

Late Postclassic Cultures of the Central Highlands

In the eighth century BC, the Mexica and other Nahuatl-speaking groups ended a long migration from northern Mesoamerica with their arrival in central Mexico. Here, they encountered a large number of societies that shared a common history of trade, warfare and religion, despite their ethnic, linguistic and political differences. Their final destination was the Basin of Mexico, a 7000 km² area with five large lakes and three main political components: Azcapotzalco was the capital of the Tepanecs, who inhabited the western part of the valley; Texcoco was the Acolhua-Chichimec capital on the eastern side; and Colhuacan dominated the region pertaining to the Colhua ethnic group, including the southern communities of Xochimilco and Cuiclahuac.

In this complex panorama, the Mexica had no option but to establish their capital, named Mexico-Tenochtitlan, on a small, inhospitable island in the middle of Lake Texcoco. Given that the island was located in Tepanec territory from 1325 on, the Mexica became tributaries of Azcapotzalco. But there was a shift in power a century later, in 1430, brought about by the Mexica military triumph over their masters and the organization of the last *excan tlatoloyan*, or Triple Alliance, consisting of Tenochtitlan, Tetzaco and Tlacopan (now Tacuba).

The *excan tlatoloyan* was a supra-state organization on a massive scale, existing in an environment of endemic warfare. Its primary function was to settle disputes among the different political entities that fell under its jurisdiction,

but it was also responsible for keeping tabs on security throughout the region and bringing in states that were reluctant to join the coalition. To this end, the three capitals took the lead in a process of military expansion designed to gain control over the entire basin and eventually a large surrounding area.

In the valleys of Toluca and Ixtlahuaca west of the Basin of Mexico, other Chichimec groups were making large gains in economic, cultural and political power. These groups presented an interesting linguistic mosaic of mainly Otomian languages (Otomi, Mazahua, Matlatzinca and Ocuiltec) and Nahuatl. When the Mexica initiated their expansion, the *excan tlatoloyan* conquered these neighbors to the west, who were deeply divided at the time. To the east, in the Valley of Puebla-Tlaxcala, the Chichimecs had created important centers of power, including Tlaxcala, Cholula, Huexotzinco and Tliluhquitepec, cities that had joined forces to withstand ongoing hostilities with the *excan tlatoloyan*, thus managing to retain their regional independence. To the south, in the Valley of Morelos, there were Nahuatl-speaking Chichimec communities, primarily Xochimilca and Tlahuica groups. The Mexica had coveted the cotton they produced since first coming into contact with them, driving them to wage a prolonged war against the city of Cuauhnahuac (today Cuernavaca), which was eventually overcome by force of arms. In the process, political entities of diverse ethnicities and levels of development were annexed. The imperial frontiers of the Triple Alliance were eventually extended from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific coast, and from the Tarascan empire to the present-day Guatemalan border.

The main goal of the *excan tlatoloyan*'s hegemonic expansion was not territorial dominion, but rather the accumulation of tributary benefits. However, it was also instrumental

in their pursuit of privileged access to certain natural resources, the reorganization of commerce and control over key markets.

Most of the conquered cities paid tributes and in some cases they were obliged to allow free passage for merchants under the Alliance's protection and to support the conquering armies with troops and provisions. Though they kept their own divinities and political and legal systems, they lived in conditions of hardship and uncertainty brought on by the institutionalization of violence. In cases of extreme opposition, the *excan tlatoloyan* could impose its own governor in addition to the required tributes, or even annihilate the rebellious population and colonize its territory. On occasion, the tributary states not only delivered locally produced goods, but also had to pay their debt with goods acquired through trade with neighboring peoples. In this manner, the Alliance's capitals acquired resources from regions far beyond its own borders.

The vertiginous growth of the Triple Alliance was accompanied by rapid evolution in the arts. In architecture, for instance, structures grew larger, the quality of the materials improved, construction methods and decorative techniques were perfected, and the elements of the imperial style were defined. In painting and sculpture there was a corresponding shift, with major strides being taken toward naturalism as a level of perfection never seen before was attained.

