Deer, changed this by lifting the waters of the Sky from the face of the Earth, thus revealing the various localities indicated by nine pages of place-glyphs. Now, for the first time, Rain symbols appear at the feet of 9 Wind, the cosmic transformer, as he lifts the sky, ending chaos, timelessness and primal unity. Now a mythological epoch ends and an era of periodic reunions begins, symbolized by Rain. As King shows:

The mythic structure of Rain distinguishes symbolic elements with respect to the Earth, the Sky, or the Center. The Center is a metaphor for the "household" or the "bed" of Rain, where the Earth and Sky bring forth new life. In this sense, the concept of Rain represents the basic cosmic structure of the Mixtec universe.

According to Henry Nicholson's interpretation of the Vienna codex then, Lord 9 Wind was a Mixtec equivalent of the Central Mexican Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and "plays a major role in Mixtec cosmogony and prehistory...He possibly was considered to have been the direct lineal ancestor of Mixteca royalty." According to Henry Nicholson's interpretation of the Vienna codex then, Lord 9 Wind was a Mixtec equivalent of the Central Mexican Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and "plays a major role in Mixtec cosmogony and prehistory...He possibly was considered to have been the direct lineal ancestor of Mixteca royalty." According to Henry Nicholson's interpretation of the Vienna codex then, Lord 9 Wind was a Mixtec equivalent of the Central Mexican Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and "plays a major role in Mixtec cosmogony and prehistory...He possibly was considered to have been the direct lineal ancestor of Mixteca royalty." According to Henry Nicholson's interpretation of the Vienna codex then, Lord 9 Wind was a Mixtec equivalent of the Central Mexican Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl and "plays a major role in Mixtec cosmogony and prehistory...He possibly was considered to have been the direct lineal ancestor of Mixteca royalty."

Concerning the notion of sacrifice, King points to a Mixtec proverb presented
in recent work by John Monaghan, "We eat the Earth and the Earth eats us." The notion preserved here is that in the beginning, after the sky was lifted and the earth was revealed, the first people, wishing to eat, set about to clear and cultivate the land, not knowing how this hurt and harmed the Earth. Again and again the Earth undid their work until they asked the Earth why their labors were frustrated, and the Earth told them of its pain and sufferings. Then a covenant was made and the people promised not go anywhere but to Earth when they died, giving their own bodies as food for the Earth in exchange for the food they take from the body of the Earth. Thus, as King says:

In this myth, the spiritually stronger, superior Earth gives the gift of food to the people who, in return, will give lesser, sacrificial counter-gifts of food until such time as they die and satisfy their role in the Covenant. These token ritual sacrifices mostly take the form of liquor, candles, flowers, and food. King likens this to gift and counter gift exchange between households in the festival sponsorship tradition and says that "in this way the mythic significance of sacrifice is instrumental in processes of social integration." From this brief overview of the creation myths, gleaned from the codices, let us turn now to consider the records of historical events and personages, remembering always that in the Mixtec pictorials the distinction between mythology and history is frequently blurred, often as if by intent.

The dynastic history of the Mixtec Kings as we know it from the codices is generally thought to begin in Tilantongo about A.D. 940. The Mixtecs may have come from somewhere else, perhaps farther north. Some accounts say the
Valley of Puebla and even mention Huejotzingo. As Maarten Jansen, among others, has pointed out, there is a legend of the Stone People, who fought with the Mixtecs in "a mythical struggle preceding the actual founding of the dynasties..." Jansen goes on to say:

In my view, the Stone people attack the First Mixtec Lords (many of whom appear in the Codex Vindobonensis Obverse associated with the Tree of Origin at Apoala), but finally are defeated by them. The capturing or sacrifice of a Stone Man seems to be equivalent to taking possession of a cacicazgo, an event indicated elsewhere by New Fire ceremonies or by the simple combination of the Founding Fathers with a ceremonial date and place sign.

The illustrious life of one of the great figures of the Mixtec past, Lord 8 Deer Tiger Claw, who lived between 1063 and 1115 A.D is celebrated in the Codex Colombino-Becker. Nancy Troike's intensive study of this codex has enabled her to reconstruct the major events of his life: Lord 8 Deer rose to power attempting to establish an empire before his eventual murder. First he was ruler of Tututepec, then co-ruler of Tilantongo, after having won the right to have his nose pierced. 8 Deer had received the blue nose ornament, the distinction of royalty, in Tula from the hands of the Toltec ruler. Later a son and a daughter of 8 Deer were married in Tula. Ambassadors from Tula visited 8 Deer in the Mixteca to propose an alliance, and they were treated with great respect. But as John Pohl has pointed out, "Tula" or Tollan are places denoted by the cattail plants as qualifiers, and more than one such place exist.

Maarten Jansen (1989) has recently revived the identification of "Tula" as being Tula-Tollan, the great Tolteca-Chichimeca capital in Hidalgo. The very localized nature of early Mixtec codical history... that includes the lives of...
Lords 8 Deer and 4 Wind, points instead to a Tula lying somewhere near the Nochixtlán Valley [in the Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca]. 21

8 Deer made a dangerous journey to visit an important solar supernatural to receive an oracular prediction of the future. He may have killed or conspired in the killing of his half brother and he sacrificed the only 2 kinsmen who threatened his claim to Tilantongo. But before 8 Deer could consolidate his power over an extended empire he met his death at the hands of Lord 4 Wind who succeeded in restoring peace to the region. 22 After the death of 8 Deer, other Toltec ambassadors came from Tula to visit 4 Wind, the new ruler of Tilantongo, who also received the turquoise nose ornament of royalty in his turn from the same Lord 4 Tiger of Tula. When 4 Wind returned he was accompanied by many people, including five ambassadors and captains of war. 23

John Pohl's work shows that the majority of human sacrifices in Mixtec codices have to do with political affairs of 8 Deer and his contemporaries Lady 6 Monkey and Lord 4 Wind. "He concluded that human sacrifices were politically motivated and represented the climax of a power struggle; the sacrifice ceremonies themselves may have served as public demonstrations of changes in power." 24

As the preceding discussion shows, during the reigns of 8 Deer and 4 Wind, or in the twelfth century, according to some scholars, it appears that Toltecs were highly respected allies of the great lords of the Mixteca. Later, however, after the fall of Tula, the Nahuatl speakers of the north become enemies. 25

In the fourteenth century an important expedition was made by Mixtecs,
including Lord 9 House of Tilantongo-Teozacualco and Lord 9 Lizard of Jaltepec together with Chochos from Coixtlahuaca to the region of Cuauhtinchan, Tepeaca, Tecamachalco and other locations in the Valley of Puebla, and it appears that the Mixtecs established a dynasty in the area. In this successful campaign waged in Mexica territory, Lord 9 House took the name Mexican Tiger, celebrating his military valor in the same way that Roman emperors used names like Germanicus. Later 9 House’s son, Lord 2 Water, took the name Mexican Fire Serpent. The use of names with political overtones, Jansen argues, demonstrates the existence of a continuing struggle between Mixtecs and Nahuas in the late Postclassic era.26

This hostility intensified in violent, bloody campaigns of Aztec aggression and Mixtec resistance in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Teposcolula and the surrounding Mixtec kingdoms were finally subjected to Aztec military authority and compelled to pay "staggering" amounts of tribute in the period just before Spanish contact.27 Unable to conclude the conquest of Yahnuitlan by force of arms, Moctezuma I (ruled 1440-1468) in about 1449 finally employed treachery in arranging the murder of the Cacique of Yahnuitlán, Three Monkeys, a valiant leader of staunch resistance to Aztec imperialism.28 Coixtlahuaca was conquered and occupied by Montezuma I in 1458, thus becoming an Aztec garrison town. The Nahuatl chronicler Chimalpahin recorded that "1458, year 5 Reed. This was the year in which the Temalacatl (Great circular stone for ceremonial combat) was inaugurated in México. The same in which the Emperor Moctezuma Ilhuicamina conquered the [Coixtlahuacans], he ruined equally the country of Teposcolula and
subjugated its people." 29

Later, closer to Spanish contact, Ronald Spores notes that "It is well documented that the Mexicans undertook a punitive expedition to Yanhuitlán and Zozollan—a "rebellious situation" had taken place—in 1506. Yanhuitlán was sacked and 1000 prisoners were taken and later sacrificed in the festival of Tlacaxipehualistli in Tenochtitlan. 30 The last Prince of Tlaxiaco, born in 1435 according to the Codex Bodley, known as Sr. 8 Hierba, or in the Spanish histories as Malinalli de Tlaxiaco, fought against the Aztecs in the fifteenth century, but was ultimately defeated by them, and finally sacrificed by Moctezuma II in 1511 and Tlaxiaco also became the site of an Aztec occupational garrison. 31 Thus, Spores concluded: "there is little doubt that the greater part of the Mixteca was under the political domination of the Mexicans during the four decades that preceded the Spanish conquest." 32

The record of enormous tribute payments from the Mixteca proves political subjugation, but John Paddock vigorously rejects the notion of Mexica cultural domination in Oaxaca. 33 He shows that the presence of images or iconography refering to Tezcatlipoca, among the most important members of the Mexica pantheon, is quite limited, and occurs only in areas garrisoned by Mexica soldiers, suggesting that there never was an adoption of the cult of this deity by the natives of Oaxaca. In spite of Fray Diego Durán's mention of a garrison of 960 Mexica soldiers and their families in what is now the city of Oaxaca, Paddock finds little archaeological evidence to support a notion of a dominating Aztec presence in the
Valley of Oaxaca.\textsuperscript{34}

Michael Lind's analysis of ceramic ware from his excavations in the Nochixtlán Valley supports Paddock's contention. Lind notes that "...the bloody cult of Huitzilopochtli, the Aztec patron deity, was not recognized by the Mixtecs or any other Mesoamerican culture until after the Aztecs had imposed it on them."\textsuperscript{35} But Lind observes a high degree of continuity in the use of ritual ware in noble households after the Aztec conquest, declining only slightly in use. He concludes that "if the Aztecs imposed the cult of Huitzilopochtli on the Mixtecs, there is little evidence for it. None of the painted pottery types, such as Pilitas polychrome, manifests representations or attributes of Huitzilopochtli."\textsuperscript{36}

However, in addition to the problems of military aggression and occupation by the imperial Mexica armies from Central Mexico, Spores notes that "there was warfare between such towns as Milantongo and Tlaxiaco, Mitlantongo and Tututepec in the coastal region of the Mixteca, Tamazola and Tututepec, Tejupa and Chocho speaking peoples, and Tilantongo carried on warfare against Teposcolula and the Zapotec."\textsuperscript{37} This may explain the continued use of a hill top location of difficult access as the principal population center of the Teposcolula kingdom up until the arrival of the friars, and what might be termed a Pax Hispanica. While there were a few, scattered instances of sustained violence in the Spanish conquest of Oaxaca,\textsuperscript{38} in Teposcolula, as in the Nochixtlán valley,\textsuperscript{39} it appears to have been achieved by means of peaceful negotiation.

Part II
MIXTEC RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Though there exists an abundant documentation on Aztec religion, it has not been possible to give us a definition, or even an organized iconography, of the Aztec god who is said to be the principal one. One reason is obvious: neither the Aztec priests nor the Spanish chroniclers had a historical or scientific viewpoint that demanded of them a clear and organized exposition. Further, if they were like many professionals of yesterday and today, the Aztec priests had a lively though concealed interest in the contrary: They promoted mystery, sought the esoteric, avoided the comprehensible, created unnecessary complications. Caso complains of this when he refers to "...obscure or disguised language that the Aztec sorcerers employed...(Caso 1959:78). Their success is clear."

John Paddock's useful insight into the problems of the much studied Aztec religion is especially helpful here at the beginning of a discussion of Mixtec religion for which much less documentation exists, and which has remained even more obscurely veiled behind the shifting mists of time. Our knowledge of prehispanic Mixtec religion is drawn largely from scattered remarks in a few early accounts, notably Fray Francisco de Burgoa and Antonio de Herrera, some brief passages from the Relaciones Geográficas, the Códice de Yahnuitlán, and perhaps most importantly from the testimony given before the Holy Inquisition in the Proceso de Yahnuitlán of 1544. These few sources have been carefully studied by many scholars, the most comprehensive general synthesis is still that of Barbro Dahlgren, first published in 1954. Later, Ronald Spores contributed many additional penetrating insights over the years which have deepened our understanding. Most recently John Pohl has published a valuable update incorporating his fresh insights. Drawing extensively from these and other writers, what follows will attempt to
partially reconstruct a general outline of religious beliefs and practices in the Mixteca before the Spanish.  

Spores succinctly and effectively introduces the central themes of prehispanic Mixtec religion:

Mixtec formal religion centered on worshipful recognition of the forces and features of nature: life ("spirit of life" or "heart": yni or ini), death and life hereafter. These universal forces, elements, events, and relationships were personified as spiritual things (sasi ñuhu) or deities (ñuhu). They were often represented as images (nac ñuhu), somewhat indiscriminately classed as ídolos by Spaniards.  

Noting the "persisting relationship between the dead and the living," Spores wrote that:

Familiar elements of the Mixtec natural and cultural universe were respected, venerated, and honored by offerings and sacrifice. Natural features, the land (ñuhu), mountains (yucu), caves (cahau), rivers (yuta), canyons (duhua), plants (yutnu), unusual stone formations (yuu canu), and the heavens (andevui) and heavenly bodies (yya caa huiyu) received special attention. Time (quevui, huico), motion (yosichi), and the days of the week were equally charged with supernatural significance. Critical forces and elements of nature, water (duta), rain (dzauíi), clouds (huico), lightening (sacuññe tecuiye or sasanduta tecuiye), wind (chi), and fire (ñuhu), took on special spiritual identities, as did more impressive animals of the Mixtec realm, cats (ñana), eagles (yaha), and serpents (coo). Occupying a place of special prominence were the spirits of deceased ancestors (taynisíyo ñuu sindi) of ruling lineages (yaatnunundi).  

In other words, Mixtecs believed that for every place there was an associated nature spirit. The more important, or larger the place, the more important or general the relationship with the nature spirit might be. Because of the place specific identity, it was uncommon for different villages to share relationships with their local spirits. On a larger scale, however, there were also regional,
"elevated" spirits to whom more generalized appeals and offerings might be made, such as that made by merchants and traders to their special patron, Toyna xifuh (Monkey of Omens); or by pregnant women to the spirit of the steam baths; by warriors to the sun spirit; by hunters to Qhuav (venado or deer); and by priests generally to Dzahui—the universal Rain spirit of the Mixteca—patron of the cultivated fields.46

Indeed, in testimony before the Inquisition of 1544, several of the principal supernatural forces of Mixtec devotion were revealed. Of the accused Don Juan, Cacique (or king) of Yanhuitlán, it was said that he:

...specially advises...[his subjects] to observe and celebrate the days and feasts of their idols as they were accustomed to do in times past, honoring the idol of water which is called Zaaguy, and another that is called Tizones who is the god of the corazón, and another called Toyna, and another called Xiton which is the idol of the merchants, these being the feasts which the said Don Juan has celebrated many and divers times, by himself and with others, dancing and singing at night as well as by day, consenting to and partaking in the sacrifices and offerings to his idols, invoking the devil and his assistance in the manner of his paganism.47

Symbolic representations of these spirits were typically small and made of a green stone considered precious, though sometimes other materials were used, including other stones and wood. These symbolic representations were the focus of devotional practices conducted by the priests, who composed a special, hierarchically structured segment of the society. Each such symbolic representation was the responsibility of a particular priest, and each important place, such as a town, had its own symbolic token or tokens recognizing the local spirits as well as the elevated spirits of regional importance.48
Pohl argues that the Postclassic Mixtec socio-political system was probably based on emulation of an esteemed foreign model such as the Tolteca-Chichimeca confederations of Puebla. In the Mixteca political authority was divided among autonomous regions ruled by hereditary descendents of recognized royal lineages founded by an ancestor recognized as divine. Under normal conditions, the divinely established authority was successively transmitted through time by the nearest of kin. The several royal lineages were of more or less equal prestige, though toward the end of the period the ruling house of Tilantongo seems to have emerged as first among equals. The relationship of these genealogical lineages to specific geographical locations was a function of strategically contracted marital alliances. These various rulers who through interlocking but constantly shifting marriage alliances governed the vast territory of the Mixteca upheld a common ideological system through an elaborate and richly symbolic ceremonialism. Regular festive reenactment brought to life the genealogical histories and great moments recorded by the codices. Public appearances of the rulers were no doubt events carefully choreographed to maximize the splendor of the sovereigns. Gorgeous costumes adorned with spectacular displays of exotic feathers and dazzling jewels exalted the majesty of the royal persons as they moved about an appropriately magnificent and symbolically expressive architectural back-drop. As Pohl showed, "A governmental system like that of the Mixtec would have had to select their administrators from the priesthood, for the ruler had become simultaneously both head of state and the focus of the popular religion." The maintenance of the
perception of royal and divine prestige was an extremely significant ideological consideration which would present a challenging problem indeed to the Mixtec rulers of Teposcolula faced with the transition to a colonial and Catholic regime. As we will see, they sought an architectural solution permanently embedded within the fabric of the new colonial urbanization they would plan and build.

Those who became priests were appointed to the novitiate at about age 7 by the kings, whose responsibility it was to provide for their sustenance and housing. These appointments were selected from noble or royal families in some kingdoms (Teconomatlahuaca) and from both noble and common strata in others (Yanhuitlán). It appears that service in the priesthood could be interrupted at variable intervals, during which time regular secular life would be resumed, including marriage and family responsibilities. In this way the priesthood may have been an hereditary institution. The members of the priesthood were subject to a rigid discipline of chastity, penance, and fasting, and lived on a severely restricted diet which prohibited alcoholic beverages and rich food even when they were not fasting. Failure to observe these regulations would result in death, administered by order of the rulers to whom they were bound in service. For most large population centers there were novices, priests and a high priest.

The creation of pictorial screenfolds recording royal genealogies, historic events, place names, calendrical and ritual information were probably prepared by the priests, or under their direction and supervision. The "reading" or performance of the stories contained in these books was quite probably a responsibility of the
priesthood, as would have been the maintenance of the crucial oral tradition for which these pictorials were merely guidebooks.\textsuperscript{52} Within this body of knowledge transmitted through the oral tradition and the screenfolds was the elaborate accumulation of astronomical information which made possible the reckoning of time in cycles of 52 years of 365 days, adjusted every four years.\textsuperscript{53}

Among the religious duties of the priests were the performance of devotional offerings and sacrifices intended to preserve the health of their rulers, to ensure their success in war, and especially to ensure timely rainfall. They also participated in the ritual performance of the ball games, in courts such as that discovered by Eulalia Guzmán at the \textit{Pueblo Viejo} of Teposcolula during her investigation of the site in March 1934.\textsuperscript{54} Other priestly activities included ritual dancing and singing, seeking knowledge through trance, performing marriages and baptisms (at age 7), and telling fortunes.\textsuperscript{55}

Priests were highly respected by the community and took an active part in governing alongside other important royal advisors. John Pohl has recently elaborated on the priestly role in the late Postclassic Mixtec world. Based on his interpretation of the pictorial manuscripts and early colonial inquisition proceedings investigating charges of idolatry he made a major breakthrough which he outlined in a four part scheme including: 1.) The Four Priests, advisors whose function was maintaining political stability by providing checks and balances to the royal authority; 2.) The \textit{Yaha Yahui}, or a wizard-priest responsible for the sacrificial and related economic sphere; 3.) Supernaturals, or oracular deity impersonators operating

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independently of any particular royal lineage who provided arbitration in times of dynastic instability, thereby contributing to national cohesion; and 4.) external priestly and religious models in the Tolteca-Chichimeca confederations of Puebla.56

The priestly advisors, or administrators came from the ranks of the non-inheriting members of the royal lineages, and could, when necessary, "stand in" for a rightful heir during an interregnum period owing, for example, to the minority of the heir. According to Pohl, these "place holders" could not legitimately excercise power permanently. Pohl sees The Four Priests not only as political advisors and administrators but also as "bundle priests" responsible for the sacred bundles containing relics related to the special spirit forces associated with the divine lineage they served. An important part of their work was maintaining the divine majesty of their rulers in the eyes of the people. The Yaha Yahui was a priest who often performed oracular interpretation for prediction of the future. This involved the use of hallucinogenic substances such as mushrooms and magical travel through the air or through the earth in trance states to find the necessary information, sometimes by speaking with the dead. Pohl notes that this class of priest could marry and produce hereditary lines of astrologers, and in instances where the royal line failed, they could appoint a new sovereign from among the Yaha Yahui priests.57 These Yaha Yahui priests supervised sacrificial activities such as those described in the following section.

According to some accounts, the chief priest at Achiutla may have functioned as a sort of primate.58 Pohl noted the role of deity impersonators, such
as 9 Grass, as capable of arbitrating dynastic problems. The chief priest of Achiutla may have served in such a capacity, as suggested by references emerging from the idolatry hearings citing Achiutla as a special location of pilgrimage.

Beneficial relations with the nature spirits were sought by means of various devotional practices to obtain favorable conditions for human life in the temporal world. Recalling the symbolic significance of sacrifice in the Mixtec mythological system discussed above, these devotions included offerings of copal incense, birds, rich feathers, precious stones, prepared foods, pulque, and human blood as autosacrifice usually obtained by piercing the tongue, ears, or other body parts with needle-like maguey spines, and allowing the blood to drip onto straws ritually prepared for the purpose. The practice of human sacrifice—usually of boys—and the associated ritual cannibalism came late to the Mixteca and was a rarity reserved for certain annual feasts of the principal nature spirits and for emergencies. However, at the end of the Late Postclassic era and at the beginning of the colonial era this practice may have been on the increase, as suggested by testimony from the 1544 trial of Don Juan:

He sacrificed and offered sacrifices, in the said shrines andadoratories of the idols, and in other places, many Indians and slaves in honor of the devil and in reverence for him, and especially, some ten years ago [about 1534] at the death of his mother-in-law when he had a girl sacrificed; and some eight years ago [about 1536] at the time of the great hunger the said Don Juan and some other principals ordered that five boys be sacrificed; and some five years ago (about 1539) he ordered the sacrifice of another girl; and about fours ago [about 1540] he killed and sacrificed a boy and buried him in his own house; and some three years ago [about 1541] when there had been no rain he sacrificed two more boys; and there are many other people that he has sacrificed in many and divers times and places as offerings to his idols.

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and demons.\textsuperscript{80}

However, another method developed for maintaining favorable relations was the practice of speaking with the spirits in an esoteric metaphoric language used with vocal techniques requiring special training. Speaking of the education of a high priest of Achiutla, Burgoa said:

\begin{quote}
...aprendían asimismo las ceremonias y deprecauciones que habían de rezar y la sumisión y rendimiento con que habían de hablar al ídolo y los secretos más ocultos, de sus frases y modos de hablar metafóricos y penetrar sus figuras en especial para sus dioses y sacrificios... se valían de la maliciosa astucia de variar las voces y vocablos en esta lengua... para los ídolos con parábolas y tropos que sólo los sátrapas entendían...\textsuperscript{61}
\end{quote}

The locations of these sacerdotal religious observations were specially built temples in town centers, or hilltops or caves. The hilltops and caves were regarded as sacred locations in themselves, even without manmade temples.\textsuperscript{62} Caves were especially sacred places. Some of the larger caves of the area contained unusual geological formations which were viewed as manifestations of important local water or Rain spirits. Some of these locations were so important that they attracted regional attention. Indeed, as Spores notes,

On the eve of [Spanish] conquest particularly important ritual activity involving regional participation occurred at Achiutla, Chacatongo, Tilantongo, Yanhuitlán, Yucuita, Apoala and Sosola. These religious centers drew celebrants from all across the Mixteca and surrounding regions to participate in ceremonies and to consult with resident priests. These larger centers as well as myriad sacred natural places had a great attraction for the Mixtecs, figured in their mythology, and served as important centers of ritual activity and as significant contributors to social integration.\textsuperscript{63}

In the area of Yanhuitlán, for example, there were five or six caves sacred to
water spirits. Another such cave with a large chamber was found between Coixtlahuaca and Tequicistepec in which an unusually large stalagmite was venerated. Hilltop locations may have been even more important. At Achiutla the temple was high on a hilltop with spectacular views down the surrounding valleys. At the Pueblo Viejo of Teposcolula the ceremonial center was perched on the highest portion of a hilltop with long views on all sides.(fig. 7.) At Achiutla, as at Teposcolula, large rivers are significant elements in the landscape seen from the ceremonial site. Furthermore, at both Achiutla and Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula the geology includes stratified sedimentary formations sheltering small cavelike openings.(fig. 8)

Another important location of ritual activity was the home of the rulers themselves, where they hosted large gatherings of nobles for the celebration of various annually occurring holy days.64 These feasts often continued over several days and involved consumption of intoxicating beverages or foods. Ritual dancing was sometimes performed. Prior to the celebration of these feast days, the priests were expected to fast, and sometimes used special herbs to aid in sustaining their fasts. Quite probably the priests had a part in these feasts, but the rulers themselves had a certain amount of religious training, and probably played the dominant role during these events, at which they and others made ritual sacrifices including autosacrifices of blood. It was not uncommon for the rulers to maintain a sacred enclosure within the precincts of their residences in which symbolic representations of nature spirits and perhaps other ritual paraphernalia were kept.65 Another pasage
from the testimony of the Inquisition of 1544 specifically mentions this in the case of the Cacique of Yanhuitlán:

Don Juan, after he was taught, baptized, and instructed in the Christian doctrine, reverted to the customs of exercising and performing his pagan rites, ceremonies, adorations, and sacrifices, and of having idols and adoratories for them, both in his house and outside of it in many parts and secret and hidden places, and of having native priests and custodians in charge of them, to care for and venerate the said idols. And Don Juan came often with other caciques and principales to honor them.96

Summary

Generally, then, Mixtec formal religious practices were intended to maintain a balance between the observable, temporal world and the spirit world beyond human knowing and time. Timely performance of the proper rituals with their corresponding sacrifices and offerings demonstrated the respect of nature required for its successful, predictable manipulation by means of favorable relations with the personified inhabitants of the spirit world for the benefit of man. As we will see in the following section on social organization, the role of the elite was at the center of Mixtec political and religious ideology.

This brief summary of history and culture—as reconstructed from the archaeological record, the Codices, and documentary sources—has shown the broad outlines of Mixtec mythology, dynastic and political development, and religious beliefs and practices in the time before contact with Europeans. As indicated in the notes, other specialists have treated these topics in more detailed or comprehensive studies, but this synthetic synopsis will provide an adequate starting point for the
discussion of Teposcolula in the sixteenth century presented in the following chapters.

Part III

Pre-Columbian Urbanism and Social Organization in the Mixteca Alta

The sequence of urbanization in the Mixteca Alta does not correspond exactly with the rise and fall of Teotihuacan or Monte Alban. But generally between 300 A.D. and 1,100 A.D (known as the Las Flores era for this region) population expansion and community building took place. During this time too, inter-community relations became more complex. While many new sites appeared, architectural and ceramic development was gradual. As the period progressed population concentrations tended to move to higher ground from the valley floors. Ronald Spores has extensively surveyed the region and has characterized the development of settlements for the period as having:

...planned architectural complexes consisting of stone and adobe structures with plastered floors, rubble-filled flat-topped mounds with crowning structures, architectural terraces, courts, plazas, compartmentalized or multiroomed structures, low-relief stone carving, and similar ceramic and lithic assemblages. The larger more complex sites reflect preferences for locating all or most structures on high hills, ridges, or mountains. This tendency for sites to be in high (and defensible) positions allows dozens of contemporaneous sites to be seen from any one Las Flores site. Sight contact may well have been an important factor in selecting site locations and may have facilitated intersite communication or figured significantly in ritual behavior.

As Spores points out, it is important to keep the mountainous nature of the region in mind. The farming valleys vary in size, and are surrounded by steep hills and
mountains, many of which have surprisingly broad, flat, tops, permitting—when cleared—remarkably long views down the surrounding valleys. One such hilltop settlement from the Las Flores era was at El Cerro de los Dos Arboles immediately west of the colonial era site of Teposcolula. From the top of El Cerro de los Dos Arboles a 360° view surveys the surrounding valleys and mountains. Even today the extensive terraces built during this and subsequent periods remain plainly visible on the hillsides.

The reasons for the movement to hilltop population concentrations may include increased need for defense in response to growing inter-community hostility, the need to maximize the farmland in the valleys, association of high location with ritual significance and the emergence of an elite capable of organizing and persuading their communities to construct increasingly elaborate ritual/political centers in difficult access, but ritually significant places. All of these reasons express a shared need of a community, and Spores emphasizes the ability to organize community life around such building projects to respond to these needs as a key feature of this period, pointing to the model of the Mixtec "kingdom" as the social mechanism for implementing such programs. Extensive archaeological research conducted over many years throughout the region has enabled him to identify two general types of Las Flores settlements:

(1) larger centers composed of several to numerous large multicomponent dwelling complexes (palaces) centrally located, adjacent to civic-ceremonial architectural clusters (ballcourts, steep-gradient mounds crowned by small, probably ceremonial, buildings, platforms, plazas, patios, and stelae) with an enveloping ring of smaller one- or two-celled dwellings on terraces on level
or moderately sloping ground; or (2) lesser settlements with a small central mound-plaza complex and one or two centrally located multicomponent dwellings surrounded by numerous one- or two-celled structures. 69

At the end of Las Flores the major hilltop centers were not abandoned, however in some instances patterns of use changed. Ceremonial activity continued to utilize the old architectural complexes with minimal alteration; but population, at least partially in areas like the Nochixtlán Valley, shifted again to the valleys. These new valley settlements were more residential in nature, and there was little monument building. It also appears that after the abandonment of Teotihuacán in the eighth century, there was significant contact between rulers from the Mixteca Alta and the new center of power in the north, the Toltec court at Tula. According to the Codex Nuttall the Mixtec King 8 Deer traveled to Tula in 1045 A.D. to have his legitimacy as a ruler of the Second Dynasty of Tilantongo confirmed.70 This and other evidence suggests that the Toltec state had a significant impact on the Mixteca politically and culturally, as will be discussed more fully below.

In the case of Teposcolula, the final major settlement area of the Natividad period (1100-1530) was a flat hilltop 1.5 km east and south of the modern town. Known today as "el Pueblo Viejo," the site was clearly selected for its defensive advantages. (fig 9.) The approach is so steep from the valley floor that even today access is limited to foot traffic. The inhabited zone was approximately .5 sq.km. and featured what appears to have been a ceremonial precinct at the summit, complete with a pair of "steep-gradient artificial mounds" and a nearby depression flanked by
low mounds suggesting a Ball Court.\textsuperscript{71} Other physical evidence surviving on the surface reveals an elaborate settlement plan on several levels including numerous masonry structures, some with plaster-paved floors.\textsuperscript{72} Spores has characterized these as Natividad phase, but he notes that some of the surviving walls may have been colonial era.\textsuperscript{73} The principal walls defining the several precincts are clearly oriented on or perpendicular to a North-South axis, as are most of the terrace walls. Some of these terrace walls approach 5 meters in height and run for scores of meters in length. While this site was undoubtedly the major ceremonial center of this particular polity, and while it no doubt was inhabited by the ruling couple and their administrative-religious retinue together with sufficient numbers of commoners to serve them, it is also likely that numerous other smaller, dispersed settlements also fell within its jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{74} Dramatically situated, \textit{El Pueblo Viejo} looks out over several valleys, the largest being that of the modern town of Teposcolula.\textsuperscript{(fig. 10)} It is a wide, flat, well watered valley intensely cultivated, as it probably has been for over a thousand years, and today mostly planted in corn and wheat as it probably has been since the introduction of wheat in early colonial times. It is worth noting that in some important ways the sweeping views down these valleys recalls the majestic experience afforded by the even more spectacular site of \textit{Monte Albán}. It is not unlikely that such sites were deliberately sought out as ceremonial centers because the visual exhiliration contributed to and was intimately related to the religious activities carried out in these special sacred locations.

Concerning the Teposcolula valley, there is a persistent oral tradition
maintaining that the valley once held a lake. A painting in the convento church dated 1749 clearly shows a lake stretching between the site of what appears to be the Pueblo Viejo and the colonial town of Teposcolula with its famous Open Chapel clearly rendered. (figs. 11, 12, & 13) There is no doubt that a large body of water is represented here stretching across the valley floor; there are even canoes pulled up on the shore. It is widely believed that the Mixtecs were adept at manipulating rainwater run-off to move soils to more advantageous locations. The Teposcolula river flows immediately below the site of the Pueblo Viejo through a narrow gorge which could easily be dammed up to flood the valley floor creating a large shallow lake. Regulating the water level at this narrow point might have permitted control of aluvial soils on a vast scale with the possibility of chinampa style agriculture as well as provided water for seasonal irrigation below the point of the dam.\textsuperscript{75} If indeed there was a lake on the floor of the Teposcolula Valley, as the documentary evidence shows, this might help explain the preference for elevated settlement sites suggested by the dense concentrations of ceramic artifacts at several locations on ridgetops and slopes surrounding the valley.

Mark King has demonstrated that "Mixtec political ideology is wholly oriented toward the support of the elite."\textsuperscript{76} As he and others have noted, the mountainous region of isolated valley systems presented particular administrative problems, and the Mixtec response was to develop a segmented system of discrete polities integrated and ruled by related members of an elite rather than opting for a supreme ruler in a paramount center of power. As we have seen in the previous section, this
system emphasized on ritual management by the elite. Indeed, as King pointed out:

This emphasis on ritual management is assumed to constitute the foundation of not just religious ideology, but also political ideology. ... The elite class represented the natural class of beings in the universe responsible for ritual mediation between the spiritual entities of the universe and the non-elite members of society. Without the elite class there could be no effective flow of life from the spiritual realm to the realm of man, and back again.  

King was careful to stress that the Mixtec pictorial manuscripts are "first and foremost political documents that function to provide legitimizing support for the elite class. He adds:

This is generated through the identification of the elite individuals and their lineages with supernatural forces and spirits, sacred locations, and rituals. These associations in turn give the elite the ideological capability to mediate with natural problems ... as well as with cultural problems. 

This use of highly symbolic visual materials to support elite legitimacy is a point we will return to in considering the role of the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula in the chapters to follow.

Recent groundbreaking scholarship by Kevin Terraciano based on indigenous language colonial documents from the Mixteca Alta has moved us beyond a cultural understanding limited and shaped by Spanish language documents and world views. Terraciano notes that the word Mixtec, a term never used by the people it intended to identify, is a Spanish derivation from Nahuatl meaning roughly "People of the Cloud Place." Instead, since pre-Columbian times, they referred to themselves as Nudzahui: "People of the Rain Place." The people lived in fhuu, or "settled places" and were governed by ruling couples directly descended from royal lineages founded by ancestors considered to have been divine. The notion of a
married couple (tayu) is crucial, as rulership was always based on a couple whose special status was transmitted through their divine and royal lineages united in their marriage symbolized by the reed mat (yuhui) on which they are always portrayed. Hence the term yuhuitayu refers to the institution of Ñudzahui rulership generally as the place where a divine ruling couple reside or rule. Terraciano was careful to stress that rulership as it existed in the Mixteca in pre-Columbian times was not kingship, but rather a responsibility and activity shared jointly by both members of the couple as long as they lived. Only after one member of the couple died would the surviving spouse rule alone. In the pre-Columbian period primogeniture was not practiced as a rule, although it existed as an option along with many other possibilities. This is in contrast to the central Mexican case where the altepetl was generally ruled by a male line with the male heir ruling alone. Not every ŋuu was a yuhuitayu, as Terraciano pointed out:

Theoretically, a yuhuitayu was a ŋuu with a royal ruling couple which maintained relations with, and perhaps commanded some form of obligation over nearby ŋuu.81

In Teposcolula subentities referred to in Spanish documents as "barrios" were called siquil. These were subunits of the yuhuitayu. There appear to have been eight. He pointed out that yuhuitayu and ŋuu were terms repeatedly used in native language documents in the Mixteca throughout the colonial period. The Spanish word barrio was sometimes used suggesting a sufficient overlapping for use as a loan word, but the Spanish terms ciudad and pueblo were never used.82

Spores argued that the origin of social stratification was directly related to
religious ceremonialism:

The emphasis on ceremonialism in Ramos and Las Flores times suggests that urbanism and social stratification emerged in the Mixteca as part of an ideological transformation whereby formalized religion became a central integrative feature of Mixtec society. I suggest that religious practitioners, in effect, created a situation of social inequality and then, in order to reinforce and perpetuate the system, emphasized and strengthened their spiritual, political, and economic hold on the greater society.  

Spores believed that this process began about A.D. 1, and that by the Postclassic times it had evolved into a system in which political and religious authority were differentiated, with the political elite controlling the religious professionals and ritual life.

By Postclassic times, social and political power, initially based on ritual power, transcended this traditional base and became far more secular and oriented toward (1) traditional rights and privileges and a supporting ideology that reinforced the social order, (2) control of productive resources and systems of tribute, redistribution, and market exchange, and (3) extension and consolidation of political power and domain through marital alliance, economic control, and conquest-annexations.

According to Terraciano, Ñudzahui society was neither rigidly stratified nor egalitarian. Nevertheless, several distinct levels within it are apparent. At the top of the social pyramid were the royal/divine ruling elite, lords and ladies called yya and yya dzehe. They were the principal hereditary landowners and also inherited and bequeathed families of terrazguerrros, or dependent laborers, known in Mixtec as tay situndayu, who provided valuable services such as weaving of textiles by the women and working the royal lands by the men. The richest lands, held by the ruling lords, were usually in the valley bottoms where alluvial soil was deep and black.
In the process of ... alliance formation the Mixtec groom appears to have brought a large number of terrazgueros with him as part of his own estate. We know such bound labor was part of various royal patrimonies; e.g. the cacique of Tecomaxtiahuaca had 800 at contact. 86

Spores noted that some 2,000 such dependent workers served the rulers of Yanzhuitlán at contact. 89 As late as 1704 the cacica of Teposcolula, Doña Lucía Cortés y Orosco still claimed the rights to services of terrazgueros. 90 These workers may also have been employed in hydraulic manipulation of soils washed from higher areas to valley bottoms or specially constructed terraces characteristic of farming in the Mixteca since pre-Columbian times. 91 Terraciano states that these dependent laborers did not hold public land nor perform public duties. 92 Beneath the yya was a class of noblemen and noblewomen or toho and toho dzhe. 93 They were related to the royal rulers, though they often had only one parent of royal ancestry. These nobles served administrative and religious functions, as noted above. Beneath the toho was the most populous class of commoners, called ōndahi, or person from a ōnu. 94 Terraciano argues in a new interpretation that the dependents mentioned above

...did not constitute a separate class excluded from participating in local affairs. Instead of a rigidly stratified and distinct classification, the "terrazguero" was merely a type of commoner. If this was the case, then dependent labor status was not rigidly defined and perhaps change from one status to another was possible; performance of such a function could also have been based on the trinaño (rotational labor system). 95

In summary, it should be clear that Mixtec society was divided generally into two strata, one composed of elite and noble members, the other of commoners, including dependent laborers who worked the lands of the elite. The segmentary
political system, unique in Mesoamerica, spread throughout the various valley systems of the Mixteca was integrated by intertwining marriage alliances of multiple royal lineages rather than by any supreme political authority or dynasty. The political and religious ideology maintained the legitimacy of the elite class by the careful management of ceremonial activity and symbol systems.

The case of Teposcolula presented in the following chapters will show how this ideology was sustained and deliberately transmitted by the Mixtec culture bearers with the skillful and creative use of indigenous and incoming European forms and techniques in a new synthesis during the early decades of colonial rule. But before entering into that discussion, it will be useful to turn our attention first to European origins of the Dominican culture bearers who helped to reshape life in the Mixteca.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 2:


9. Nicholson, H. B. "The Deity 9 Wind 'Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl' in the Mixtec Pictorials." Journal of Latin American Lore 4 1(1978):61-92, p. 66, Interpreting the Vindobonensis Obverse, Nicholson says in 51-I "a third male-female pair [appear], with fleshy jawsbones and Wind God mask headresses, each bearing the calendric name 1 Deer. As all students have recognized, they obviously equate with the 1 Deer creative pair of Garcia's cosmogony... [later on 49-II-IV] another male-female pair with macabre features appears, who may have constituted another aspect of the primordial creative pair and who may have been considered to have been the immediate parents of Lord 9 Wind Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl."


11. H. B. Nicholson. "The Deity 9 Wind..." p. 89, though Nicholson also points out that this hypothesis is based on some speculative genealogical reconstructions.


15. Jansen. "The Search for History..." Jansen gives a general review of the historiography and details of the debate over the years concerning how this date was arrived at through interpreting the codices.

A similar, though earlier, review of the literature, and general discussion of the codices may be found in Caso, Alfonso. "Reyes y reinos de la Mixteca." Antropologia e Historia Ill 20 (oct-dec 1977): 17-35. (This was the introduction to a book of the same name [see below], but published here before the book and without the notes) In this article Caso recounted the process by which he arrived at his reckoning of Mixtec calendric dates and their corresponding Christian dates.


Jansen, writing in 1990, ("Search for History..." p. 107.) felt that Rabin's
correction of Caso's chronology (Rabin, E. "Chronology of the Mixtec Historical Codices, an overview." ponencia Annual Meeting American Society for Ethnohistory, Colorado Springs, 1981) has been generally accepted.


In recent years traditional interpretations and dating correlations, particularly those provided by Alfonso Caso, have been questioned by some students of the codices. This is to be expected in such an important and relatively untapped field as Mixtec Codex analysis. These studies have dealt almost exclusively with analysis of style, personal- and place-glyph identification and dating. While progress is being made in these areas, findings tend to be provisional and inadequately published. Likewise, there has been virtually no consideration of the content of the codices with reference to Mixtec social and political institutions beyond those provided by Caso, Dahlgren, Jiménez Moreno, and the author. Until the "new school" of codex research integrates its findings and presents a stronger case for revision, "traditional" interpretations will prevail, at least in this book.

But Jansen ("Search for History..." p. 107.) quoted Caso from his last work, published after his death, who said (Jansen's translation):

I warn, however, that the correlation between the two calendars (Mixtec and Christian), which I have proposed, is by no means indisputable, especially where early times are concerned. We may say that the correlation is reasonably valid for fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and naturally for the more recent periods, but that it may need correction by 52 and even 104 years. For the more remote periods, our correlation is merely tentative. (Reyes y Reinos de la Mixteca, 2 Vols. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977-1979, Vol I, p. 39)

It is clear from Caso's statement that he did not regard the chronological issue as one he had completely worked out to his own satisfaction.

Nancy Troike has studied minutely the Mixtec codices, focusing on issues of style and chronology. Troike wrote that Caso's work "has now been found to be almost totally wrong" (Troike, Nancy. "Fundamental Changes in the Interpretations of the Mixtec Codices" American Antiquity 43 4(1978): 533-568, p. 554) The remark occurs in a section of her paper entitled "Erroneous Central Mexican Models" aimed at Caso. It is in this paper that Mrs. Troike introduced the members of the "new school" Spores referred to above, identify their areas of research, and to announce that "Other Mesoamericanists may still be unaware that many older concepts about [the codices] have now been disproved...and as a consequence almost everything that has ever been published about these codices is now partially or wholly
erroneous." A rather sweeping statement. In this and other writings Troike again and again hammered away on Caso's chronology, and claimed to have first discovered his error in 1965. Troike went to great lengths to disprove Caso's "erroneous" conclusions, but never mentioned Caso's "merely tentative" and "by no means indisputable" feelings about his correlation, as Jansen does. Jansen also noted ("Search for History..." p. 102.) that "Caso's publications...formulated a paradigm for Mixtec codex research that is still essentially valid today."

16. Jansen, Maarten. "Dzauyindanda, Ita Andehui y Tukano, Historia y Leyenda Mixteca." Boletín de los Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe 42 (June 1987): 71-89, p. 72. In this article and elsewhere in his writing, Jansen pointed to several Oaxacan historians writing in the last years of the last century up to the Revolution who may have had access to as yet unknown codices and even remnants of an oral tradition. Among them was Manuel Martínez Gracida, who wrote that the Mixtecs left their ancient capital Yutatuan, being Huejotzingo before finally coming to the Mixteca.


This last reviewed the historiography of the concept and argued for its continuing validity, and argued against the further subdivision by the use of the term "Mixtec," because he felt that the style was not dependent on language group. He attacked James Ramsey's dissertation at some length and with determination, saying, for example (p. 236) "I am aware of no passage in any primary source which indicates that Mixtec-speaking craftsmen from Oaxaca were ever brought to Mexico Tenochtitlan to practice their skills." He was intent on showing "the dangers inherent in an overuse of employment of the term 'Mixtec' and the ascription to the speakers of this language of what I would regard as an unnecessarily exaggerated role in the diffusion of the final Mesoamerican horizon style." His argument's strength seems to emanate principally from his own conviction, and he allowed, in the next breath "I may lean, and I have been accused of leaning, too far in the other direction..." He concluded his point by observing "In short, it is my conviction that the undeniably popular "pan-Mixtec" approach simply represents speculation far outrunning the available facts." It may have been that Nicholson used this opportunity to make a last defense of a long career at the expense of some of the younger scholars (students of his rival) emerging in the field.

I will point out here, in this discussion of the real or imagined extent of the
Mixteca-Puebla zone, that I was shown, and permitted to photograph, distinctively Mixtec Polychrome ceramics by the resident priest of what was once the Franciscan, and briefly Dominican house of Tlaquitenango, Morelos. He told me that these came from the floor of a nearby small neighborhood church visible from the convento. He discovered this cache, which evidently included a large sacrificial knife in addition to the various bowls and other ceramics, in the course of remodeling the chapel. It is interesting to note in passing, in anticipation of the chapter on disk friezes to follow, that he also showed me and gave me photographs of the same chapel, taken during the remodeling process, in which several double concentric ring disks arranged in a horizontal row painted on what appears to have been the original plaster walls inside the sanctuary.

But returning to Gracida's point, it seems that though in early times proto-Mixtecs may have come down from the north, later, they return to the Valley of Puebla, see below, and perhaps therein began some lasting ties to the Mixteca, but coming from the south, inspite of Nicholson's convictions.

17. See also, for example, Rabin, Emily. "The War of Heaven in Codices Zouche-Nuttall and Bodley: A Preliminary Study." Actes du XLII Congres International des Amerianistes. Paris: Publié avec le concours de la Fondation Singer-Polignac, 1979. In this highly technical article she discussed the War of Heaven in which the stone men are opposed by 15 personages. On page 178 she cited Smith's (1974:68-9) translation of Fray Antonio de los Reyes's remark "it is reported that although the hereditary rulers of the Mixtecs were said to have originated in the town of Apoala, those who came from Apoala conquered an earlier group who were considered to be the original or "true" Mixtecs. This group was called tai nuhu, or "the men of the earth," because they were said to have emerged from the center of the earth, anuho (orañuhu) in Mixtec.


22. Troike. "Fundamental Changes..." I have drawn parts of this reconstruction from Mrs. Troike's text on page 556 of this article. Mrs. Troike has written extensively on the Codex Colombino-Becker, among others.


26. Ibid. p. 74; my translated paraphrase of Jansen's text.


28. My free translation and adaptation of Antonio Herrera as cited in Jansen "Nombres Históricos..." p. 75. But see also Spores "Zapotec & Mixtec..." in HMAI p. 980. Spores says Yanhuitlán under Lord 3 Monkey fell to Montezuma I, or some attribute it to Tizok around 1486.


30. Spores "Zapotec and Mixtec..." in HMAI p. 980. Spores cites Durán, 1941, 1: 451-56; Tezozomoc, 1944, pp. 447-51. In a tabulation of populations for communities in the Mixteca in The Mixtecs in Ancient and Colonial Times, p. 105, Spores shows Yanhuitlán with 12,207 inhabitants in 1547-48, probably not too different from what it would have been in 1506 when the 1,000 prisoners, were taken. If these were mostly adults and men, and each family had 2 children, then as much as a third of the adult male population was butchered by the Aztecs.


32. Ronald Spores in"Zapotec and Mixtec..." in HMAI p. 980.

However, writing almost 20 years later in The Mixtecs in Ancient and Colonial
Times, Spores asked:

What, then, is to be concluded from the widespread appearance of Mixtec elements in the Valley of Oaxaca, the known influence of the Mixtecs on Aztec art, and the virtual absence of Aztec elements from the Mixtecs, an area that the Mexicans were known to dominate politically? (p. 63)

In an end-note he amplified his point:

Aztec sherds are occasionally found in the Nochixtlán and Tamazulapan valleys and in somewhat greater numbers in Coixtlahuaca. There is, in fact, virtually nothing in the archaeological record to suggest political domination of the Mixteca by an external power. Archaeology thus far has done little or nothing to expand knowledge of the relationship between Mixtecs and Aztecs gained from historical documentation. Inferences based on material culture remains are little more than speculation. (p. 229, note # 40)

He answered his question with a call for more and overlapping research, and a caution:

The best approach to these perplexing problems appears to be one that utilizes conventional documentation, pictographic manuscripts, and linguistic studies in conjunction with a well-integrated program of archaeological survey and multiple-site excavation. Hasty conclusions and facile explanations based on sparse or poorly acquired evidence, evidence from one or two sites, or one valley, or misapplied theory do little to facilitate research or promote understanding of the development of Mixtec culture. (p. 63)


The awful heresy of proposing that Aztec dominion in Oaxaca was less than total is not new...The commonly alleged Aztec dominion of the Valley of Oaxaca is looking more and more doubtful...Once a line of conquerors has proclaimed grand dominions, any attempt to delineate the truth behind their exaggerations becomes a negative argument. Discovery in the right context of a convincing Tezcatlipoca representation might make all the preceding negations of his importance in Oaxaca seem less persuasive; all negative arguments share this weakness. Should we therefore not examine the
conquerors's tales, or other claims, because negative conclusions are likely to result?


39. Michael Lind. *Mixtec Ceramics*, p. 98. Lind states "In the absence of specific references to battles with kingdoms in the Nochixtlán Valley, it appears that the conquest of these kingdoms by the Spaniards was either by peaceful negotiation or without remarkable incidents."


41. Barbro Dalgren. *La Mixteca: Su cultura e historia prehispánicas*. México: INAH, 1990. Of course Professor Alfonso Caso, among the first of the modern scholars in the field, extensively published the abundant results of his pioneering efforts, which continues to be a foundation block in Oaxacan studies. For a bibliography of his published work see Flannery, Kent V. and Joyce Marcus, eds. The Cloud People. New York: The Academic Press, 1983, p.374. An early piece from 1940, "The Mixtec and Zapotec Cultures," was translated into English and published in Boletín de Estudios Oaxaqueños 21 and 22 in 1962, with notes by Douglas Butterworth which included additional clarifications and additions to Caso's based on then available scholarship.


45. Dahlgren used the terms *dios, deidades* and *idolos* (god, deities, idols). Following Franke J. Neumann's warning [personal communication] against the use of the term deity (Neumann was a participant in the session Nancy P. Troike discussed in "Current Problems in the Mixtec Codices," XLII International Congress of Americanists, Paris, 1976 in which the use of the term was ñahu was examined), I will use the term nature spirit. Spores used the term deity in *Mixtec Religions,* but also speaks of nature spirits in his writing and in personal communications: 1991-95.

For a list of various spirits of particular places, see Dahlgren's listing, with sources, on page 213 of *La Mixteca.*

46. For a detailed discussion of Mixtec "gods" other than those found in Dahlgren and Spores, see also: Caso, Alfonso. "Los Dioses Zapotecas y Mixtecas." In *México Prehispánico, Antología de Esta Semana—This Week, 1935-1946.* Alfonso Caso and Jorge A. Vivó, Eds. Mexico: Editorial Emma Hurtado, 1946, pp. 519-525. Caso gives the following names of "Gods":

Huishueteotl, the Old God of Fire of the Mixtecs; Hituayuta, which is the god of generation; Yozotoyua, god of merchants; Cohuy, god of maize; Qhuav, which means deer, god of the hunters.

He said the idea of a divine pair which engendered the other gods corresponds with the Aztec belief, and that the cult of the sun was similar and accompanied by human sacrifices, as was the cult of the god of life and the wind, Quetzalcoatl, who appeared to be the tribal hero of the Mixtecs, as Huitzilopochtli was for the Aztecs. Caso says the most important of the sanctuaries was Achiutla where a large esmeralda (from Burgua, but probably not an emerald but rather a jade) which was called The Heart of the People was venerated.

47. Spores. *The Mixtec Kings.....*, pp. 26-27. Spores cited Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) *Inquisición*, 37, exp 11. The Translation is by Spores. In his introduction to the section on Religion and Ceremony in this book, Spores noted "Religious life was characterized by recognition, possession, and worship of a number of idols and deities closely corresponding to Tlaloc, Quetzalcoatl, Xipe Totec, and others from the Aztec pantheon, but with Mixtec names." (p. 22).

Concerning Quetzalcoatl, Maarten Jansen said explicitly in "The Search for History in Mixtec Codices":

"It is ...clear that Quetzalcoatl, or Plumed Serpent" of the ancient Nahua-
speaking peoples, is related to the modern Mixtec Rain-Serpent, which is a powerful alter ego." (p. 105.)

Concerning Xipe and the possible relationship between the Aztec and Mixtec pantheons, Paddock ("Tezcatlipoca in Oaxaca," p. 322.) made his position clear:

"As for Xipe, his origin was said to be in Yopitxinco, or modern Guerro; but the Aztecs said they had learned of him from the Zapotecs. With Xipe worshippers on both sides, the Mixtecs were unlikely to be ignorant of him. Thus Xipe was the patron deity of a largely or entirely Mixtec dynasty that ruled Monte Albán-Zaachila in late times, as is recorded in Codex Nuttal on pages 33-35 (Paddock 1983:63-68). Xipe, a Southerner, found his way north into the Aztec pantheon; but Tezcatlipoca, a Northerner, did not accomplish the converse."

Paddock struck another blow against Nicholson's convictions.

48. Spores. The Mixtecs in Ancient ..., p. 85. Spores used the term "elevated spirits" which he likens to the Mixtec term nubuy and the English "deities." He said "All major centers recognized and worshiped similar pantheons of regional (even pan-Mesoamerican) and local spirits, personified forces, and probably honored ancestors, particularly of royal caste."


52. For a discussion of the nature of these performances see Monaghan, John. "Performance and the Structure of the Mixtec Codices." Ancient Mesoamerica 1 1(Spring 1990): 133-140.

53. For a complete description of the Mixtec calendric system see: Caso, Alfonso. "El Calendario Mixteco." Historia Mexicana 5-20 (1965): 481-97. Caso notes "Si nuestra hipótesis es correcta, los mixtecos adoptaron el calendario tolteca a fines del siglo X, y a partir de entonces los glifos mixtecos están estrechamente emparentados con los mexicanos, y los años se llaman Caña, Pedernal, Casa y Conejo." (p. 488) Tula, the Toltec capital, was the location of an elaborate astronomical observatory, parts of which still function and can be observed today. The Toltecs devoted great cultural energy to perfecting their calendrical system, and were known to convene conferences of experts from all over Mesoamerica in this
effort.


57. Ibid. p. 51.

58. See also Simonin, Martine. "La Representación del cosmos entre los mixtecos y su paralelo en el Códice Aubin No. 20." In *Proceedings 46th International Congress of Americanists*, London: Bar International Series 518(ii), 1989, pp. 313-319, in which the codice is interpreted schematically showing Achiutla at the center of the cosmos. Simonin does not make a case here for the priest of Achiutla being a primate, but her presentation of the Mixtec cosmos with Achiutla at the center would support the argument of those who do.

59. Dahlgren. *La Mixteca...* p. 230: "La brillante interpretación de Caso, de que la vida de los dioses dependía de la ofrenda de corazones humanos como símbolo del principio de la vida, es seguramente válida también para la religión de los mixtecos. En este sentido corroboran los datos de Petlatlcingo, Ixiltlán u Piaxtla, donde se llevaban los corazones a la boca del ídolo. Por otra parte, todo parece indicar que los sacrificios humanos se hacían en escala más reducida entre los mixtecos—por lo menos comparados con los que los aztecas hacían en masa—...." In evidence taken at the Inquisition of Yanhuitlán, it was stated by the prehispanic priest that the king, known to the Spanish as Don Francisco "tenían siempre muchachos en depósito para sacrificio al dios de la lluvia," and Dahlgren believed that these boys were sold by their parents in the market.

60. Spores. *The Mixtec Kings...* p. 26. Spores cites Archivo General de la Nación (AGN) *Inquisición*, 37, exp 11. The Translation is by Spores. These instances are cited in the context of an accusation of apostasy which occurred after Don Juan's "conversion" to Christianity by baptism early in the contact period. However, it should be noted that the presence of Christian missionaries, and Spaniards generally, was sparse and sporadic in the region, especially Yanhuitlán, until after about 1545. The initial baptism made during a brief entrada in the period immediately following the Spanish conquest of the Valley of Mexico, may have reflected Don Juan's willingness to cooperate with the new regime more than his profound understanding of and belief in Christianity. It is likely that at the time of his baptism few of the missionaries had a mastery of the Mixtec language sufficient for imparting anything but a most general outline of their faith. The period following the Spanish contact was a time of cultural transition, if not disorientation. Under such
stress there may have been a perceived need to rely more heavily than ever on the old religion by employing what may have previously been used as emergency measures in extraordinary circumstances. Along these lines, an interesting comparison might be the terrible events recorded in the Yucatan in Father Landa's inquisition portrayed in Clandinnen, Inga. Ambivalent Conquests. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

61. Dahlgren (La Mixteca... p. 221) suggested that this passage from Burgos (t. I, pp. 337-340) may help explain how the Oracle of Achiutla may have given the impression of the spirits speaking through the priests, and she mentions ventriloquism in this regard. But concerning the notion of a special metaphoric language which only the "sátrapas" understood, see also Jansen, Maarten. "Las Lenguas Divinas del México Precolombino." Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe. 38 (June 1985): 3-14. Throughout his writing, Jansen stresses that the Mixtec Kings were viewed as divine, and there may be a correlation to the special metaphoric language Dahlgren has identified here and the special language Jansen writes about. See also Terraciano, Kevin. Nudzahui History: Mixtec Writing and Culture in Colonial Oaxaca. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1994, pp. 170-176. On page 176 Terraciano gave another explanation of this "high rhetoric":

The Nudzahui rhetorical register is a cultural and linguistic phenomenon only rarely glimpsed in archival sources, most often found in the earliest texts, and limited to a rather small range of vocabulary. The high speech further distinguished nobles and commoners in a society — like that of the Nahua — that placed much emphasis on speaking properly and respectfully, ever mindful of one's audience. Yet it is unlikely that the yya honorific vocabulary divided Nudzahui society into distinctly defined strata; it was not a distinct language cultivated by elites to close their ranks to commoners, as it has been portrayed.

And yet three sentences later in the same paragraph he added somewhat paradoxically:

The yya speech was another shared feature of the elite class, one of many unifying elements with which it exercised power, and a native custom which gradually faded in the centuries after the Spanish Conquest.

62. See John Monaghan. "Performance..." for a discussion of contemporary ritual practices by a Mixtec Curandero including a reference to the Ndoso, or "a large stone on a hill above the town." This was the locus of the recitation of a prayer Monaghan observed and recorded. This was a place where offerings were made and, evidently, continue to be made. The deliberate but discrete pruning of small
areas at the Pueblo Viejo of Teposcolula and as well as an area west of the town on El Cerro de los Tres Arboles suggests a continuation in Teposcolula of practices similar to Monaghan's case.


64. See Lind. *Mixtec Ceramics*. Lind discussed distinctions between commoner ceramic ware and the special elite dinner ware used for these gatherings, and analyzes their use over time. He found that the decline in the use of this special dinner ware was slight but noticeable after the Aztec conquest and subjugation of the area, and much more dramatic after the Spanish conquest.

65. Dahlgren. *Mixteca* .... p. 218: "En el Proceso de Yahuixtilan se describe cómo los caciques del lugar tenían cuartos especiales donde guardaban sus ídolos—esto podía, sin embargo, deberse a la persecución de los padres cristianos—, y cómo uno de ellos tenía ~un cu de altura de dos palmos hecho de todas las masas que ellos comen." In December of 1991, in the presence of Lic. Delphino Cardenas Peralta, formerly Judge of the Teposcolula District Court, I observed, photographed and videotaped what appeared to be a fragment of a prehispanic sculpture, about 1 meter by 40 cm. by 30 cm. placed on the low wall of a disused fountain in the courtyard of the Casa de la Cacica at Teposcolula. I was told by the farmer who keeps his cattle in this building that a wall of one of the various rooms within the enclosure had recently collapsed, and that this stone was found among the rubble. I was then hurried out of the enclosure. More will be said of this below. Seen from the top of the north west corner of the enclosing wall, the same stone sculpture appeared to be present in April 1995, but this could not be verified by closer inspection.


67. Surviving written records from the precolonial era in the Mixteca are scarce so the history of settlement in the area must be reconstructed largely through archaeological research. While well known sites such as Teotihuacan and Monte Albán have had much attention from teams of archaeologists over the years, areas like the Mixteca have enjoyed attention by fewer, but no less dedicated, archaeologists. Ronald Spores is a leading specialist who has pioneered the field of anthropological and historical Mixteca studies. He contributed a series of articles to *The Cloud People* (Kent V. Flannery and Joyce Marcus eds. New York: Academic Press, 1983) which trace the origins and development of settlement
patterns and town formation in the Mixteca Alta. The discussion of urbanization which follows is largely drawn from these articles and from personal communication with Spores as well as my own field research conducted during numerous visits to the area since 1988, and most recently in March, 1995 aided by Daniel DiMarco.


71. Personal research in situ in August 1992 reveals that trails leading to the tops of these "steep-gradient" mounds are discretely, but regularly maintained today, together with tiny clearings on the tops of these high points. These trails and clearings were still carefully maintained in March 1995.

72. My own field work on numerous visits to the site, most recently in March 1995, has identified copious quantities of late Post Classic ceramic sherds including polychrome as well as numerous metates and manos de metate made of stone still found along the river and streams in the valleys below. Of particular interest were several pieces of obsidian including several fine green blades and grey-black cores. For a discussion of an important center of refining and trading green obsidian brought from Pachuca, Hidalgo to the nearby Tamasulapan Valley, see Byland, Bruce. Political and Economic Evolution in the Tamasulapan Valley, Mixteca Alta, Oaxaca, Mexico: A Regional Approach, Ph. D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1980. The large quantities of these artifacts unevenly distributed over approximately 40 acres on various levels of the carefully terraced site suggest a substantial resident population at the site generally, and concentrated in some areas more than others, the highest levels having the fewest artifacts. Many factors could account for this distribution, including rainwater and gravity over four centuries. However it is also possible, and I think likely, that the uppermost precinct was reserved for ceremonial activity and the residence of the highest status individuals. In conversations in April 1995 in Oaxaca Ron Spores pointed out that the area below that delineated by the terraced precincts with masonry structures was probably densely inhabited by people living in structures built of impermanent materials.

73. Ronald Spores "Postclassic Mixtec Kingdoms: Ethnohistoric and Archaeological Evidence," Topic 75 in Cloud People. In personal communication August-September 1992 I have discussed the possibility that the standing walls may not be colonial era, and while Spores agrees that this is uncertain, he points to colonial era ceramic
shards he has discovered on the site, suggesting continued use of the site well after contact.

74. For a description with sketches of the site as it was in 1934, see Guzman, Eulalia. *Exploración arqueológica en la Mixteca Alta*. México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, Publicaciones del Museo Nacional de México, 1934, pp. 33-36.

75. Chinampa style agriculture refers to the practice of making "floating gardens" or raised beds in shallow lakes such as the Nahua did in the lakes in the Valley of Mexico. This was accomplished by piling soil, or night soil, on floating plant material, such as dried reeds. Eventually these floating islands became attached to the lake bottom, and functioned as well watered and intensely productive raised beds. For a description with helpful diagrams and illustrations see Sabloff, Jeremy A. *The Cities of Ancient Mexico. Reconstructing a Lost World*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989, pp. 126-127.

76. King. *Mixtec Political Ideology...* p. 35. King’s highly theoretical dissertation intended to explore the "use of language resources pushed to the extreme to reconstruct past ideological systems." p. 4.

77. Ibid. p. 39.

78. Ibid. p. 41. For a further discussion of the the regional operation of the Mixtec system see his Chapter 3 section "Political Ideology and Segmentary Political System," pp. 79-84, and "Ideological Transformation and State Origins," 84-93.

The segmentary nature of the political network appears to have existed as such from the origins of stratified society until Spanish contact. Throughout this period of time, the frontiers of the Mixteca were gradually expanding, yet there was no appreciable progress toward a more centralized political arrangement, although the elite class does show signs of progressive consolidation and functional secularization of their ideological support system (based on evidence of decreasing utilization of monumental architecture and other conspicuously symbolic means of generating legitimate support. (p. 80)

Segmentary political organization appears to have been an original adaptation of the Mixtec culture, not influenced by any neighboring segmentary system, and not a revolutionary derivative of an earlier system. (p. 82)

79. I have benefited greatly from conversations with Dr. Terraciano in Oaxaca and from his kindness in generously providing me with a copy of his recent dissertation, *Nudzahui History: Mixtec Writing and Culture in Colonial Oaxaca*. University of California at Los Angeles, 1994. The following discussion of Mixtec, or Nudzahui,
social organization summarizes and condenses his presentation in Chapter 4 of his dissertation, pp. 234-273. Other refinements of my thinking and terminology, gratefully acknowledged, have been made possible by reading his dissertation and are suffused throughout the entirety of my study here. I have elected to continue to use the conventional term Mixtec here to avoid confusion when referring to the work of Spores and other earlier scholars, though I recognize that Terraciano's usage is more accurate linguistically.

80. Ibid. pp. 20, 236, and Chapter Six, especially 463-67.


82. Ibid. p. 270.


84. Ibid. p. 235.

85. Terraciano, Ñudzahui History... p. 566.

86. Ibid. pp. 387-91.

87. Ibid. p. 369.


89. Spores. The Mixtec Kings... pp. 159-160.


91. The hydraulic manipulation of the landscape for agricultural purposes is a topic which has interested Spores for many years, see for example the several pieces he contributed to Flannery, Kent V., and Joyce Marcus, eds. The Cloud People. New York: Academic Press: 1983. But for a more recent study of this topic in a case in the valley of Coixtlahuaca building on Spores's pioneering work elsewhere, see Rincón-Mautner, Carlos. "Agricultural Adaptation and the Emergence and Decline of a State: An Example from the Oaxacan Mixteco, Mexico." paper presented at the 48th International Congress of Americanists, Stockholm, Sweden, July 4-9, 1994.

92. Terraciano, Ñudzahui History. p. 566.

93. Ibid. pp. 378-86.
94. Ibid. pp. 363-368.

95. Ibid. pp. 337-2. This hypothesis is speculative and does not account for the apparently permanent movement of dependent laborers to new locations as the yya marriage alliances he mentions elsewhere shifted. The evidence he offered is semantic based on his analysis of the surviving documents with references to these types of people.
CHAPTER III

DOMINICAN SPIRITUALITY, MISSIONARY METHODOLOGY, AND

EVANGELIZATION IN TEPOSCOLULA
Fr. Pedro de Córdoba began the Dominican mission in the New World on Hispaniola in 1510. He worked, until his death in 1521, with his co-religious to develop a pedagogical approach to catechism which departed from the procedures being standardized in Spain in the last years of the 15th century and the early years of the 16th century. Fr. Pedro conceived the notion of presenting the doctrine in the form of a historic narrative based directly on the Holy Scriptures. Rather than offering dry lessons in theology, Fr. Pedro relied on dramatic presentation, dramatic re-enactment of the Bible story from Adam and Eve through Ascension of Christ. His insightful and exciting combination of narrative history and dramatic performance had but little lasting impact in the Antilles where the indigenous population soon melted away in the epidemics. Nevertheless, his "sermons" or dramatic presentations were developed, refined and recorded by the Dominican community in the islands, which included Bartolomé de las Casas and, after 1514, Domingo de Betanzos.

The exact nature of this process of development, refinement, and recording remains unclear, but it is a certainty that the _Doctrina Cristiana_ published in 1544 and 1548 in Mexico by Bishop Zumárraga with the cooperation of Domingo de Betanzos had its origins in the Dominican evangelization of the Antilles. And, even before the publication of the _Doctrina Cristiana_ numerous manuscript copies were doubtless in circulation among the Dominicans who came from the islands to Mexico after 1526, including Betanzos and Bartolomé de las Casas. As will be seen below,
the early vision and effort of Fr. Pedro de Córdoba, while a heartbreaking
disappointment in the Antilles, paid rich rewards in the Mixteca.²

Within the Dominican Order there was a mystic tradition tied to contemplative
meditation and rigorous austerity in strict observance of the constitutions governing
Dominican monastic life. Savonarola's example of this tradition in Florence—until his
death in 1498—had a great influence on the reform movement within the Order in
Spain, where a protracted struggle between the strict observants and those more
moderate divided the Dominicans for many years.³ Indeed, as Mary Giles has
pointed out,

The congregation in Italy that influenced the Spanish reformers most was
that of St. Mark in Florence where Savonarola instituted major reforms after
his election as prior. The Spanish reformers emulated the practices of St.
Mark in terms of rigorous austerities, the short, narrow habit, mystical
dances, the style of singing, love of processions and enthusiasm for
prophecies and revelations.⁴

Another important feature of the observant reform was an increased
emphasis on theological scholastic rigor and intellectual life conducted in an
atmosphere of silence and material austerity in preparing missionary preachers for
work in the field. The reforming supporters of observance successfully advanced
their program during the Capítulos Provinciales of the Dominican province of Spain
in Peñafiel in 1504 and Burgos in 1506.⁵

One Spanish manifestation of this reforming spirit was Sor María de Santo
Domingo, a Dominican Beata from the house at Piedrahita, whose raptures and
visions caused much concern in high places especially in the years 1508-1510, but
continuing thereafter another decade. In her mystic raptures she dramatically re-enacted the Passion of Christ, taking the parts of the various individuals, including Christ. Evidently she had a powerful, spellbinding impact on those who witnessed these mystic enactments, including the Queen and innermost members of the royal circle. Giles detailed the precise nature of the relationships between Sor María, the royal family, Cisneros, and the Duke of Alba. There is no doubt that the king personally and repeatedly intervened vigorously with the Pope and other religious leaders to protect her from charges of heresy and impropriety. The Duke of Alba had a convent built for her at his own expense. Cardinal Cisneros believed her raptures to be divinely inspired. Clearly she enjoyed the active and sustained support as well as the attention of the most powerful people in the realm, and precisely at the moment at which the Dominican mission to the New World was being prepared. In fact, her reform efforts and remarkable raptures led her to interact with many individuals intimately connected with the Dominican evangelization in the New World.

She was 17 when she entered the Dominican third order in Piedrahita to live in the residence for lay sisters until May 28, 1504, when she entered the lay house of Santa Catalina in Avila. By 1507 she was at the royal monastery of Santo Tomás in Avila. In October 1507 she was on the way to Toledo to reform the Dominican House, on October 18 Diego Magdaleno granted a request from the prior of Salamanca and his companion, Juan Hurtado de Mendoza, authorizing the Beata to promote stricter observance, especially in matters of fasting, abstinence and
penance. Nevertheless, the Toledo house rejected her efforts. In a state of rapture, she threatened dire consequences if Magdaleno failed to implement strict reform. The king ordered Magdaleno to come to Burgos and to bring with him Fr. Diego de Vitoria, prior of Santo Tomás of Avila and Sor María's confessor. Later, in the winter of 1507-8, Sor María was called to court where she entered rapture in front of the Queen and Lady Juana of Aragón. Later, in Santa María de Nieve, she entered rapture in front of Cisneros, who said to Hurtado he had never seen living doctrine till then. Diego Vitoria was instructed to write down her ecstatic utterances for Cisneros's edification. 6

These relationships between Sor María, the royal family, and Cisneros, and between Sor María and the Dominicans of San Esteban and especially of Santo Tomás demonstrates the presence of an esoteric mystic tradition even at the highest level of Spanish society, a tradition of no little consequence for the evangelization of the New World. Though the Dominican Order is usually considered, in light of the Thomist tradition, to be primarily concerned with rational scholastic study rather than mystical prayer, as Giles pointed out "the case of Catherine of Siena gives lie to the belief that supernatural phenomena and contemplative prayer had little place in Dominican life."7 The so-called devotio moderno was an important influence in late 15th-century spirituality, and stimulated an intensified exploration of internal modes of approach to the divine. Nothing could be more personal than Sor María's experience and expression of her devotion in rapture:
Even a cursory reading of Sor María's Book of Prayer is enough to prove that she was nothing if not ardently devoted to meditation on the passion of Jesus Christ; enraptured, she would act out the passion in detail and take the parts of the central characters and even speak in the person of Jesus Christ. In the "Contemplation While Enraptured on Easter Sunday" Sor María enacts a dialogue between Jesus and his Mother after he has died on the cross as well as one with Jesus and Mary Magdalen and another with Jesus and two of his disciples. Interspersed are exhortations for Christians to see and feel Jesus's suffering and to realize that personal sin is the reason why the precious body suffers so horribly.⁸

Sor María's profound and dramatic devotion to the Passion is an extreme example of a type of mental prayer widely practiced at that time in which the Passion of Christ was the focus of a systematic meditation through visualization. In this meditation the sequence of specific events of the Passion were internally visualized aided by, or prompted by the iconography of the arma Christi in which the Instruments of the Passion are individually represented graphically.⁹ Certainly Sor María's enactment, like a mystical dance, was a form of sacred drama in which the Passion was personally experienced and expressed simultaneously with arresting spiritual intensity through the actual performance itself in which she became a living icon.¹⁰

There is no doubt that such performances made a compelling impression on the royal spectators, who were well acquainted with Passion iconography. In the Capilla Real in Granada are displayed items of devotional art from the personal collection of the Reyes Católicos, including a large oil painting portraying the Mass of St. Gregory with a complete array of the Instruments of the Passion, attributed to the School of Memling, probably painted in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.
These objects of personal devotion traveled with the royal couple during their ceaselessly peripatetic reign. Thus it may be presumed that this dramatic devotional image was never far from their thoughts.

Furthermore, Sor María’s rapturous re-enactments of the passion were well known to her co-religious in the monasteries of San Esteban and Santo Tomás, including Fr. Juan Hurtado de Mendoza, under whose guidance Fr. Pedro de Córdoba, among other friars bound for the New World, passed his novitiate. It is quite likely that Fr. Pedro himself would have personally known and seen Sor María because their presence in the Dominican communities in Salamanca and Avila overlapped during the same years. As she was quite a spiritual celebrity at the time, and as he was a rising star, it is not unlikely that their paths often crossed in the rather small world of the mendicants in those cities. The relationship of Passion iconography to the New World evangelization is a topic to which we will return momentarily, but first a brief discussion of the early years of the Dominicans in Mexico will provide the context for our further examination of this crucially important constellation of images and practices.

Fr. Domingo de Betanzos was a controversial, enigmatic figure during his own life, and remains so today. At different times his feelings about the Indians appear to have varied. He is best remembered today as one who said that Indians were beastial, and he had serious reservations concerning their suitability for the priesthood, and some even say he doubted their ability to become Christian. He was sharply criticised by his peers for never learning any of the Indigenous languages,
and Daniel Ulloa has portrayed him as the leader of the "ultra reformist" branch of the Dominicans with ties to Sor María and the group at Piedrahita.\textsuperscript{12}

According to Ulloa, the Dominicans in Mexico were divided in their beliefs about mission practice. Betanzos and his followers emphasized strict adherence to the constitutions governing monastic life, believing the construction of only a few but large conventos as centers of scholasticism, contemplation and meditation, and the fulfilment of the obligations in the choir to be the best way of practicing Dominican life. Their vision included pairs of friars going out to preach to the Indians regularly, but always returning immediately to the convento as their residence. But others believed that effective evangelization could only result from many smaller conventos diffused throughout the countryside and populace, where missionary work among the people including religious instruction, town founding and socio/economic leadership would be emphasized over strict observance of monastic life. Initially Betanzos and his followers, according to Ulloa's interpretation, retarded the development Dominican engagement in the active work of the evangelization.

Nevertheless, it must be remembered that, in contrast with the Franciscan experiment in advanced studies in the Humanities for the sons of the native elite at the \textit{Colegio de Tlatelolco}, from the beginning of the Mexican evangelization, the Dominicans were generally opposed to the advanced intellectual training and ordination of native priests, having already had unsatisfactory results from this practice earlier in the Antilles. Furthermore, the Spanish Dominicans held to a late medieval Iberian reconquista tradition stressing "purity of blood" or decent from "old
Christian" antecedents as important considerations bearing on admittance to the priesthood. Finally, based upon their observation of widespread native alcoholism and their belief that the Indians were unable to maintain a celibate life, the Dominicans had serious reservations about the native capacity for advanced intellectual work, an important element of Dominican sacerdotal life. 13

Adolfo Robles Sierra believes that Ulloa’s interpretation disfigures Betanzos, and offered his interpretation of a letter Betanzos sent from the Mixteca to the President of the Council of the Indies in 1540 to portray Fr. Domingo in a different light. 14 Moreover, as María Teresa Pita-Morena has pointed out, in Europe the Dominican order was an essentially urban organization. 15 Indeed, the continuation of their scholastic tradition required this urban orientation. Their principal center for the scholastic training was the great Dominican house San Esteban at Salamanca, seat of the famous university. But other important centers of Dominican spirituality and learning included Santo Tomás at Avila, San Pablo and San Gregorio at Valladolid, San Pedro at Córdoba, Santo Tomás at Alcalá, and San Pedro Mártil at Toledo.

However, in spite of this well documented Dominican attitude concerning the readiness of the indigenous people to enter the priesthood in the first decades after contact with Christian evangelists, it is also true that the Dominicans labored energetically to educate the Indians not only in matters of the Christian faith, but also in the fundamentals of what they believed to be a Christian lifestyle in community, or civitas. Where in Europe there was already a centuries old Christian
tradition functioning in a built environment reflecting an already ancient Christian civilization, in New Spain not only were the handful of friars scattered throughout a vast land faced with the enormous task of implanting the Christian faith among millions of Indians even before effective preaching could begin, but they also had to create all the necessary physical and socio/economic infrastructure of Christian civilization. This involved training in what the Dominicans felt were the basic civilizing arts including reading, writing, arithmetic, and technical training in the trades. Indeed, as Ramón Hernández pointed out:

En los conventos tenían escuelas. No se contentaban con enseñar las oraciones y los artículos de la fe, como piensan los que no quieren molestarse en estudiar y hacer la verdadera historia. En esas escuelas conventuales, que los dominicos se obligaron a establecer en sus casas, los frailes enseñaban a leer y a escribir, la gramática, elementos de matemáticas, y cuando eran mayores, artes y oficios, como la carpintería, la labranza, la albañilería, etc.¹⁶

In addition to the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and technical training in the building trades, the Dominicans also introduced European agricultural implements, techniques, field crops, fruits, and above all domesticated animals for traction, meat, milk, cheese, and fibers. These introductions quickly and radically altered the patterns of Mesoamerican agricultural production and significantly changed too the related socio/economic patterns. This is a topic we will consider more fully in the following chapter on urbanization.

But returning to Domingo de Betanzos and the changing nature of Dominican evangelization in New Spain, it is clear that Betanzos was largely responsible for the creation of a new Province of Santiago de México, independent from the Provincia
de Santa Cruz de las Indias. He traveled to Europe for this purpose in 1531 where his efforts—aided by the powerful influence of Cardinal García de Loaysa, "gran amigo del emperador"—were successful by 24 July, 1534. He returned to Mexico where he served as Provincial from 1535 to 1538, after which he evidently went to Oaxaca. By the time he returned to lead the Mexican Dominican mission it was already apparent to many in the order that their work in New World would require new approaches to their traditional mission of preaching. The enormous challenge of transforming an existing pagan high culture to Christian lifeways along a European model could not be successfully met by friars based in the urban centers of the white European population. Indeed the mission to the Indians of New Spain could only be carried out successfully by friars living and working among the new converts. This realization dictated the construction of a network of rural Dominican houses eventually stretching from Mexico City to Guatemala. The staggering scale of this achievement is a tribute to the commitment and struggle of hundreds of thousands of Indians and a few dozen friars in a complex campaign of evangelization, technical training and building construction carried out simultaneously in countless new towns in the decades between 1530 and 1580. Thus the Dominican order in New Spain was transformed in the fulfillment of its mission from an essentially urban organization focused on scholasticism and the disciplines of the cloister to a vast rural self-sufficient agricultural enterprise aimed at integrating millions of new converts in remote valleys into a wider Christian world. Scarcity of friars meant that they usually went in pairs to begin their work in a new
community, sometimes later joined by a third and rarely a fourth brother to share the work. These rural friars necessarily found themselves at the center of a swirling hubub, providing multi-level educational programs for thousands of adults and children offering sacred and technical instruction amid the dust and clamor of construction sites which saw not only the rise of churches and conventos, but of whole towns. And all of this while administering ever expanding agricultural operations and finding time to serve as parish priests. In seeking to transmit Christianity and transform Mesoamerican culture, the Dominicans were themselves transformed in a new life quite different from what they had known in the silent cloisters of Castile.20

Colonial Teposcolula, First Contact

The exact dates of first Spanish contact and the subsequent beginning of evangelization and urbanization at Teposcolula are difficult to reconstruct precisely from surviving documentary record. However, it is known that as early as 1519 Gonzalo de Umbría passed through the region of Tamazulapan about 20 km. north of Teposcolula, as well as through the Valley of Nochixtlán about 20 km. east of Teposcolula on his way to Sosola.21 After the death of Moctezuma in October 1520 there were disturbances in areas of the Mixteca where Spanish conquistadores were stationed. At Tututepec, near the coast, several Spaniards were ritually sacrificed. Cortés decided to pacify the region before resuming his attack on Tenochtitlán, and dispatched Francisco de Orozco to the Mixteca with 30 horsemen and a contingent
of allied Indians. No armed resistance was encountered in the Mixteca Alta, but at Cuilapan the Indians held out for two weeks before surrendering. Pedro de Alvarado was sent to the Mixteca de la Costa and met scattered resistance of little significance. Following instructions from Cortés, he attempted to establish a Spanish "villa" near Tututepec, and he distributed as encomiendas some of the important Mixtec señoríos among his followers. But the establishment of the Spanish regime in the Mixteca was marked by frequent rebellions and remained largely unsuccessful during the first decade after contact.

The first encomendero of Teposcolula was Gonzalo de Alvarado, who held the title until about 1529. He was followed by the notoriously abusive Paláez de Berrío who held the title until 1531. After the outrageous performance of Paláez de Berrío Teposcolula became a Corregimiento, that is, under the supervision of an official appointed by the Crown, called a Corregidor, who collected the tribute directly for the Crown. At this point it can be assumed that whatever clergy were in the area became dependent upon the Corregidor and ultimately the Crown for their livelihood.