Such transformations likely stemmed from the independence of Tenochtitlan in 1430 and a visionary ruler's ascent to the throne a decade later: Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina, the fifth Mexica *tlatoani*. As a result of these two events, the island state experienced its first real period of political supremacy and economic prosperity, a fact that permitted it to commission several new imperial monuments from foreign artists. These were mainly sculptors from cities under the

dominion of Azcapotzalco and Coyoacan, who were later joined by others from Tlacopan, Texcoco, Xochimilco and Chalco. The new immigrants must have shared their knowledge, tastes and traditions among one another and with local creators, thus generating a seminal creative atmosphere like few in recorded history. The artists discovered stimulating sources of inspiration in the art of their neighbors in the Mixtec-Puebla territory and other more distant regions, particularly the Huasteca. They were also inspired by the artistic expressions of the extinct civilizations of Teotihuacan, Xochicalco and Tula. Following an accelerated period of experimentation, this process resulted in the invention of a style that was both original and cosmopolitan.

In the early sixteenth century, Tenochtitlan was the new hub of Mesoamerican artistic creation. This small area was home to not only the largest concentration of monoliths, reliefs and images in the empire, but also to the most important monuments. It must be recognized, however, that other thriving sculptural schools were producing high-quality work during the same period in different capitals of the Basin of Mexico, each with a signature style. These included Texcoco, Xochimilco, Tlahuac, Chalco and Tlalmanalco.

At their zenith, the influence of the metropolitan schools was felt far beyond the mountains surrounding the basin, as it rapidly spread throughout the empire and outside its borders. On several occasions, the sovereigns of the Triple Alliance sent artists to sculpt state monuments in strategic sites, and at other times, outlying Mexica communities and the rulers of independent territories hired these master creators themselves.

At the dawn of the sixteenth century, the Triple Alliance attained its maximum extension, though it was precariously held. The political situation became unstable, and there was

increasing discontent among the subjugated populations. Many embraced the arrival of the Spanish as the perfect opportunity to regain their freedom, joining forces with them in order to facilitate the conquest. Clearly, the final result was not what they had bargained for.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN

TRANSLATED BY MICHELLE SUDERMAN

41 Coatlicue

MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Andesite and red pigment, 2.52 x 1.58 x 1.24 cm

Inventory: 10-1153

Coatlicue (“She of the skirt of serpents”) is a being with human form, and though motionless, she is poised for attack. She is lacking her head, hands and parts of her legs. The amputated parts are replaced by menacing yet beautiful snakes representing the fertilizing blood and eagle’s talons emblematic of the goddess’s status as a sorceress. She wears a necklace bearing a skull, hearts and severed hands beneath which one can glimpse her flaccid breasts and the folds of her abdomen, which are marks of her reproductive calling. Coatlicue wears a skirt of serpents, which is the root of her name and links her to the powers of fertility. Her skirt is belted by a two-headed snake, which also has a buckle or brooch bearing a skull emblem.

This masterpiece of universal art is noteworthy for its expressive force and originality. However, it is not unique: three fragments of identical effigies and a sculpture of Yollotlicue (“She of the Skirt of Hearts”) suggest the existence of a remarkable sculptural group. According to Andrés de Tapia—one of Cortés’s soldiers who ascended to the Templo Mayor—there were “idols” of “polished grainy stone” at the apex, measuring “nearly three yards in height” (2.52 m) and “as thick as an ox.” They were decorated with “necklaces of ten or twelve men’s hearts,” “some fat snakes around their waists” and “a face at the back of the head, like a fleshless man’s head.” He was likely referring to the Coatlicue sculptural group: the four “sustainers of the sky,” images of the terrible primitive goddesses whose mutilation gave rise to the universe.

Following the discovery of Coatlicue in August 1790, Viceroy Revillagigedo ordered the sculpture moved from the Mexico City Zócalo to the Royal University so that it might be conserved, studied and put on public view. But the Dominicans who ran the institution reinterred it in hopes of preventing the emergence of a new cult that would pervert Mexican youth. The monolith only reemerged in 1825 with the opening of the National Museum.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



42 Head of Coyolxauhqui

MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Diorite, 72.5 x 85.5 x 64.5 cm

Inventory: 10-2209118

According to myth, the lunar goddess Coyolxauhqui (“She of the rattle-snake face paint”) and her astral siblings—the Centzonhuitznahua—felt dishonored on discovering that their mother, the earth goddess Coatlicue, was miraculously impregnated when she placed a ball of celestial feathers on her belly. The moon and the stars decided to murder the transgressor, and went to the top of Snake Mountain. But just as they were about to commit matricide, the sun Huitzilopochtli was born fully grown and armed with a fire serpent. He annihilated his half-brothers and beheaded Coyolxauhqui, whose body fell to the base of the mountain.