The surviving standing walls at El Pueblo Viejo, if they are indeed from the colonial era, may have been built during this period. If an early church was built by the encomenderos or by the early corregidores, then it would probably have been at the hilltop site of the major settlement of the region, clearly the center of ritual activity before the Spanish arrival. In this earliest period of contact with the Spanish it appears that little occurred to significantly change the indigenous lifestyle.
Payment of tribute was redirected after the collapse of the Aztec regime, but the local power structure remained intact. It is difficult on the basis of existing evidence to gauge the religious impact of whatever clergy may have been working in the area.

In 1528, just two years after arriving in Mexico, Domingo de Betanzos left Mexico City for the south with two of his closest associates, Fr. Gonzalo Lucero and Fr. Bernardino de Minaya. Lucero and Minaya founded a Dominican house in Antequera, today's Oaxaca City, on land provided to them by the local cabildo. This was to become the urban hub for theological, liturgical and basic linguistic training of novitiates who would receive their final training in the field in the rural houses where ongoing experimentation would perfect the development of evangelical strategies. This approach of basic foundation training in the urban centers perfected by the constantly changing adaptations in the field avoided stasis and accounts for the variety of change over time evident in the various distinctly local developments seen in rural houses and communities throughout the sixteenth century. Indeed it is essential to keep in mind that all through that century of experiment everything was changing, adapting, evolving, not only in the evangelical strategies employed by the friars but also in the perception, levels of understanding, participation and integration of the indigenous peoples. There was no stasis, neither in the built environment nor in the mental worlds neither for the friars nor for the Indians.

In 1529-30 Dominican missionary contact was briefly established in Yancotílán, the principal community in the largest, richest farming valley in the
Mixteca, about 12 km. east of Teposcolula. Several of the leading members of the native elite in that kingdom were baptized, but the mission was soon abandoned. By 1534 there were eight friars working in Oaxaca, four at the house in Antequera, and four others in the Mixteca, probably based in Teposcolula. In 1535 another group of Dominican friars arrived in Yanhuitlán, but increasing problems with the local Spanish encomendero, Francisco de las Casas, eventually led to their withdrawal from Yanhuitlán and their relocation in nearby Teposcolula in 1541 where there had already been Dominican activity for some years.

Thus the first efforts to evangelize the Mixteca, and this probably included the population of Teposcolula, probably began after 1534 with the efforts of Fr. Gonzalo Lucero who did not at first speak Mixtec. Instead of preaching, he used pictures to communicate the basics of Christian doctrine: the existence of one all powerful creator God, the immortality of the soul with reward and punishment, the redemptive power of Christ and the need to work hard. With his pictures Fr. Gonzalo tried to show these concepts metaphorically and to show different ways of life in the world and the reward or consequences they produced after death. The Mixteca was and is an extensive mountainous region with numerous valleys and isolated settlements. It is known from records of the chapter meeting of 9 January 1540 that the problem of evangelizing a dispersed population was discussed, and "it was determined to attempt to gather them in convenient locations, there to form a pueblo in order to instruct them more readily in the Christian precepts." While the hilltop Pueblo Viejo site was probably the major settlement in the Teposcolula polity, its difficult access
and the likely dispersed nature of a large portion of the population no doubt inclined the friars at Teposcolula to implement the resolution of the 1540 chapter meeting by persuading the local ruler to agree to building a new town in which to assemble the population around a new church. However it is also possible, as was common in the colonial world of the sixteenth century, the resolution of the 1540 meeting may have merely acknowledged or approved of what had already been happening.

The sustained systematic evangelization of Teposcolula began in 1538 with the arrival in the area of Fr. Domingo de Santa María and Fr. Francisco de Marín. Teposcolula soon became the principal center of Dominican activities and diffusion in the Mixteca. Fr. Domingo de Santa María is mentioned in a letter written from the Mixteca on 3 December 1540 by Domingo de Betanzos to Cardinal García de Loayza, President of the Council of the Indies. The letter, presented in translation in the Appendix, is one of the earliest surviving written records of the contact era in Teposcolula, and it provides several important insights. It was to this powerful Cardinal that Betanzos repeatedly appealed for assistance in his efforts to establish the independent Dominican Province of Santiago de México. He begins with an apostolic greeting typical for its time, and generally describes his arduous efforts in conversion in many remote places, and then focuses on the Mixteca and Teposcolula:

...having wandered through various mountains I came to descend into a province known as the Misteca, where I found something new and of much consolation for me that I myself greatly wish to see in the conversion of these people: and in order that your grace understand what I so much wish to say, it is necessary to know that all methods of conversion of these people from
the beginning up till now have always been more violent than voluntary, because it has been brought about by fear and punishment rather than by love and good will, which is counter to the doctrine and preaching of our Redeemer.

This passage is arresting because in it he freely admits—indeed he calls to the attention of no less august a person than a Cardinal who is also the supreme civil servant charged with administration of the Indies—that up until this time the evangelization has been counter to the teaching of Christ. Yet Betanzos stresses that he greatly wishes the conversion of these people, and is consoled by the new development he is about to report, because the conversions of the past have been fatally flawed by the use of force:

And because of this we are always suspicious of the Christianity of most of them because the faith is not confirmed in them by love: and because of this they have never been completely uprooted from their idols, nor of their will, because if some have abandoned them it was more by force leaving them against their will: this is something quite universal in this New Spain:

Again this is a remarkable passage from a man who in 1540 had been at work twenty-six years in the Indies as an evangelical friar, and who had been the founder of the Dominican community in New Spain fourteen years before this letter. He declares that the evangelization has been forcible and incomplete universally up until now, though it seems he would wish it otherwise. But he has good news to report:

when I arrived in this province of the Misteca, as I said, I found there several friars of our Order working for the conversion of these people who speak another most difficult language, one of whom your Grace knows and spoke to in Castile, who is called Fr. Domingo de Santa María, who is certainly an apostolic man, and who learned that barbarous tongue, that certainly no other person up until now has been able to learn or know except him:
Betanzos, who never learned any of the native languages, is obviously excited, impressed, and gratified by the friar's ability to learn such a difficult, impenetrable language, and by the new possibilities for effective evangelization:

and God gave him so much grace with these people and he was so effective with his preaching that with love alone he attracted them and of their own free will all of one heart brought all of their idols and idolatry and with their own hands burned them detesting them so much from the heart that it was as if they had been a thousand years having received the faith and not one man among them was baptized until they had all abandoned all of their idols,

Here the emphasis is on free will, and voluntary participation in the destruction of the idols. He notes that Teposcolula was the first cabecera or head town to be successfully converted, and that it served as an example to which people came from all over the Mixteca to see and learn about the new religion and life. Hundreds of loads of idols were burned willingly by the Indians themselves, refering no doubt to human loads, which would probably have been under 40 pounds each.35 And the friars in this case refrained from the mass baptisms characteristic of the earlier years of the evangelization, waiting until the people were sufficiently catechised to understand what they were accepting.

And with all this they did not wish to baptize anyone until they were well instructed and knew to give correctly all the Christian doctrine: they had so much the desire for baptism that they became so diligent to learn all the doctrine that in very short time there was scarcely a man or woman who had not learned it, and the parents with great care taught their children. And above all before they were baptized they were examined each one to see if they knew how to say the doctrine but furthermore to see if they understood and they all gave (showed) such good reasoning (understanding) of everything, more completely than any commoner (plebeyo) of our country.
knows it, which is something very esteemed and very new in these people: and with all this examination were taught and baptized all the people of the Misteca, who have such great love and faith of Christ as has never been seen in these lands since their discovery.

Here Betanzos, a highly educated Dominican, compared the level of piety and comprehension of these new converts to the countrymen of Spain and said the Indians understood their faith better. Given that Betanzos was writing to the highest civil authority in the government of the Indies asking for favors, it is to be expected that he would make the strongest argument, and paint the rosiest picture. Yet even discounting for exageration, Betanzos stated flatly that what was happening in Teposcolula was something new, something he had never seen before, or, presumably, ever mentioned in other letters asking for favors. Rather than exagerating the usual claims, Betanzos said everything up until now had been false or forced or flawed, but that now something completely new was happening, and, to someone who may have become weary of the years of disappointments, something exciting and consoling.

and they have such great love for the friars and give so much credit to their words as if they were truly angels come from heaven: and all of this came, because this province up until now had not been preached to by anyone, but was neglected like bestial people (gente bestial): and this priest who I mentioned with his companions wished to throw their labors into it, and finally because this priest learned their language he attracted them by love.

He said that up until Fr. Domingo de Santa María and his companions, among whom was Fr. Francisco de Marín, began their work [probably about 1538] the area had been neglected like bestial people. This is an important turn of phrase, one that
would haunt Betanzos for his use of it elsewhere, perhaps taken out of context or misunderstood. In comparing the results of Dominican activities in this area with some of those farther south, Sidney Markman noted that the social structure existing at the time of contact was a determinant in the overall outcome of the Dominican program. Resistance was often greater in areas of more dispersed, less urbanized societies with less complex material cultures.37 Evidently, the Dominicans at this point enjoyed at least a tolerant relationship with people of Teposcolula, even if not as glowing with love as Betanzos portrays it.

...nor has an idol been abandoned by them by means of force, but all that they have done, they have done by their own free will: for which your Grace may believe that this is the best Christianity that there is in all of New Spain, and it is the faith of Christ in them better planted and edified or preached conforming directly to the gospel. Which never in these parts has been done...

Again Betanzos stressed the willing participation, together with a note that the preaching was coming directly from the gospel. And again the newness of the phenomenon was flatly stated as something that has never happened before. But what can account for the remarkable success of Fr. Domingo de Santa María and the others in Teposcolula?

The friars, who taught largely by example, brought a revolutionary, new understanding of the nature of God transmitted through an attractively inclusive multimedia campaign in which the Indians themselves played an important part. Medina explained how the evident love the friars showed the Indians, together with their message, had a powerful impact. As Miguel A. Medina pointed out in the following
Como legados de un Dios que les quiere, los misioneros son cariñosos con los indios, les respetan y les muestran palpablemente su amor. Desde luego, aquellas palabras y aquellos gestos no eran frecuentes entre el grupo de extranjeros. Por tanto, era muy natural que los indios, viéndose llamar hijos y hermanos por algunos de aquellos extranjeros, se movieran hacia una respuesta de respeto y de amor. En este punto, el autor de la Doctrina supo ver con claridad el choque emocional que debía producir en los indios verse llamados "hermanos" o por unos hombres, mal vestidos y de aspecto pobre, a quienes los otros extranjeros respetaban. Junto a este choque emocional, el autor dice a los indios que podían ser amigos de Dios. Es de imaginar que, al llegar a este punto, los indios estuvieran seriamente influenciados por la curiosidad, y al mismo tiempo por el ansia de poseer y gozar esos dones y bienes prometidos.36

It is important to recall here that the macejuales, or commoners, were unaccustomed to being directly addressed in affectionate, equalitarian terms by members of higher status groups interested in their personal salvation. Such novel practice by the friars had revolutionary implications. But of supreme importance was the notion of one all-powerful, loving God who actively sought the individual, personal friendship of each of the Indians. The contrast of this notion with the pre-Columbian gods was compelling:

Para el indígena, la concepción de un Dios amigo debía aparecer muy extraña. Sus dioses eran normalmente terribles, a los que había que aplacar con sacrificios y ofrendas y siempre a través del intermediario, nunca en una relación directa. Sus mismos caciques se consideraban y eran considerados como seres supetrascendencia y asemejaba en las relaciones con los dioses.39

Thus, for the commoners, there was in this universal access to the divine love and friendship of a merciful God a revolutionary equality with an implied promise of liberation. Furthermore, the missionaries used a historical approach rather than a
dogmatic approach. By this means they sought to show what they believed to be the
demonic origin of the Mesoamerican gods in terms of the Christian interpretation of
history, and gradually to lead the Indians to a new consciousness. Involving them
with music and singing, the friars wove the new teaching, the new history into an
engaging inclusive performance.

Medina felt that Bartolomé de las Casas may well have had a copy of a
manuscript of the *Doctrina* worked out earlier on the islands for his own use. He
cited an early chronicler’s account of Dominican missionary practice employed by
Las Casas:

> En efecto, leyendo a Remasei aparece un dato muy curioso. Cuando Fr.
> Bartolomé de las Casas, Fr. Luis de Cáncer, Fr. Rodrigo de la Adrada y Fr.
> Pedro de Ángulo intentaban entrar en la región de Tuzulutlán se las
> ingeniaron para enviar por delante a algunos indios convertidos que
> hicieran de precursores de la doctrina cristiana. Para ello, los frailes
> prepararon "unas trovas, o versos del modo que la lengua permitía con sus
> consonancias e intercadencias, medidos como a ellos les pareció que hacían
> mejor sonido al oído. Y en ellos pusieron la creación del mundo, la caída del
> hombre, su destierro del paraíso; y cómo no podrían volver a él, según la
> determinación divina, sino mediante la muerte del hijo de Dios; y en orden
> a darle a conocer, y cómo pudo morir para redimir al hombre, pusieron toda
> la vida y milagros de Cristo Nuestro Señor, su pasión, su muerte, su
> resurrección, la subida a los cielos, y cuándo segunda vez ha de venir a
> juzgar a los hombres, y el fin desta venida, que es el castigo de los malos y
> el premio de los buenos."40

Unfortunately this musical doctrina does not survive, but the historical narrative style
which it expresses, the themes and the way of making contact employed by the
friars mentioned here, all seem to point to their access to a manuscript of the
doctrina developed by Fr. Pedro and the Dominicans on the Antilles. The date
referred to here for Guatemala is 1537, so that friars passing through the Mixteca along the Camino Real on their way between Mexico City and Guatemala (before Betanzos wrote his letter in 1540)—including Bartolomé de las Casas, who had many years in the Antilles—could certainly have shared at least discussion or demonstration of the basic techniques proven effective in the field if not a manuscript copy of the Doctrina itself.

Later, in 1544 and 1548, typeset editions of this Doctrina were published by Bishop Zumárraga aided by Fr. Domingo de Betanzos. Of this Sterling Stoudemire said:

Rarely has so much of the Bible and catholic doctrine been reduced to such short space. In only sixty pages Córdoba includes the seven Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments, the Seven Sacraments, Deeds of Mercy, how to make the sign of the cross, a sermon for those who have just been baptized, a brief history of the world from the Creation to the Ascension, and two blessings for the table (one before the meal and another after). Interestingly, both blessings are in Latin, the only Latin in the text.41

Actually, there are two groups of 7 in the Articles of the Faith: 7 Articles of Faith that pertain to the Divinity of God, and 7 Articles of Faith that pertain to the Humanity of Christ. In reviewing these after long passages detailing and repeating these articles in different ways, at the close of each discussion there is a final summary.

The systematic preaching by use of historical narrative dramatically enacted by highly motivated, accomplished specialists trained in a tradition of spellbinding performance—perhaps influenced by Sor María—evidently had a powerful effect. Furthermore, the very nature of Mixtec culture may well have been especially suited to the methods and message of the friars.
In pre-Columbian times the Mixtec elite focused their cultural energy on the compilation and transmission through time of their history in genealogical terms as a means of demonstrating their legitimacy and preserving their power. This was done, as we have seen, through the creation of sacred books to facilitate the ritual re-enactment of the history in dramatic performance. This ritual performance by specially trained priests was sponsored and controlled by the royal elite, who periodically presided over public ritual spectacles in which participation by the commoners was mandatory, as well as other more exclusive ritual banquets for the nobles and visiting dignitaries. All of these events centered around ritual dramatic performance and sacrifice suffused with religious meaning, frequently accompanied by singing and dancing, and designed to ensure the smooth functioning of the cosmic and social order.

A significant and unusual aspect of the Mixtec civilization was its ability to survive intact through centuries of hostility, both internal and external.\textsuperscript{42} Diffusion of power among an elite class whose various members enjoyed autonomous supremacy in their particular polities certainly contributed to their success in flexible response to a changing world. Out of this over time emerged also, it seems to me, a ruling class of remarkable political acumen capable of insightful, sophisticated analysis of changing conditions.

Confronted with a new imperial regime, evidently even more powerful than that of Montezuma—whose brutal depredations in the Mixteca at the beginning of the century were only too well remembered—the Mixtec rulers of Teposcolula chose
peaceful cooperation rather than overt hostile resistance as the best means of promoting the survival of their civilization and their place in it. Indeed, willing cooperation offered the chance to participate in the decision making process in the new colonial regime where overt resistance would surely have resulted in bloody defeat and a dictated settlement imposed by the conquerors, as indeed it had for the far more powerful Aztecs\(^{43}\), not to mention the Mixtecs of Tututepec at the hands of Pedro de Alvarado.\(^{44}\)

If we take Medina’s suggestion of diffusion in Mexico of the *Doctrina Cristiana* from multiple manuscript sources prior to its publication in 1544, which he argued convincingly, and if we believe Betanzos’s letter of 1540 claiming that the evangelization of Teposcolula was a success, and a pacific success before 1540,\(^ {45}\) then it seems highly likely that an important feature of early evangelization in Teposcolula was a manuscript copy of the *Doctrina Cristiana*. We know that this was developed by the Dominicans in the Antilles between 1510 and 1521, and it was probably brought to the Mixteca by Dominicans with ties to the earlier work in the islands, such as Fr. Bartolomé de la Casas who passed this way in 1537. If not Las Casas, then Betanzos himself, a veteran of many years in the islands, may well have had a copy, and he was known to have been in Oaxaca as early as 1529.

The special success claimed by Betanzos in his letter may be attributable, then, to several converging factors: 1.) The stated ability of Fr. Domingo de Santa María to speak the Mixtec language; 2.) the willingness of the politically astute Mixtec elite to cooperate with the new regime for maximum benefit to themselves
and to their people; 3.) the possibility of genuine interest of this elite in a historical exposition of the new religion brought by the victorious conquerors of the Aztec Empire, and 4.) the powerful, persuasive appeal the friars and new religion may have made to the common people.

It is well known, as Lockhart pointed out, that in pre-Columbian times the religions of the victors of military campaigns were commonly viewed as contributing to the success on the battle field, and thus demonstrating their superiority to the religions held by those defeated. It was expected that the victorious, and thus evidently more powerful or effective religion would assume a prominent place in the conquered territory. The spectacular defeat of the Aztec regime at the hands of a Christian led coalition may have impressed the Mixtec leadership sufficiently to at least listen to the arguments in favor of Christianity advanced by the friars. Furthermore, the very historicity of the pedagogical approach of the Dominicans may well have appealed to the Mixtec elite, concerned above all, as they were, with history and their place in it. The systematic integrated presentation of a new religion in a richly developed historical continuum with the aid of new musical forms, written language, and pictorial illustration such as the friars certainly had in the form of wood block prints or engravings, may have had a strong, and perhaps even persuasively convincing appeal to an elite quite interested in history and religion.46 Furthermore, the ability to write specific and elaborate historical text by means of an alphabetical writing system may have been especially exciting to the minds of the elite, who may have seen the possibilities for record keeping and self expression
beyond that offered by their own mnemonic/glyph based system. Certainly they were quick to learn how to use the new writing system, as their elaborate signatures on early documents show. Having tentatively identified the literary basis of evangelization in Teposcolula, we may now explore the possible visual elements used in the process of transforming the indigenous sacramental imagination, and the relationship of these elements to experience and expression through sacred drama.

The earliest work of art of known date produced in colonial Mexico was a gift for Pope Paul III intended to express the gratitude felt for his bull Sublimis Deus in which he recognized the fully human nature of the Indians, and their entitlement to receive all of the sacraments. A most significant gift for the most powerful officially Christian man on earth, it was made by Nahua artists expert in feather mosaic in the Franciscan school at Tlatelolco under, one may justly assume, the close supervision of Fr. Pedro de Gante—named in the inscription--with the approval of Bishop Zumárraga, the most powerful Christian official in Mexico. The gift, according to the inscription along the border, was made in 1539, but it disappeared, perhaps taken by pirates on the Spanish main, only to reemerge at auction in 1987. The gift was a feather mosaic representation of the Mass of St. Gregory displaying all of the instruments of the Passion.(fig. 15) Now in the Musée des Jacobins in Auch, France, this striking piece was exhibited in New York in 1991. The catalogue entry describes it as follows:

...Kneeling before the altar, the saint and two deacons see Christ rising from
the sarcophagus. The elaborate designs on the deacon's dalmatics and on the altar frontal show the amalgama's interpretation of European textile motifs. A syncretic detail may be seen in the thirteen disks within the cross on the chasuble; in the pre-Hispanic world these disks represented chalchihuitl, a precious stone associated with water; St. Gregory himself interpreted them as symbols of the Old and New Testaments. The number thirteen, symbolizing Christ and his apostles, is repeated in the pattern on the linen corporal on the altar. The symmetry of the overall design is emphasized by the paired arrangement of the instruments of the Passion on each side of the Cross.49

These thirteen disks, or water symbols, are examples of a symbolic motif ubiquitous in pre-Columbian art all over Mesoamerica, and less frequently seen in the colonial context. Later I will refer to disks such as these seen on buildings as "double concentric ring disks." As used here there is a convergence or conflation of meaning, doubtless intentional. The inscription notes the name of the Indian artist, who was a close relative of Montezuma, and the last governor of Tenochtitlán. Nor should any necessarily covert intent be automatically assumed, because it is just as likely that to the indigenous mind a powerful symbol expressing sacredness was quite appropriate in its new application, forming a cross on St. Gregory's chasuble. But, as Markman pointed out, the number 13 also has significance in terms of the pre-Columbian calendar system, suggesting a further dimension to the syncretism.50

This gift, then, was an example of old, familiar symbols given new Christian meaning by their very incorporation in such a high status work of religious art. These new meanings might not necessarily completely displace the old, but clearly a process of fusion or integration through mutual transference and assimilation was well under way even in these early days of the post-contact era.
Certainly Fr. Pedro de Gante, who was on hand in the earliest years of the evangelization, and was intimately familiar with pre-Columbian religious art and architecture, knew very well of the pre-Columbian origins of this symbol. It cannot be assumed that the presence of the chalchiuites in this gift for the Pope escaped his notice. I believe this may be viewed as an outcome of a process of negotiation and consent, of reconciliation of meanings in a mutual transformation in a new world.

As noted in the catalogue description, "the question of why the Mass of St. Gregory was dedicated to Paul III in 1539 requires a complex answer":

The actual Mass of St. Gregory, one of the rituals in which the relics associated with the Passion were venerated, evolved over several centuries; it attained its greatest popularity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when a number of popes extended indulgences to those who participated in it. Its popularity spread to New Spain, where the Eucharistic nature of its theme must have been quite effective in teaching new Christians the concept of Holy Communion. The Franciscans were especially devoted to it; in addition to the present example, the legend is represented on a number of feather miters, and there are surviving murals depicting it in the Franciscan convents at Tepeapulco and Cholula. (St Gregory's mass fell our of favor about 1628 when the Holy Commission of Rites prohibited it.)

The deliberate transmission of Passion symbolism is evident from the numerous examples found in early colonial settings throughout Mexico. Etchings and woodblock prints from northern Europe brought by or sent to the friars are a likely medium of transmission. One well known European print, in this case depicting the Mass of St. Gregory, dated 1480-85, by Israhel van Meckenem, carries this inscription:
Whoever piously recites before the instruments of Christ's Passion seven Credos, Seven Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, and as often as he does so, shall enjoy an indulgence of 20,000 years.\textsuperscript{55} (fig 18)

This example is among the various possible sources for the image in the gift to Pope Paul III. It too has a disk motif: thirteen disks are arranged in a horizontal frieze on the sepulcher. Christ is standing in his sepulcher depicted as the Man of Sorrows Who, as shown by His wounds, has suffered for the salvation of man.

As will be seen, Passion iconography played an important role in the early open chapel of Teposcolula, and groups of seven have a significance reflected by the arrangement of disks at the Casa de la Cacica. Forms of mental prayer were apparently encouraged by the Dominicans of Teposcolula, as is suggested by the sculptural representation of Rosary beads over the great arches of the second open chapel. We will return later to consider the possible numerical relationships between the groups of disks on the Casa de la Cacica and the beads on the chapel and the recitation of prayers.

The use of the iconography of the Instruments of the Passion, or arma Christi, is principally associated with the Franciscans and Augustinians as applied to their well known Atrio crosses.(figs 19, 20, 21)\textsuperscript{56} Nevertheless, the Dominicans also employed this iconography, as at the early house of Atzcapotzalco near Mexico City, and most notably at Coixtlahuaca over the north door in what is thought to be the earliest sculptural example in Mexico.\textsuperscript{57} (figs. 22, 23, & 24) But this may not have been the first sculptural example of this iconography in the New World. In the Church of San José, built by the Dominicans in San Juan, Puerto Rico, there is a
fine example of what appears to be an atrio cross clearly presenting the Passion iconography. (fig 25) Its location today within the church is perhaps for safe keeping. Ongoing research will attempt to more accurately locate the production of this artifact in time; however, it now appears that this Dominican example may well predate the earliest Franciscan or Augustinian examples. 58 Fr. Domingo de Betanzos, who collaborated closely with the Franciscan friar, Bishop Zumárraga, may have been a link between the Dominican Antillean development of the use of Passion Iconography on atrio crosses as a teaching tool and its use by the Franciscans later in Mexico. Certainly Zumárraga and Betanzos cooperated on the publication of the Dominican Doctrina developed in the Antilles, and this may have been another example of similar sharing of missionary technique.

Rev. Jaime Lara has recently called attention to a medieval European antecedent of the late fifteenth-century florescence of the Mass of St. Gregory but which also featured Passion iconography. 59 He points to a tradition celebrating the "resurrected cross," or what came to be viewed as an eschatological cross represented in association with the arma Christi appearing as early as the Carolingian period. Certainly there are examples of crosses displaying Passion iconography in Europe. 60

Another factor contributing to the transmission of Passion iconography may have been the Dominicans' long association with the Spanish tradition of penetential confraternities devoted to re-enacting the Santo Entierro, or burial of Christ, during Holy Week. Elena Estrada de Gerlero has called attention to the importance of this
tradition in understanding the Passion iconography present at three locations in sixteenth-century Mexico where there are graphic depictions of such processions: the Franciscan houses of Huejotzingo (figs. 26, 27, & 28) and Huaquechula (figs. 29), Puebla61, and the Dominican house at San Juan Teitipac (figs. 31-35), in the Valley of Oaxaca.62 She emphasized the Dominican connection with penitential processions originating with St. Vincent Ferrer who joined the order in 1367 and went on to lead, after 1399, vast crowds of penitents and flagellants in itinerant, open air preaching missions.63 Furthermore, she noted that a manual offering instructions on just how to properly conduct these processions based on an earlier Spanish edition was published by Juan Cromberger in Mexico City by order of the Archbishop Zamárraga in 1544, the same year Zumárraga collaborated with the Dominican Betanzos on the Doctrina project.64

As Susan Webster has shown in the case of Huejotzingo, these processions, conducted with elaborate ceremony and costumes, were a form of extra-liturgical drama performed within the atrios.65 Members of the processions actually carried representations of individual Instruments of the Passion, and accompanying priests explained the edifying message of each of the passion symbols at stations along the processional path.66 Concerning the Spanish tradition of Santo Entierro Processions, Webster pointed out:

In Spain, the Descent Ceremony was typically, though not exclusively, performed by the Confraternity of the Santo Entierro. The Sevillian Abbott, Alonso Sánchez Gordillo, has left us with a marvellously detailed description of a Descent Ceremony performed by the Confraternity of the Santo Entierro in Seville during the late sixteenth century. Abbot Gordillo describes the
scene as follows:

"Every year at midnight the scene of the crucifixion was erected on a small hill outside the confraternity's chapel. [They set up] the image of the crucified Christ, accompanied by the two thieves, and at the foot of the cross [they placed] the images of Holy Mary, St John the Evangelist, the Magdalen, and the two Marys with some candles, so that at the appointed hour, when the people arrived to see the spectacle, they were struck with great reverence and devotion . . . and then the sermon of the descent was read as four priests raised ladders against the cross, and two of them climbed the ladders to perform the descent of the body of Christ our lord . . . pulling out the nails and winding long towels around the body of Christ to support it, and with much reverence and devotion they lowered the Holy Body, and placed it in the lap of the image of the Virgin . . . the priests wrapped the body in winding sheets there, and later it was carried in procession by the confraternity members from the outdoor location of the calvary to the chapel of the confraternity . . . the body and image of Christ [was carried] on some very beautifully adorned and outfitted andas, and was placed on the altar."

As for a specific Dominican transmitter of this Passion iconography into Teposcolula, Robert Mullen has identified Fr. Francisco de Marín as the architect of the Dominican buildings at first Teposcolula and then Coixtlahuaca. Jiménez Moreno locates him with Fr. Domingo de Santa María in the Mixteca after 1538. The presence of Passion iconography in the carefully laid out sculptural program at Coixtlahuaca strongly suggests that Fr. Marín would have had printed examples for the masons to work from, and also to use directly in catechism before the sculpture was in place. Any of the many prints of this theme by various artists could have been among the teaching tools brought to the Mixteca by Fr. Marín.

The many known examples of the iconographic use of the Instruments of the Passion in early contact period settings supports the likelihood of its use in Teposcolula from an early date, particularly since this iconography is seen in what
appears to be an early example from the Dominican efforts in the Antilles predating Mexican examples, and since the full array of the Instruments of the Passion appears at Coixtlahuaca, in construction subsequent to the first open chapel of Teposcolula. As will be seen in the next chapter, there is also explicit surviving physical evidence of the early use of this iconography at Teposcolula.

In summary, this chapter has traced the spiritual history of the Dominican evangelization of Mexico through Spain and the Antilles to illustrate some of the underlying motives and techniques they brought to the Mixteca and Teposcolula. I have also identified what I believe to have been a focus of Dominican mystical spirituality and the principal iconographic complex used in the earliest contact with the Mixtecs. In the following chapter we will return to the iconography of the armas Christi as an all important feature of the total built or formal environment aimed at promoting Christian life ways. But first it will be helpful to discuss the new colonial built environment at a more general level.

Sidney D. Markman has made the most sustained, comprehensive and detailed investigation of specifically Dominican initiatives in early colonial town founding yet published. His field work examined Dominican activity in Chiapas, south of Oaxaca. He identified the general patterns of Dominican practice and discussed them in their historical context. The Dominican evangelical program in Chiapas and Oaxaca, and indeed throughout their extended territories stretching from the Valley of Mexico south through Morelos, Oaxaca and Chiapas to Guatemala, was conducted more or less contemporaneously from the 1530s
through the end of the century. It is safe to assume that, generally speaking, there were similarities in their methodology all along their far-flung chain of establishments. For this reason in the following chapter we will begin by reviewing early colonial Dominican urbanization generally as described by Markman based on his study of Chiapas before turning to a consideration of the construction of some of the principal components of the colonial town of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula and their intended uses. This comparative approach will highlight some important regional differences between Chiapas and the Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca in the outcomes of Dominican initiatives demonstrating the important role played by the indigenous leadership in Teposcolula.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. An earlier version of substantial portions of this chapter appeared in a working paper entitled "Domination and Subordination Or Negotiation and Consent? A View from Teposcolula, Oaxaca 1535-1600" presenting research in progress to The Eighth Annual Virginiash Carolinas Latin American Colonial History Seminar at The Lightsey Conference Center College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina, 16-17 April 1993. I gratefully acknowledge the helpful constructive criticism contributed by the other members of the seminar including Tom Cummins and especially Jim Riley.


4. Giles, Mary. The Book of Prayer of Sor María of Santo Domingo. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990, p. 54. This book presents a comprehensive overview of the reform movement within the Church generally and the Dominican order particularly during the period of Cisneros's primacy. The following discussion of Sor María's life follows closely and summarizes Giles's work.

5. Hernández, Ramón, O.P. "Primeros dominicos del convento de San Esteban en América." Ciencia tomista 113(1986):317-342, p.319. Published texts of the proceedings may be found in "Las Actas del Capítulo de Peñafiel de 1504." Archivo Dominicano 2(1981):89-118; and "Las Actas del Capítulo de Burgos de 1506." Archivo Dominicano 3(1982):13-84. Ramón pointed out (p. 320) that among the acts were instructions aimed at maximizing the emphasis on scholarly activity, including provisions for exempting students from certain traditional elements of cloistered life, such as the regular participation in the recitation of the Divine Office. These provisions were intended to permit the scholarfriars time to devote to their studies.
in uninterrupted concentration.

6. This paragraph closely follows, but compresses Giles's presentation of the events of Sor María's life. Sor María's interaction with individuals directly related to Dominican activities in the New World justifies this digression from the main theme of Teposcolula.

7. Giles. *The Book,...*, p. 55. An examples of the importance and reverence accorded St. Catherine in Mexico are the frequent 16th-century frescoe paintings found in early Dominican houses depicting her, such as may still be seen at Tetela de Volcán, Morelos. See Martínez Marín, Carlos. *Tetela del Volcán, su historia y su convento*. México: UNAM, 1966, or take the colectivo from Cuautla early in the day and see the cloister as it is used today by the school children weekday mornings. The building may not be open at other times.


9. Giles. *The Book,...*, p. 89: She noted that later Teresa of Avila would also focus on the passion:

   Teresa of Avila, also a Dominican, was so devoted to the Sacred Humanity that she prayed by visualizing and reflecting on an event in the passion:
   "By meditation I mean prolonged reasoning with the understanding, in this way. We begin by thinking of the favor which God bestowed upon us by giving us His only Son; and we do not stop there but proceed to consider the mysteries of his whole glorious life. Or we begin with the prayer in the Garden and go on rehearsing the events that follow until we come to the Crucifixion. Or we take one episode of the Passion—Christ's arrest, let us say—and go over this mystery in our mind, meditating in detail upon the points in it which we need to think over and to try to realize, such as the treason of Judas, the flight of the Apostles, and so on. This is an admirable and a most meritorious kind of prayer."

For a comprehensive discussion of the history and meaning of this iconographic complex, see Schiller, Gertrude, Janet Seligman tr. *Iconography of Christian Art*. Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1972, Vol 2, pp. 199-228 and the numerous plates. More on this topic follows below.


11. Beltrán de Heredia, Vincente. *Las Corrientes de espiritualidad entre los Dominicos de Castilla durante la primera mitad del siglo XVI*. Salamanca: San Esteban, 1941. p. 18-19. Fr. Vincente stressed that Juan Hurtado de Mendoza was a "real" reformer whose plans began before sor María's rise, but who also was from
the Piedrahita house, and at first supported María, but later did not. He was in the convent at Ávila in 1504. His plans at reform were delayed by her until 1519. He was prior of Salamanca from December 1509-December 1511, one of the most austere houses of the Province. He began to unite some friars who wished to restore the primitive rigor of the order, including absolute poverty (and renunciation of possession of rents), and other measures such as Savonarola had done at San Marcos in Italy. He also focused on the Sacred Humanity of Christ in his preaching and reform, he died in holy week 1525. Another humanist follower of Hurtado at Salamanca was Domingo de San Pedro who professed at Salamanca before Hurtado (en manos de) 2 July 1518, and who (from 1524 -1550) was master of the novices at San Esteban. He was responsible for the formation of many of the hearty souls who went out to the New World. For a helpful article making connections between the important Dominican center of learning, San Esteban in Salamanca and the New World mission, see Hernández, Ramón, O.P. "Primeros dominicos del convento de San Esteban en América." Ciencia tomista 113(1986):317-342.


Al mismo tiempo que llegaban los nuevos asignados a Santo Tomás, tomaba posesión del cargo de prior el P. Juan Hurtado, el 20 de noviembre de 1509. Este hombre será providencial para entender el motivo del primer grupo misionero de dominicos en América. Mientras fue prior supo imprimir, como ya lo hiciera siendo Maestro de estudiantes, una intensa vida de observancia, estudio, y apostolado, logrando una pléyade numerosa de discípulos. De este modo providencial, Fr. Pedro de Córdoba fue creciendo como estudiante y como neosacerdote a lo sánbre paternal de un superior que supo transmitirle, con su propio testimonio, el ideal de la "vida dominicana reformada."

Giles, The Book..., p. 197, note 1. Among other luminaries whose lives she touched, Sor María's book was dedicated to Cardinal Adrian of Utrecht, born March 2, 1459, who took his doctorate in theology at Louvain in 1491 and rose to become chancellor of the university and tutor to the future Charles V. He went to Spain in 1515, acting as co-Viceroy with Cardinal Cisneros after the death of King Ferdinand in 1516, and sole viceroy after Cisneros's death in 1517. In 1516 he was named Bishop of Tortosa, Inquisitor General of Castile and Aragón before he became pope in 1522. It was edited by either Diego de Vitoria or Alonso de la Peña, it seems.

As an aside, I note that in what is now the parish church of Barco de Ávila there is in the altarpiece a small depiction of the mass of St. Gregory from an earlier altarpiece...also another example of this iconography is in the cathedral of Palencia...The nuns of Sor María's group were located near Barco de Ávila, and were eventually moved in the second half of the last century to a house in Ávila...what became of their convent I do not know. See Sobrê, Judith Berg. Behind the Altar Table. The Development of the Painted Retable in Spain, 1350-1500.
12. Ulloa, Daniel. *Los Predicadores Divididos, Los dominicanos en Nueva España, siglo XVI*. México: El Colegio de México, 1977. This is a comprehensive treatment of the Dominican mission in Mexico. Ulloa focussed on the sharp division in the early years between the Dominicans who maintained the strict observance of conventual life according to the rule in large urban priories in the principal Spanish cities, venturing out on occasion to preach among the indians and those who believed it necessary for the fulfillment of the missionary goal of the order in the New World to live in smaller houses, or *vicarías*, working among the Indians in congregated centers of indigenous population known as *pueblos de indios*. But for another more recent and comprehensive treatment, written in Spain and based largely on documents now in Spain, especially in the Archivo General de las Indias in Seville, surveying the entire sixteenth century see also: Pita Moreda, M. T. *Los Predicadores Novohispanos del Siglo XVI*. Salamanca: Editorial San Esteban, 1992. This is the published version of her doctoral dissertation, however Dr. Pita Moreda wrote a master's thesis *New Spain's Urban Convents in the Sixteenth Century*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1985, based on documents from the various archives in Mexico. Her notes are especially helpful as guides to the archival and published primary sources. I gratefully acknowledge Dr. Pita-Moreda's kindness during several extended telephone conversations and her assistance in helping me to locate a copy of her published work.

13. Pita Moreda. *Los Predicadores Novohispanos...* pp. 96-99. She cited passages from several letters from Domingo de Betanzos in the 1530s & 40s making this case. As has been noted elsewhere, Betanzos remains an enigmatic figure whose opinions of the indians were notably ambivalent. Concerning ordination of native priests see Poole, Stafford. "Church Law on the Ordination of Indians and Castas in New Spain." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 61(1981):609-637, cited by Pita Moreda.


16. Hernández "Primeros dominicos..." p. 320. He cited Medina, Miguel A., O.P. *Una comunidad al servicio del Indio, L obra de fr. Pedro de Córdoba, O.P. (1482-1521)*. Madrid: 1983., p. 84. It is worth pointing out that eventually in Mexico there were three great Dominican urban priories, at Mexico, Puebla and Oaxaca in which the full observance of the ceremonial and ritual life of the conventual recitation of the Divine Office and the participation in the activities of the coro as prescribed in the
Dominican constitutions were observed. During the sixteenth century in Mexico City the Dominican community numbered between 80 and 100, while in Puebla and Oaxaca the communities maintained a fluctuating average of about 30 in each location. These urban priories were centers of learning and formation of the entering novitiates who would later serve as friars after taking their final vows. Because of the larger communities in these three houses it was possible to maintain the full observance of the Dominican rule as it originated in Europe. In New Spain the quite different circumstances and extreme scarcity of friars compared to the enormity of the task meant that in the rural houses, or vicarios, had much smaller resident communities, often only 2,3, or 4 friars. Given the small numbers it was not possible to fulfill all of the specified observances of the rule and cope with the endless tasks of building Christian communities literally from the ground up. For a further elaboration on the nature of the urban priories and the nature of Dominican conventual life see Pita Moreda Los Predicadores..., Capítulo III, 131-203, for a discussion of rural conventos see Capítulo IV, 205-272.

17. Ulloa. Los Predicadores Divididos..., p. 125. Alonso Loaisa, possibly a relative of García [? this needs verification], was the provincial whose tact averted schism in the Dominican order in 1512 by peacefully settling the case of Sor María de Piedrahita, see Giles The Book..., p. 54. García Loaysa's brother, Fr. Domingo de Mendoza Loaysa, (Stoudemire, Sterling A. Pedro de Córdoba Christian Doctrine for the Instruction and Information of the Indians. Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1970, p. 19.) was chosen to be the first leader, or Vicar, of the Dominican mission to the New World, only to be recalled to Rome at the last minute. He eventually arrived in Santo Domingo and served under Fr. Pedro de Córdoba, whom he had chosen for his own replacement. Medina. Doctrina Christiana, p. 18.


19. Ulloa. Los Predicadores Divididos..., p. 133. He said: "La expulsión de Betanzos a Guatemala abrió nuevas perspectivas hacia las regiones del sur, pues junto con Betanzos dejaron la capital fray Gonzalo Lucero y un tal fray Bernardino de Tapia, quienes se establecieron en Antequera, recorriendo a su paso las regiones de Pueblo, Izúcar y Yangüitlán, y dieron a conocer a su paso la presencia de los dominicos."


Frizzi is among the leading historians of the Mixteca in Mexico today, and this recent book is a comprehensive treatment of early colonial history from the Spanish side. Her work is based on early chroniclers as well as many years of painstaking archival research in the Archivo del Poder Judicial Regional de Oaxaca among others. The following discussion of early colonial history follows her account.