In this representation of the severed head of the lunar goddess, the artist has masterfully captured her death mask, emphasizing the drooping eyelids and downturned lips. Her hair is covered with a ribbed cloth headdress studded with circular balls of feathers that allude to sacrifice. A succession of three circles may be seen on each cheek, the uppermost one with the cruciform sign for gold and the bottom one in the form of a spherical bell. The sculpture’s base bears carvings of bands of water and fire, a cord with heron’s feathers and the two-headed serpent, signifying war, sacrifice and death, respectively. These appear with the year 1-Rabbit, the date that is inscribed in the Azcatitlan Codex alongside the scene where Huitzilopochtli defeats Coyolxauhqui.

This sculpture, which may have originally stood at the peak of the Templo Mayor, was found in March 1830 in Mexico City, during the construction of some buildings forming part of La Concepción Convent behind the church of Santa Teresa la Antigua. Despite receiving some tempting offers from foreign dealers, the convent’s abbess María Josefa Travieso decided to turn the piece over to the National Museum, through the intercession of the historian Carlos María de Bustamante.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Olivine basalt with red and ochre pigments, 358 cm ø

Inventory: 10-1123

By all indications, the Sun Stone—popularly known as the Aztec Calendar—was carved in the early sixteenth century from a block of stone extracted either from the rocky ground of San Ángel or from Mixquic or its surrounding areas. This means it had to be moved between twelve and twenty-two kilometers from the southern Basin of Mexico to the sacred site of Tenochtitlan, where the monolith served as a *temalacatl* (a circular stone for gladiatorial contests) or perhaps as a *cuauhxicalli* (sacrificial stone).

The Sun Stone's concentric structure presents a summary of Mexica concepts of space and time. It shows the four cardinal directions (with the East at the top), and marks the sequence of twenty divinatory days, the fifty-two-year cycle and the five cosmogonic eras. Tonatiuh's face occupies the smallest circle in the relief: it is the midday sun, as the curved lines of his eyes and the tubular nose ornament refer to its ascendant aspect, while the fleshless mouth and knife-tongue refer to the descendant aspect. The next ring is occupied by the date 4-Movement, which names the present era and encircles the four previous eras with two talons seizing hearts. The signs for the days make up the third ring, while the fourth ring is a solar disc that alternates rays of light with jade beads, year symbols, feathers and precious water. This disc is surrounded by two massive fire serpents descending toward 13-Cane, the date of the birth of the Fifth Sun, and then along a nocturnal band carved into the stone.

Shortly after the fall of the Mexica empire in 1521, the Sun Stone was dragged to the southeast corner of the Mexico City Zócalo, where it was displayed until sometime between 1551 and 1572 when a decision was made to bury it. It was dug up again in 1790 and, months later, ensconced in the cathedral's western tower, where it remained until August 1885, when it was moved to the original site of the National Museum. It has remained in its current site in Chapultepec since June of 1964.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



44 The Stone of Tizoc

MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Andesite, 94 x 265 cm ø

Inventory: 10-1162

Commissioned by Tizoc, the governor of Tenochtitlan between 1481 and 1486, this monument was one of two massive stone cylinders in the courtyard of the Temple of Yopico, dedicated to the deity Xipe Totec, Our Lord the Flayed One, and was located at the southern end of the sacred building. Both cylinders were built for the ritual of “gladiatorial sacrifice.” One of them, the *temalacatl*, was the small arena upon which an inadequately armed captive would battle the sacrificing warriors. The other one, called *cuauhxicalli*, was the recipient where the captive’s wounded body was deposited for the extraction of his heart and blood which would be subsequently offered to the sun and the earth. The Stone of Tizoc was a *cuauhxicalli*, given that it lacked the *temalacatl*’s central spike to which the captive would be tied with a rope.