22. The term señorío refers to a territory ruled by a señor, or lord. Spores referred to these as kingdoms in the Mixtec case, and elaborated on his terminology at some length in his writings cited elsewhere in this paper. The term encomienda refers to a system developed in Spain during the Reconquista. In Mexico it was used by the Crown as a means of rewarding the “Conquistadores” by assigning to them the right to tribute and rotational labor from newly conquered localities. While they were not usually permitted to reside in the area of their encomienda, and while the land itself remained in Indian possession, the encomenderos enjoyed the fruits and labors of their Indian populations according to established regulations and durations which were largely ignored in the first decade after conquest. In exchange for this privileged position, it was—theoretically—the explicit responsibility of the encomendero to see to the conversion and religious instruction of those living within their encomiendas. This usually meant the construction of churches and the provision of clergy at the expense of the encomendero. In this case the clergy would usually have been “secular” rather than “regular.” The term secular refers to those priests not members of the religious orders, such as the mendicants, who lived according to a “regula” or rule. Because these secular clergy, who in religious matters were answerable to the Bishop, depended upon the encomenderos for their living, they were at least susceptible to manipulation by the encomenderos. In contrast, the regular clergy had been granted extraordinary powers by the king and Pope, and were not responsible to the bishops or civil authorities. Within territories under their administration, the regulars were virtually a power unto themselves, and frequently encountered the hostility of the encomenderos who coveted their lands and Indians.

23. As indicated in the previous chapter, opinions vary concerning the date of construction of these walls. No systematic archaeological excavation has been conducted at the Pueblo Viejo site, although Eulalia de Guzmán published the conclusions she reached during her brief visit in the 1930s and Ronald Spores visited the site some years ago and examined sherds and other artifacts on the surface, but this was not a full scale study. Without the kinds of evidence that would emerge from a more detailed and elaborate investigation, little can be said with certainty concerning the date of these walls.

24. During one of my visits to the site I encountered a countryman tending his flock of sheep, and he showed me a ruined structure, whose foundation outline was still visible, looking out over a large terrace. This, he said, was the "Iglesia" or church.


27. Ibid. She cited a letter to the Bishop of Oaxaca, March 1534.


29. As these notes indicate, the exact date of first Dominican arrival in Teposcolula remains uncertain. Mullen, Robert. *Dominican Architecture in Oaxaca*. Phoenix: Center for Latin American Studies, 1975, postulates that a Dominican house, founded after 1535 by Fray Betanzos, was "accepted" or recognized by the 1538 Provincial chapter meeting of the order.


32. Jiménez Moreno and Mateos Higuera. *Códice de Yanhuitlán*. p. 22. Fr. Marín is mentioned as Vicar of Yanhuitlán until 1540 followed by Fr. Domingo de Santa María thereafter. Evidently both of these friars, upon whose early work the apparent success of the evangelization of the Mixteca depended, were hard at work in the area before Betanzos's letter of 1540, and evidently had much to show for their labors by that time. Each of these figures had specific contributions to the transmission of culture, Fr. Domingo de Santa María by his linguistic accomplishments, and Fr. Francisco by his architectural and artistic gifts which gave form to the new built environment and as well as the new interior world of visualization. Pita Moreda. *Los Predicadores Novohispanos*. p.116, notes that they came from the Dominican house in Mexico City as a result of a petition from the Bishop López de Zárate, and that they arrived first at Acatlán before moving on to a temporary base in Chila from which they visited all of the Mixteca, including Yanhuitlán and Teposcolula.

33. Pita Moreda. *Los Predicadores Novohispanos*. p.116, she noted that problems with the encomendero of Yanhuitlán prevented that community from taking
the leading role, at least in the early years.

34. Jiménez Moreno and Mateos Higuera. *Codice de Yanzuitlán*, p. 22. They present the known biographical information of Fr. Domingo de Santa María:

Remesal nos dice que era oriundo de Salamanca e hijo del convento de San Esteban, de la misma ciudad, y que en él profisó el "el día de la concepción de nuestra señora, año de 1524". Dávila Padilla, en cambio, afirma que su lugar de origen hubo de ser Jerez de la Frontera, que era de la noble familia de los Hinojosa, y que vino a México siendo muy mozo, y pidió el hábito a Fr. Domingo de Betanzos. Beristain asegura que lo recibió el año de 1528; mientras Remesal registra la profesión de un Fr. Juan de Hinojosa en 1531, aunque éste no debe ser aquel cuya vida historiamos, porque sabemos tenía por nombre, desde su nacimiento, el mismo que adoptara cuando su profesión. En vista de datos contradictorios como estos, es mejor que esperemos mejores luces de los documentos.

35. For a description of human carriers and load levels, see Hassig, Ross. *Trade, Tribute and Transportation, the sixteenth century political economy of the Valley of Mexico*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985, pp. 32-34: "Loads and Distances." He said: "The stated practice of pre-Columbian tlamemes carrying two arrobas [50.72 lbs.] for five leagues per day appears reasonable, but rather than granting blanket acceptance to these standards, more consideration must be given to loads, distances, terrain, and climate as interrelated variables affecting tlammeme portage."

36. For a careful discussion of levels of piety in sixteenth-century Spain see Christian, William, Jr. *Local Religion in Sixteenth Century Spain*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981. See also other work by Christian. Sidney Markman, who has devoted many years of research to the activities of Dominicans in Chiapas and Central America, urges caution when reading these glowing accounts, noting that similar claims were made by Las Casas for areas to the south on slender evidence. Dr. Markman refers to these accounts as exaggerated. Comments made in conversation March 25, 1993.


44. I have benefited from reading an unpublished MS by Ronald Spores which details the bloody events in Tututepec. This will appear as "Tututepec. A Post Classic Period Mixtec Conquest State" in *Ancient Mesoamerica* Vol. 4, 169-176.

45. Robert J. Mullen, a specialist in the field of Dominican architecture in Oaxaca, agrees on the pacific nature of the evangelization of Oaxaca: "But yes, like you, I come away with the conviction that the evangelization of Oaxaca was essentially pacific." Letter to me dated 24 March 1993.

46. See Cárceles Laborde. "Los catecismos iconográficos..." cited in Note 29 above.


48. Zumárraga himself had feather mosaic representations displayed on his own sacramental vestments expressing motifs identical to those found on this gift to the Pope. See also Bishop Zumárraga’s Gremial, also depicting the instruments of the passion as seen in the mass of St. Gregory, another reference to the "Cult of the Passion." Another item, a bishop’s miter, also feather mosaic work depicting the Mass of St. Gregory, was deposited in the Escorial in 1576 by Philip II. See The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1990, p. 261.


52. Estrada de Gerlerio and Martinez del Rio de Redo, Mexico: Splendors, pp. 259-60.


57. See Sebastián-Lopez. "'Los 'arma Christi'..." p. 268 for the reference to Atzcapotzalco. He mentions his Mexican colleague, Mariano Monterrosa, who has
catalogued instances of Passion iconography in Mexican conventos, and who supplied the photographs for the article. On atrio crosses, see Monteverde, Mildred. "Sixteenth-Century Mexican Atrio Crosses." unpublished dissertation, University of Los Angeles, 1972, pp. 154 and 161. She focused on Franciscan and Augustinian examples, though noted the Coixtlahuaca case, citing Toussaint.

58. A Dominican presence in Puerto Rico was in place before Fr. Pedro de Córdoba's visit in 1518. Ramón Hernandez, "Primeros Dominicos..." p. 334, points out that Antón de Montesinos arrived in Puerto Rico in 1514 following his work in the Venezuelan mission. Montesinos accompanied Bartolomé de las Casas to the Spanish court in 1515. However King Ferdinand died before they could see him. Instead they eventually met with the regent, the Franciscan Cardinal Cisneros, and Prince Charles’s ambassador, former mentor and future Pope, Adrian of Utrecht. As a result of these meetings in which the New World mission was discussed at great length, Las Casas was given the title "Defensor de los indios de todas de las Indias." Clearly, then, there was direct contact between the highest civil and religious authorities in Spain and the Dominican mission in the New World. It is quite likely that evangelical methodology was discussed. It is therefore at least possible, if not indeed likely, that the implantation of mental prayer and the use of devotional iconography came up in these conversations. The Dominican mission in Puerto Rico was flourishing after 1525 by which time a convento had been erected. Friars coming from San Esteban in Salamanca, including Fr. Antón, were notable among the others, possibly continuing the link through Cisneros and Hurtado with Sor María and her reform movement and mental prayer techniques. For a general history of the Dominicans in Puerto Rico see Cuesta Mendoza, Antonio. Los Dominicos en el Puerto Rico Colonial, 1521-1821. México: Imp. Manuel León Sánchez, 1946. The cross within the church of San José today is of a black veined stone which I have not yet been able to identify. However further research will attempt to identify the type of stone and its origin.


60. For an example of what appears to be a twentieth-century persistence of this tradition see Germain, Felix. Men and Mountains of Savoy. France: Arthaud, 1960, fig. 93, Calvaire de Villaron. Though this is a modern example, it certainly points to the existence of a tradition of crosses bearing Passion iconography in Europe as well as the Americas.
61. It is worth noting that in the lower cloister at Huaquechula there are rosettes painted on the walls at even intervals. These painted rosettes appear to be original painting from the sixteenth-century. For many years these rosettes were covered by wooden frames holding devotional paintings from a later period, now moved into the church. These rosettes are particularly interesting because in their centers may be seen individual elements of the Armas Christi, including dice, hammer and nails, and etc. This is an important observation because it reinforces Richard E. Phillips contention that the cloisters were used as processional pathways during the period of the evangelization in the sixteenth-century, and because the presence of the Instruments of the Passion in a processional pathway is consistent with Susan V. Webster's belief that cofradías devoted to the Vera Cruz and to the Santo Entierro existed from an early date in the colonial era. Webster pointed out in conversation January 27, 1996, that regular Friday observances of the "Perpetual Passion" could have included processions through the cloister, and would have culminated in the special processional activities of the cofradías during Holy Week. Furthermore, as we will see in Chapter V, the Augustinians clearly used the disk frieze as a ledger of meaning for Christian purposes. To the extent that these rosettes, evenly spaced at intervals convenient for groups to view in sequence during a devotional or instructional processions, may be derived from disk frieze ornament there is also the suggestion that the Franciscans from an early date deliberately co-mingled pre-Columbian symbol systems with Christian meanings when it seemed fruitful to do so. See fig. 30.


64. Ibid. 652. Cartujano, Dionisio Richel. Compendio breve que tracta de la manera de como se han de hazer las processiones. México: Juan Cromberger, 1544.


67. Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

DOMINICAN URBANIZATION:
ARCHITECTURE, ICONOGRAPHY,
AND RITUAL PERFORMANCE
Dominican Urbanization, a View from Chiapas

Sidney D. Markman has eloquently portrayed the urbanizing efforts of the Dominican friars in early colonial Chiapas. While we are here primarily concerned with the regionally distinct aspects of the specific case of Teposcolula, because of the general similarities in the Dominican *modus operandi* in Oaxaca and Chiapas Markman's classic work offers an appropriate introduction to the topic of Dominican urbanization in colonial New Spain:

Of all the religious orders that played a role in the urbanization of the native population in Chiapas and what was to become the Reino de Guatemala, the Dominican was the most expert in town planning and construction. Sometimes, even on their own initiative, the friars undertook the non-violent conquest of the Indians. The weapon they wielded was the Cross, rather than the sword, when they would venture into remote pockets of pagan population in order to *reducir a poblado* and bring the idolatrous natives in from their dispersed cornfields, where they had been living in constant peril of losing their souls, to towns founded especially for them where they might live under the comforting shelter of the wings of the Lord.

The expertise of the Dominicans in town founding may in part be due to their heritage in European evangelization and town building. However, in the New World, working among various distinctly different ethnic and linguistic groups from Mexico City south into Guatemala and beyond, it was the accumulated experience of trial and error in 16th century that led to the standardized plan that they used. But it was not simply the construction of neat new towns that interested them, indeed conversion to Christianity and urbanization were part of one and the same process.

Thus the founding of towns in Chiapas became a professional enterprise for the Dominicans, town planning and construction being but a facet of evangelization. To found an Indian town was synonymous with Christianizing
its inhabitants.³

Town building proved to be a complex enterprise requiring diverse skills and the time to learn them in the new environment with the new materials and human resources. Basic elements to be mastered in the process included site selection, and site preparation. Moreover, the friars working in the field, often one or two at a time—isolated from the rest of their religious community and far from European settlements—had to learn for themselves how to actually lay out the streets and plazas, to locate and dig wells, to build aqueducts for the new towns, to quarry stone, to cut and prepare lumber. In short, they had to learn all the skills necessary to build new towns from the ground up in an area where metal tools and European technology had hitherto been completely unknown.⁴ Of course a crucial aspect of the Dominican's success was their remarkable ability at an early stage to master the local languages.

In spite of the great diversity of ethnic and linguistic groups among whom the Dominicans labored, they evolved a standardized approach which could be employed with predictable results no matter where they found themselves. Markman noted that Father Ramesal, an early chronicler of Chiapas and Guatemala, said there was actually a standard procedure "sounding like a manual for town planners."⁵

A gridiron pattern was used, with a church and plaza at the center. (fig. 36) The walled atrio in front of the church provided an intermediate zone between the
sacred precinct of ritual performance and secular world of daily life. In smaller communities the atrio also served as town plaza, in these cases a high stoop in front of the church marked the transition. Buildings for civil authorities and the jail were located opposite the church, and on one of the sides a casa de comunidad offered hospitality for travellers. (It was not uncommon in Dominican communities to have friars passing through on the way from one end of the chain of missions to the other.) The size or dimensions of the plaza served to determine the size of the blocks in the grid lay out. Markman pointed out that in some pueblos de indios the grid pattern remained embryonic.⁶

But perhaps more challenging than the technical requirements of town founding were the emotional or psychological problems to be overcome in relocating a population from their old homes to the new town. Moreover, a constant concern was how to keep them interested in the new way of life. Markman shows how the new town center functioned as a cultural focal point, and that some continuation of previous lifestyles was tolerated:

So long as the converts attended divine services and assembled to receive instruction in Christian doctrine, the Dominicans did not force the issue of living in the actual shadow of the church, but allowed them to continue in their nearby cornfields, the town itself thus developing into a ceremonial center for the Christian religion and not too distant in conception from what the natives had been accustomed to when they were pagans.⁷

In many ways the work of the Dominican friars corresponded closely with the 142 ordinances detailing town founding enacted in the Laws of the Indies in 1573, but as Markman showed, the work was largely done by the time the laws were finally
published, and that they were an official recognition of what had already been an ongoing process for decades.\(^8\) In the towns initiated by the Dominican friars the plaza and church were intended to focus community life around the new Catholic cult. The spaces created contributed to a sense of sequential ritual enactment: "The outer open space served as a prelude, as a vestibule, a temple forecourt to the interior space of the church with its altar at the far end and the goal and terminus of the faithful." \(^9\)

Attention to the physical and symbolic separation of the secular and the sacred was a characteristic feature of Dominican town planning. But Markman argued that the "plaza-church layout" was not a conscious implementation of Renaissance civil theory. The Indians were familiar with outdoor religious ceremony even before the coming of the friars. Rather than a Renaissance town intended for civilized earthly life, he argued that the Dominicans preserved the medieval notion of "man's transitory stay on earth as being primarily but a prelude to heaven." The Dominicans were on a spiritual mission first and above all. So for them the realization of plaza-church settlement, with its clear transition from secular to sacred through the atrio, was the physical expression of the spiritual plan underlying it. Thus, as Markman said:

...the primary aim in creating the pueblo de indios was to build an urbs on earth, which for them was a plaza-church with the congregants living immediately adjacent to it, an urbs which served as the ante-chamber where they prepared to enter the eternal civitas of heaven.\(^10\)

Concerning the use of the gridiron pattern, he said that there is no evidence, neither
in the documents nor in the built towns, that the Dominicans were consciously trying to revive an ancient form. Rather, he maintained, they were practical problem solvers using an effective technique which was well known in the 16th century. Markman noted that the Ordinances for the Discovery and Founding of New Towns:

...had been codified ex post facto in 1573 at a time when most of the towns, both Indian and Spanish, of Chiapas and the Reino de Guatemala had already been established. These instructions apparently went directly back to Vitruvius by-passing the Renaissance theories of such writers as Alberti (1404-1472), Filarete (1400-1469), Giorgio Martini (1439-1502) and others. It would seem, therefore, that while the intellectual Italians were theorizing the Spaniards, both conquistador and friar, were building.\textsuperscript{11}

He added that the gridiron plan suited the Dominican needs in dealing with a vast dispersed population, and they had little time for theorizing.

If the Dominican plaza of the pueblo de indios is similar in appearance, even superficially, to the Renaissance theorists' ideas of the ideal central space in the urban complex, it is more the result of the convergence of two styles rather than the diffusion of a single one; for even in Italy itself, the Renaissance and later the baroque arcaded plazas, though traceable back to Greek and Roman origins, took hundreds of years to reach their final form. The primitive plazas laid out by the Dominicans never began as the ancient or Renaissance arcaded type. It is true that arcades or colonnades eventually graced the plazas of such towns as Chiapa de Cars or Comitán, but these were seventeenth- and eighteenth-century agglomerations and, as a result, had lost their original pueblo-de-indio character.\textsuperscript{12}

He continued, saying that "prime objective of the missionaries-turned-urbanists was not one of putting artistic or architectural theories into practice, rather was it one of converting the Indians and insuring that they remained steadfast in that conversion."

The construction of Spanish style gridiron towns among the indigenous population was a means to an end, and the seriousness with which the Dominicans viewed this
end was the driving force behind the means. Later on this conversion to Christianity and implantation of the embryonic town center might hopefully lead to a civitas, "that is a true city where the inhabitants would eventually be civilized and take part in the direction of community affairs."13

**MARKMAN'S CONCLUSION:**

Sidney Markman's years of study and field research have brought him to the conclusion that in Chiapas

...the original inhabitants of pueblos de indios, often brought there against their will, certainly had no part in planning the town intended for their benefit, both temporal and divine. The design for the new life which the Dominicans devised for the still uncivilized neophytes was given both abstract and concrete symbolic form in the guise of an architectural artifact, the church and plaza.

Pioneering work like Markman's in Chiapas is especially valuable in building up our knowledge of regional variations in the colonial experience. To better appreciate the contribution my work in Teposcolula makes, it is important to notice in Markman's presentation of the Chiapas case the description of Indians who might "eventually be civilized" and eventually "take part in the direction of community affairs;" original inhabitants who "certainly had no part in planning the town intended for their benefit." While the Dominicans in early colonial Chiapas no doubt worked in ways not unlike their colleagues in the Mixteca Alta, my work in Teposcolula demonstrates important regional differences concerning who participated in and directed the original planning process in Teposcolula. These differences were related to the respective pre-Hispanic social and material cultures of the areas and resulted in

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significantly different urban environments in the colonial era.\textsuperscript{14}

**Teposcolula: The New Ceremonial Center**

The gridiron town of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula was planned circa 1540, concurrently with the great Dominican chapel-church-convento complex at its center, in the tradition of similar planned towns examined by Dr. Markman as discussed above. The more or less triangular site selected for the new town lays about 1.5 km. west north west of El Pueblo Viejo at the opposite end of the valley at the intersection of two ridge systems which flank the site. At the northern edge of the broad flat valley, the new site actually has little flat land, and most of that is taken up by the Dominican complex. Indeed this actually appears to have been cut out of the sloping site. Except for the main plaza, which is atypically located east of the apse of the church, most of the town is built on sloping ground.\textsuperscript{15} The site does not appear to have been well suited to a gridiron plan, and as it expanded it began to follow the natural contours of the hill sides, though even in these extensions some attempt was made to conform to the grid, as the map will show.

Further archival research may eventually permit a more precise reconstruction of the sequence of building in the new town. Records exist which may permit dating individual private residential buildings from the earliest period.\textsuperscript{16} However, thanks to the efforts of George Kubler, Robert Mullen and others, more can be said about the largest building in the town.\textsuperscript{17} The Dominican Convento complex, composed of the church—whose facade faces west with the nave disposed along an east-west axis—flanked by the open chapel to the north and the residential
precinct, or convento, to the south. The facades of the three components form a continuous wall on a precisely oriented north-south axis.18 (figs. 37, 38, & 39)

It is safe to say that work on the existing church and convento were begun in the late 1530's or early in 1540 with work continuing until 1579, when the workers were assigned other tasks.19 The east-west axis of the nave and the north-south axis of the main facade correspond with the axes of the gridiron pattern of the town itself. No doubt this is not accidental, and probably the traditional orientation of the church facing west was a determining factor. But it should also be pointed out that the orientation of many of the principal surviving walls in the pre-Columbian Pueblo Viejo of Teposcolula is also north-south and east-west.

The famous Renaissance style open air chapel was probably constructed between 1548 and 1555.20(fig 40) If the facade of the existing church is indeed from the original building program and the church was roofed by 1578, as Robert Mullen argues, then the work on the facade and north door was probably executed between 1538 and 1578.21 Mullen and others point out that the building, originally a single nave church considerably shorter than the present nave, was later rebuilt in the present cruciform plan, and the present saucer domes and great dome over the transept are clearly of a later date.(fig 41) However, the lower portions of the nave west of the crossing do not appear to have been rebuilt, although it does appear that a large door once connecting the south end of the open chapel with the interior of the nave has been walled up.

Passion Iconography at Teposcolula: the Tequitqui Capital/Pedestals

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Elizabeth Wilder used the pedestals under the saints in their niches on the lower west facade of the church to illustrate her chapter on "Tequitqui Art." Manuel Toussaint pointed out that these appear to have originally been capitals, perhaps from an earlier building on the same site. Mullen's contention that the original open chapel of the late 1530's or early 40's was demolished supports Toussaint's argument that these pedestal-capitals on the facade came from an earlier structure, if not from this site, I would add, then perhaps removed from the Pueblo Viejo. They may have been incorporated into the facade we now see as that work progressed in the 1540's. If, as Mullen argues, the existing open chapel was begun after 1548, perhaps by workers by then more skilled in executing the latest Renaissance forms, then these earlier capitals may be work by artisans who remembered or perhaps participated in the arts of the pre-contact era. Certainly there is a clear similarity between the angels on these pedestals and the angels on the capitals of the open air chapel at Coixtlahuaca. According to Mullen, the Coixtlahuaca chapel was constructed under the supervision of Fray Marín between February 1546 and September 1547, or subsequent to the earlier chapel in Teposcolula.

Especially noteworthy is the headdress consisting of a band around the head bearing a cross on the front, identical on both buildings. The clothing is also similar in both conception and execution. In the case of the capitals from Teposcolula, which according to Mullen's chronology would have been earlier work, the angels are carrying symbolic elements of the Passion iconography, a lance, a ladder, a
cross with nails and blood drops, while at Coixtlahuaca the angels are carrying crowns toward what may be a glyph symbol composed of floral elements.

If the pedestals on the facade at Teposcolula were originally capitals used in an earlier structure, as close visual inspection convincingly suggests, then this supports Mullen's contention that Fray Marín was the architect of both buildings, and demonstrates the use of Passion iconography at an early date, well before 1548, in the evangelization of Teposcolula. Close visual inspection conducted during field work in April 1995 again confirmed the likelihood of these being originally capitals because the carving on them continues past the plane of the facade into which they are set, as may be seen in places where the facade has eroded or where mortar has come away. This leads me to speculate that if we removed these capitals from the wall we would find on their opposite sides other angels holding other Instruments of the Passion. These capitals might be seen, then, in light of their probable pedagogical use, as late examples of the tradition of medieval historiated capitals found all along the pilgrim routes in Europe. The mendicant friars professed in the Old World were certainly no strangers to the pilgrimage routes or historiated capitals. If these capital/pedestals are indeed survivals of the first open chapel built at the beginning of the program of relocation in or before 1540, then the fragmentary survival of Passion iconography they present suggests an original presence in the first years of evangelization of a fuller implementation of this iconographic system used as a teaching tool, such as certainly occurred later over the north door at Coixtlahuaca. Furthermore, the apparent refinement of composition and execution
at Coixtlahuaca further supports Mullen's chronology, that is that Coixtlahuaca's open air chapel followed immediately the original open air chapel at Teposcoiula. As noted above, the theme of Passion symbolism was carried through at Coixtlahuaca over the North portal to its most complete sculptural representation in Mexico. Thus, based on an analysis of available evidence, it is reasonable to assume that the use of the Passion iconography was an important visual component of the overall evangelical strategy from the beginning of the contact period in Teposcoiula.

**Medieval Passion Iconography and the Dominicans**

As James H. Marrow pointed out, the Middle Ages in Christian Europe were characterized by a notable intensification of devotion to the suffering Christ. In a passage particularly appropriate to this study of Dominican and indigenous efforts in Teposcoiula to build a Christian life around Christian infrastructure, Marrow succinctly encapsulated the principal focus of medieval piety:

The desire of pious men and women to approach the Divine through intimate knowledge and empathic experience of Christ's humanity and the human ordeal of his Passion led to profound developments in religious literature and art: content and style underwent evolutionary changes mirroring the emotional religiosity of the period, and entirely new genres were created, for example, passion plays and the visual representations known as Andachtsbilder, or devotional images.

As Dominican activities in Teposcoiula and elsewhere in New Spain make abundantly clear, this medieval European Christian religiosity was deliberately and systematically transmitted by means of architecture, an architecture specifically intended and built to promote an all important feature of medieval religious life.
identified by Marrow:

One of the most important developments for the evolution that concerns us ...dates from [the eleventh and twelfth centuries]: the recognition of the potential of serial meditation upon Christ's life and passion as an effective means of exciting feelings of spiritual love and compassion. 30

In the fourteenth century the Dominicans reluctantly took responsibility for the Rhineland convents where they encountered an intense mystical spirituality among the resident unschooled nuns that would have a lasting impact on their order. Vernacular prayerbooks, devotional tracts, and even Bibles began to circulate freely. Intense meditation on Christ's Passion produced ecstatic visions, rapturous tears, and swooning collapses abundantly recorded in the chronicles of the Dominican Rhineland convents of the period, prefiguring the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century case of the Dominican Beata Sor María in Spain discussed in the previous chapter. 31 Indeed, as Marrow pointed out:

The labors of monks and nuns to lose themselves in Christ led them to devise new methods of meditating on Christ's sufferings. Group meditations alternating spoken and reflective prayers are known, and various combinations of the Our Father and other prayers with contemplation of the passion were practiced. 32

As we will presently see, these practices involving serial group meditation on Christ's Passion alternating between spoken and reflective prayers among Dominican communities in late medieval Germany offer a key insight for understanding sixteenth-century Dominican activities in the Mixteca Alta.

The Murals at Teitipac: Santo Entierro Procession and Armas Christi

Elsewhere in Oaxaca there is surviving visual evidence, also manifest
through Dominican architecture, which not only reinforces the case for early use of Passion Iconography, but also offers a glimpse at how it might have been intended at Teposcolula as part of a larger program. The mural painting in the portería of the Dominican convento at San Juan Bautista Teitipac in the Valley of Oaxaca clearly shows a processional sequence in which Dominican friars are engaged with other, hooded, penitents performing a re-enactment of the Santo Entierro. The penitents carry Instruments of the Passion. Susan Webster, a specialist in penitential processions in sixteenth-century Spain and Mexico, has described the Teitipac murals as follows:

The procession is organized in two registers that are joined on the far right. In the upper left, the head of the procession is about to enter a portal—it is led by two young boys and several black-garbed penitents carrying banners and standards. They are followed by rows of penitents, arranged in groups of three, that carry the Arma Christi, or instruments of the Passion, and are guided by a friar. None of the penitents in this mural are flagellants—they do not engage in any type of self-mortification.

The second half of the procession continues on the lower register, where it has just exited a portal. Groups of secular figures bring up the rear of the procession, and before them appear people dressed as the Virgin, Mary Magdalen, and, seemingly, St. John the Evangelist (who, with his gola, looks strangely like a member of the Spanish nobility—but he is clothed in a long "historical" tunic). These figures are preceded by eight rather opulently attired friars carrying a bier on which is placed a sculpture of the dead Christ wrapped in winding cloths. Another group of friars lead the platform, one of whom swings a censer, sanctifying the space through which the image of Christ will pass.

On the back wall of the portería is the portal that leads to the cloister, the form and appearance of which is quite similar to the portals depicted in the murals. Directly above this portal is a scene of the descent from the cross, which is performed by Dominican friars. This scene is actually the origin of the procession, for, after Christ was lowered from the cross, the procession with the sacred body, known as the procession of the Santo Entierro, traditionally took place.33
Webster's interpretation of this mural sequence enhances our overall understanding of the significance of Passion iconography in Dominican houses in sixteenth-century Mexico. The Teitipac case depicts the Holy Week activities of a penitential confraternity. Mullen shows that Teitipac, in a Zapotec region of the Valley of Oaxaca, was accepted in the Dominican Actas of 1555, and Kubler notes that "the discovery of nearby mines ruined the settlement" sometime after 1580 "when the buildings were nearly finished."³⁴ The presence of four posa chapels in the atrio at Teitipac indicates that devotional processions were conducted in the atrio. Webster convincingly shows how at the Franciscan house at Huejotzingo, where similar wall paintings depict penitential processions in which the armas Christi are also present, posa chapels were employed by Santo Entierro processions. It is safe to assume that the same occurred at Teitipac.

**Evidence Suggesting Early Santo Entierro Processions at Teposcolula**

Returning now to San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula, posa chapels no longer stand in the atrio, but their foundations still indicate their former locations just west of the north entrance to the atrio, in the western corners, and near the portería in the southeastern part of the atrio.³⁵ If the pedastal/capitals now set into the facade of the church were originally used in the first open chapel, before its demolition in 1548, their Passion iconography may have visually reinforced early organized Christian processional activities the friars sought to foster. Estrada de Gerlero stated that the first cofradía established among the Dominicans was founded in 1582.³⁶ But even if the official establishment of self governing Indian religious confraternities in
the Spanish tradition did not take place until the 1580s, the evidence in Teposcolula suggests that the friars were, from the 1540s, establishing the basic patterns of outdoor communal devotional practices in anticipation of the day when the cofradías could be officially established in communities sufficiently familiar with Christian lifeways and doctrine. Moreover, the early date of the original open chapel points to another element of the overall strategy: open air ritual performance involving the newly converted as communicants in the sacred drama of the Eucharistic miracle.

Sacred Drama and Iconographic Significance: The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, Approaching the Divine through Performance

In the feather-mosaic rendering of the Mass of St. Gregory made as a gift for Pope Paul III by Nahua craftsmen working under the supervision of the Franciscan lay brother Pedro de Gante, discussed in the previous chapter, we have already seen the importance placed on this particular configuration of Passion iconography. Fray Pedro de Gante is believed by many to have been a close relative of the Emperor Charles V, and he was certainly a central and formative religious teacher of the Mexican Evangelization. That St. Gregory was regarded, for the purposes of the Mexican Evangelization, as a crucially important figure in Church history is further demonstrated by the fact that all intact surviving Mexican sixteenth-century retablos prominently feature a sculptural representation of him as one of the founding fathers of the Church. Furthermore, he is also prominently represented in the surviving fragments of a sixteenth-century retablo in Teposcolula, possibly originally made for the open chapel, or Capilla de los Indios. It is worthwhile,
therefore, in this discussion of iconography used by the Dominicans in Teposcolula and elsewhere to briefly consider how St. Gregory's importance may have been understood and presented by the friars.

**St. Gregory and the Mass as Sacred Drama**

O. B. Hardison has clearly demonstrated the direct relationship between the iconography of the Mass of St. Gregory and the performance of sacred drama.\(^{37}\) His work shows that the intention of the graphic presentation was to represent two dimensionally the kinetic experience and expression of the divine in the performance of the Roman Mass through which occurred the Eucharistic miracle fulfilling Christ's promise and the obligation of the faithful. He illustrates his discussion with Albrecht Dürer's 1511 woodcut of the Mass of St. Gregory which he describes as follows (fig. 47):

In Dürer's illustration the naïve legend becomes the basis for a vivid pictorial statement of the central meaning of the Roman Mass. The veil which normally falls between the truth of faith and the tangible realities of an imperfect life has been pierced. Christ, powerfully alive, with the cerements still clinging to him, rises from a retable which has suddenly become the *sepulchrum Domini*. The altar cross has changed from gold to the wood of the True Cross. The walls of the basilica have vanished, exposing the cloud-filled space beyond. Two Angels—related perhaps to the "angels and archangels" of the prayer *Vere dignum*—appear as they did to the Marys on the morning of the Resurrection. Indifferent attendants and onlookers, including a venerable bishop, fade into an obscurity from which only Gregory's tiara and the papal cross shine forth. The two deacons assisting Gregory see nothing—their eyes are fixed on the physical symbol, the Host. We have a sense of bearing witness with St. Gregory to a timeless event, and we realize suddenly, and with a sense of shock, that as onlookers we have been placed in the position of the skeptic for whom the miracle is intended.\(^{38}\)
Gregory was associated more than the other three Doctors of the primitive church with establishing the liturgy, and initiating a reform movement throughout Western Christianity, something close to the hearts of the early Mexican Dominicans, to be sure. The notion of sacrifice, central to Mixtec pre-Hispanic religious practice, is a central theme on which Gregory elaborated in his Dialogues:

"Let us meditate what manner of sacrifice this is, ordained for us, which for our absolution doth always represent the passion of the only Son of God: for what right believing Christian can doubt that in the very hour of the sacrifice, at the words of the Priest, the heavens be opened, and the choirs of Angels are present in the mystery of Jesus Christ; that high things are accomplished with low, and earthly joined to heavenly, and that one thing is made of visible and invisible."

St. Gregory was speaking of the creation of sacred time in which contact with the divine becomes possible through ritual performance. The overarching task of the friars in the New World mission was the replacement of one experience of sacred time with another. The crucial difficulty was to make the new somehow recognizably familiar, yet more attractive with a distinctively Christian message. This could only occur successfully through a process of negotiation and consent, through willing participation.

Betanzos knew this only too well, and makes it plain in his letter that until the evangelization in Teposcolula, this had never happened in the New World, and as a result all the "conversions" up until that time were suspect, in his judgment. Evidently, perhaps due to the pacific nature of the evangelization in Teposcolula, coupled with the astute decision of the local elite to cooperate, the movement
toward a new Christian lifestyle had a chance to begin without the confusion of the terrible destruction that so characterized the beginnings of Christian life in the Valley of Mexico and elsewhere.

I believe the key to this pacific success in Teposcolula may have been in the strategic decisions the friars made in selecting the most effective vehicles for cultural transmission, in this case beginning with the use of historic narrative dramatically performed to communicate the catechism lessons, gradually involving the new Christians in cultural activities they knew and enjoyed, such as singing and dancing, but now imbued with a Christian meaning. Ultimately, I believe, this process of cultural synthesis resulted in full scale dramatic performances centered on Christian historical and liturgical themes richly presented amid a magnificent architectural context designed and built to maximize the many layered significance of these activities.

Nor was such a reliance on dramatic performance new, for as Hardison points out in discussing an eighth-century Bishop of Metz, the history of allegorical sacred drama was already old in 1540:

That there is a close relationship between allegorical interpretation of the liturgy and the history of drama becomes apparent the moment we turn to the Amalian interpretations. Without exception they present the Mass as an elaborate drama with definite roles assigned to the participants and a plot whose ultimate significance is nothing less than a "renewal of the whole plan of redemption" through the re-creation of the "life, death, and resurrection" of Christ. Perhaps the most remarkable expression of this idea is found in the Gemma animae, written about 1100 by Honorius of Autun:

It is known that those who recited tragedies in theatres presented actions of opponents by gestures before the people. In the same way
our tragic author [i.e., the celebrant] represents by his gestures in the theatre of the Church before the Christian people the struggle of Christ and teaches them the victory of His redemption.

Whatever else may be said about Honorius, one fact stands out: he understood the Mass as a living dramatic form.  

This notion of the Mass as a dramatic form was not unfamiliar to Dominican priests in the New World, working as they did within the tradition of Pedro de Córdoba’s teaching and preaching technique. And in the celebration of the Mass, of course, the priest took on a representative role to bring about the Eucharistic miracle:

How far did the celebrant carry his role as repræsentatio Christi? From the anthropological point of view such questions are unnecessary, The Mass is a ritual drama no matter how it is performed. To the students of the history of drama, however, they are important. They are a way of asking how far representational drama based on history, rather than psychologically determined patterns of ritual, emerged during the Mass itself.  

The long tradition of mendicant preaching frequently relied on what some considered dramatic or histrionic excess to make their points. Preaching missions in Spain and France in the early sixteenth century regularly attracted crowds so large no church nor public square could hold them all, and they removed the venue outside the city walls where special platforms were erected for better visibility and edification. The surging crowds came to have their faith revived by preachers well known as spiritual entertainers. Hardison elaborates on allegory and drama and the Mass:

Later evidence confirms the view that the clergy frequently translated Mass allegory into histrionic action. The elevation of the Host and its extravagant adoration during the high Middle Ages is a striking instance of the compulsion
felt by all participants, including the clergy, to express invisible mysteries in visible dramatic form. The celebrant's imitation of Christ during the *Qui pridie* was already a venerable tradition when Amalarius wrote the *Liberr officialis* and remains in the rubrics of today's Mass. The extension of the celebrant's arms during the *Unde et memores*, the elaborate Fractions of the Mozarabic and Gallican churches, the proliferating genuflections, kisses, and embraces, the veneration of the Gospel, the widening use of crucifixes, and the popularity of images of saints directly behind the altar are all expressions of the mimetic tendency. And, returning to Dürer's woodcut of the Mass of St. Gregory, the art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries adds visual testimony to the evidence that the dramatic tradition survived intact until the Reformation.\textsuperscript{43}

Certainly preaching style and liturgical practice in early sixteenth-century Mexico had to rely on any advantage to be gained through dramatic technique, especially where language barriers presented problems. But the friars, many of them—in the line of Sor María—personally practitioners of meditation and discipline aimed at promoting mystic experience, might have appreciated indigenous practices of similar motivation, though with a view to redirecting them toward Christian revelation. The most notable, most readily observable pre-Hispanic religious practice was certainly the public ritual dancing. The Dominicans in the line of Savonarola and Sor María knew something about ritual dancing. They may have seen and understood the possibilities for redirecting this "pagan" practice to Christian devotion.

**Burkhart's Insights on Performance**

Louise Burkhart has studied the Nahua response to evangelization and emphasized the importance of dance, pointing out the rich ceremonial noted by Sahagún. She said this was a "pervasive feature of Nahua religious life:"\textsuperscript{44}

For the Nahuas, contact with the sacred was established through ritual, through the collective carrying out of prescribed actions at prescribed
moments in a calendrical sequence or life cycle Ritual acts produced, in the here and now, fleeting but authentic manifestations of the sacred forces upon which all life depended. Through rituals, men and women laid themselves open to the power of the gods; the frame of the ritual worked to channel and limit this dangerous contact by directing the sacred force into persons, images or other objects invested with a god's regalia, which served as conduits for the sacred manifestations.\footnote{45}

Burkhart noted that for the Nahua the contact with the divine was sustained throughout the ritual performance, where in the Christian experience this contact was understood to take place only in the moment of the Eucharistic miracle.\footnote{46}

Concerning the perceived success of the evangelization by means of mass baptisms, a practice about which Betanzos had serious doubts, she noted:

The Nahua's formal conversion to Christianity, characterized by mass baptisms and other enthusiastic displays, quickly became legendary as a "spiritual conquest." The chronicles of the friars, on which this legend depends, predictably glorify the achievements of the evangelizers while representing the native people as passive and childlike recipients of the Word. However, if we invert the rhetorical flow of their propaganda so as to grant agency to the native people, we can see that the Nahua, by selectively responding to the devotional options presented them by the friars, exerted considerable control over the creation of their Church....The friars soon found that preaching fire and brimstone got them nowhere. But if they set the catechism to music and invited the natives to sing and dance, or put on a Christmas pageant with native actors in costume, suddenly the churchyard could not accommodate the crowd.\footnote{47}

Burkhart's emphasis on the rapid emergence of the glorified rhetorical legend of "spiritual conquest" is tempered somewhat by Betanzos's 1540 letter declaring "it is necessary to know that all methods of conversion of these people from the beginning up till now have always been more violent than voluntary, because it has been brought about by fear and punishment rather than by love and good will, which
is counter to the doctrine and preaching of our Redeemer." Nevertheless, Burkhart's assertion that the Indians "exerted considerable control over the creation of their Church" corresponds precisely with my findings in Teposcolula. What she referred to as "selective response to the devotional options presented by the friars" correctly identifies part of the larger process I have referred to here as "negotiation and consent." And I would add that it was not only the Indians who were making "selective responses to options" but that the friars were too, and consciously. Both sides were deliberately seeking a positive outcome, and in Teposcolula they succeeded. Burkhart argued that the Indians founded their church on exhuberant pageantry not abstract theology "which tended to mask a slower and more subtle process by which world view and philosophy were renegotiated by the Nahuas without there being any abrupt rupture with the past." 148

**Gregory's Advice and the Transformation of Pagan Traditions**

I would agree with Burkhats's argument here, and add that in many ways the friars were aware of this process and did everything they could to nurture it. As Luis Weckman pointed out: ". . . the Church had not forgotten Gregory the Great's wise admonition to the sixth-century missionaries sent to evangelize the still-pagan Anglo-Saxons: 'Never forget that you are not to disturb any traditional belief that can be harmonized with Christianity.' 149

Pagan Europe was not converted to Christianity overnight, after all, but over a millenia. With a long view Saint Augustine, too, often advocated pragmatic, inclusive, integrative approaches in evangelical technique. 50 Christmas trees are a
surviving example of such approaches. In terms of the calendar, consider the names of some of the days of the week: Wodin's day, Thor's day, Sun day, Tue's day, Saturn's day. Many, if not most, Romanesque churches are built on previously sacred pagan sites, and often included architectural elements from pagan temples. Many of the feast days of patron saints selected for these new Christian temples fall on or near the previously pagan holidays. The process of cultural reconciliation by which Europe gradually became Christian not only changed European culture, it transformed the Christian cult. Catholic Christianity, or the universal Church spread over the various culturally distinct regions of Europe precisely because it was sufficiently elastic and adaptable that it could make room for former devotees of the cult of Sol Invictus along side of former worshipers of Thor or Odin. Predictably, European sacred art and architecture of the Romanesque and later periods is blessed with a rich regional diversity of aesthetic and iconographic expression reflecting, indeed transmitting and transforming important visual elements of the pagan past. For much of its history, this regional diversity was also reflected liturgically. Among others, a surviving example of which may be seen today in the Mozarabic Rite in Spain. Europe is large and ancient and made up of many discrete ethnicities and local cultural traditions. Christian identity remains recognizable even while integrating these often quite distinct local differences over an entire continent. This reflects a process of cultural transformation through willing negotiation and consent operating over a long duration. Who would expect the process in Mexico to be any different?
But what was different about the Mexican experience was the time frame. Perhaps driven by apocalyptic millenarianism, or the terrifying belief that Satan was indeed incarnate and near, in Mexico the friars sought to achieve over a lifetime what in Europe had taken fifteen hundred years. In retrospect, their success in implanting their faith cannot be denied. Together with millions of Indians they transformed the sacred landscape, physically constructing a new, Mexican Church. Together they created in fifty years a density of religious infrastructure rivaling that built up in Europe over a millenia. The Mexican achievement becomes even more breathtaking with the realization that most of what was built in the sixteenth century survives in use today.

Another difference in the Mexican case was that the pagan past with which Christianity was to be reconciled this time was neither Hellenistic, nor Teutonic, but Mesoamerican. While the process might be the same, the outcome, if unfamiliar at first, would necessarily reflect this important difference. Expectations that Mexican Christianity would replicate the European model in a few short generations were bound to remain unfulfilled. Another measure of success was needed together with the passage of time. Both eluded the friars of the sixteenth century.

Burkhart Reconsidered: Transforming the Sacramental Imagination With Passion Iconography

However, returning to Burkhart's text, concerning the nature of religious experience she wrote:

That the Nahuas did not share their dualistic conceptions of matter and spirit, of form and substance, of body and soul, of exterior appearance and interior
essence, the friars took as evidence not of a different, non-dualist way of seeing, but of a lack, an indifference toward the second element in each of those paired opposites. If the Nahuas were inclined toward ritual display, which was exterior and superficial, it necessarily followed that they were disinclined toward spirituality, which was interior and reflexive. Since the two categories were contradictory, one could not encompass the other within a single devotional methodology.\textsuperscript{56}

It seems to me, however, that one of the main purposes of the use of Passion iconography as a visual basis of serial meditation, as transmitted by the Dominicans in the line of the Rhineland mystics, Savonarola, and Sor María, was precisely that it lent itself to external AND internal experience and expression of the divine. It provided the iconographic script for a choreography of the Passion which could be dramatically performed publicly by the assembled congregation within the sacred enclosure of the atrio as seen in the mural at the Dominican house at San Juan Bautista Teitipac. Abstracted Passion iconography, such as seen publically displayed on the historiated capitals of Teposcolula or over the North Door at Coixtlahuaca, also provided daily visual reinforcement of mnemonic prompts for individual or private devotional use along the lines suggested for meditation and mental prayer in the writings of St. Teresa de Avila after 1556.\textsuperscript{57} For the Mixtecs, the functional similarity of this new iconographic system to the writing technique of the screenfold codices of old, both of which used visual shorthand as mnemonic prompts to aid dramatic performance, may have contributed to the acceptance of and participation in this new religious practice.

The omnipresence of Passion iconography repeatedly depicted in frescoes
and other media in areas of the conventos reserved for the private use of the friars indicates that it was certainly a part of their daily devotional routine, suggesting the regular practice of meditation based on these images and events.\(^{58}\) (fig. 48) As presented to the new Christians, I believe it was intended to become the focus of an internal, meditative reflection on the Passion and its significance, reinforced periodically with the actual dramatic performance of the ritual in the liturgy and in extra-liturgical dramatic performances engaging members of the indigenous community through their participation in cofradías. This internal meditative reflection, reinforced by public performance, would have been an application of the Imitation of Christ advocated by Thomas à Kempis as a means of mystically experiencing and expressing contact with the divine.\(^{59}\)

Moreover, Passion iconography such as used in the Mass of St. Gregory provided a means of visually teaching the humanity and love of Christ as expressed in the image of the Man of Sorrows, of teaching the history of the Passion, and of demonstrating symbolically the mystery of the presence of Christ in the consecrated Host, the Bread of Life, the new sacrament. With the message of Christ's all sufficient suffering and sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, ritually reenacted regularly in the Eucharistic miracle, the friars brought an end to the era of a state religion requiring the regular sacrifice of living human beings. The possibility of triple use as a learning tool for catechetical instruction, as a script for public ritual performance, as well as for a focus of personal devotional meditation was mutually reinforcing. What was new for the Mixtecs in all of this was the notion of the
humanity of God, a God accessible in human terms, a God who, like them, knew suffering, but who, out of His love for them, Himself suffered and died for their individual salvation and actively sought their personal friendship in the glory of His resurrection.

The humanization of religion, the movement from a Mesoamerican pantheon of terrifying gods, who fed on human blood and hearts to a single, all powerful, omnipresent God who chose to manifest Himself in human form and live a human life which was sacrificed out of His friendship for and love of humanity may have offered a welcome change. The role of the Mass of St. Gregory expressing the mystery of the sacred humanity visually and graphically was to reinforce the verbally, dramatically expressed story told by the Doctrina Cristiana of Pedro de Córdoba. The Mass of St Gregory also served as a model for the Sacred Drama of the Mass while Passion iconography generally provided the focus for a variety of ritual performances, as well as mnemonic aids for mental prayer or meditation. Passion iconography, indeed, offered a powerful multi-media learning tool for the sixteenth century.

Theatres for Evangelical and Liturgical Drama: The Open Chapels, Old and New

The Dominicans working in Oaxaca were certainly aware of the benefits of using music and pageantry as part of religious instruction and celebration. The physical and documentary evidence indicating the presence of an early open chapel in Teposcolula also suggests the early practice, by 1540, of Christian ritual
performance of a dramatic nature involving congregational dancing and singing in a specially designed facility. In 1540 Betanzos stated that people were coming to Teposcolula from all over the Mixteca to see and be converted:

They were the first that they made (converted) those of a head town (cabecera) which is the most notable and most populous in the Misteca, which is called Teposcolula, and to the example of that town come all the people of the Misteca, which are many and numerous, the which all one heart have given all their idols.

The successful, and apparently enthusiastic use of the original open chapel as a locus for indigenous participation in outdoor pagentry may have been among the factors that prompted Fray Marín and the Mixtec cultural leadership to conceive of a more magnificent architectural context to accomodate what was, no doubt, rapidly becoming a popular and attractive element of community life in the new town. Indeed, the dismantling of the old open chapel and the construction after 1548 of what became the most spectacular open chapel ever constructed in the Indies might be explained, at least in part, by the growing need in Teposcolula for a staging platform for the diverse dramatic performances taking place.61

It is well known that religious or evangelical theater quickly became an all important feature or the new religious life of sixteenth-century Mexico.62 Of course there was a long history of religious theater in Europe, including mystery plays and autos sacramentales such as those treating Eucharistic, Passion or Nativity themes. These last often focused on the shepherds, or pastores, and in Mexico came to be referred to as pastorelas.63 But as Weckman points out:
...the chief characteristic of the religious theatre in New Spain, that of being a means of spreading the new creed, is virtually alien to the medieval [European] theater. In its turn, this intention opened the doors of the theater to native influence because of the fact that the performance in Náhuatl and other indigenous languages were preferred for purposes of proselytism.\textsuperscript{64}

He adds that "The theater was not confined within the churches for very long; it was soon installed in the 'open chapels' and in the spacious courtyards of the monasteries using the facades of the conventual churches as backdrops." The evangelical use of theater by the Franciscans is justly famous, but they were by no means alone in its use.

Echoing Burkhart's observations on the Nahua case noted above, Pita Moreda pointed out that the Dominicans, too, found that involving Indians with important roles as actors, musicians and cantors in these pageants contributed significantly to their understanding, enjoyment of and integration into the new religious life.\textsuperscript{65} Among the first recorded performances of evangelical theatre was \textit{El Juicio Final} given in Tlatelolco in 1533.\textsuperscript{66} In Tlaxcala in 1538 a more complex sequence of four dramatizations was enacted on St. John's (Baptist) Day. These elaborately staged dramatizations were witnessed by the Dominican Fr. Bartolomé de las Casas who recorded that all of the actors were Indians, and all of the rich costumes and staging were made entirely by Indians on their own initiative.\textsuperscript{67} But, as Fr. Antonio de Remesal recorded, Fr. Bartolomé had already been writing dramatic performances in native languages as early as 1537 for use in Guatemala.\textsuperscript{68} It is extremely likely that Las Casas passed through Teposcolula during his travels back and forth to central Mexico, and he may well have planted the seeds of
evangelical theatre there at an early date. Certainly there is ample evidence of the enthusiastic participation in such dramatic performances elsewhere in Oaxaca.

Burgoa recorded that in Etla, in the Valley of Oaxaca, prior to 1575 the Dominican Fr. Alonso de la Anunciación wrote dramatic representations to explain "el sacrosancto misterio del cuerpo de Cristo Nuestro bien, sacramentado, con las figuras de la Sagrada Escritura."69 The emphasis here was on illuminating the mystery of the Eucharistic miracle, the presence of Christ in the sanctified Host. Fr. Melchor de San Raimundo, also working in Etla, wrote dramatic religious performances on topics including the life of Santa Catalina. These performances were accompanied by guitar music and narration in verses composed in native language.70 If documents describing religious pageants in Teposcolula have survived, they have not yet come to light. However, in nearby and dynasticly related Tejupan the Códice Sierra records the sums spent on items used in religious pageantry, including 120 pesos in 1551 for eight brass trumpets as well as other sums for rich cloth used for processional canopies and vestments, perhaps similar to those seen in the murals at Teitipac.71 (figs. 49 & 50) The Dominican chronicler Burgoa recorded that one Fray Martín Jimenez

worked for many years among the indigenous peoples referred to as the Chochos. He learned their language (Chocho Popoloca) and used drama as a technique to teach them. Martín Jimenez then travelled to the area of the Mixteca in Southwestern Mexico. He stayed long enough to learn the Mixtec language. His teaching method continued to include the use of drama with songs and music, as well as the presentation of autos about the Eucharist and mysteries of the Gospel.72

Burgoa also notes that one Fray Vincente de Villanueva, a native of Antequera who
entered the order at the Oaxacan mother house, Santo Domingo in that city, composed metered poetry in the Zapotec language describing the mysteries of "nuestra Santa Fe" and that they were performed, or preached in theaters.73

Another Dominican chronicler, Dávila Padilla, recorded a Passion Play performed at the church of Santo Domingo in Mexico City in 1582 complete with Christ on the Cross, the two robbers, and an image of Mary as the Sorrowing Mother. Following a midday sermon describing the Passion and burial priests came from the sacristy and took down the Instruments of the Passion, which were evidently part of the tableau. These were then processed through the streets together with the image of Christ to the Church of the Conception for interment until the following week when it was returned to Santo Domingo.74 It is worth mentioning that a similar tradition exists in Teposcolula today wherein the image of Christ crucified is processed out of the main conventual church to the nearby Capilla de San Juan, outside the atrio where it remains for a week before being returned to the main church. The procession and related arrangements are the responsibility of a cofraía devoted to El Señor de la Vidriera. (figs. 51 & 52)

From the documentary evidence at Etla and Tejupan and elsewhere, and the murals at Teitipac it is clear that elaborate pageants and processions were being staged in Dominican towns and conventos from the mid-sixteenth century for the edification and enjoyment of their communities reflecting active, willing, enthusiastic collaboration between the friars and indigenous performers. In the absence of descriptive archival documentation, the sustained willingness of the indigenous
leadership and people to devote the enormous resources, material and human, over the years required for the construction of the spectacular open chapel still standing today at Teposcolula is powerful evidence in itself of just how popular and successful the new religious pageantry was there. That the open chapel at Teposcolula was conceived as a grand theatre for staging a variety of dramatic enactments, including the Mass, is strongly suggested by its very form. (figs. 53-55)

Indeed, as Weckman pointed out:

Another indication of the persistence of medieval culture was the utilization, until well into the sixteenth century, of multiple stage settings; the stage, for example, was divided into three or more parts representing the same number of places, on the same horizontal plane. 75

Of course the open chapel of Teposcolula is divided into three distinct areas on the same horizontal plane. Thus configured it was clearly an advance on the already theatre-like, but less complex, proscenium arch arrangement of Coixtlahuaca. (fig. 56)

The large rooms on the second story of the chapel at Teposcolula flanking the dome with windows looking out into the area between the arcades further suggests conscious effort to maximize dramatic possibilities while providing for practical considerations of secure storage of wardrobe, props and costly musical instruments purchased with money from the caja de comunidad in a facility under Indian administration. It was, after all, the Capilla de Indios, entirely outside the Dominican Convento, even if it was attached to the convento church. Though no documents have yet come to light to confirm it, there is a strong possibility that these
upper rooms were used by local cofradías administered by Indians, probably from the elite class. Moreover, in a rainy climate, the open chapel of Teposcolula generously provided space under roof, at least for the elite, in which to observe and participate in the celebration of the Mass, if not other events as well.

As the preceding discussion has shown, more than merely passive spectators, indigenous people actively entered into the new religious life by their enthusiastic participation in organized sacred drama and ritual performance. Indeed, with people coming from all around the Mixteca to see and participate in the new religion the original facility had by 1548 evidently become inadequate. Accordingly a new ceremonial center, conceived on a vast scale, was now required. It is significant that the overwhelming size of the open chapel of Teposcolula, built for the Indians and by the Indians and at their expense under the leadership of the local native rulers, actually dwarfs the convento church next to it. There simply is no other site in Mexico where this occurs. Such a grand and elegant center surmounted by a fabulous rib-vaulted dome (a marvel in itself), attracting crowds from all over the Mixteca, would naturally contribute to the prestige of Teposcolula as a notable place in the redefined sacred landscape. But even more importantly, by its lavish display of the community’s wealth, the great open chapel of Teposcolula would greatly magnify the perceived power and prestige of the indigenous rulers whose authority was ultimately required and responsible for the decision to allocate and organize over an extended period the vast amounts of labor and materials necessary for its construction.
Max Harris's Insights on the Dialogical Theater

It is also worth pointing out that the very nature of theater requires performers to bring the drama to life, performers who interpret the script. Max Harris has convincingly shown how indigenous performers were often able to add another layer of meaning, or an alternative reading to the scripts prepared by or suggested by the friars.⁷⁷ Within the performance, Harris argues, there was the possibility for a cultural dialogue. This is consistent with the pattern of negotiation and consent seen elsewhere in the process of cultural integration or rapprochement in Teposcolula. It is also possible, and I believe quite likely, that it was just this opportunity for dramatic interpretation, or negotiation of ritual meaning through performance that particularly appealed to the native cultural leaders of Teposcolula, and contributed to their willingness to support the construction of a spectacular venue for their own theater of prestige.

Dominican Use of Architecture to Promote Interior and Exterior Spirituality

But let us return again to Burkhart's observation cited above. She claimed that the friars took Indian inclination toward superficial ritual display as evidence of an indifference toward substantive interior spirituality, and that since the two categories were contradictory in the minds of the friars they believed that one could not encompass the other within a single devotional methodology.⁷⁸ But, to the contrary, as I have shown above, it was precisely to address both the needs of exterior display and interior spirituality in a single devotional methodology that Dominicans employed at Teposcolula and Coixtláhuaca a highly visible architectural
representation of Passion iconography in the most public space of the new built environment. Nor is this an isolated case, but rather it is part of a pattern of deliberate methodology which may have already been in use by the Dominicans for decades as suggested by the atrio cross in Puerto Rico mentioned above.

The Rosary and Architecture in Teposcolula

At Teposcolula there is another example of deliberate Dominican use of architectural transmission and reinforcement of devotional practices suitable for both public performance as well as interior meditation, and this in addition to the Passion iconography already discussed. Openly and obviously displayed, again in the most public space of the new town, it is the sculptural representation of Rosary beads over the great arches in the facade of the open chapel.76 (fig. 57)

St. Luis de Montfort was a seventeenth-century Dominican Tertiary, or lay brother, who wrote a brief pious history of the Rosary, The Secret of the Rosary. In it he traces the mystical origins of this devotional meditation to St. Dominic who received it in a vision in 1214 from the Blessed Virgin as a powerful means of converting the Albigensian heretics. St. Dominic himself instituted the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, but with the devastation of the plagues of the fourteenth-century, interest in the confraternity waned. It was revived, however, by another Dominican, the Blessed Allen de la Roche, in 1460. The Rosary is also known as Psalter of Jesus & Mary. It is composed of systematic repetitious recitations of the prayers known as The Lord's Prayer, given by Jesus Himself, and the "Hail Mary" or Angelic Salutation, so called because it was first said by Gabriel to Announce the

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Incarnation of the Eternal Word. As it was practiced in the sixteenth century, the
devotion was preceded with a recitation of the Creed and began with a brief prayer
recognizing the Blessed Virgin and the mysterious unity and trinity of the Eternal
God. This was followed by multiple recitations of the Lord’s Prayer and the Hail Mary
arranged around the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary. These are the Five Joyful,
Five Sorrowful, and Five Glorious mysteries, related to the Incarnation and early life
of Jesus; His suffering during the Passion; and his Resurrection, Ascension and
heavenly existence. Sequential meditations on each of these fifteen mysteries of the
Life, Passion, and Glory of Christ are separated by recitations of the Lord's Prayer
followed by ten Hail Marys. Thus, a total of fifteen Lord's Prayers and one hundred
fifty Hail Marys were recited. The devotional practice of the Rosary was intended to
purify the spiritual life by reinforcing the commitment to turn away from sin,
illuminate the soul by meditations on Christ’s mission, and thereby help unify the
soul of the devotee with the Eternal God.80

That the Rosary was suitable for both public performance as well as interior
meditation is quite clear. Indeed, as St. Louis de Montford said nearly three hundred
years ago:

The Rosary is made up of two things, mental prayer and vocal prayer. In the
Holy Rosary mental prayer is none other than meditating on the chief
mysteries of the life, death, and glory of Jesus Christ and of His Blessed
Mother. Vocal Prayer consists in saying fifteen decades of the Hail Mary,
each decade headed by an Our Father, while at the same time meditating on
and contemplating the fifteen principal virtues which Jesus and Mary
practiced in the fifteen mysteries of the Holy Rosary.81
Pita Moreda pointed out that of the cofradías established by the Dominicans, the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary was the first. In public group devotion still practiced by members of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary today in San Juan Teposcolula and elsewhere in the Mixteca, the Rosary prayers are recited in unison out loud, with periods of silence for individual, reflective meditation. Spores pointed out that the cofradía de Nuestra Señora del Rosario de Teposcolula was in existence at least as early as 1658.

In Teposcolula this kind of distinctively Christian devotional practice was introduced by the friars in a manner that integrated existing indigenous traditions of outdoor public religious celebration. This again shows creative adaptation through negotiation and consent on the part of the friars and the Mixtecs of Teposcolula. Thus, a new kind of mental prayer was introduced in association with the visible iconographic program displayed and transmitted on a very special building deliberately planned and executed to reshape the indigenous sacramental imagination precisely by focusing individual meditation AND public celebration on the core mysteries of the new religion. Like the earlier use of Passion iconography at Coixtlahuaca — also associated, as we have seen, with repetitive recitation of similar prayers — the open chapel at Teposcolula shows a pattern of deliberate Dominican use of architecture as part of an integrated program for instilling the practice of mental prayer and the deliberate use of the built environment to transform the sacramental imagination. However, in this ongoing process of negotiation and consent the Dominicans were not alone in the deliberate use of
architecture as a medium for the transmission of ideology.

**Fire Gods, Water Spirits, and the Dominican Church**

A clearly traceable example of the integration of pre-Christian indigenous ornamental forms found on the west facade of the Dominican Church has been identified by Constantino Reyes-Valerio. He points out butterfly symbols on the arch over the main door, which, citing Walter Krickeberg, he says were important to the Indian mentalité and were linked to fire gods. (fig. 58) Flanking this western door are two towers with niches sheltering stone santos. Facing each other in their niches in the walls of the flanking towers are two santos on axis perpendicular to the axis of the nave. They are standing on platforms above the capital/pedestals mentioned above. These platforms each have carved on them in relief pairs of "S" shaped scrolls representing the blue worm, or Xonecuilli in Nahuatl. This is a shape quite common in pre-Columbian ceramics of Oaxaca. Jorge Enciso notes that this is a symbol of the scepter of Quetzalcoatl. More recently Janet C. Berlo has explained that "the linkage of butterfly with fire and with death revolves around the idea of metamorphosis..." It is worth pointing out here that there is a similar use of this iconography in the Christian tradition as George Ferguson pointed out:

The butterfly is sometimes seen in paintings of the Virgin and Child, and is usually in the Child's hand. It is a symbol of the Resurrection of Christ. In a more general sense, the butterfly may symbolize the resurrection of all men. This meaning is derived from the three stages of its life as represented by the caterpillar, the chrysalis, and the butterfly, which are clearly symbols of life, death, and resurrection.

In light of the preceding discussion of the Rosary, with its emphasis on the life,
death and resurrection of Christ, these butterflies clearly rendered in the pre- 
Columbian style are an important example of how religious imagery, or the integers 
of meaning of the sacramental imagination came to be "renegotiated" in 
Tepecolula. Moreover, the inclusiveness of the butterfly imagery, according to 
Ferguson, moves beyond the Rosary's focus on Christ's life to speak of all men. In 
terms of pre-Columbian meaning, there is an implied linkage of these butterfly 
symbols and the souls of the dead, but I believe it is more fruitful here to view this 
as an example of integration rather than syncretism or resistance.89 Butterfly 
imagery was adapting and changing in pre-Columbian Oaxaca, a process which 
evidently continued into Colonial times in Tepecolula. Silk production introduced 
by Dominican friars, was based on the propagation of the all important silk worm. 
In early colonial Tepecolula the production of silk yielded immense wealth 
permitting the construction of the spectacular open chapel. It seems only fitting, 
therefore, to recognize the importance of the Butterfly, with a possible reference to 
a new kind of worm, or caterpillar, in the iconographic program of the church.90

There is a curiously carved keystone on the north portal of the nave of the 
Dominican Church.(figs. 59 & 60) This appears to be a face with swirling whorls for 
eyes. I have argued elsewhere that this face may be that of Dzahui, the water spirit 
of the Mixtecs.91 If there was a conscious desire to express the symbolic presence 
of Dzahui, the personification of the elemental and essential force of rain or storms, 
then all of the requisite attributes are present: the diagnostic goggle eyes, the curling 
mustache, the fanged mouth mask, though in highly stylized, abstracted form.92 The
high degree of stylization and abstraction may have resulted from desire to express this symbolic content covertly, interwoven with the European forms, or may more simply have resulted from artistic experimentation with the new tools and forms.  

Certainly at nearby Coixtlahuaca the presence of clearly identifiable pre-Christian iconography is open and obvious in the Fire Serpent motif in the frieze in the proscenium arch of the open chapel. (fig. 62) Of course this open and obvious presence of a clearly pre-Hispanic symbol referring to the Fire Serpent appearing in a location of sacred ritual performance also reflects the process of integration of meanings through negotiation and consent at work in the Mixteca. The difference in technique is that at Coixtlahuaca the rendering is more in the flat incised relief style characteristic of pre-Columbian carving, while at Teposcolula the forms are rendered as more fully three dimensional sculpture.

The plainly identifiable butterflies on the West Door are clearly linked to a notion of metamorphosis of the souls of the dead. Similarly, in her work on the Tlalocan mural at Teotihuacán, Esther Pasztory has shown another kind of linkage between the souls of the dead and water deities:

in many Mesoamerican cultures, dead souls are believed to join the ranks of beneficient smaller spirits that accompany the major deities, such as the rain and fertility gods, and to help their descendants on earth.

If the keystone at the North Door is a representation of Dzahui, then the same process of integration evident at the West Door may have been at work here. Furthermore, the notion of beneficient smaller spirits accompanying the major deities may have provided a place for these familiar friendly helpers alongside the new
Christian God in the minds of the carvers and others who saw this image, suggesting a basis for the integration in an ongoing process of negotiation and consent.

Rather than a token of anti-Christian resistance in the old "Idols Behind Altars" mold, I suggest that this Dzahui symbol simply designated a locus of sacred ritual activity aimed at maintaining the balance among nature, man and the supernatural. The crucial problem of climate for an agricultural society had not changed with the coming of Christianity, only the means of addressing it. Seen in this way the Dzahui symbol on the keystone need not be viewed as antithetical to Christianity, rather it may be seen as an attempt at integrating the old fundamental concerns into the new spiritual system. Indeed its location on the Christian temple suggests a perceived need for such integration.

Finally, there are some other pre-Columbian iconographic elements built into the convento church itself. These are two nearly identical disks bearing symbols associated with storms or rain and the cardinal directions. One is on the southwest corner of the church, over the stairs leading to the choir loft and unfinished bell tower.(figs. 63 & 64) This appears to be original installation, though some of the masonry above seems to be later. Four swirls, arranged around an eight petaled flower, point in four directions. This disk is somewhat eroded, however, over the north transept window there is another disk, virtually identical, except that is distinctly crisper and newer looking.(figs. 65 & 66) We know that the transept is part of a later, seventeenth century, construction campaign, and this might help explain
the newer appearance of the disk set into the bricks over the north window. Perhaps it replaced an earlier disk set in the northeastern portion of the church, diagonally opposite the one still over the choir loft staircase, in a location eliminated in the remodeling process that significantly lengthened the original church and produced the transept. Whatever the case, these two disks, but for the difference in wear and tear, are identical, and certainly of pre-Columbian inspiration. We will examine to the history of disks in pre-Columbian and early Colonial buildings in the following chapter.

To summarize, this chapter has examined the relationships between urban form, architecture, iconography, ritual performance and the sacramental imagination in early colonial Teposcolula. We will return to explore this theme further in the final chapter with a consideration of the Casa de la Cacica and its relationship to the open chapel.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. An earlier version of substantial portions of this chapter appeared in a working paper entitled "Domination and Subordination Or Negotiation and Consent? A View from Teposcolula, Oaxaca 1535-1600" presenting research in progress to The Eighth Annual Virginia-Carolinas Latin American Colonial History Seminar at The Lightsey Conference Center College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina, 16-17 April 1993. I gratefully acknowledge the helpful constructive criticism contributed by the other members of the seminar including Tom Cummins and especially Jim Riley.


4. As Humberto Rodríguez has pointed out, Markman makes an important distinction between pueblos de españoles and pueblos de indios. For a recent and excellent discussion of pueblos de españoles in Central America, see Markman, Sydney D. "Urban History of the Pueblos de Españoles in Colonial Central America." Paper delivered at conference on "Cultural Transmission and Transformation in the Ibero-American World, 1200-1800" at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, October 21-22, 1995, in press, on file at the Inter-American Institute for Advanced Studies in Cultural History, P.O. Box 93, Free Union, Va., 22940. In this paper Markman points out:
The location of the Pueblos de Españoles was predicated by the need to create centrifugal centers of civil, ecclesiastical and economic control of the surrounding hinterland where the indigenes, scattered about in tiny urban nuclei before the arrival of the Spaniards, had been reducidos a pueblo. Some of the residents of the Pueblos de Españoles were members of the religious orders, principally the Franciscan and the Dominican. Their primary interest was to convert the Indians to Christianity. However, in order to realize their religious goals, the orders were soon compelled to exercise economic and political control as well in many Indian pueblos. They often filled a civil administrative vacuum, but were not responsible to the civil or political authorities, rather instead to their superiors in the home or main conventos located in the Pueblos de Españoles.

In Oaxaca the principal pueblo de españoles was Antequera, later called simply Oaxaca. It seems clear enough that colonial San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula
was initially intended as a *pueblo de indios* to relocate and concentrate the indigenous population of the Teposcolula polity from their mountain-top redoubt and other scattered locations. Nevertheless, there were probably a very few lay Spaniards resident there from an early time. The town's great prosperity during the boom years of the silk and cochineal enterprises doubtless attracted others, including the famous artists Andrés de Concha and Simon Pereyns. My ongoing research, in particular the transcription of the *Libros de Protocolos* of Juan de Medina, for many years the local Spanish notary, may eventually permit a more exact evaluation of the town's demography. For a general treatment of the activities of Spaniards in the Mixteca Alta of this period see: Romero-Frizzi, Maria de los Angeles. *Economia y vida de los españoles en la Mixteca Alta: 1519-1720*. México: INAH, 1990.

5. Markman, "Dominican Townscape," p. 81. He cited: Ramesal, Fr. A. de. *Historia general de las Indias Occidentales, y particular de la gobernación de Chiapa y Guatemala*. 2nd edition, 2 Vols., Guatemala: 1932. II, p. 244. Again, my discussion here follows quite closely Markman's elaboration, and is presented to demonstrate Dominican procedures which had basic similarities wherever they were employed. As will be seen, this has relevance for the case of Teposcolula.

6. Ibid. p. 82. He notes that even in some of the more populous *pueblos de Indios*, such as Chamula and Huistán, the street layout remained "ever embryonic."

7. Markman, "Dominican Townscape," p. 82-3. This may account for the piece of apparently colonial era ceramic fragment I found on the hill behind the cemetery in Teposcolula, in an area where the ground was fairly paved with ceramic fragments evidently of older, pre-colonial provenance. This multicolored fragment about 1 by 2.5 inches, cream colored field with bright reds and greens under a clear glaze is now part of a collection in care of Lic. Delfino Cardenas Peralta, an attorney living in Teposcolula. Ronald Spores has also found colonial period ceramic fragments at the Pueblo Viejo site. Personal communication September 1992.


14. In conversation on March 25, 1993, Dr. Markman noted that the Indigenous groups more urbanized at the time of contact typically entered the new Hispanic lifestyle more easily than those less urbanized. He noted that in Chiapas, parts of Guatemala and Central America there were numerous instances of rebellion throughout the colonial era, some of which aimed at exterminating the Europeans and Ladinos with notable violence and brutality. He also pointed out that in the areas where there was little contact with Europeans, evangelization either did not occur or had little effect, and that these areas retained their pre-Columbian culture up until more recent time. This corresponds with Lockhart's findings for the central zone of Mexico. Markman also noted that areas where growing corn was the only way to make money did not attract much Spanish attention.

15. This location of the principal plaza behind the apse end of the church rather than in front of the principal western façade also occurs in Yahnuitlán and Tejupan.

16. Personal research in the Archivo del Poder Judicial Regional de Oaxaca in August 1992 identified numerous documents, including especially the Libros de Protocolos de Juan de Medina, in the Ramo Civil de Teposcolula and its Anexo which relate to property issues. Hundreds of pages of these documents from the 1550s to the 1640s photographed in 1992, 1993, and 1995 await transcription.


18. These alignments were verified in the field on 16 March, 1995, using a theodolite generously provided by the Department of Civil Engineering of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Daniel DiMarco, then in his final semester in the MA Architecture program at VPI, kindly volunteered to transport the instrument and assist me with his technical expertise during the site survey. DiMarco determined that the plane of the open chapel façade is on a precisely north-south
alignment without using modern declination adjustment. Using modern declination adjustments to correct for the difference between "magnetic" north and "true" north, the plane of the facade of the open chapel is rotated counter-clockwise 7.5 degrees.

19. See Kubler, *Mexican Architecture...* p. 63. He gave a general range of 1540-50 for first campaign of building, on pages 532-3 he noted that building was still in progress in 1579, but he stated:

"The Dominicans, after conflict with the encomendero at Yanhuítlan in 1541, withdrew to Teposcolula, which before that time had been a secular curacy. When the Dominicans returned to Yanhuítlan ca. 1548-49, the vicarate of Teposcolula continued under fray Juan Cabrera. A stylized representation of the church that served the community ca. 1550 occurs in the Códice de Yanhuítlan. This Church is mentioned by Viceroy Mendoza in 1550. After complaining that the Dominicans were undertaking many new buildings without proper architectural supervision, he cites Teposcolula, where the friars had built an inadequate structure ("de muy ruin mezcla") in the hope of attracting the Indians to settle near the site. This first campaign of building has nothing to do with the present edifices at Teposcolula, for the unhealthy and humid site described by the Viceroy does not fit the present location upon the well-drained slopes of a hill rising to the east of the settlement."

It seems likely the decision noted in the Actas of the January 1540 provincial meeting to congregate dispersed indigenous populations may have marked the beginning of a program to relocate the people of Teposcolula, a process well under way by the time of Fr. Domingo de Betanzos's letter of December 3, 1540. See below. Writing more recently, Mullen, *Dominican Architecture...* p. 128 argued that the current church facade is the original begun, with the rest of the church, in the late 1530's or early 1540's. He pointed out that the large sculptures of the saints are not in the round, detached statues, but are three quarter round and actually integrated into the original, still existing facade. I was told by a lifetime resident of Teposcolula in August 1992 that "long ago the valley used to be a lake." If this is true, it might explain the Viceroy's description, and thereby support Mullen's contention. The valley, through which a river flows more or less northwest to southeast, is quite narrow at its southeastern end, just below the pueblo viejo. Possibly the valley was flooded for agricultural purposes from time to time. Water is known to stand in parts of it today after heavy rains, and it is not at all uncommon to have dense fog covering the valley floor in the mornings in the rainy season.

20. Toussaint *Paseos Coloniales*, pp.26-27, and *Colonial Art...* p. 61 maintained that the existing church was later than the open air chapel which he thought was built between 1550 and 1575, while suggesting that some of the existing sculptural elements of the church facade may have come from an earlier building. John
McAndrew, *Open Air Churches*, pointed out on page 544 that "a monastery and a church must have been acceptable enough to the Provincial Chapter by 1561, since that year they chose to meet there." He stated his belief that the open chapel was probably built between 1561 and the plague year of 1576. On page 547 he added "No more skillful vault had been built in the Americas...It was perhaps the finest example in the New World of Medieval craftsmanship on a grand scale which has survived to our time." McAndrew pointed out similarities of the work with illustrations of various editions of Vitruvius, Serlio and Diego de Sagredo. Mullen, *Dominican Architecture*... pp. 128-138, described events surrounding its construction, and suggested that an "old" chapel, "there had to be one," was demolished and the "new" open air chapel must have begun after Fr. Marín returned to Teposcolula in 1548. He identified Fr. Marín as its architect and noted that it was his masterpiece completed circa 1555.

21. Mullen. *Dominican Architecture*, pp. 77 and 128. But see also Calderón Galván, Enriqueta. *Teposcolula*, pp. 68-69. She noted two documents in the Archivo General de la Nación located by R. Spores and Miguel Saldana which support the existence of an "iglesia primitiva." One dates from 1699 and says "que a cambio de la obligación de acudir a la fábrica de la iglesia de su cabecera (que es Teposcolula) se permite a los naturales de Santiago Yolomécatl ye se les da licencia, sin servirles de pretexto, ampliar su iglesia, par elegir alcaldes ye oficiales de república." The other is an ordenanza from 1768 "Para que se aplique la cuarta parte de los tributos para la reedificación de la iglesia parroquial de la cabecera de Teposcolula." Calderón Galván also noted a document found by María de los Ángeles Romero Frizzi in the local archive dated 9 July 1692 "en donde el prior del convento junto con el alcalde mayor el gobernador y otros sagredotes reconocen que la iglesia está muy corta y que se comprometen a alargar dicha iglesia haciendo un crucero y poniéndolo en efecto, asegura, empezaron a abrir los nacimientos." Calderón Galván added that according to Romero Frizzi "en base a este documento, se puede afirmar que la iglesia de Teposcolula fue construida en el siglo XVI de una sola nave, al igual que la mayoría de los templos dominicos de esta época, y que no fue originalmente de planta cruciforme como lo expone Mullen, pues este escritor, autor de varios tratados, afirmaba lo contrario."

22. Elizabeth Wilder Weisman *Art and Time...*, p. 143, plate 147. She said "Tequitqui — the art which shows an Indian quality — occurred only while there was a living memory of pre-conquest art in New Spain. In situations where it had no importance for the cult, where it seemed to fill a purely decorative function, and where, in short, it didn't matter, decoration might—in those early days—be left to the stonecutter, who would in all probability be an Indian. Weisman following Toussaint, identified it as a "Capital (used as a pedestal)."

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24. Mullen, *Dominican Architecture...*. p. 128, notes: "It is with considerable justification that Professor Toussaint identifies them as among the few extant sculptural pieces made before 1550." He adds a few lines later "The sculpturing of the double arches, capitals and supporting columns of the portería at Teaposcolula...must now be viewed as one of the earliest examples (1540's) in Oaxaca of native tequitqui artisanship." To this I would add what appears to have been the font of a fountain in the cloister garden now kept near the foot of the staircase in the convento.


26. There are also angels like these with similar headgear at the Dominican house of Tepoztlán, suggesting a possible connection or overlapping workmanship.

27. The surviving examples of historiated capitals along the medieval pilgrimage routes in Europe are abundant. Specific examples of Romanesque historiated capitals may be found in in the Musée des Augustines in Toulouse and in the cloisters in Avranches, Moissac, San Juan de la Peña, Santo Domingo de Silos, and especially Santillana del Mar.


29. Ibid.


31. Marrow, *Passion Iconography...*, pp. 13-14, my text follows closely but compresses Marrow's text.


33. Webster, Susan Verdi. "Holy Week Processions in Spain and New Spain: The Case of Huejotzingo." Paper delivered at conference on "Cultural Transmission and Transformation in the Ibero-American World, 1200-1800" at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, October 21-22, 1995, in press, on file at the Inter-American Institute for Advanced Studies in Cultural History, P.O. Box 93, Free Union, Va., 22940. Dr. Webster based this description on slides I took during field work in Oaxaca, Holy Week, 1995, and which I provided to her for the preparation and presentation of her paper. I gratefully acknowledge her kindness during many
conversations in sharing with me her profound knowledge of this subject. Her many insights have enabled me to make what I believe are some important connections with the Teposcolula case. I feel justified in including an extended citation from her paper because my own field work contributed to her research and discovery. As she mentioned in personal communication dated 27 October 1995 "I would have been unable to complete my study of the sixteenth-century penitential murals in Mexican monasteries without the slides [you]...provided. In fact, the many slides that you sent were of such excellent quality that I was actually able to identify crucial elements of the murals that were not visible in other reproductions."

34. Mullen. *Dominican Architecture*, p. 39; Kubler. *Mexican Architecture*, p. 533. Today the cloister beyond the portería lacks the typical arcade seen in most sixteenth-century Dominican houses of Oaxaca. I do not know if this is because this work was never completed, or if it later fell to ruin, vandalism, or theft. The church, as Kubler points out, is one of the largest in Oaxaca, and it is filled with splendid retablos, mostly Baroque, but there appear to be also some earlier fragments present.

35. At San Juan Teposcolula there are also posa chapels in the atrio, one of which, displaying an escutcheon bearing the Hapsburg arms, collapsed sometime between August 1993 and April 1995. At San Felipe, a former sujeto two miles southwest of San pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula, with what appears to be an eighteenth century church, there are also posas still in use. San Miguel Achiutla still has posas, or partly wooden construction. In Teotitlan del Valle in the Valley of Oaxaca there are posa chapels which are still used as the loci of catechism instruction among other purposes. Tlacolula has posas still used in the Corpus Christi celebrations. In short, posas are numerous and typical in Oaxaca.


42. The Franciscan Thomas Illyricus, who preached several missions in the south of France and in Spain in the years immediately preceding and following Luther's complaint. He wrote a book in 1520 on how to stir the crowds up and is but one example of this kind of preaching. For an introduction to the related literature see Godfroy, Marie-France. "Le prédicateur Franciscain Thomas Illyricus a Toulouse, Novembre 1518-Mai 1519." Annales du Midi, 97(Avril-Juin 1985):101-113. Her exhaustive dissertation on Fr. Thomas's preaching mission and later life is available in the main public library of Toulouse. It is a certainty that the Dominicans of Oaxaca were well acquainted with his work and the sermons he personally published, including those given in Toulouse in 1518. Burgoa referred to him as follows:


43. Hardison, Christian Rite..., p. 79.

44. A point noted in conversation, 31 March, 1993.


46. A point noted in conversation, 31 March, 1993, though I think some of the friars of the mystic tradition may have thought otherwise on this point. My current research seeks to illuminate this issue among others.


50. A point Tom Drain illustrated for me by reciting passages from St. Augustine's writings.

51. Among the countless examples that could be given, one that comes immediately to mind may be seen at Vaison-la-Romaine, Vaucluse, France. A fine photograph
of this may be found in Gantner, Joseph, and Marcel Pobé. The Glory of Romanesque Art. New York: The Vanguard Press, 1956, pl. 75. For those unfamiliar with Romanesque Europe, an hour or two with this or any other well illustrated comprehensive treatment of Romanesque architecture and art will offer many valuable insights to the student of Mexican architecture of the sixteenth century. See for example: Durliat, Marcel. El arte románico. Madrid: Akal, 1992, for a fine, comprehensive treatment with excellent plans, photographs, maps, and diagrams extremely useful for a comparative study along side of Kubler's Mexican Architecture... and McAndrew's Open Churches...

52. The late Willie Meltzer opened my eyes to the process of cultural reconciliation expressed in the architecture of Romanesque Europe during a memorable opening lecture given atop the walls of the Roman arena of Arles at the beginning of a traveling seminar down the Medieval Pilgrimage Routes to Santiago de Compostela in May and June 1989. Much of the thinking presented here I owe to insights gained from Willie's intensely stimulating lectures during an unforgettable pilgrimage.


54. José Jorge Klor de Alba began his presentation at the October 1992 Dumbarton Oaks conference with the following words: "Christianity is dead in Mexico. No, Christianity never existed in Mexico." Following his remarks I pointed out that at Actopan, a town I had recently visited, the church, among the largest ever built by the mendicants, was regularly full, filled twice a day, for Mass in the morning and Mass in the evening, and that furthermore along the road to Ixmiquilpan several new churches were then under construction. I asked him to explain this in light of his argument. But rather than answer my question, he asked me "Are you running for president or something?" and turned to take the next question.

55. I first heard the notion of the reconciliation of Christianity with the Greco-Roman and Gothic pagan traditions advanced during a lecture given in May 1989 on the top of the Roman Arena in Arles, France, by the late Willie Meltzer, who went on to further demonstrate his point during several weeks of unforgettable on site lectures at Romanesque sites along the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela.


by a number of Dominican and Jesuit confessors, she began to experience mystical prayer with visions after 1556. Her teachings and writings have been influential in Hispanic countries since the sixteenth century. See also Sackville West, V. The Eagle and the Dove. New York: Doubleday, 1944. That she was aided in the experience of mystical prayer focused on the Passion by Dominicans further demonstrates the powerful presence of this mystic tradition in the order.

58. Wherever the early programs of fresco painting remain intact, almost certainly will be found examples of this iconography. Among many examples is the fragmentary survival at the entrance to the coro at Oaxtepec, suggesting that the friars focused on this as they passed into the coro in the daily routine of conventual life.


60. A visit to the halls of the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City provides ample evidence of the terrifying nature of the pre-Hispanic conceptions or representations of divinity as may be seen in the sculptural renderings of the Mesoamerican pantheon of deities, created, no doubt, under the watchful eyes of the priestly elite.

61. Mullen suggests in Dominican Architecture... p. 138, that a sense of competitive civic pride may have been a motivating factor. He pointed out that other nearby Mixtec centers, including Tlaxiaco and Yanhuitlán, were about to begin large scale church building projects. Teposcolula's earlier and less grand church and convento were already well under way by 1548. Mullen argues that therefore the strategy of constructing an extraordinary open chapel was conceived to maintain the relative prestige of Teposcolula. He emphasizes the role of Fray Francisco Marín in the planning process. While I agree with Mullen's contention that civic pride was probably a motivating factor, and that a European specialist, such as Fray Marín, would have provided technical expertise in the design and construction of the open chapel, I remain convinced that the indigenous leadership and people of Teposcolula played a determining role in the complex decision making process resulting in their great open chapel for the reasons I elaborate in the text.


63. Weckman. *Medieval Heritage*, p. 536. Weckman offers a concise overview of the use of theatre and dance in the evangelization, focusing on its medieval connections to Europe. In this and many other areas, Weckman provides an excellent introduction to the literature treating cultural transmission and transformation in sixteenth-century Mexico. I gratefully acknowledge my debt to his summary.

64. Ibid.


69. Burguoa, Fr. Francisco de. *Geográfica Descripción*. México: Porrúa, 1989, Vol 2, p. 4. Cited in Pita Moreda. *Los Predicadores Novohispanas*, p. 226. Elta was an early site of Dominican activity. Mullen, *Dominican Architecture*, listed it as "accepted" as of 1550, though as Burguoa related, the original building collapsed in 1575 with much loss of life during a dramatic performance of one of Fr. Alonso’s works. Subsequently a new church was built under the direction of a Spanish carpenter, Sebastián García, skilled in the construction of artesonado roofs. Though he died soon after, the Indians who had worked with him had become quite expert and continued as carpenters, presumably diffusing their skills throughout the area.


74. Ibid. This passage follows closely but condenses Ravicz's text.


76. There is a similar arrangement at Actopan where the great vault of the open chapel is flanked by two ground level rooms, today used for parish activities including Christian education and evening meetings.


78. Burkhart, "Pious Performances..." p. 13. I have deconstructed, or reconstructed Burkhart's phraseology somewhat to get at the essence of its meaning. I do not believe that my rendering alters, nor do I intend to alter in any what she meant, as a comparison with her exact wording cited above will show.

79. The presence of the Rosary beads over the arches was brought to my attention by several local informants, one of whom was a stonemason quite proud of his community's unique treasure. Explaining that it still helped people in saying their Rosary prayers, they showed this to me with evident pleasure in my surprise and intense intrerest in this prominent feature which had up until that moment escaped my notice.

81. Ibid., p. 17.


83. I have personally witnessed and participated in such gatherings.

84. Spores. *The Mixtecs*, p. 153. The parish priest of Teposcolula informed me that the colonial records of the cofradías were lost in the troubled years of the 1920s, but he told me there are today five confraternities active in Teposcolula devoted to: Nuestro Señor de la Vidría, Perdón, Santísimo Sacramento, Padre Jesús, and San Pedro. Nuestro Señor de la Vidría is a sculptural image of Christ Crucified which is processed during Holy Week to other locations, including a special chapel across the street immediately north of the atrio, a chapel which adjoins the "casa de la comunidad," a building which appears to be contemporaneous with the convento and Casa de la Cacica long used for travelers including those who today return to their community for special religious holidays, including Holy Week. The chapel has been rebuilt in recent decades, however, it appears to have been part of the original ensemble at the town's core. I have not yet been able to closely inspect this image of Christ, however this tradition of the procession during Holy Week has strong parallels with the Santo Entierro processions discussed above.

85. Reyes-Valerio, Constantino: *Arte Indoamericano*. México: Escuela Nacional de Conservación, Restauración y Museografía "Prof. Manuel del Castillo Negrete," 1978, p. 262, lámina 223, fig. 57 & 58. Reyes-Valerio also cites Laurette Séjourné who suggested an intimate relation between butterfly symbols, Xolotl and fertility. She links these symbols to dancing figures at nearby Monte Albán. Franke J. Neumann, in personal communication, has urged caution in pushing these "intimate relations" too far.


89. Berlo "Warrior," 1983, p. 97. She also suggested that the cult of the Obsidian Butterfly was exported as far as southern Guatemala by Aztec traders. But she argued that "In Oaxaca, the butterfly went through another transformation. Her adaptation to local concerns resulted in a partial disjunction of form and meaning." She noted that in the local adaptation certain other elements entered the representation including "a square knot, shells, fire symbols, and hanging headdress flaps, all of which I believe are Teotihuacán rather than Zapotec motifs." She also points out that there is a frequent conjoining of butterfly symbolism with jaguar mouth imagery and suggests that this"in order to produce a new composite being" in which war emblems were absent. She argued that this partial disjunction was a selective adaptation and hints at "possible shifts in meaning of symbolic forms."

She continued on p. 98: "Despite the lack of martial emblems, two features from the constellation of Teotihuacán butterfly symbols are retained in Oaxaca: the association of the butterfly with fire, and the depiction of the butterfly personage as at least sometimes female. Occasionally, the old wrinkled face of the fire god wears the butterfly headgear in Oaxaca. In both cases, a jaguar mouth occurs beneath the proboscis, so there is a triple conflation here: butterfly/jaguar/old god. Butterfly and old god imagery intersect on two censors known to me from Teotihuacán itself (Berlo 1980). I consider them to be a dual expression of the transformational symbolism discussed earlier: the transformation of the human soul into a butterfly, and the physical transformation occurring in a fire sacrifice. It is unclear whether this symbolism was maintained in Oaxaca."


92. Ronald Spores has confirmed in a conversation on October 14, 1991, that indeed the "converted Zahui symbols are quite clear" noting the fangs and forked tongue among others. He also pointed out the resemblance of these "whorls" to conch shells, and noted that conch shells are present at Teotihuacán in conjunction
with Tlaloc images. Furthermore, he suggested that the "whorls" might be a way of depicting wind, or a wind storm such as a tornado. In this way wind might be seen as something round and swirling. Thus with this multilayered meaning built up of many possible connotations this image may be viewed as an integrating symbol for wind, rain and fertility. During the October 1991 conversation, Spores referred to a photograph I had sent to him, however we have subsequently visited the site together on numerous occasions, and looked together at this keystone. He has continued to confirm the association with Dzahui.

93. At the Dominican house of Azcapotzalco there is an arched door leading from a room off the cloister to the sacristy. The keystone of this arch displays what appears to be a jaguar face. Of course the jaguar or ocelotl had iconographic significance in the pre-Columbian world, and this may be taken as another example of integration. See fig. 61.


95. Pasztory, Esther, The Murals of Tepantitla, Teotihuacán. New York: Garland series: Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts, 1972, p. 159 (cited in Berlo 1983, p. 86) Franke J. Neumann, who has spent many years studying Pre-columbian religions, has pointed out, in personal communication, that careful distinctions need to be made between the concept of nature spirits and fully divine gods. He questions the use of the term "water gods" or "water deities" in the Mixtec case, and feels the notion of nature spirits, or water spirits is more appropriate.
CHAPTER V

THE DISK FRIEZE

IN

ANCIENT AND EARLY COLONIAL MEXICO

CONTINUITY IN THE ARCHITECTURAL TRANSMISSION OF MEANING
Documentary evidence and standing buildings show that from an early date indigenous leaders in various parts of colonial Mexico were systematically manipulating elements of the incoming European architecture in a deliberate fusion with well known elements of pre-contact form culture, consciously creating new, distinctive, high status building types. In several cases the evidence demonstrates clear ideological and symbolic motives. In these cases, and especially in Teposcolula, the evidence shows that the implementation and integration of the ideological program was not limited in its conception to a single high status building in isolation, but rather was carried out at the level of the initial urban planning of the new colonial towns, and creating important relationships within the overall sacred landscape. In Teposcolula and elsewhere, then, the evidence shows that the indigenous leadership participated in the process of urban planning, successfully transmitting important elements of their traditional culture into the new era as permanent and highly visible components of their new built environment. This process of fusion of indigenous and European architectural forms and technologies, resulting in new building types such as seen in the Casa de la Cacica in Teposcolula, was arrested by the terrible epidemic of 1576. The devastating, demoralizing and destabilizing consequences of the demographic collapse sapped the vitality of this new architecture and rather than flourishing and flowering it died and decayed, leaving us but a few reminders of a hopeful moment in the history of cultural transmission and transformation in early colonial Mexico.
To prepare a context for the consideration of the case of the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula, to be presented in the following and final chapter, this chapter will begin by briefly reviewing several documentary and standing examples of the pre-Columbian use of Disk Frieze ornament. Then a variety of examples employing this pre-Columbian feature in the early colonial period, seen both in the documentary record and in surviving standing buildings, will be identified in a longer discussion.

Before proceeding to a discussion of early colonial fusion architecture, a brief review of some traditional indigenous building types is in order. Most pre-contact examples of picture writing were destroyed during the early years of the colonial era, however the surviving documents provide numerous examples of buildings depicted in a stylized form. Of various possibilities, selections from three screenfolds from the Mixtec cultural zone—the Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus I, the Codex Nuttall, and the Codex Sánchez Solís—sufficiently illustrate typical pre-contact graphic representations of high status buildings.²

While these and other examples of screenfold illustration have in common a high degree of stylization, the technique is nevertheless capable of distinguishing and differentiating between several types of structures including steam baths, high status residences and temple platforms. Furthermore, an important distinguishing feature of all buildings is a carefully rendered ornamental frieze. These friezes usually appear along the top of flat roofed residential buildings, and sometimes at the crest of steeply pitched thatched roofs. They are also present on temple
platforms both immediately beneath the top surface of the platform and often also appearing on the small buildings on top of the platform. In the case of steam baths these friezes occur as in the case of residential buildings, along the top. No one can say with certainty exactly what these friezes were intended to communicate, however the great care with which they were drawn, the great variety of distinctive patterns employed in diverse combinations with subtle differences in color combinations of repeated forms strongly suggests that they carried a specific meaning easily recognized by those initiated into the complex symbol system. Because, for the most part, these Mixtec screenfolds were concerned with genealogy and the relationship of particular families to particular places at particular times, these friezes may have served a heraldic function, so that together with specific place glyphs and year glyphs it would be possible to identify the changes of genealogy over time as related to place.

The recording and preservation of this kind of knowledge was, no doubt, quite important to a landowning elite group, entrance to which was restricted to legitimate children of parents of recognized lineages on both sides. These friezes are such prominent features of the architecture as portrayed that it is natural to assume that the buildings represented actually resembled the graphic depiction and that these buildings actually had friezes prominently displaying these same patterns and communicating the same kind of information to those who saw them. It is also possible that the information communicated was understood more precisely by those initiated into what may have been a somewhat esoteric symbol system,
capable of being read at several levels, but denoting at the most basic level of understanding a high status building. It is believed that the Mixtec elite reserved for their private use a spoken language not understood by the common people. 4

In Oaxaca no standing examples of pre-Columbian buildings displaying an ornamental frieze of disks have yet been identified. Nevertheless, the remarkable buildings of Mitla and Yagul in the Valley of Oaxaca certainly demonstrate that ornamental friezes employing distinctive geometric patterns were used, probably to transmit specific meaning, perhaps related to genealogy of legitimate ruling families.(figs. 67 & 68) Elsewhere in the Mesoamerican world, however, there are still to be seen standing examples of high status buildings prominently displaying disk friezes in long horizontal bands along the tops of the walls. The examples treated below are in the Yucatan Peninsula, heartland of the Mayan civilization.

At Tulum, the spectacular Late Post Classic center perched on the cliffs overlooking the Caribbean Sea in what is today the Mexican state of Quintana Roo, there is a building on the acropolis, the so-called “Temple of the Diving God,” featuring a disk frieze.(fig. 69 & 70) At Tulum the Diving God is associated with rain or lightening. This building has also been associated with the Bee God, or god of apiculture. Before Spanish contact, Tulum was a center of honey production, an important export commodity in the thriving water borne trading network that linked Tulum with points all along the Yucatan coast as well as many locations deep in the interior. 5 Perhaps owing to the local geology, the structure was built of mamposteria, or random rubble stone laid up with the generous use of lime mortar. It was covered
with a thick lime stucco.

As is often seen in the Maya region, the form of the building makes a reference to the traditional Maya hut with its thatched roof, suggested here by the sloping shape of the masonry comice. A sculptural representation of the dedicatory deity is presented on the principal facade, flanked with horizontal bands clearly displaying disks rendered in relief, now somewhat restored, in the stucco. Like most pre-Columbian ceremonial structures, this building was probably originally painted in bright colors.

Close inspection reveals that the disks are of two types which alternate from one being a simple round rosette or representation of a flower with a deep hollow in the center, in the way of a "trumpet" shaped flower, to another flower similar in every respect except that it appears that their stamens project out, as if hanging out of and downward (like a bifurcated snake's tongue seen elsewhere in Mesoamerican iconography) from the center of the flower.⁶(fig 71) Because the flower's stamen was the locus of the activity of the fertilizing bees, it is not surprising to find this iconographic complex featured here on this building dedicated to the Bee God. This alternation between two disk types in a frieze is present in many of the disk frieze buildings I have identified, including, as we will see, the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula. Moreover, it is worth noting the Late Post Classic mural paintings of Tulum, published by Arthur G. Miller among others.(fig 72) Miller pointed to suggestive similarities with Mixtec art.⁷ Even earlier, Ignacio Marquina had also suggested a Oaxaca connection, noting of the Tulum paintings:
En general, no tienen el carácter de las pinturas realistas que se hallan en la Zona Maya, como las de Bonampak, las de Chacmúltún o las de Chichén-itzá, en las que se representan batallas, fiestas o diversas escenas de la vida diaria; se asemejan más a los dibujos de algunos códices y las que existen en Mitla.⁸

Indeed, close visual examination of the murals at Tulum and those in the Church Group at Mitla, generally considered Late Post Classic Mixtec work, reveal striking formal similarities.⁹ (fig. 73 & 74) Indeed, as Mary Miller pointed out, "The palette of these works is limited to red, blue, and yellow, all outlined in black. Stiff conventional gestures as well as the proportional system suggest influences from Late Postclassic Mixtec painting."⁹

From their ship members of the Grijalva expedition, early Spanish explorers of the Yucatan Peninsula, saw Tulum in 1518. It was then a flourishing trade center and they grandly compared it with Seville.¹⁰ Mitla was also in use as a native administrative center at contact.¹¹ The striking similarities in the mural art of these two sites, both known to have been actively inhabited up until Spanish contact, strongly suggest cultural contact of some kind, as yet little understood, between the Mixtec and Maya worlds in the period immediately preceding Spanish contact. And there is other evidence further reinforcing belief in this still mysterious Mixtec-Maya connection.

A building with remarkable similarities to the Casa de la Cacica stands at the site of Xkichmook, south of the Puuc hills in the Mexican state of Yucatan. (figs. 75, 76, & 77) Showing a photograph by Maler from the 1890s, Marquina referred to it as "Palacio con Medallones."¹² George F. Andrews published the most comprehensive
treatment of the site to date, including several good recent photographs, plans, elevations and sections of this building which he referred to as Structure 12. He dated it as circa 830 AD and noted that:

The use of large rosettes as decorative forms in the upper wall zone is unique and there are no similar examples in either the Puuc or Chenes regions. Small rosettes of similar design are used as decorative forms in the cornice moldings of some classic Puuc buildings, particularly in the Late Uxmal style buildings...the rosettes [at Xkíchmook] should probably be considered as Puuc inspired.\textsuperscript{13}

These "rosettes" appear to be floral representations; certainly the decorative forms he refers to on later buildings at Uxmal are floral in nature. (fig. 78) Indeed, Linda Schele refers to buildings displaying this ornament as \textit{nikteil nah}, or "Flower Houses."\textsuperscript{14} Citing personal communication with Stephen Houston she notes that these are the same as \textit{popol nah}, or the "mat houses" identified by Barbara Fash where "the councils of nobles and other leaders met."\textsuperscript{15} These "mat houses" are identifiable by the presence of sculptural representations of woven reed mats on the facades. (fig. 79) This, of course, immediately calls to mind the numerous pictorial representations of Mixtec ruling couples seated on their mats in the Mixtec codices, as discussed by Terraciano and others noted in Chapter 2. Schele concludes that these "mat" or "flower" houses have a long history in the architecture of the Maya, and while relatively rare in the southern lowlands, they are more abundant in the northern zone.\textsuperscript{16}

From this discussion of standing buildings in the Maya cultural region displaying disk friezes it is clear that there is a persistence of meaning, linking these
buildings with high status activities, moving through time from the ca. 830 transitional buildings at Xkichmook identified by Andrews to the ca. 1000 Late Uxmal style buildings discussed by Schele, to the Terminal Post Classic buildings at Tulum, which Mary Miller suggests were thirteenth century or later. Thus for at least four centuries this iconographic motif was applied to buildings in construction. Given that Tulum was an inhabited and thriving city in 1518, it is safe to say that disk frieze motifs were transmitting their meaning at various points in the Yucatan from 830 until 1518, or for nearly seven centuries. This demonstrates an enduring regional commonality of meaning in architecture in the Maya area. The mural paintings at Tulum and Mitla indicate some kind of cultural connection between the Maya area and the Mixteca. It is at least possible that contact such as this contributed to the use of disk frieze ornament in both areas, suggesting a broader, inter-regional commonality of meaning, as was noticed in the case of the mats connoting high status common to both areas. Other than chronological inferences, the available evidence would not strongly support speculation suggesting of diffusion of disk frieze ornament moving in one direction or the other. But the chronology does point to the use of disk friezes in monumental high status buildings at ceremonial centers in the Yucatan earlier than in the Mixteca, indeed perhaps earlier than the Late Post Classic culture commonly associated with the Mixteca-Puebla style.

There are numerous examples of pre-contact building types depicted in documents prepared in the early colonial period either at the initiative of indigenous
leaders making cases before the colonial judicial system or at the initiative of colonial officials seeking documentation for administrative or historical purposes. Donald Robertson wrote on the topic of these early manuscripts and presented two documents with special relevance here. The Codex Mendoza was created at the order of the first Viceroy, don Antonio de Mendoza, as a background history intended for the King in Spain. Work began on this historical pictorial in 1541 by a native master painter, Francisco Gualpuygualcal. Important here is the retrospective portrayal of Montezuma's palace which had been destroyed during the conquest. (fig. 80) This document is in itself an example of artistic fusion of traditional Aztec painting style with the new European techniques, including the use of illusionistic perspective. Folio 69r shows Moctecuzoma sitting in his obviously high status pre-contact building. The tell-tale disk frieze is, again, the most evident ornamental feature.

The architectural transformations resulting from this fusion of two alien traditions may also reflect some modifications in the role of the indigenous leaders in the operation of government in the colonial regime. The Florentine Codex, compiled by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún before 1585, gives specific examples of architectural types in illustrations elaborated by text. In Book 11-Earthly Things Twelfth Chapter, Ninth Paragraph "which telleth of the various manners of houses [end] their classifications," there is a text referring to an illustration numbered 889 describing "Tlatocacalli, House where the lord usually lived. This is the house of the ruler or of him who is esteemed. It means a good, fine, cherished, proper house."
The illustration shows a house with a frieze of discs set in a dark field, such as those seen on Montezuma's house and on the Tecpan of Mexico. Of course, this book was compiled in the 1580's from accounts of informants who may not have been old enough to recall events and buildings pre-dating the conquest, and who may have been more than a little acculturated after long years of study and work with the Spanish friars. Still, the accounts and illustrations representing an indigenous view on the Aztec history and culture before contact are generally accurate. Furthermore, in the specific case of the architectural use of disk frieze ornament, the evidence presented in the Florentine Codex is corroborated by numerous other early colonial and pre-contact sources as we have seen above. The specific refinement of knowledge offered by this passage in the Florentine Codex is that buildings in which the ruler lived were of a type that had a special name, "Tlatocacalli," which described this special class or type of building, notable because it was "... a good, fine, cherished, proper house." And the most notable visual feature of the building in the illustration is the disk frieze. There was clearly an association of the ruler, "or him who is esteemed," with a particular and appropriate type of special building in the pre-contact world.22

The colonial regime strove to change the role of the indigenous "Lords" or seigneurs from perpetual hereditary dynastic rulers to participants in a more democratic system of elected "Gobernadores" and "Alcaldes" in which the occupants of the seats local of power rotated periodically among members of the traditional leadership. While this changed gradually during the sixteenth century as
access to these elected positions became less restricted, at the outset it was typical for the traditional leaders to be "elected" to the position of Governor or Alcalde, unless the colonial administration found the traditional hereditary leader to be objectionable for one reason or another. It is also true, as Spores, Taylor and Terraciano have pointed out, that in Oaxaca generally and in the Mixteca Alta particularly, the traditional hereditary indigenous leadership remained more firmly in control of the seats of local power.²³

Nevertheless, the mechanism of government forever changed with the coming of the Spanish regime, and by the end of the sixteenth century the indigenous leaders everywhere found themselves no longer the undisputed possessors of pre-eminent hereditary power, but rather holders of posts with a more diluted authority institutionalized by and subject to the colonial administration. While individuals continued to hold the posts and exercise the power, it was now increasingly the exercise of a more restricted, institutional power in which they participated rather than a personal power exercised on their own authority by divine right. This trend had direct consequences for the architectural expressions of power. In the past the locus of power was the dwelling place of the lord, in the Mixteca the yuhuitayu or dwelling place of the divine ruling couple. But the colonial regime sought to alter this precedent with the introduction of Spanish municipal institutions, shifting the locus of power to the seat of the municipal institutional authority, the Tecpan, or cabildo.

George Kubler stated that "The physical remains of early colonial Indian
housing are difficult to identify. Their form probably persists in such towns as Mizquic and Milpa Alta. The dwellings of only the Indian nobles and officials approximated European types.\textsuperscript{24} However, while it is certainly true that the Indian nobles selectively incorporated notable European architectural features in their buildings, even more important were the systematic, deliberate inclusions of traditional pre-Hispanic forms and symbolic ornaments. Kubler pointed out that "In Texcoco, the Indian nobles preserved their traditional symbols of prestige. No Indian who pretended to social distinction in 1582 could afford not to live upon a terreplein (cf. fig 81 [which shows the Tecpan of Mexico in the Codex Osuna]). (fig 82) Small his house might be, if only enthroned upon an earthen platform."\textsuperscript{25} Certainly the principal structure in the image Kubler cited is elevated as he points out. But what he does not mention may be an even more important "traditional symbol of prestige:" the disk frieze as plainly and deliberately evident in the carefully drawn picture as it no doubt was in the real building portrayed.

As Robertson points out, the Codex Osuna was made between January and August 1565 to present evidence in the 1563-66 Visita by Valderrama reviewing the government of Viceroy Luis de Velasco. In this document indigenous leaders claimed non-payment of numerous services rendered by their people in building construction and other activities undertaken for the Viceroy. Of special interest is the representation to which Dr. Kubler referred, found in Document VII, folio 500/38r showing the "tecpán or municipal building of Mexico, `Tecpa`calli México."\textsuperscript{26} Here, again, is an explicit documentary depiction of a high status building, of early colonial
construction (before 1565) shown with the same kind of disk frieze seen on Montezuma's house in the *Codex Mendoza* as well as on buildings in the pre-contact codices. Other architectural features typical of buildings seen in the pre-contact documents include the rectilinear door openings with the distinctive overhanging lintels. But what is also clearly evident is the use of distinctly European technology and design in the repeated use of compression arches seen in the arcade along the front of the building and especially in the main atrio portal in which the voussoirs are emphatically rendered with architectural precision. The *Codex Osuna* is itself a fusion of pre-contact art forms and picture-writing systems with European artistic techniques and alphabetically written language. What it shows in this illustration is an example of a new building type in which traditional pre-contact forms are deliberately fused openly and obviously with unmistakably European forms and technologies.

This building so carefully portrayed in the documentary record is an outstanding example of the design and construction of a new architecture which had never existed before European and Mesoamerican cultures came into contact. It was conceived and built as an architectural statement implementing an indigenous political agenda. The *Codex Osuna* is a document painstakingly prepared at the direction of the indigenous leadership specifically for use in a judicial process at the highest level of colonial administration. The building depicted was the seat of indigenous municipal authority, and was constructed to demonstrate and dignify this legitimate indigenous political power within the new colonial regime. Its careful
graphic representation in this high level document was intended to transmit that
demonstration and impart its authority and dignity into this legal process. The
Teopan of Mexico beautifully recorded in the Codex Osuna was a building intended
to be a lasting architectural expression of the legitimate power and authority of the
indigenous leaders, demonstrating not only their continuing role as transmitters of
the traditional culture but also their new role as interpreters and transformers of the
new culture. The new architectural forms that emerged at their direction as
permanent and highly visible elements of the new built environment demonstrated
their ability as cultural and political leaders to successfully perpetuate and integrate
their culture into the new world order in early colonial Mexico.

Perhaps the most spectacular example of early colonial Indian civil
architecture survives not only in documentary evidence but also in a standing
fragment of an original arcade of the Teopan of Tlatelolco, begun in 1576.(fig. 83)
As Kubler said: "It was entirely an Indian enterprise, built to maintain the dignity of
Indian town government."107 It is worth noting Kubler's observation of the perceived
need—lavishly expressed by this most unusual building—to maintain the dignity of the
town government, as an institution, rather than that of a particular individual. This
extraordinarily luxurious complex, over six hundred feet long in all, included a suite
of 19 rooms, itself 170 feet long and arranged around an elaborate garden,
especially dedicated to the entertainment of the Viceroy and other high status
visitors. The compound also included special facilities for the various elements of
town government, including rooms for scribes, a community room, apartments for

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less distinguished travelers, a jail (on two floors), a separate latrine, a separate bath-house, and all served by a fresh water system. Kubler details the expense of this undertaking which totaled 33,600 pesos, of which 5,600 were paid in cash by the Indian elite, the rest in labor and in kind by the community. He points out that this was on a par with the well known sale price paid in 1562 by the Crown for the Casas Nuevas originally built by Cortés himself.28

Nor were the Tecpans of Mexico and Tlatelolco isolated instances of high status construction by Indian nobles in the new colonial environment, for as Kubler points out the Indian leaders were busy with their own domestic architecture as well:

In 1554, the Indian governor of Tlatelolco lived in handsome houses fronting upon the main plaza. The Indian governor of Coyoacán in 1560 enjoyed the services of ten brick layers and masons, for the building and maintenance of his house, which when built was to face upon the main plaza and market.29

Clearly, then, the indigenous leaders were actively engaged in building not only suitable new municipal offices befitting their traditional dignity, but also suitable personal residences for themselves. The Map of Uppsala, an early colonial map of Tenochtitlan/Mexico City, is thought to have been made in 1555 by Alonso de Santa Cruz, the royal cartographer. Another possible author of the actual map would have been one of the Indian students of the school at Tlatelolco. The map shows a number of disk frieze residential buildings, all from after the conquest, concentrated in several districts presumably reserved for high status indigenous use. These buildings were purposefully integrated into the appropriate locations in the new colonial built environment.30
The distinction between the residence of the Indian lord and his municipal office may reflect the change in the nature of government: in pre-colonial times the local lord was the hereditary ruler for life, whereas in the colonial regime the office of gobernador was—at least officially—an elected position subject to change at the end of the predetermined term at the pleasure of those eligible to vote. What these two types of colonial buildings have in common, however, is that both were locations associated with persons of high status: one for private residential use and one for public, official, and ceremonial use, functions which may have occurred under one roof in pre-colonial times.

Furthermore, the nature of the role of the colonial Indian Governor in public ceremonial life had no doubt also changed considerably, especially as this related to religious ritual performance. In the colonial era public official ceremonial duties might include lavish entertainment of the Viceroy in specially built and luxuriously furnished rooms and gardens, but the era in which these Indian lords or caciques publicly presided over official religious ceremonies had come to an end. In the new regime these sacramental functions were reserved for the Spanish archbishops, bishops, priests and friars. Of course, membership in religious confraternities was open to the Indian leaders, an opportunity in which they often took full advantage.  

Still, it was not the same pre-eminent relationship to the religious ceremonial life as before. This, no doubt, presented a problem for the native leaders in the public perception of their status in religious affairs. However, as in the case of the residential and municipal buildings already noted, there was an architectural solution
to this problem of perception.

In Mexico City there was another case of the juxtaposition of a well known and unusual round chapel and a disk frieze building recorded in an early pictographic document. Again citing the Map of Uppsala we see the Chapel of San Miguel, built between 1556 and 1558, on Chapultepec Hill. (fig 84) It is shown on the hill top but at the bottom of the hill appears another building with a disk frieze and a row of arches just as is seen in the Codex Osuna and at Tlayacapan discussed below. The chapel is in a higher position, but nevertheless associated by a monumental staircase with a building seen below combining European arches with traditional pre-Columbian disk frieze ornament, denoting high status. Thus these buildings are linked by a staircase along which one can well imagine ceremonial processions. The unmistakable fact is that the buildings are linked by means of carefully designed architectural elements and highly visible spacial relationships in another example of the manipulation of the ceremonial landscape advancing an indigenous ideological agenda by celebrating the prestige of native rulers.

Another case may be seen in the map provided with the 1580 Relación de Zempoala, a colonial site in what is today the State of Hidalgo, a fine example of early colonial fusion of picture writing and map making. The scale and geographic accuracy of the map are somewhat vague and difficult to interpret. But that several distinct building types are depicted is abundantly clear, including the large church of Zempoala, numerous smaller chapels, perhaps of the single cell variety common in Hidalgo. There is also an example of a disk frieze building facing the large
church of Zempoala. The actual spatial relationship of these two buildings cannot
be conclusively confirmed on the basis of this document alone, due to its abstract
and schematic nature. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the artist responsible for
this map clearly sought to carefully portray the large church and the disk frieze
building as exceptional cases, given the high level of uniformity with which all the
other buildings are depicted. Furthermore, these two buildings are the only ones out
of the thirty odd buildings shown which clearly face each other or have anything
other than a purely random relationship. Karl Butzer and Barbara Williams
published a black and white picture of part of the 1580 Map of Zempoala offering
their interpretation. Without addressing the possible symbolic relationships between
the church and the disk frieze building, they point out, on page 541, that the
"conceptual aspect of the map, as an historical statement, is completed by the
"house" of the ruler of Mexico — depicted by a conventional symbol for tecpan
palace, a flat-facade structure with a framed doorway and supralintel panel with a
disk motif, below and to the right of the foundation symbol for Zempoala; this does
not refer to an old palace, but to the site of Moctezuma's defeat by Cortés in 1520." From their reproduction it appears that the caption next to the building reads
"México tlatoani." Whatever the reality of their physical relationship may have been
the artist in this case clearly portrayed them as though they were in a special
relationship for the purpose of the Relación.\textsuperscript{34}

A striking example of the Disk Frieze ornament on an early colonial religious
building occurs in the northern Valley of Mexico at the cemetery chapel in Atotonilco

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de Tula, Hidalgo. (figs. 85, 86 & 87) Probably built in the 1540's, it is now in ruinous condition. In this case the disk frieze is used only on the principal facade, and displayed originally five red disks in a field of white mosaic stone surrounded with a matching red border. There is a flower motif carved into the disks in this case with eight petals with a clearly defined pair of rings, the inner most perhaps again composed of smaller petals. These disks are different from those seen in the Codex Osuna and Codex Mendoza in that they display clearly carved flower petals, perhaps of a dahlia, a favorite among noble Indian connoisseurs, including Montezuma. There was, in pre-Hispanic times, an association of the cultivation of flowers for pleasure with high social status.

Concerning the importance of flowers, Gruzinski pointed out that among the elite the source of "heat" or power was believed to be a divine force infused into the ranks of the pipiltin that came from Quetzalcoatl and Xiuhotecalli. He elaborated as follows:

This fire lodged in the heart of the nobles was far from being a stable element: the rigors of penance and the discipline of education increased its intensity, as did contact with jewels, floral offerings, the scent of flowers, the consumption of the victims' flesh, and even cacao.

This corresponds with observations recorded by Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl published by León-Portilla. From the *XIII Relación de Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl*, a direct descendent of the last king of Texcoco, there is an account of the meeting of Cortés and Moctezuma on the causeway. What is particularly interesting is the note about the flowers which were elaborately prepared for the ceremonial event,
and the importance has to do with connections with ceremonial flower imagery noted by Gruzinski concerning the building up or intensifying of the divine fire by proximity to flowers and their scents:

The Spaniards arrived in Xoloco, near the entrance to Tenochtitlán. That was the end of the march, for they had reached their goal.

Motecuhzoma now arrayed himself in his finery, preparing to go out to meet them. The other great princes also adorned their persons, as did the nobles and their chieftains and knights. They all went out to meet the strangers.

They brought trays heaped with the finest flowers—the flower that resembles a shield; the flower shaped like a heart; in the center, the flower with the sweetest aroma; and the fragrant yellow flower, the most precious of all. They brought garlands of flowers, and ornaments for the breast, and necklaces of gold, necklaces hung with rich stones, necklaces fashioned in the petatillo style.

Thus Motecuhzoma went out to meet them, there in Huilsillan. He presented many gifts to the Captain and his commanders, those who had come to make war. He showered gifts upon them and hung flowers around their necks; he gave them necklaces of flowers and bands of flowers to adorn their breasts; he set garlands of flowers upon their heads. Then he hung the gold necklaces around their necks and gave them presents of every sort as gifts of welcome.

Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl’s account here has the air of an informed observer, he may have recorded a living memory of the event. Certainly the particular distinctions of the types of flowers and the lavish use of flowers is most interesting, and relevant to this discussion of the deliberate use of flower imagery on early colonial buildings.

As we have seen in the numerous examples already cited, there was also in pre-Hispanic times a clear association of the disk frieze on buildings with particular high status individuals. The continuation of these associations of individuals with
buildings expressed by the disk frieze ornament in early colonial architecture was, no doubt, intended to perpetuate the ideological message, in this case linking a native lord with a new Christian temple. In this way, even if it was no longer possible to publicly preside over the religious ritual performance, still there was a permanently visible stamp of high status association openly and obviously linking the indigenous leader with the new temple.

The chapel at Atotonilco de Tula is but one example of this kind of use of the pre-Hispanic disk frieze on early colonial Christian churches. Nearby at Tequixquiac, Mex. there was until recently another disk frieze plainly visible on the bell tower, here set in mosaic field with border as at Atotonilco de Tula.39 Another, perhaps better known example, may be seen at Xochimilco. (fig 88 & 89) The mid sixteenth-century church of the Franciscan convento openly and obviously displays a frieze composed of 10 double concentric ring disks along the top of the principal facade.40

Among the standing examples outside the Valley of Mexico is San Juan Nepopualco, Morelos, in which a frieze of large double concentric ring disks, like those on Montezuma's house in the codex, are still clearly visible, painted in red on the original, but now crumbling white stucco.41(figs 90 & 91) Nearby, in this area of Augustinian evangelization, two other examples of the double concentric ring disks show up in open and obvious display on early Christian buildings: large disks virtually identical to those at Nepopualco are painted in the cloister at Yecapixtla, other double concentric ring disks appear in sculptural form on the tower at Totolapan and as a comice above the now partially walled up arcade. (figs 92 & 93)
I should point out that there is another double concentric ring disk placed emphatically in the wall to the right of the gate leading from the plaza into the atrio. Furthermore, at the Dominican house at Tlhuac there appears to be a disk frieze composed of Christian symbols and stars set in a black mosaic field with cut stone border, as at other sites.\textsuperscript{42} All of these sites appear to be from the first half of the sixteenth century. In addition to these standing buildings, there are also numerous examples in the documentary record of early colonial era use of disk frieze ornament on churches and chapels. \textsuperscript{43}

Another, slightly less obvious, use of the Disk Frieze survives in fragmentary form at the two story Municipal Palace located on the Plaza of Tlayacapan in Morelos, where an incomplete row of disks appears along the top of the building, alternating between an eight petalled flower and a disk composed of two concentric rings.\textsuperscript{(figs. 94, 95, & 96)} The disks emerge from the white-washed wall which becomes thicker just below the frieze, suggesting a build up of layers of replastering. This later resurfacing may also be covering the mosaic field characteristic of Atotonilco de Tula, Tequixquiac, Tlhuac and other sites. While the frieze is incomplete, there is a double concentric ring lower on the wall near one of the windows.

According to the President of the Municipality, this building was built before the well known Augustinian convento next door and was used as a temporary residence for the friars who moved to the convento when it was completed. Then the building was used as the Cabildo for the local government, according to the
President. Of course, the local government, or Cabildo would have been composed of the indigenous leaders of the area. The convento dates from 1555, and Kubler says that the Augustinians took up residence in Tlayacapan in 1554. Certainly the surviving frescoes in the vaulted arcade support the claim that the building dates from the mid 16th century.  

As noted above, there is a clear example of a disk frieze on the great church dedicated to San Bernardino at Xochimilco. However, not far away is another example of fusion architecture employing disks. Located at the corner of streets today called José Ma. Morelos and Vincente Guerrero, the two story house built in 1553 for the cacique Apochquizauhtzin, baptized as Don Luis Cortés Zerón de Alvarado. While no apparent axial alignments relate this building to the church or convento complex, this Casa del Cacique is located on an important intersection at the corner of what is today the Zócalo, or central plaza of the town. The local market, or tianguis, still takes place within this plaza located between the convento complex with its large walled atrio and a row of modern buildings which include the library. Thus the building built for the cacique still enjoys a prestigious location close to the center of community activity and commerce, a fact which no doubt contributes to the success of the pharmacy now occupying the first floor. As Clara Bargellini has pointed out, the building was remodeled in the eighteenth-century, as is evident from the arrangement of the windows. Nevertheless, there may yet be clearly seen high on the walls the distinctive flower disks, which local informants uniformly identified as dahlias, a favorite flower of the indigenous
n nobility.48 At the archaeological museum a few miles away are two stone blocks with large pre-Columbian sculptural representations of flowers, one of which is identical to the forms on the cacique's house. Perhaps these stones were once used as markers identifying special boundaries, locations or associations.

At Malinalco, an Augustinian house founded in 1543 and completed by 1568, there is another clearly visible example of disks arranged in a frieze along the cornice above the porteria/open chapel.47(figs. 99 & 100) In this case the disks are obviously of colonial era work, and rather than floral motifs, they have Spanish style heraldic motifs such as the Pierced Heart of the Augustinians, although there is one disk with representation of twisted grass, the place glyph for Malinalco.48(fig 101) Nevertheless, the frieze is bordered by carefully cut stone, as at Atotonilco de Tula and elsewhere, but in this case rather than being of red stone, the stone was painted red, and the field was dressed quarried stone rather than mosaic, but painted white.49 It is safe to assume that this slightly modified disk frieze at Malinalco, openly and obviously incorporating European iconographic motifs of unmistakably Christian meaning in a distinctively pre-Columbian architectural feature was executed with the willing consent of the Augustinian friars. It is also a certainty that the friars had no illusions about its historical antecedents in pre-Columbian architecture, many examples of which were no doubt still much in evidence on standing buildings when this convento was built. This shows a willingness if not a deliberate intention on the part of the friars to include ideologically significant pre-Columbian architectural elements but with a deliberately "renegotiated" iconographic
content. The disks in this frieze include the recognized Malinalco place-glyph adjacent to a disk bearing the pierced heart symbol of the Augustinian order on the right and the IHS monogram of Christ. Thus this disk frieze adorning the Augustinian house at Malinalco provided a recognizable medium for ideological expression and transmission deliberately fusing well known pre-Columbian forms with new European elements in a new, visible, creative outcome of the process of cultural change through willing negotiation and consent.

There is another example of this process at Malinalco, an unusual cross that was probably the original atrio cross. It is now mounted on the corner of the atrio wall. (fig 102) Prominently displayed at the crossing is what appears to be a representation of an eight petalled flower.50 Appearing in relief is a small cross, piercing the flower, a possible reference to the Spear of Longinus of the Passion. From the wound created by the cross piercing the flower flows a stream of blood into a chalice shown in relief below the flower, making references to the sacramental symbols of Christ’s Body and Blood. Taken together, this iconographic complex is a representation of the mystery of the Eucharistic Miracle, Christ’s presence in the consecrated Host, the sacrament of the new religion with which His once for all time self-sacrifice is ritually reenacted. Given the frequency with which Passion iconography appeared on atrio crosses, it is not surprising to find such a message carved on a teaching tool from the early years of the evangelization.51 However it is also important to recognize that the use of flower imagery in religious iconography was a practice common to both Late Medieval Christianity and Late Post Classic
Mesoamerican traditions. The central flower at the crossing is flanked by a smaller four-petaled flower on each of the arms of the cross. This is undoubtedly colonial era work, but it shows a blending of highly significant meanings and symbols from the pre-Columbian and Christian iconographies, carried out and displayed prominently under the close supervision of the friars, again showing the operation of a process of negotiation and consent.\textsuperscript{52}

Another example of the association of the atrio cross and the pre-Columbian flower motif occurs at the Augustinian convento at Yecapixtla, built after 1541.\textsuperscript{53} In this case a fragment of an eight-petaled flower disk with a central raised ring is embedded in the base of the cross located in the atrio together with a fragment of bas relief with four petalled flowers and another plain round disk. On top of the stone base into which the cross is set there is a chalice and Host in relief on the plinth of the cross, and on the cross there are three nails in relief and at the crossing what appears to be the Host represented as a flower, or perhaps a sunburst, with a circular void in the center and a tiny cross above the center, as at Malinalco, with the chalice beneath it on the shaft of the cross, again as at Malinalco.\textsuperscript{54} Above the Host is the Crown of Thorns, symbolically refering to the Crucified Christ. As at Malinalco, there is a coming together of pre-Hispanic and Christian symbolic metaphors: the pierced flower, which looks like the sacramental wafer, seems to refer to the Eucharistic miracle, the presence of Christ in the Host.

John Carlson kindly shared with me a slide he took at the Field Museum in Chicago offering further evidence of the manipulation of this cross piercing a flower
motif in early colonial art. (fig. 103) Pictured is a ceramic disk [item #95851] 36.2 cm. diameter, 3 cm. thick, from San Juan Teotihuacán. This disk displays a flower made up of a variety of motifs, including step-frets, of distinctly pre-Columbian inspiration, and at the center is a cross piercing the center of the flower, and blood appears to be flowing from this wound. According to Kubler, in 1557 the Augustinians sought to evangelize this town and met with resistance from the Franciscans and the local people, unwilling to bear the cost of another sumptuous establishment like nearby Acolman. But construction was begun under the Augustinians inspite of intense resistance. Finally, in 1563 the people were succesful in expelling the Augustinians and bringing in the Franciscans who eventually completed the convento in 1580.\textsuperscript{55} Kubler published a photograph of a window from this convento, fig. 403.\textsuperscript{56} It shows a pointed gothic window frame decorated with floral patterns and a horizontal frieze composed of five eight petaled flowers beneath the opening. I am inclined to believe that this dish dates from some time prior to 1563, or during the Augustinian activity, based on the similar iconography found in the two other contemporaneous Augustinian houses discussed above.

At Tlamanalco there is yet another example of the use of pre-Columbian disks to ornament a location of Christian ritual performance. In the north wall of the nave of the Franciscan church, built between 1582 and 1591 there are several of the double concentric ring disks, but on the tower there is a horizontal arrangement of three disks openly and obviously displayed in a prominent location.\textsuperscript{57} The two outside disks are of the double concentric ring type, the one in the center is of the
floral motif type, but with five petals. (figs. 104-107)

There is a precise similarity between the way that these five petals are expressed and the petals of the flowers on the knees and forearms of the "Prince of Flowers," or Xochipilli, now on display at the Museo Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, exhibited in Washington at the National Gallery from October 1991-January 1992.58 (figs. 108-109) The exhibition catalog note by Felípe Solís and Michael D. Coe has much useful and relevant information concerning this figure, which I will summarize and cite from here: The statue was found in the last decades of the nineteenth century in the village of Tlamanalco. The "Prince of Flowers" was thought to be the supreme patron of the greenness of the fields, responsible for the opening of the flowers that bring butterflies and birds. Xochipilli was also the god of dances, of games (including the ball game), of gambling and of love. They note that Seler (1904, 821-822) felt that the face mask was an attribute of Xochipilli in his role as the deity presiding over theatrical performances and dances during which the performers wore masks. Of particular interest is the presence of butterflies drinking from the flowers and waiting to drink from the flowers. Elsewhere, a sequence of small disks, not unlike the larger double concentric ring disks, represent the stamen and pistils of flowers. Solís and Coe note that

The flowers and plant forms appearing in relief on the base and on Xochipilli's body have been the subject of a controversial analysis by the late R. Gordon Wasson ... who proposed that the depictions include the powerful psychotropical mushroom *Psilocybe aztecorum*, known to the Aztecs as the flesh of the Gods, along with flowers of tobacco and the hallucinogenic morning glory *Turbina corymbosa*.59
Having now surveyed a number of instances of the use of disk frieze ornament on early colonial buildings and religious art, it is clear that a fusion of pre-Columbian and European form and ornament was taking place in Mexico by the middle of the sixteenth century. Moreover, the examples examined show that these forms were being deliberately employed for ideological and iconographic purposes, and evidently in circumstances under the supervision of the friars. It should also be clear that this deliberate ideological manipulation of forms from two cultures in collision was initiated by and served the agendas of members of both cultural groups: the friars and the Indians. Furthermore the open and obvious use makes it clear that this was taking place in a willing process of negotiation and consent. This introduction to the theme of architectural fusion involving the architectural use of disk frieze ornament for ideological purposes provides a context for an investigation of several similar cases in the Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca. But before turning to the case of the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula, let us first briefly consider some important documentary and physical evidence from some nearby communities that will contribute to an overall interpretation of the case at Teposcolula.

In 1581 government of Nochixtlán, a town in the Mixteca Alta a few miles south of Yanhuitlán, prepared a response to a questionnaire circulated by the crown. This resulted in the _Relación de Nochixtlán_. This document included a map showing the grid pattern _Taza_ with the church on a plaza in the center. Nearby three other buildings are shown occupying different blocks near the center of the town. One of the three buildings is clearly portrayed with a disk frieze. From the map there is no
clear association either by alignment or by architectural elements between this building with the disk frieze and the church, except that both are near the center of town and both have friezes, though in the case of the church the frieze is not a disk frieze but a stepped geometric pattern. The disk frieze building is located northwest of the church. It is not yet known if this building survives in any fragmentary form, but given the steep site of the church and the possibly pre-Hispanic terreplein on which it is built, it may be that geography prohibited a convenient ceremonial relationship between these buildings other than proximity. Nevertheless, the distinctive disk frieze set its building apart from all the others as plainly on the map as it no doubt did in the standing building. Further research will investigate possible alignments with significant topographical elements in this case.

In Yanhuitlán, situated at the northern end of the largest valley of the Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca, there were certainly buildings associated with high status individuals at the time of initial contact with the Spanish and these buildings may have survived on into the early colonial era. (figs. 110 & 111) Such a building was vividly portrayed in the mid sixteenth century Códice de Yanhuitlán, displaying its disk frieze and showing the Cacique Nine House seated before a large group of his people. 61

Maria Teresa Pita Moreda has argued that during the sixteenth century in the Mixteca Alta the relationships between the friars, caciques, and macejuales changed over time as the Dominicans and indigenous leaders adapted to the challenges posed by their new situations in colonial New Spain. She argued that as the friars increasingly acquired and managed large land holdings and related agricultural
enterprises they came to have more and more in common with the landed native elite. She argued that the native elite and the friars thus became increasingly reliant upon each other, and that this alliance was at the expense of the commoners. As an example of how this worked, she cites a most interesting 1563 letter she discovered in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville to Lic. Valderrama, Visitador de Nueva España from Alonso Caballero, vecino de Yanhuitlán:

The friars of Yanhuitlán persuaded Don Gabriel, cacique of that town, to build for himself a most sumptuous house with the end of slowing the work of the monastery, because if it is finished they will lose the interests that they hold with the Indians and the tribute surplusses that they are ordered to give. And to build the house of the cacique much damage ensues to the poor because it draws out the work of the monastery, and if they must work for the friars they lose time from their own work, and don't have time to work their own lands, nor to earn their tribute payments for the encomendero, because every one has to make room for four weeks each year for the work of the church, and two more to take out stone from the quarry; and two more to make cal; and one in the mountains to cut wood; and another to haul the cal to the monastery; and another to cut fodder for the friars and the community and services for the friars, caciques and community; and six to work the cropfields of the cacique until they give it to him stored in his house; and another six to the friars in the field which is planted in wheat and corn. And then, on top of what has been already said they have to give another four weeks at the house of the cacique, that does not leave them time to make and work their own cropfields, and for this reason the poor suffer great need. And for all of these tasks of rotational labor and works they give no pay at all to the Indians more than what the friars and the cacique order, and they do like this because there is no one to argue on behalf of the poor.\textsuperscript{62}

Yanhuitlán's early colonial history was often troubled. Difficulties between the friars and the original encomendero caused the friars to abandon the area. And as Kevin Terraciano has shown, the colonial administration simplified the system of local government in the vast Yanhuitlán valley by eliminating several independent polities governed by their own ruling couples.\textsuperscript{63} This resulted in an unwillingness of
members of these disenfranchised communities, now subject to the *cacique* of Yanhuítlán, to participate in the construction of the monumental Dominican facility in what became the colonial *cabecerra*, or head town. No doubt members of these now subject communities were especially rankled by demands on their people to build a lavish palace for the *cacique* of another *yuhuitayu*. Perhaps the letter Pita Moreda uncovered reflects some of this hostility. Be that as it may, this 1563 letter offers valuable insights concerning the deployment of the labor force, and shows us that by this date a new royal residence was under construction in Yanhuítlán.

An eyewitness description by the Jesuit Father Bernabé Cobo, who passed through Yanhuítlán in January of 1629, shows that unmistakably European architectural techniques and luxury features were incorporated into a building he refers to as the "*Casa del cacique*," undoubtedly the building under construction in 1563 in the letter uncovered by Pita Moreda. Father Cobo related:

In this same town of Yanhuítlán I saw the *casa del cacique* which is of the same work as the church, all in stone with a large rectangular patio at the entrance in which they run bulls, and inside it has two other small cloisters with stone columns and rooms vaulted with stone with fireplaces in them such as those at court, certainly a house capable of lodging within it the royal person. ⁶⁴

The reference to bulls indicates that bullfights were staged in this enclosure, a recreational activity enjoyed by high status individuals in Spain as well as the New World, and its mention here was intended to convey how large the enclosure was. Kubler referred to this building in Yanhuítlán as "the Tecpan" and noted that it was built "during the third quarter of the century, at about the same time the church was
Undoubtedly masons who worked on the still spectacular church and monastery also worked on the Tecpan, or "casa del cacique," and were able to include the same kinds of distinctly European luxury features in the now lost building Father Cobo described.\(^6^6\) That this building featured disk frieze ornament may reasonably be assumed on the basis of the clear record of disk frieze ornament associated with Nine House as seen in the Códice de Yanhuitlán, a document roughly contemporary with the construction of Cobo's building. Further evidence is offered by a surviving example of the use of disk frieze ornament on what appears to be an early colonial building on the plaza in Yanhuitlán.\(^6^7\) It is possible that these disks were originally part of the Casa del Cacique of Yanhuitlán. When it was stripped of its stone cladding sometime after Cobo's visit, perhaps to provide material for the present facade of the convento church, these disks may have been saved. It is possible that they were re-used on a simple adobe building built after the great prosperity of the sixteenth century had passed. Cobo notes that already by his visit in 1629 the population of Yanhuitlán had fallen from over 10,000 to about 400. Except for the disks themselves, this building is of adobe, and was neglected, roofless, and near collapse in August 1993. Its location on the plaza in approximate alignment with the Municipal Palace indicates its original high status, reinforced and stated publicly by the disk frieze. In this case the disks are not of the standard double concentric ring variety or of the flower variety, but rather closely resemble a symbol seen in Lámina VI of the Códice de Yanhuitlán, which may have been a
place glyph, suggesting that this may have been a residence of a high status individual, if not the cacique then perhaps a principal of the barrio indicated by this sign.

Following his pleasant sojourn in Yanhuitlán, Father Cobo continued north, passing through San Juan Teposcolula, which he noted was 2 leagues journey. Dominating a commanding site with a sweeping long view down the valley, the church of San Juan Teposcolula is an early colonial structure, unusual for its three aisled basilica plan. Juan B. Artigas has suggested that the triple naved basilica was built in the 1590s onto an earlier simple open chapel consisting only of what is now the apse. This chapel in itself would have been an important experiment in the evolution of Dominican architectural spaces devoted to the performance of sacred drama culminating in the more spectacular examples at Coixtlahuaca and Teposcolula. Of special interest here, however, is the residential building immediately south of the church. (figs. 112 & 113) Visual analysis indicates that this is a mid sixteenth-century building. San Juan was a visita of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula, and while it was not a recognized convento, the building next to the church was clearly intended to be a residential facility, perhaps for friars visiting in the course of their regular liturgical duties in the town. But as Father Cobo's letter shows, travelers from Oaxaca passed this way en route to México on what was then the direct route, or Camino Real. San Pedro y San Pablo may have been a larger population center with a larger church and "accepted" priory, but it was also a long way from the direct north-south camino, and notably absent from Father Cobo's list.
of points along his route which did include, however, Tejupan, Tamazulapan, Huahuapan among others that anyone making the same journey would pass today. Perhaps, then, the building at San Juan was a stopping point in the Dominican chain from México to Guatemala, perhaps this building functioned as a hostelry, or méson, for travelers along the chain as well as an overnight residence for friars from the cabecera at Teposcolula visiting for missionary and liturgical duties.

The residential building at San Juan was quite well built, with standing walls completely of stone. There is no evidence in what survives of stone vaulted rooms perhaps because this building was not built for a rich local cacique, as was the building Cobo described, but rather for occasional use by friars from the convento at Teposcolula and for mostly mendicant and other travelers on the camino real. Nevertheless there is a fireplace set neatly into the wall, as in fashionable buildings back in Spain. The windows are all marked by carefully cut jambs and the doors have semicircular compression arches carved out of large stone voussoirs with elaborate mouldings. This is not a rude hut, but an elegant building suitable for dignified, high status, if not rich, individuals. With its elegant features it has much in common with another distinctive building, this one in San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula, built not for the comfort of Spanish travelers but as the residence of a Mixtec Queen.
NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE:

1. An earlier version of substantial portions of this chapter and the following chapter entitled "Architectural Fusion and Indigenous Ideology in Early Colonial Teposcolula: The Casa de la Cacica, Teposcolula, Oaxaca, Mexico: A Building at the Edge of Oblivion" was presented at the 48th International Congress of Americanists, "Threatened Peoples and Environments in the Americas," Stockholm, Sweden, July 4-9, 1994 in the Symposium "Latin American Colonial Architecture and Urbanism on the Fringes." The paper was subsequently published in the Anales of the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, No. 66, 1995, pp. 45-84, benefiting from comments made by the discussants Elisa Vargas Lujo and Damián Bayón and other members of the symposium, especially Humberto Rodríguez-Camilloni, Sydney Markman, Clara Bargellini, and Robert Mullen. Further field research was made possible by a generous dissertation year fellowship awarded by the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies supported by the Mellon and Ford Foundations. An abbreviated version of this chapter with a slightly broader focus was presented as "Cultural Integration and Architectural Fusion as a Strategy for Survival: the Iconographic Use of Disk Frieze Ornament in Pre-Columbian and Early Colonial Buildings" at a conference on "Cultural Transmission and Transformation in the Ibero-American World, 1200-1800" at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, October 21-22, 1995, in press, available upon request from the Inter-American Institute for Advanced Studies in Cultural History, P.O. Box 93, Free Union, Va., 22940.

In response to comments made concerning my use of the word fusion, I will cite the definition offered by The New Practical Standard Dictionary of the English Language, New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1957:

fusion: 1.) the act of blending, or the state of being blended throughout. 2.) Specifically, the act of coalescing two political parties...

and

fusion welding: A process of joining metal parts by applying high temperatures to the contact surfaces, thus fusing them together without the use of rivets or other mechanical means.

In the case of the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula and other early colonial buildings in which clearly and distinctly identifiable architectural elements from both the pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican and European traditions are joined together in what was a highly complex and intense cultural process involving the commingling of aesthetics, technologies, multi-racial design teams and labor forces, I believe it is appropriate to view, metaphorically perhaps, the results as a fusion, or cultural fusion weld. The result was a new building type, with identifiable elements of both
cultures in varying proportions, and yet blended throughout in the very process of building where local building traditions, such as stone quarrying and carving were used together with and sometimes modified by, imported technologies such as steel tools. Therefore, while there may be clearly picked out a European detail here, a Mesoamerican detail there, the underlying process of construction was blended throughout. In this way both senses of fusion and fusion weld as defined above are appropriate and correct as I intend them to be understood in my discussion here.


9. Miller, Mary Ellen. *The Art of Mesoamerica from Olmec to Aztec*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1986, p. 192. Miller added that though there may have been Mixtec influence, the glyphs accompanying these murals were strictly Maya, demonstrating that they were intended for a Maya audience.


11. Marquina, *Arquitectura prehispánica*. p.371-388. He reproduced the Mixtec murals in black and white which can be compared with those of Tulum reproduced on p. 823. For a general synthesis well illustrated with images and drawings see also: Robles García, Nelly M. et al. *Mitla*. Oaxaca: Tule, 1989. Robles argued that at the moment of contact Mitla was a Zapotec village, but it is generally accepted, as she pointed out, that in the Late Post Classic period pressure from the Aztec north resulted in military alliances between the Zapotecs and Mixtecs. Spores has noted in conversation that demographic pressure was another factor urging the Mixtecs to find new territories. Most agree that while the buildings at Mitla were built by Zapotecs, at some point they were occupied by Mixtecs and the murals, clearly Mixtec work by all accounts, full of diagnostic pictographic features, were applied during a period of Mixtec presence in Mitla. While the buildings may have in some cases deteriorated, or been put to other than original uses, the site was nevertheless inhabited and in use by high status individuals at Spanish Contact.


17. Miller. *The Art of Mesoamerica*. p. 192. However, Lathrop, S. K. *Tulum*. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Institute, 1924, felt the buildings were fourteenth century or later, contemporary with Mayapan, and George Kubler, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient America*. London: Penguin Group, 1990, p. 321, argued for eleventh century. I am more inclined to agree with Lathrop, based upon visual inspection in situ. But as Kubler pointed out, the buildings were often rebuilt, so what we see may well be results of several campaigns stretching over a long period, and the murals may be more recent than the masonry under them, as at Mitla.

18. Humberto Rodríguez has urged caution on this point, recalling Panofsky's observation that meaning usually changes with time. To the extent that the exact nature and type of high status activities associated with the buildings bearing disk friezes may have changed over time I would agree that Panofsky's point applies, but to the extent that the disk frieze is, so far as I can determine, always throughout the centuries in which these buildings are encountered, an indicator of high status activity I would reiterate that there is persistence of meaning transmitted by the disk friezes at a general level over seven centuries.


20. Ibid, plate 26, see also his discussion of the *Codex Mendoza*: pp. 95-107.


26. Robertson. *Mexican Manuscript...* Plate 33, see also his discussion to the Codex Osuna: pp. 115-122.


31. See Pita Moreda. *Los Predicadores Novohispanos...* p. 247-249. Pita Moreda noted that in areas of Dominican the first *cofradías* were Confraternities of the Most Holy Rosary. She states that *cofradías* began to be formed by the decade of the 1560s, and that by the 1570s *pueblos de indios* were using these institutions for their own political and economic defense, often as financial alternatives to the *caja de comunidad* which she says had become by that time subject to abuse by the friars and caciques. Susan Webster emphasized in conversation in March 1995 her belief, based on her own research in the episcopal archive of Puebla, that *cofradías* were actively founded by the mendicant orders much earlier than has been generally been assumed.

32. Kubler. *Mexican Architecture...* See Figure 132, p. 249. His footnote #42, p. 249 contains the following information:

The dates are given in the *Anales mexicanos*, no. 1, as copied and translated by Chimalpopoca in the *Anales Ramírez*, MS, fol. 437: 1556, "Comenzó la iglesia de S. Miguel"; 1558, "se levantó S. Miguel." See Cervantes de Salazar, *Crónica de la Nueva España*, p. 321. Allusion to it is made in the narrative of Ponce's travels. Ca. 1585, it was ministered by the Franciscans. *Relación...Ponce*. I, 57-8.Pt. 86.

33. Ibid. p. 487-88. The building was begun in 1570.

35. Kubler, *Mexican Architecture...* . p. 452-3, noted that the Franciscans evangelized this area before 1547 when the population was listed, according to Catálogo...Hidalgo, at 820 tributaries. Kubler said that the main church in the town, some miles from this small chapel which he did not mention, was an Augustinian establishment from c. 1560 with links to Acolman and Yecapixtla. The proximity of this community to the large Franciscan center at Tula inclined Kubler to believe that the Franciscan presence in Atotonilco de Tula was dependent on the larger house at Tula. Kubler notes (p. 484) that the Franciscans were active at Tula beginning in 1529, built a primitive church there before 1546, and replaced it with the current edifice after 1550, and the Convento from 1553-61. I am inclined to think that the Cemetery Chapel at Atotonilco de Tula may be a survival from the initial Franciscan evangelization, and that it dates from the 1540’s. The Augustinian Church in the center of the town today may have been built as part of a new town built to congregate the people in an urban environment, not unlike the sequence in Teposcolula. An old photograph, probably from the 1930’s, appeared in Mac Gregor, Luis. *El Plateresco en México*. México: Editorial Porrua, 1954, pl. 78. Considerable deterioration has occurred since this photograph was taken, calling attention to the need for an immediate preservation intervention at this important and extremely rare site of transitional architecture.

36. O’Gorman, Helen. *Mexican Flowering Trees and Plants*. México: Ammex Associados, 1961, p. 154. She wrote: "Very few people outside of Mexico know that the dahlia was originally Mexican, an imperial jewel in the time of Moctezuma, and greatly loved by him and his cousin, the poet-king Netzahualcoyotl."


39. Reyes-Valerio, Constantino. *Arte Indocrismano*. México: SEP, 1978. see photo 241. Tequixquiac lies north of Mexico City on Rt. 167, below Atotonilco de Tula. A visit to the site in March 1995 failed to locate the disk frieze in his photo, however it appeared that the tower in question had been altered in remodeling since 1978 and this may explain the absence of what may be seen in his photograph.
40. There are several smaller examples in the city as well, including the Capilla de San Francisco which displays three double concentric ring disks on its principal facade.

41. A photograph and description of surviving ruins of this structure may be seen in Artigas, Juan B. Capillas abiertas aisladades de México. México: Facultad de Arquitectura, UNAM, 1983.

42. Benítez. La ciudad de México.

43. See for example the place sign of Amusgos on the Lienzo of Zacatepec. Smith. Picture Writing. Fig 114, p. 293; For other early documents showing disk friezes see also: Autry, William O. "Selected Maps, Codices, and plans for the Oaxaca region in the Colonial Period Collections of the Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico and the Mapoteca Manuel Orozco y Berra, Mexico City." MS, Chicago, University of Chicago, Summer 1991. A copy of this with photographs reproducing the documents cited may be seen in the Instituto Welte in Oaxaca in which he kindly gave this address for those interested in further information: William O. Autry, 59389 County Road 13, Elkhart, Indiana, 46517-3503, Telephone: 219-875-7237. I do not know if this is current. He gives the following citations, among others:

AGN#: 867 Mistepec, Map, 1595, Tamo Tierras, Vol # 876, expd 1
this shows 3 Churches with friezes, mostly rectilinear step fret

AGN#: 899 Teposcolula, Tecamatlan Y Jaltepetango, Map, 1724
1692.8 This shows ruling couple sitting on mat in palace with frieze for
kingdom beneath.

AGN#: 2463 Tlaxiaco area, Coquila, map, 1599, Ramo Tierras, vol 3539, expd. 4,
22 fojas. This shows church with disk frieze, palace with kingdom frieze and
place glyph of ocelotl in a mountain.

44. Personal interview with the President of the Municipality, August 1992, and
Kubler. Mexican Architecture... p. 520.

45. INAH. Catalogo Nacional Monumentos Históricos Inmuebles Xochimilco. D.F.,

46. Personal communication, October 21, 1995. I would add that even though the
building was substantially remodeled, there is a flower disk over a first floor door
which appears to be original construction, and the flower disk over the door
matches those high above the second story windows, indicating that these upper
flower disks are also part of the original fabric of the building.
47. Kubler. *Mexican Architecture...* p. 512. For an award winning study of the lush iconography within the convento at Malinalco see: Peterson, Jeanette F. *The Paradise Garden Murals of Malinalco, Utopia and Empire in Sixteenth Century Mexico.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993. An illustration of this disk frieze may be seen on p. 154, close-up p. 150. It is worth pointing out that the portería of Totolapan closely resembles that at Malinalco, and that Totolapan also has a frieze of disks with Christian symbols prominently displayed above the arcade.

48. The identification of the place glyph was explained by Louise Burkhart in conversation March 31, 1993, see also: Peterson, *Paradise Garden Murals...* p. 150.

49. A quite similar disk frieze may also be seen at Totolopan, though I have not noticed any surviving traces of paint there.

50. After a long telephone conversation during which Dr. Peterson very kindly responded to my many questions on this topic, I sent her a picture of this cross. Later she had a chance to look at it in Malinalco. We talked about it again at a meeting in Denver in October 1993 and she said then that she doubted it was an atrio cross owing to its small size. I have indeed seen larger atrio crosses, but I have also seen atrio crosses of similar size and even smaller size, such as at Tlaluelilpa. If this was not the principal atrio cross, it no doubt served as an important visual reinforcement to the central message of the ongoing evangelical program in the area, perhaps at a visita or posa chapel. Also present in Denver was Tita Gerlero who doubted my identification of this flower as Morning Glory, but kindly pointed out that the Augustinians often used the Passion Flower in their iconography.

51. See: Monteverde, Mildred. *Sixteenth-Century Mexican Atrio Crosses.* Los Angeles: University of Los Angeles, 1972 Doctoral Dissertation, to date this is the most comprehensive study of the subject.

52. On the mountain immediately adjoining and overlooking the colonial era town, there is a pre-Columbian site cut from the living rock in which Eagle and Jaguar knights were initiated. In convento behind the atrio in which this cross was located in the vault over the cloister stairwell there is painted in fresco a large, prominent bird with wings spread over its nest in which baby birds are visible. It is not immediately apparent whether this is a representation of an eagle, a bird figuring importantly in local pre-Columbian iconography, or a pelican. As George Ferguson pointed out in *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 23:

According to legend, the pelican, which has the greatest love of all creatures for its offspring, pierces its breast to feed them with its own blood. It is on the basis of this legend that the pelican came to symbolize Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, because of His love for all mankind. In this sense, it also

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symbolizes the Eucharistic Sacrament.
The ambivalence of possible interpretations of this rendering suggests a further intermingling of iconography surely not lost on the Augustinian friars of Malinalco. Weckmann notes that the Augustinians were more willing to accommodate indigenous tradition. Weckmann, Luis, The Medieval Heritage...., 204.

53. Kubler, Mexican Architecture..., p. 523. He noted it was substantially complete by 1586. This, again rather small, atrio cross probably dates from the mid 16th century. If this is not the original atrio cross, it is set up in the middle of the atrio on axial alignment with the altar of the church, as is the case today at Huejotzingo. But as Mildred Monteverde pointed out in her dissertation cited above, the cross in the atrio at Huejotzingo is not the original atrio cross, but may instead have originally stood atop one of the posas.

54. Sydney Markman suggested in conversation on March 25 1993 that the motif at the crossing might also represent a Sunburst symbol of the Church.


56. Ibid.

57. Kubler, Mexican Architecture..., p. 480. The guardian of the open chapel in August 1992 pointed out that these double concentric rings came from pre-Hispanic buildings on the site, and Kubler (p. 479) noted that the "Indian shrines at Tlamanalco were destroyed in 1525..." The guardian was also proud to point out to an interested visitor the pre-Hispanic sculptural representation of a local diety, recently added in a discrete corner of the garden, which he had carefully enhanced with lovely floral plantings. This guardian, retired from a long career in factory work, had been responsible for the maintenance of the garden in front of the open chapel for some time, and had personally created a miniature paradise of some of the most spectacular roses and fragrant flowering plants and shrubs to be seen anywhere in Mexico. Flowers in a place of ritual performance, flowers in the friezes, flowers in the disks, flowers in the mind, flowers in the sacramental imagination.

58. See color reproduction in: Levenson, Jane A., ed. Circa 1492, Art in the Age of Exploration, New Haven: Yale University Press and National Gallery of Art, 1992, page 558. I have closely examined this exquisite basalt sculpture several times in Mexico City, and once much more thoroughly and at some length while it was on exhibit in Washington D.C in January 1992.


62. Pita Moreda. Los Predicadores... p. 249. She cited Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de México, # 2564. My free translation. I reproduce Pita Moreda’s Spanish transcription of the original below:

Los frailes de Yanhuitlán persuajeron a Don Gabriel, cacique del dicho pueblo a que se hiciese una casa muy suntuosa a fin de detener la obra del monasterio, porque si se acaba perderán los intereses que llevan a los indios y las sobras de tributos que les son mandadas dar. Y de hacer casa el cacique se sigue gran daño a los frailes les pobres porque se alarga la obra del monasterio, y si hay lugar de que los frailes les llevan más tiempo, lo que les llevan, y ellos no tengan lugar a labrar sus tierras, ni a ganar para pagar los tributos al encomendero, porque le cabe a cada uno cuatro semanas cada año ir a la obra de la iglesia; dos a sacar piedra a la cantera; y dos a hacer cal; y una al monte a cortar madera; y otra a traer la cal al monasterio; y otra a cogar zacate para los frailes y la comunidad y servicios de frailes, caciques y comunidad; y seis a hacer las milpas del cacique hasta que se lo dan encerrado en su casa; y otras seis a los frailes en la milpa que siembran de trigo y de maíz. Pues, si sobre lo que está ya dicho han de dar otras cuatro semanas a la casa del cacique, que no les queda a ellos tiempo para hacer y labrar sus milpas, y esta causa padecen necesidad muy grande los pobres. Y de todo estos tequios y obras no les dan paga ninguna a los indios más de como se lo mandan los frailes y el cacique, y así lo hacen porque no hay por la parte de los pobres quien responda.

63. See: Terraciano. Ñudzahui History...

64. Romero, C. A., "Dos Cartas inéditas del P. Bernabé Cobo, " Instituto histórico del Perú, Lima, Revista histórica, tomo VIII-entregas I-III (1925), 26-50, p. 35. Transcription of this passage by Romero reads as follows in Spanish:

En este mismo pueblo de Yanguitlán vi la casa del cacique que es de la misma obra que la iglesia, toda de sillería con grande patio quadrado a la entrada que se corre en el toros, y dentro tiene otros dos claustros menores de columnas de piedra, y las salas de boueda con sus chimeneas en ellas a lo de corte, casa por cierto capaz de aposentarse en ella la persona real. Detuvieme en aquel pueblo 3 días en casa de un pariente del Pe. Ror. recibiendo todo regalo posible: vi en los terminos deste pueblo arboles de madroños y la plaza del tiene una alameda de alamos blancos.

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Kubler, *Mexican Architecture...*, referred to this with out quoting from it, and gave an incorrect bibliographic citation, a problem overcome by the kindness of the reference desk at Duke University Library.


66. There is an oral tradition in Yanhuitlán related to me by the brothers David and Norberto Jiménez, one of whom was the sacristán, that a large set of standing walls built of mud and rubble south of the Convento complex was once the Casa del Cacique of Yanhuitlán. This was confirmed by Ronald Spores in conversation February 1993. The brothers also related that these walls once had been clad in fine cut stone, but that the cacique had given [sold?] this fine stone for work on the Dominican church. Certainly the current facade of the church is a later baroque addition, applied directly over the original, probably more plain, facade. This is apparent when standing in the doorway and looking straight up. The original door had pyramidal ornament such as is found at Tlaxiaco and Tejupan, and in several places within the convento at Teposcolula. The stone of the new facade certainly matches the rest of the building, and if it is true that the stone cladding of the Casa del Cacique of Yanhuitlán was removed after Cobo saw it in 1630 for work on the church, then Cobo would have been correct in his observation that the work on the Casa was of the same kind of stone as the church. The facade certainly has a mid seventeenth-century look. Thus, the oral tradition of the Jiménez brothers may well originate in fact. Stratigraphic excavation within the high walled compound would reveal much about the early history of colonial Yanhuitlán, but until now this has not been possible.


Chapter VI

CONCLUSION:

ARCHITECTURAL FUSION AND INDIGENOUS IDEOLOGY:

URBAN PLANNING IN EARLY COLONIAL TEPOSCOLULA

CULTURAL INTEGRATION IN THE NEW SACRED LANDSCAPE
The context created in the previous chapters permits us now to finally turn our attention to the central issue of this study, Casa de la Cacica and its place in the new sacred landscape of Teposcolula. (figs. 114–130) In what follows the approximate construction date will be identified, based upon evidence I have assembled, and an iconographic and ideological interpretation of its meaning in the new urbanization will be offered.

At San Juan Teposcolula a road branches southwest toward Tlaxiaco and the coast from the path followed by Father Cobo. About twelve kilometers from San Juan along this road is San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula, justly famous for its spectacular open chapel. But a lesser known yet equally important building stands on a rise overlooking this great open chapel and in a direct and deliberate axial alignment with its altar.¹ It is known locally as the "Casa de la Cacica" and it has much in common with the building described by Father Cobo and with the Tecpan of Mexico seen in the Codex Osuna.²

The Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula is actually a compound including a principal structure still bearing the distinctive disk frieze ornament characteristic of a royal residence, as well as several smaller buildings arranged around a large walled enclosure. Today in this enclosure are kept various animals, including at times a small herd of cows, a pair of donkeys, some dogs and occasionally a pig or two.³(figs 131 & 132) If cleared of the debris of some collapsed rooms, a large manure pile, and numerous agricultural implements, the enclosure might still
comfortably host a bull fight. The vestiges of a fountain show that fresh water was run to the compound and suggest that this enclosure was once landscaped in a luxurious fashion. (fig. 133)  

Another important similarity with the building illustrated in the *Codex Osuna* is the continuation of the disk frieze on the upper portion of the enclosing wall. (figs. 135 & 136) While this detail survives only in a fragment at the junction of the outer wall with the north east corner of the principal structure, it is enough to demonstrate the remarkably close similarity, if not indeed identical conception of this complex and the Tecpan of México. While the exterior walls of the residential portion of the *Casa de la Cacica* survive more or less intact, the perimeter wall of the enclosure and the rooms joining it have been badly damaged, by neglect if by nothing else. The masonry at the juncture of the perimeter wall with the north east corner of the main building strongly suggests that the main building and the perimeter wall were not built simultaneously, but that the perimeter wall came after the main building. (fig. 137)  

Although the surviving fragment of the disk frieze on the perimeter wall is constructed in precisely the same way as that on the main building, it appears to have been damaged and then repaired or added on to in a more clumsy execution. A possible explanation for the absence of the disk frieze elsewhere on the perimeter wall might be that the work was never finished during the original campaign, perhaps another casualty of the epidemic of 1576-78. But there is clear, unmistakable evidence of the beginning of a frieze on the north wall of the enclosure which, if the
rest had been completed or had survived, would present today a building compound virtually identical to that seen in the *Codex Osuna*.

And, like the building in the *codex*, the *Casa de la Cacica* makes emphatic use of European technology and taste in the elaborate compression arches, richly ornamented with carved moldings. Yet another similarity is that there are outbuildings built against the perimeter wall and that there was once an opening in the perimeter wall aligned with the principal door of the main building. Finally, it is worth noting that on the east and west facades, that is, the long facades, of the *Casa de la Cacica* the disks appear in two groups of seven, and in the *codex* the *Tecpan* clearly shows the disks in a single group of seven, two groups of seven may have been too difficult to render in the reduced scale of the drawing.

Based upon a close examination and comparison of the masonry techniques employed at the Dominican complex and at the *Casa de la Cacica*, it is beyond doubt that these projects were built more or less concurrently and by the same crews. (figs. 138-140) The initial program of construction at the Dominican project was terminated before completion in 1579, probably as a result of the epidemic of 1576-78. The crews were then assigned to work on another private project, perhaps at the *Casa de la Cacica*. Concurrent construction of these two projects would parallel the pattern at Yanhuitlán, which as Cobo noted were "of the same work." So it would appear that the *Casa de la Cacica* was under construction and nearly completed in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, paralleling again the case at Yanhuitlán. However, surviving documentary evidence permits some
conclusions leading to a more precise dating.

Kubler refers to the pre-1565 Tecpan of Mexico as a residence and describes the 1576 Tecpan of Tlatelolco as a richly appointed municipal building. While both would have been used by high status indigenous leaders, there is a difference between a municipal building and a residence, and it may well be that this difference had to do with chronology. The building pictured in the Codex Osuna is clearly identified in a written text immediately above the building as "Tecpa’ calli méxico" or tecpan house of Mexico. The building Father Cobo described has much in common with that pictured in the Codex Osuna, and with the description in the Códice...Tlatelolco Kubler draws on and the surviving fragment of the arcade. Yet in the Yanhuitlán case Father Cobo specifically referred to this as the Casa del Cacique, which is the same usage as in the case of Teposcolula except that in Teposcolula it is cast in the feminine: Casa de la Cacica. A possible explanation for this may be found in a document dated 1563 from the Viceroy Don Luis de Velasco in which he officially declared and recognized the legitimate claim to the caciguazco of Teposcolula by don Felipe de Austria, who was cacique of Teozacualco but who had married the natural cacica of Teposcolula and had his living there. Evidently she was a hereditary ruler in her own right prior to the marriage, and the Casa may have been built as her house, hence "Casa de la Cacica."

In 1560 the Viceroy don Luis de Velasco issued a "merced," or grant, authorizing Teposcolula, among other towns in the Mixteca, to furnish workers, "algunos macehualtes," every week specifically for the personal service to the
'principales,' to work on their lands and houses. So the repartimiento of labor was officially in place for the construction of a house for the cacica, and work of a very similar kind had already been ongoing at the Dominican convento down the hill at least since 1550. Clearly, then, there were by 1560 skilled masons at work in Teposcolula in sufficient numbers to build by 1563 a structure such as the main building at the Casa de la Cacica, even working in small teams on a rotational basis. If indeed this is the case, then the residential portion of the complex may have already been in existence by 1563, and associated with this natural cacica. The 1563 date suggested by Viceroy Velasco's recognition of Felipe de Austria is reinforced by the certainty of the 1565 date of the illustration in the Codex Osuna, which pictures a building of precisely the same type. Further reinforcement comes from the 1563 letter from Alonso Caballero of cited above, showing with the viceroy's 1560 merced that projects of this kind were officially encouraged and indeed underway in Yanhuitlan by 1563. It is reasonable to conclude then, on the basis of this evidence and an examination of the building itself that the residential portion of the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula dates from approximately 1563. If the work on the Dominican complex came to an abrupt end in 1579 and the workers were assigned to another private project, it may have been an addition to the Casa de la Cacica, and this may help explain the obvious discontinuous joint at the northeast corner of the original building noted above.

By 1575 don Felipe de Austria was no longer cacique of Teposcolula, as shown in a document from that year. It appears that don Diego de Mendoza,
legitimate son of Diego de Orozco and María Zárate, caciques of Zoyaltepeque, was himself cacique of Teposcolula and Tamazulapan, in which towns he lived, and not wishing to live in or be cacique of Zoyaltepeque, he gave the cacicazgo to his brother, don Bartolomé. This suggests that don Diego came into possession of Teposcolula by marriage, as had Don Felipe de Austria before him. Furthermore, by December 1580 another dynastic change had occurred in Teposcolula, a Domingo de Zúñiga had become "cacique y gobernador," and he had asked the Viceroy don Lorenzo Suárez de Mendoza for permission to ride in a saddle with a bridle on a jennet, or small Spanish horse. The Viceroy granted his request.10

If there was, about 1579, an addition or modification to the Casa de la Cacica, it may have reflected a transition in the use of the building from a private residence of the hereditary ruler, or "cacica natural," to a municipal building. Certainly it appears that Teposcolula had passed by marriage out of the local ruling family responsible for the construction of the original main building within the Casa de la Cacica compound, and after the catastrophic changes brought by the plague of 1576-78, the building may have ceased to be a residence. There is documentary evidence suggesting that this may indeed have been the case, and offering a possible explanation for an interruption in the work on the disk frieze on the enclosure wall.

On the fifteenth of December 1580 the Viceroy don Lorenzo Suárez de Mendoza, Conde de Coruña wrote that he had been informed by "algunos naturales" of Teposcolula that for many days a Spaniard, one Miguel Sánchez, had
been occupying "las casas de la comunidad" where the Indians had been having their "cabildos y ayuntamientos" and had been storing their goods and tributes for His Majesty. The viceroy ordered the Spaniard to vacate the buildings immediately, and without delay, and without continuing to occupy any part thereof.11 This incident suggests that there was some kind of trouble in the "casas de la comunidad" at about the time that Domingo de Zúñiga, perhaps newly possessed of the cacicazgo, was applying for his permit to ride a horse. There may have been serious disruptions in dynastic continuity resulting from the epidemic which gave an opening to the opportunistic Spaniard, Miguel Sánchez. These disruptions may have interrupted construction before the building program in progress was fully implemented.

The Casa de la Cacica was not an isolated, stand alone architectural expression of an indigenous ideological agenda. Rather it was part of an integrated program of urban design openly and obviously intended to demonstrate and celebrate the continuing prestige of the "cacica natural" of Teposcolula in the new colonial regime. The relationship between the principal elements of the built environment in early colonial Teposcolula was not accidental, but the result of careful planning from the beginning of the urbanization. The people of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula were persuaded by the Dominican friars to move from their mountain top redoubt to the floor of the valley sometime after 1535. Indeed, the place name of the community center was known to the Mixtecs before contact as "Yucu Ndaa, " meaning "on the flat top of the mountain,"12 which is a good description of the site now known as the "Pueblo Viejo."
Of course the Dominicans were interested in the construction of a suitable religious center as the focal point for a new Christian life in community. This required a new urban form. Furthermore, the people of Teposcolula no longer required the protection offered by hill-top locations for their settlements because the long period of armed struggle against the imperial ambitions of the brutal Aztec regime had been ended by the Spanish led popular revolution. The construction of colonial San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula was in progress by 1540, and well under way by 1550 when the buildings of the present Dominican convento and open chapel were certainly under construction, partially replacing some of the primitive structures of the initial campaign.

By 1550, then, the layout and arrangement of the Dominican complex had been finalized, and with it the layout and arrangement of the traza, or grid of the street plan. Along with the establishment of the traza went the distribution of building lots. Certainly it is no accident that the most prestigious parcel of urban real estate was reserved for the ruler, with its prominent location overlooking the spectacular open chapel and precisely situated in direct axial alignment with its altar. Nor would this open and obvious relationship have been lost on villagers, nor pilgrims from other communities, standing in the atrio between the deliberately aligned open chapel and cacica's house on the hill with its clearly visible disk frieze, the royal insignia.

These two structures were the two most prestigious, most distinctive architectural statements in the new town. One was the new ceremonial center for
Christian ritual performance, the other the residence of the hereditary ruler of the community. The relationship of the buildings suggests a relationship of their functions. The open chapel is the most spectacular stage for the enactment of the sacred drama of the Mass ever erected in the New World. It is completely without European precedent. In its marvelous synthesis of Gothic and Renaissance forms and techniques it exceeds in its complexity, elegance and stupendous scale all other open chapels. It was a fabulous architectural concentration of wealth, of wealth the Mixtecs of Teposcolula kept for themselves, to be permanently, conspicuously displayed and enjoyed by them, as well as any others who might come to see their treasure.

Such an undertaking required careful planning and decision making for so vast an allocation of resources. Naturally the Dominican friars encouraged such lavish undertakings of religious devotion, but without the approval and continuing support of the indigenous leadership, no such building would have been built. Under compulsion perhaps some other building might have been forced out of them, but not this building. Not one, but many complex decisions were made along the way to realizing so unique and so prestigious a temple. And these were decisions made by the Mixtec leaders. The friars provided design and technical support and plenty of enthusiastic encouragement, but the Mixtecs provided the resources.

It is not known if any of the Mixtec leaders of Teposcolula actually labored on the project themselves, though this seems unlikely. The decisions they made to build this building, thus were carried out by the general population, on whose backs
the countless blocks of stone were transported. But temple building has never been easy, neither in pre-Columbian times nor since. At least in the case of colonial Teposcolula the project was located on the floor of the valley, and not on a mountain top.

The new open chapel no doubt served not only as a locus for the celebration of the Mass, it served also, as we have seen, for the enactment of other, less liturgical, more pedagogical religious dramas and processions during the holiday festival cycles. The Casa with its easily recognized disk frieze, basking in the reflected glory and sharing the prestige of the community's great architectural achievement, is perfectly located for viewing the ritual activities performed in the chapel. Furthermore, when the royal couple descended from their palace to take their place at Mass under the dome of the fabulous open chapel, their stately procession — along the axis linking these two most important buildings of the community, dressed in the elaborately gorgeous clothing typical of Mixtec rulers — would certainly have made an impressive display to the thousands of commoners assembled in the atrio. Indeed, such a living display would make complete the meaning built into the new sacred landscape providing a new architectural context for ceremony and hierarchy in community life. And this ideological statement encoded in the most significant and obvious spatial relationships of this new urban environment was further, vividly reinforced by the iconographic statement made by the disk frieze proudly displayed on the rulers' palace.

Nasser O. Rabbat has argued that iconographic symbolism in buildings, as
distinct from specific articles of devotional art, carries significance in more general, 
more layered, multiple meanings, and that therefore interpretation must be 
suggestive rather than definitive. 13 With the above examples and Rabbat's caution 
in mind, I will now attempt an interpretation of the various possible meanings 
intended by the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula. The meaning of the Disk Frieze 
motif as used at the Casa de la Cacica in Teposcolula cannot be explained with 
absolute certainty. What I propose in the following discussion, therefore, is a 
tentative interpretation.

We have seen in the case of the five lobed disk on the tower at Tialmanalco 
what appears to be a reference to psychotropic plants used by the Nahua in pre-
Hispanic times in religious ceremony. These plants had a powerful effect on those 
who ate them. They were referred to metaphorically as the flesh of God, and 
partaking of them led to mystic experience and contact with the divine. At Malinalco 
and Yecapixtla flowers appear to be represented on the atrio crosses in a way that 
is suggestive of sacramental significance because the flowers resemble the shape 
of the Christian sacramental wafer, because the flowers are pierced by a cross, and 
because a chalice is shown below them, apparently receiving the Blood of Christ. 
This symbolism suggests that the presence of Christ in the Host is like the presence 
of God in the psychotropic plants. Eating the flesh of God is, in both cases, a 
sacramental, transforming act expressing symbolic and mystical communion with 
God. And the use of a flower symbol might have had the added advantage of 
expressing the relationship of the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross with the
Eucharistic Miracle of the Mass in recognizable terms referring to similar significance from the pre-Columbian symbolic lexicon.

Every example of colonial era Disk Frieze ornament or isolated disk ornament I have found has occurred either in a location of Christian religious significance, or on a building associated with indigenous rulers in the early contact period. In the pre-Columbian era, the indigenous elite controlled religious activity and access to the sacraments, and to the divine, the ultimate source of power and legitimacy. The coming of the friars officially terminated their control of religious activity, although they were welcomed as participants in the new religion, and often took leading roles in Christian religious life as laymen. Of course, as seen in surviving records of Inquisition proceedings, there are well known examples of pre-Columbian religious rites—often blended with elements from Christianity—conducted by Mixtec leaders as late as the 1640's, suggesting that they were not entirely satisfied with their place in the new religious regime.

I suggest that the use of the Disk Frieze ornament at the Casa de la Cacica was employed by the native leaders to make a visual, architectural statement alluding to their legitimacy as rulers by the use of the recognized pre-Columbian symbolism denoting royal residences, but also using their palace as an architectural expression of the leadership role they wished to maintain under the new religious system.

The disks at the Casa de la Cacica have similarities with the other disk frieze buildings already discussed. As at Xkixmook, Tulum, Atotonilco de Tula, and the
Casa at Xochimilco, among others, at Teposcolula the disks depict distinctly petaled flowers with a deep central cavity suggesting a sculptural representation of some trumpet shaped flower. Furthermore, as at Tulum and Tlayacapan, among others, the disks alternate between a round and a multilobular outline, as if to distinguish between two types of flowers in a stylized but effective abstraction.

My ongoing research aims at positively identifying flowers corresponding to the explicit forms depicted in the disks, and identifying patterns in the iconographic-ideological use of disk friezes throughout post-conquest Mexico. As part of this effort on 5 November 1994 I showed Dr. Leslie Garay a series of slides from my field work. These included slides of the disks on the Casa de la Cacica, a pair of nearly identical disks on the tower of church at Yolomecatl (a colonial sujeto of Teposcolula 10 km. west on the way to Tlaxiaco, near the great pre-Columbian ceremonial center at Hualmalulpan), the disks on the chapel at Atotonilco de Tula, the disks on the tower of the church at Tlalmanalco, and the flowers on the arm of the statue of the Flower Prince, Xochipili, discovered in Tlalmanalco in 1885.16 Looking at the alternating disks on the Casa de la Cacica he confirmed my suspicions when he said without hesitation that the multilobular one with spikes is datura and the round one is morning glory, both plants much used in ritual intoxication in pre-conquest Mexico. Pointing to many varieties of each in the Badianus Manuscript, he said both were abundantly present in the flora of Oaxaca of the period of contact.17 We discussed the curling C shape seen on the Teposcolula, Yolomecatl and Tlalmanalco disks and Dr. Garay said his first impression was that this could have
been an artistic or stylized way of indicating the petals having a curled shape which unfolds as they bloom. He further pointed out, drawing on his many years of experience interpreting historic documents and renderings of plants, that this would have been a botanically accurate depiction in this case for these flowers. He agreed without hesitation that the flower on the chapel at Atotonilco could be a dahlia, but his first impression was sun-flower. Clearly this is a composite flower, rather than one with 5 or 6 petals. He pointed out that the middle disk on Tlalmanalco had five "C" shaped lines with curling ends, and that the flower on Xochipili's knee and forearm had only three of these shapes, so that the while these two representations were not identical, they had formal similarities. He later said that this could be a form of visual short-hand on the Xochipili examples, something he had often encountered in looking at old codices, where often the images conveyed the first impression rather than a precise rendering of reality.

Based upon Garay's expert confirmation it is safe to say that the botanical identities of the flowers on the disks at Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula are Tlapaltic-Cataloxóchitl, or Datura stramonium, and ololiuqui, or Turbina corymbosa. I will add that ground seeds of Tlapaltic-Cataloxóchitl and ololiuqui were taken in pre-Columbian times to produce visions and to cause a certain kind of intoxication accompanied by hallucinations which were then interpreted "como adivinación."  

A further interpretation is possible by referring to Doris Heyden's research into the floral symbolism in pre-Columbian iconography. She emphasised that in pre-
Columbian times, like society itself, flowers had their own hierarchy. Furthermore, the cultivation, cutting, and use of flowers, and even the use of flower imagery, was systematically regulated and controlled according to strict rules of hierarchy enforced, even among the nobles, by severe penalties, including death. Images of specific flowers were worn on clothing as badges of rank. Citing Durán, she wrote that:

Las leyes sobre las jerarquías eran tan estrictas que todos los nobles “tenían sus insignias y sus señales en que se conocían y diferenciaban de los otros,” y los hombres de baja cuna o los que no habían hecho hazañas en la guerra podían sufrir la pena de muerte si traspasaban las barreras sociales de los mexicas.

She stated that in particular the Tlapaltic-Cataloxóchitl was reserved for the exclusive use of monarchs and nobles. Based on Heyden’s findings, then, it is clear that the use of sculptural representations of Tlapaltic-Cataloxóchitl on the disks of the Casa de la Cacica was deliberately intended to iconographically reinforce the architectural statement that this was indeed the house of someone very privileged, a fine and proper house for a royal couple.

If the case of the cross of Malinalco can be taken to shed light on possible layers of meaning suggested by the disks on the Casa, it is worth pointing out that the round white disks do resemble the round white Hostia of the Mass, at least formally. The visual association of the organic psychotropic sacraments, once (perhaps still...) the prerogative of the rulers and recognizable in the disks, with the new Christian sacrament(s) may have been employed by the native rulers to associate themselves with the prestige of the new religion. Certainly the location of
the royal palace, higher than but in direct alignment with open chapel, and
overlooking from a commanding position the atrio and town, visually conveys the
message that this is the highest status dwelling in the town. No other dwelling was
privileged with such a direct relationship to the ceremonial center. Furthermore, the
use of the Disk Frieze ornament, with its implied religious connotations symbolically
includes, or attaches this royal residence to the new sacred precinct in the atrio
below.

Another possible layer of meaning further reinforcing the relationship of the
native royal couple with the devotional practices of the new religion, perhaps
intended to focus some of these on the royal palace and indirectly on the royal
couple, may help to explain the numerical grouping of the disks. In the catechism
lessons taught by the friars important dogmatic concepts were presented in four
groups of seven, perhaps for ease in recollection or recitation: the Seven
Sacraments, the Seven Articles of Faith, the Seven Works of Corporal Mercy, the
Seven Acts of Spiritual Mercy. As we have seen in the case of the Passion
iconography displayed at Coixtlahuaca and the Rosary beads displayed on the open
chapel of Teposcolula directly facing the Casa, the friars encouraged the deliberate
use of mnemonic devices prominently displayed on architecture to implant Christian
devotional practices.24 It is possible that the native leadership of Teposcolula, which
had clearly cooperated with much else, was willing also to cooperate, for their own
reasons, in this use of architecture to display iconographic symbols that could also
be used as mnemonic aids to Christian devotion. And particularly if it would
contribute to their own prestige. This blurring or overlapping of sacramental symbolism on the rulers house may not have been accidental, if perhaps less apparent to the friars.\textsuperscript{25}

Such a reference prominently displayed on the royal palace, as a mnemonic reminder to the new catechists looking on from the atrio below, may have indeed pleased the friars. It may be nothing more than coincidence that these four groups of seven disks appear in the friezes, but there is one more piece of the puzzle worth mentioning which suggests a coordination, if not competition, with the iconographic program of the open chapel. On each of the end walls of the Casa there are eight disks in the frieze. Taking this eight and adding to it the seven from the next group of disks in the frieze of the long wall makes fifteen disks, or counters if the mnemonic theory holds. This could correspond to the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary. If this speculation on the possible numerical significance is true, it would further demonstrate a highly complex and deliberate layering of meaning. But even without the numerical dimension, the other evidence leaves it beyond doubt that this building was built to take a prominent place in the new sacred landscape and to transmit a message continuing of royal legitimacy and prestige. Thus the open and obvious combination of distinctly Mixtec pre-Hispanic architectural form and ornament with distinctly Spanish architectural form and ornament placed in direct alignment with the altar of the new ceremonial center may be viewed as a statement of the ruling couple's continuing role as religious mediators, in this case between the old and the new cult.
Dr. Rabbat suggested in conversation an alternative reading in which the ruler is viewed as participating in his own subordination by recognizing the political superiority of the new cult and regime and his need to obtain reflected prestige by association with it, and that it was this which was the organizing motive behind his decision to locate his house in this relationship with the chapel. Seen this way, he becomes a "collaborator," a heavily freighted term much used by John Murra in his discussion of Andean colonial experience.26

While there is merit in this view, I see also a creative indigenous response resulting from astute analysis of shifting political realities which actually enhanced, advanced, and enriched the native elite and their people in ways simply not possible under the Aztec regime. The native rulers actively participated as partners in the creation of a new built environment aimed at, among other things, maintaining their own dignity and prestige in the new regime. I would add that this served not only their own interest, but that of their people and the Spanish as well. I would argue further that this positive outcome was possible because the indigenous leaders were leaders, and were looking for and working toward maximizing their advantage in the crucial initial, formative stages of the new world order. They took an active, aggressive role, using every opportunity at their disposal to advance their ideological agenda, which as King showed in the pre-Columbian world meant maximizing and sustaining the prestige of the yya elite as the focal point of the religious and civic ceremonial activity. Furthermore, considering the regime existing before the arrival of the Spanish, the Mixtec rulers actually gained a degree of autonomy they did not
enjoy under the Aztec imperial system and they and their people certainly became immensely wealthier as a direct result of their favorable relationship, engineered and manipulated by the native elite, with the Spanish authorities.

It is also a certainty that the level of violence in the Mixteca declined under the Spanish regime, and that a legal system of adjudication based on clearly recognized rights granted to the Mixtecs provided a non-violent mechanism for conflict resolution which did not exist under the Aztecs. Furthermore, this legal system was open to the commoners as well as the elite, and they all used it regularly, often with genuinely helpful guidance from the friars. Moreover, Betanzos’s letter demonstrates that the Mixtecs rulers with careful calculation used the friars, including such an important and powerful friar as Betanzos, as their ambassadors to the royal court of Spain. It is clear from his letter that Betanzos was serving the Mixtec royal agenda at least as much as the Dominican agenda. I conclude, contrary to Rabbat, that this reflects creative and successful negotiation and consent, not domination and subordination.

The non-coincidental axial alignment of the Casa de la Cacica with the site of the Eucharistic miracle of the new cult demonstrates the involvement of the local indigenous ruler in planning the relationship of the most important buildings with the each other and the landscape in the creation of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula. Indeed, the non-accidental relationship of the Casa de la Cacica to the Dominican complex determined the very organization of the grid itself. This configuration of buildings establishes an open and obvious ceremonial relationship
between the residence of the indigenous rulers and the open chapel below. The rulers' house places them in a position symbolically and literally mediating between the old and the new loci of ritual performance. Indeed, whenever mass was said at the open chapel, the location of the rulers house directly in front of and overlooking the chapel could not be missed by the thousands of Indians standing in the atrio between the altar and the royal palace.

Furthermore, an apparently coordinated iconographic scheme of pre-Christian significance integrated into the new church by artisans who may also have built the Casa de la Cacica contributes to a pattern of indigenous involvement in planning significant iconographic aspects of the new built environment.

If the hypothesis presented here—that the indigenous leadership of Teposcolula determined in their new town the relationships of the principal buildings to each other and the surrounding geography—is true, then this was not a case wherein the Spanish "authorities" simply drew up the plans and compelled the Indians to carry them out. While a superficially Spanish looking town was in fact built, it was not built according to a strictly Spanish agenda. It appears that significant negotiation leading to agreement occurred. Conscious cultural integration by peaceful consent rather than hostile isolation may have been what the Mixtec elite sought to accomplish by implementing their planning priorities. I believe, therefore, that negotiation and consent are more helpful concepts in understanding what happened in Teposcolula than the domination and subordination concepts shaping some older models in the literature.
Sidney Markman believes that "a building is a social document." His pioneering research in regional studies of colonial societies are landmarks in the field which contribute to our understanding of the variety of response to the colonial situation. My own work, focused on a region to the north of Chiapas, points to a planning process in town founding quite different in some important respects from what Markman uncovered in colonial Chiapas. I conclude on the basis of my own examination of the compelling physical evidence that the indigenous people of Teposcolula certainly had "a part in planning the town intended for their benefit," and evidently a major part.

For the commoners, the initial movement in the direction of Christian lifestyle was probably the result of several factors, including perhaps the explicit equality of the Christian God's love and friendship. If this seemed to offer an implied promise of liberation, it may ultimately have been a dream betrayed. Still, there is little doubt that life was better for the commoners under the new regime than the old. The new economic opportunities arising out of the production and sale of silk and cochinchilla permitted a certain amount of social mobility unthinkable in pre-colonial times, and the introduction by the Dominicans of new agricultural technologies and products, including draft animals and sheep and goat herding, provided an enriched diet with more diverse sources of protein which contributed to a more vigorous population, until, that is, the catastrophic epidemics swept through the Mixteca and turned the dream of the New Jerusalem into a nightmare.

The cacica might no longer preside over sacramental ritual performance in
the new Christian town, but it was clear from the spatial relationship of these two buildings and the iconographic statement made by the disk frieze that from her commanding residence overlooking the chapel that the "cacica natural" maintained an important ceremonial role in the life of her people gathered in the atrio below, at the foot of the great chapel. It is as though the chapel was built as a backdrop for public religious celebration performed for the cacica to be seen from her special royal viewing station. The architecture made this a visible, physical reality, inescapably obvious to anyone with eyes.

The creation of a built environment in which these relationships were so clearly stated architecturally did not happen by accident, it was planned this way from the beginning by the indigenous leaders as a permanent demonstration of their continuing prestige and high status, even in the colonial regime. They achieved this by deliberately manipulating a new architecture and urban form, successfully integrating and celebrating symbol systems well known from the pre-contact world. In this way they perpetuated their own cultural heritage by integrating it into the new architecture, and they did this to advance their own ideological agenda. Moreover, as this study has shown, Teposcolula was not the only place in which this architectural manipulation of public ceremonial space occurred in sixteenth-century México. Indeed, if the hypothesis presented here is true for Teposcolula, then other sites must be re-evaluated by looking for similar evidence of creative indigenous participation in the planning process and direction of community affairs early on in the contact period. 28
NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX:

1. An important aspect of the alignment was pointed out to me by Dr. Annegrete Vogrin after she saw the presentation of my paper at the 48th International Congress of Americanists in Stockholm, July 5, 1994. In the presentation I showed a slide prepared for me by Patrick J. Hannigan using a digitized 1955 airview photograph in a computer aided design system. I asked Mr. Hannigan to outline the Open Chapel in blue and the Casa de la Cacica compound in green and to project a red line from the location of the altar of the Open Chapel perpendicular to the western facade of the Chapel and see where the line went. I had supposed that it would bisect the Casa de la Cacica residence. The projected line approximately bisects the enclosed area behind the Casa residence, but I was dissapointed that it did not bisect the actual Casa residence. Rather it appeared to align with the plane of the south wall of the Casa residence. In spite of my dissapointment, I nevertheless used this slide for the presentation, and it was precisely this alignment along the south wall, making the Casa tangent to the axial line, which attracted Dr. Vogrin's attention. She has for some years been re-surveying Maya sites, correcting older site surveys, and her work has repeatedly revealed precisely this same kind of tangential alignment. What had been a dissapointment for me was convincing evidence of premeditated systematic arrangement of monumental architecture consistent with well established pre-Columbian practice seen in her work. She refered me to her work, *Die Architektur von Copan* (Honduras). Graz: Akademische Druk-und Verlagsanstalt, 1982. In March, 1995 Daniel DiMarco and I surveyed the Tepeoculula site with a theodolite to verify the alignment. We determined that the plane of the facade of the open chapel is aligned true north/south, that the distance from the plane of the facade of the chapel to the plane of the west wall of the Casa de la Cacica is 980 feet and that the plane of the south wall of the Casa is within 45 inches of an axis projected from the altar of the open chapel perpendicular to the facade of the open chapel. The line of sight between these two buildings has been obstructed by recent construction. This fact and the inaccessibility of the enclosure east of the main Casa building complicated our work, requiring several jogs, and several repositionings of the theodolite. Furthermore, the plane of the facade of the open chapel is not perfectly even or straight. Therefore some allowances for a margin of error must be made in our calculations. Nevertheless, even allowing for a small margin of error, we can safely conclude that the alignment of the two buildings was deliberate, as is dramatically apparent in the telephoto photograph taken from the "Cerro de Dos Arboles." The existing grade at the Casa is approximately 38 feet above the grade of the atrio in front of the church, originally providing an unobstructed and commanding view over the atrio and chapel.

2. Local informants agree that this building has been known as the Casa de la Cacica throughout living memory.
3. During visits to Teposcolula in March and April of 1995, I spoke to the municipal authorities about the extreme rarity and immense cultural significance of the Casa de la Cacica, and expressed my profound concern for its safety and for the safety of any archaeological artifacts in the ground in and around the compound which might be damaged by prolonged presence of animals and animal wastes in the enclosure. I pointed out a few simple steps that might be taken at little or no cost that might benefit the building and prolong its safety. Following these conversations, in which I was assisted by Lic. Delfino Cardenas Peralta, former District Judge of Teposcolula, the municipal president assured me that they would take steps immediately to remove the animals, cut the brush around the building to retard further damage from roots, and to take steps to redirect ground water run-off to protect the foundations of the building. During my last visit to the site in late April 1995 it appeared that they were beginning to move forward with these plans.

4. As recently as April 1995 there was a stone fragment of what appears to be a pre-Columbian bas-relief resting on the fountain. I was told in December 1991 by a local resident who was then using the enclosure to stable his burros and cattle, that he had found this fragment among the rubble of a recently collapsed wall of one of the rooms built into the walls of the enclosure. My ongoing research aims to identify the subject depicted on the stone and to determine its origin and use. That this apparently pre-Columbian artifact appears in a colonial-era context suggests that it was deliberately moved to this site, possibly from the Pueblo Viejo. What its presence within the precinct of the Casa de la Cacica suggests about covert religious activity on the part of the Mixtec leadership must remain speculative until a comprehensive archaeological investigation of the site is completed. Certainly this fragmentary artifact strongly suggests that more lies hidden within the rubble, and argues for the scientific excavation at the soonest opportunity and careful preservation and protection of the site until such supervised archaeological investigation is possible. See figure 134.

5. Kubler Mexican Architecture.... He gave a general range of 1540-50 for first campaign of building on page 63, in his appendix he noted on pages 532-3 that building was still in progress in 1579, but he stated

"The Dominicans, after conflict with the encomendero at Yanhuitlán in 1541, withdrew to Teposcolula, which before that time had been a secular curacy. When the Dominicans returned to Yanhuitlán ca. 1548-49, the vicariate of Teposcolula continued under fray Juan Cabrera. A stylized representation of the church that served the community ca. 1550 occurs in the Códice de Yanhuitlán. This Church is mentioned by Viceroy Mendoza in 1550. After complaining that the Dominicans were undertaking many new buildings without proper architectural supervision, he cites Teposcolula, where the friars had built an inadequate structure ("de muy ruin mezcla") in the hope of attracting the Indians to settle near the site. This first campaign of building
has nothing to do with the present edifices at Teposcolula, for the unhealthy and humid site described by the Viceroy does not fit the present location upon the well-drained slopes of a hill rising to the east of the settlement." It seems likely the decision noted in the Actas of the January 1540 provincial meeting to congregate dispersed indigenous populations may have marked the beginning of a program to relocate the people of Teposcolula, a process well under way by 1540.

McAndrew. Open Air Churches,... p. 554: Speaking of the construction of the open chapel McAndrew stated:

Since the work is unfinished, either someone was discouraged with the work itself, or perhaps discouraged by the plague of '76, or possibly discouraged when workmen who were to do the final finishings were diverted to private undertakings in '79.


Kubler also cited this source when he noted that the workers came from surrounding villages.


7. Spores, Ronald. Colección de documentos del archivo general de la nación para la etnografía de la Mixteca de Oaxaca en el siglo XVI. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Publications in Anthropology, 1992, p. 31. Document 61, "Mandamiento de amparo a don Felipe de Castilla de Teozacuaco en el cargo sin que se haga novedad a la relación de Alonso Canseco." Spores's typescript transcription of the relevant passage follows:

...Por cuanto don Felipe de Austria cacique del pueblo de Teozacuaco está por mí declarado por cacique y gobernador de la provincia de Teposcolula porque se casó legítimamente con cacica natural y a causa de tener su vivienda en la dicha provincia de Teposcolula con su mujer se teme que los del dicho pueblo de Teozacuaco [sic] era novedad a no admitirlo por tal su cacique y gobernador natural y me pidió le mandese dar mi mandamiento de amparo para que fuese tenido y obedecido por tal su cacique y gobernador del dicho pueblo de Teozacuaco como lo era de Teposcolula. ...

8. Spores. Colección de documentos,...p. 22, Document 45, "Sobre que en cada pueblo de la Mixteca se repartan cada semana algunos Indios para beneficiar las tierras parajes y reparar sus casas, pagándoles su trabajo." The document is damaged and incomplete, but it specifies that the workers shall be paid, but it less
clear on how many workers are to be provided.

9. Spores. *Colección de documentos...* p 52, Document 107, "Diego de Mendoza y Diego de Orozco sobre el cacicazgo de Zoyaltepec." Spores's typescript transcription of the relevant passage follows:

_E por ende, por virtud de la dicha licencia al dicho don Diego de Mendoza, dada e concedida, dijo que de su grado y buena voluntad sin premia ni fuerza que le sea hecho en pública ni en secreta. E que por cuanto él es hijo legítimo de don Diego de Orozco, e de doña María Zárate su legítima mujer a quien podría suceder el cacicazgo e señorío del pueblo de Zoyaltepeque como hijo mayor del dicho don Diego, su padre. E porque él tiene el cacicazgo e señorío del pueblo de Tamazulapa, a de Teposcolula y vive y reside en los dichos pueblos, en los cuales goza de los dichos cacicazgos, e no puede asistir en el dicho pueblo de Zoyaltepeque a gozar del dicho cacicazgo, e conformar a la dicha su costumbre e faltando el hijo mayor, yéndose a casar y vivir en otro pueblo e cacicazgo, sucede en él, segundo hijo, que por aquella vía e forma que de derecho mejor lugar haya él cedía y traspasaba y renunciaba e renunció el aión que a él tiene y le pertenece y puede pertenecer en cualquier manera a don Bartolomé de Orozco....


_Don Lorenzo Suárez de Mendoza_, etc. Hago Saber a vos el alcalde mayor de la provincia de Teposcolula que algunos naturales de ella me ha sido hecha relación, que un Miguel Sánchez español, so color de ser suegro del escribano propietario de la dicha provincia y pueblo de Teposcolula, tiene ocupadas muchas días las casas de la comunidad de él, donde los dichos naturales han de haber sus cabildos y ayuntamientos y recoger sus bienes y tributos de Su Magestad, pidiendo se la mandase desocupar. Y por mi visto, por la presente os mando que luego que os sea mostrado compeláis al dicho Miguel Sánchez deje a los naturales del dicho pueblo de Teposcolula libres y desembarazadas las casas de su comunidad, no dejando ocupada en ellas parte alguna. Lo cual haced y complid sin dilación ni remisión. Hecho en México a 15 días del mes de diciembre de 1580 años. El Conde de Coruña. Por mandado de Su Exención, Martín López de Gaona.

13. Thoughts shared in conversation, March 26, 1993. Dr. Rabbat is the Aga Kahn Assistant Professor of History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture at MIT, Cambridge.

14. There is, for example, an old, apparently colonial era adobe building near collapse in Yanhuitlán on the prestigious plaza adjoining the convento complex which has several surviving stone disks set high in the wall at cornice level. On the same plaza is a small structure immediately behind the Apse, giving access to the aqueduct, which openly and obviously displays at eye level too eroded now to identify accurately, but widely recognized as pre-Colonial by Ronald Spores and others. (Conversations with Spores 1992 and Feb.1993). It is tempting to associate this figure with water symbolism, given its presence, in apparently original installation, on public water source.

At Yolomcatl, a town about 10 miles south west of Teposcolula, there are two disks openly and obviously mounted on the tower of the church and displaying five lobed flowers nearly identical to those at Teposcolula in the Casa de las Cacicas, but much less eroded. (figs. 141 & 142) It may be that those of Teposcolula once looked more like those at Yolomcatl, or even that they share a common origin. The hollow center which appears to have some kind of terra cotta lining occurs identically in both locations and nowhere else that I have seen. I have seen disks with holes in the center (but no terra cotta lining) in an obviously colonial era example now built into the staircase at Suchistlahuaca, and in the curious multilobular Host in the chalice carved in relief on the atrio cross now atop the convento church at Tlalhuelpa. (fig. 143)


16. Dr. Garay is a botanist long familiar with tropical plants and recently retired from the Botanical Museum of Harvard University. He was a longtime colleague and research associate of Richard Schulte who published frequently on the topic of psychotropic and narcotic plants used in aboriginal American religious ritual. Dr. Garay was also a close friend and colleague of Gordon Wasson, well known for his work with hallucinogenic mushrooms in Native American cults. Drs. Garay and Schulte often traveled and worked together in the field in many areas of Latin America including Mexico.

17. *Badianus Manuscript (codex Barberini, Latin 241)* An Aztec Herbal of 1552, edited by Emily Walcott Emmart, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940.


20. Ibid. 49, verbatim translation.

21. Ibid. 53.

22. Ibid. 54.

23. Ibid., p. 49-50.

24. Another example of this use of early colonial architecture encoded with a set of seven disks may be seen over the main door to the Church of San Miguel Huejotzingo, where seven disks are displayed bearing the monogram of Christ, an indication of the Franciscan devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus fervently advocated by Thomas Illyricus, OFM, among others. Again, this is an example of friars, Franciscan this time, employing the use of disks in a mode consistent with pre-Columbian usage but as transmitters of Christian ideology, here emblazoned with Christ's sign, as is often the case with the sacramental Host of Christian ritual. Seven disks also appear over the door of Tepoztlán, a Dominican house, used in this case as escutcheons bearing the symbol of the Dominican order alternating with other Christian symbols.

25. Again, such a deliberate overlapping of traditional used symbol systems imbued with new meanings appears in highly visible ways on buildings built by the friars, of all three orders.


28. This study has been motivated in large part by my desire to encourage the preservation of what I believe is a most important architectural artifact of the contact period. The fact that I have made my living as a stone mason for nearly twenty-five years no doubt contributes to my interest in and appreciation of the work of other masons of other times. The Casa de la Cacica is not a grand monument, rather it is principally a residence on a modestly intimate and human, if elegantly regal,
scale. It is a building built by a small crew probably in a matter of weeks or months, and yet it is a pivotal survival of a time of great and sudden change. If carefully preserved and lovingly studied its simple walls of honest masonry can tell us much about those who built it and their times. Archaeological excavation by trained and sensitive professionals would pay rich rewards. I suppose it is a sense of solidarity with my fellow masons across time who worked in ways that I can recognize and understand that filled me with a sense of empathy for their little building, built with such evident care and pride, and innovative experimental enthusiasm. Today it is at the edge of oblivion, at great risk of obliteration through vandalism, misuse and casual neglect. It is too great and too important a cultural treasure to suffer such indignity. Over the past five years I have made every effort to call attention to the Casa de la Cacica. In 1992 I published a brief piece with color photographs, "A Structure for the Ages," in Américas, Volume 44, Number 1, pp. 3-4, calling attention to the importance of the building and the damage it was suffering from its misuse as a stable for farm animals. Américas is the magazine of the Organization of American States, published in English and Spanish editions and circulated throughout Latin America in diplomatic and educational circles. I was deliberately trying to get the attention of officials responsible for preservation initiatives, and to use this high visibility publication to gently apply some pressure. I have given papers at national and international conferences to magnify the fame of Teposcolula's treasure. I have been in contact with the Getty Institute, who for all their vast, indeed inexhaustible financial resources have so far expressed little interest in a preservation intervention. I have personally written to and appeared before numerous officials at various levels of local, state and federal governments in Mexico to call for a careful, systematic, professional, scientific, and above all, minimally intrusive preservation intervention. I have published a study of the building in the Anales of the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas de México. Finally, I am working on a master plan for a preservation intervention for which I will undertake an international fund-raising effort. What I believe is crucial is that the preservation effort simply stabilizes the standing ruin as it is, and attempts no "reconstruction" based on the whims or fantasies or misunderstandings of well meaning but non-professional amateurs. Elsewhere in the area truckloads of cement have been applied to historically important ruins to provide local employment, tourist attractions, and political influence. The resulting disfigurement forever obscures and distorts the true historical value of the sites with irreparable and needless damage. Because the Casa de la Cacica of Teposcolula is the only surviving example of its kind, such a travesty must be avoided. My continuing efforts will be aimed at a happy outcome and a secure future for the work of those masons who so long ago built this building to transmit a message of enduring Mixtec cultural continuity through time.
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APPENDIX 1

Letter from Fr. Domingo de Betanzos, O.P. to García de Loaysa, President of the Council of the Indies, written in the Misteca

3 December 1540: ¹
Very Magnificent Lord,

May the Grace and consolation of the Holy Spirit be always in your soul. Because I know that your Grace is interested in the well being and advancement of those newly converted in this New Spain, especially in that which touches on their spiritual advancement, I want to let you know that I am traveling on foot through this land visiting and baptizing the children who populate it, for the most part in the very rugged hills and mountains, very dangerous passages through which no animal can walk, there are even wearisome places where no Christian had been, where for the goodness of God much progress has been made and many souls saved: then having wandered through various mountains I came to descend into a province known as the Misteca, where I found something new and of much consolation for me that I myself greatly wish to see in the conversion of these people: and in order that your grace understand what I so much wish to say, it is necessary to know that all methods of conversion of these people from the beginning up till now have always been more violent than voluntary, because it has been brought about by fear and punishment rather than by love and good will, which is counter to the doctrine and preaching of our Redeemer. And because of this we are always suspicious of the Christianity of most of them because the faith is not confirmed in them by love: and because of this they have never been completely uprooted from their idols, nor of their will, because if some have abandoned them it was more by force leaving them
against their will: this is something quite universal in this New Spain: this I assume your Grace knew that when I arrived in this province of the Mistecca, as I said, I found there several friars of our Order working for the conversion of these people who speak another most difficult language, one of whom your Grace knows and spoke to in Castile, who is called Fr. Domingo de Santa María, who is certainly an apostolic man, and who learned that barbarous tongue, that certainly no other person up until now has been able to learn or know except him: and God gave him so much grace with these people and he was so effective with his preaching that with love alone he attracted them and of their own free will all of one heart brought all of their idols and idolatry and with their own hands burned them detesting them so much from the heart that it was as if they had been a thousand years having received the faith and not one man among them was baptized until they had all abandoned all of their idols, and even though the friars did not wish to baptize them they shed so many tears and that above this wailing there could not be a heart so hard that would not break, and burst with tears upon seeing it. They were the first that they made (converted) those of a head town (cabecera) which is the most notable and most populous in the Mistecca, which is called Teposcolula, and to the example of that town come all the people of the Mistecca, which are many and numerous, the which all one heart have given all their idols. These were of such a quantity that passed six hundred loads of idols, and in truth I say little, because there was much more in number, because there was a town where they carried and burned over four hundred loads of idols and idolatries. And with all this they did not

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wish to baptize anyone until they were well instructed and knew to give correctly all
the Christian doctrine: they had so much the desire for baptism that they became
so diligent to learn all the doctrine that in very short time there was scarcely a man
or woman who had not learned it, and the parents with great care taught their
children. And above all before they were baptized they were examined each one to
see if they knew how to say the doctrine but furthermore to see if they understood
and they all gave (showed) such good reasoning (understanding) of everything,
more completely than any commoner (plebeyo) of our country knows it, which is
something very esteemed and very new in these people: and with all this
examination were taught and baptized all the people of the Misteca, who have such
great love and faith of Christ as has never been seen in these lands since their
discovery, and they have such great love for the friars and give so much credit to
their words as if they were truly angels come from heaven: and all of this came,
because this province up until now had not been preached to by anyone, but was
neglected like bestial people (gente bestial): and this priest who I mentioned with his
companions wished to throw their labors into it, and finally because this priest
learned their language he attracted them by love in such a way that up until now he
has not given them a fool (has not been taken for a fool? no se les a dada un
papirote) nor has an idol been abandoned by them by means of force, but all that
they have done, they have done by their own free will: for which your Grace may
believe that this is the best Christianity that there is in all of New Spain, and it is the
faith of Christ in them better planted and edified or preached conforming directly to
the gospel. Which never in these parts has been done for which it is very right that these Indians be very favored and relieved in order to preserve within them the faith that with so much love they have recieved, although nevertheless it was on account of making this, but most especially I beg your Grace take respect in this for this town of Teposcolula, the which being the first to be converted, and by its solicitude and diligence, and by its example have come all the other towns: and for this, which distinguishes itself among all others, it is right that your Grace should also be in favor of and procure with those Lords of the Council as make grants (como se les hagen mercedes), who are by the honor and glory of God and good of soul and service to our lord the Emperor: for that which this town asks is a very small and very favorable thing the which nevertheless should be done, and it is that they beg of his Majesty that he give them a privelege of being always of the royal Crown: and that they never be abandoned by it, because those towns which are in the royal Crown are always better treated and more free: and the second thing they beg is that they not install a Corregidor to whom they would have to give personal service or food: because these personal services are that which destroy towns. Furthermore they say that they wish to pay themselves to the King all their tribute very completely and to carry it in gold to the officials of the King without anyone in charge of them: and that they yield willingly to be Christians and to serve his Majesty, that they pay their tribute better than any others that are in the land: these are the two principal things that they beg, which are very pious and with just and pious reason they should be conceded: I beg your Grace to show yourself who is in favor of these poor
people, especially to these new plants that the Lord has brought to his vinyard: and
[1 beg] your Grace to see and to consider how necessary it is that the Indians be
much praised and well treated in order that they receive the faith and sustain it,
because I hold it impossible that oppressed and afflicted people can be converted:
no matter what these Indians of Teposcolula would send to this holy Council, your
Grace and those lords should look more to the willingness with which they send and
not the quantity of the present, and that being Indians and sending with such
willingness, and above all such a pious cause should be received with love and be
gratified with your good courtesy, and since these people are of low value for what
they have done they should be held with much [value]: because it will charm and
encourage them to the service of God and his Majesty and motivate all people to do
the same. the friar Father Domingo de Santa María will write to your Grace more
[about this] as someone who knows more about their affairs and who has them in
his charge, to whom your Grace can and should quite correctly give as much credit
as to an apostle of God, [and] who is truly as much an example in his person of his
preaching as was the other Saint Paul and God gave to him the language of these
people almost miraculously, which no one up until now had learned or known, and
by the hand of this friar God converted these people, he holds them as children, and
it is right to procure for them all good like a father, and because of reverence for
God your Grace should favor their good wishes and works, since they are therefore
worthy to be favored. And to that which I beg on behalf of these people I would have
the favor of your most reliable Grace because in this you will make a very great
service to God: and [I would beg] that the letters of this priest your Grace would relate to the Council. May divine mercy always tender its grace to your Grace so that you may always serve its will. From this province of the Misteca in New Spain, the third of December of this year 1540. The servant and chaplain of your Grace friar Domingo de Betanzos.²
NOTES TO APPENDIX I:


2. This translation has benefited from suggestions by Justo Ulloa.
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