Both cylinders also served as memorials glorifying the feats of each sovereign, as they celebrated both inherited conquests and their own victories. The upper face of the Stone of Tizoc presents a conventional representation of the sun, while the sides show a sequence of fifteen scenes, each one featuring a Mexica warrior defeating a deity that personifies a particular territory identified by a place name. The scenes of war are bordered by two horizontal bands, one above and one below, which represent the night sky and a terrestrial reptile respectively.

Following the Spanish Conquest in 1521, the Stone of Tizoc was buried in what is now Mexico City’s main square. It was unearthed between 1562 and 1565 when the foundations for the new cathedral were being laid, and placed in front of the cathedral’s main entrance, where it remained on public display for more than six decades. It was reburied during the eighteenth century, then exhumed in December 1791, only to be buried again in 1793. Finally, in 1824, the government ordered its removal to the National Museum, which opened a year later.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Basalt and red pigment, 123 x 92 x 100 cm

Inventory: 10-81548

This stone reproduction of an indigenous temple masterfully combines symbols of political power, religion and cosmology to demonstrate the connections between governors, divinities and the forces of nature. The king is propagandistically situated at the center of the scene as a worshipper, while warfare and blood sacrifice appear as basic conditions for the functioning of his empire and of the universe as a whole.

The pyramid's main façade has a staircase of thirteen steps framed by two-slope alfardas with carved sacrificial recipients—an eagle on one and a jaguar on the other—and the years 1-Rabbit and 2-Cane which commemorate the fact that the New Fire was moved from the year 1506 to 1507 AD. The sides of the pyramid bear images of the divinities Tlaloc, Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli, Xiuhtecuhtli and Xochipilli, while the back has the emblem for Tenochtitlan: an eagle perched on a prickly pear cactus holding the symbol for war in its beak. The pyramid is crowned by a chapel where the patron god Huitzilopochtli and Moctezuma II perform self-immolation before a sun marked with the date of the fifth age and a reptilian earth flanked by round shields and bundles of darts. The sides of the chapel are marked with the dates 1-Flint and 1-Death, alluding to Huitzilopochtli and Tezcatlipoca, while the roof bears a penitential ball and the emblem for 2-House (1325), the year the Mexica capital was established.

In August 1831, the minister Lucas Alamán announced the discovery of a "piece of stone bearing half-relief figures of the arms of the Mexican Empire and other signs" under the foundation of the south tower of the National Palace—in other words, where Moctezuma's palace had been located. However, the monolith's size and its location beneath a load-bearing wall prevented its extraction at the time. Nearly a century had to go by before it was successfully removed to the National Museum in July 1926.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



CHALCO CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tlalmanalco, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Andesite, 117 x 55.5 x 45 cm

Inventory: 10-222116

A masterpiece of Chalco art, this image of a male figure was found near its pedestal at the foot of the Iztaccihuatl Volcano, just outside the town of Tlalmanalco. It was subsequently included in the collection of the historian Alfredo Chavero, who identified it as Ixcozauhqui, the god of fire, and later gave it to the National Museum. The figure represented is actually Xochipilli-Macuilxochitl, a name that literally translates as “Flowered Nobleman, 5-Flower.” As the fifth and last in a series of so-called “gods of excess,” Xochipilli was the patron of music, song, dance, play and sexual pleasure. He was also a fertility god with strong solar associations.

What is surprising about this sculpture is how naturally the human anatomy has been captured. The god is seated with one hand resting on his knee and legs crossed at the ankles. He may have been holding some movable object: a rattle, a flower, perhaps a calla lily—a plant that is emblematic of fertility. His head is thrown slightly back, suggesting that he may be singing or, more likely, in a trance. He is wearing a headdress of short feathers hanging down his back, where it is adorned with feathered pendants, the four rings representing the heat of the sun, and the four vertical bars that are always drawn in four different colors in the codices and represent the cardinal directions. His face, flanked by large circular ear ornaments, is hidden behind a mask with a revealing expression. His body is covered with flowers and mushrooms known to have psychotropic properties. Xochipilli is also wearing a pectoral and armbands made out of feline skin, bracelets perhaps of gold, leather wristlets, a loincloth and sandals. The image of this deity is perfectly accompanied by a splendid pedestal or seat, also decorated with the symbol for solar heat, jade beads and six beautiful butterflies drinking from four large flowers.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
Tr. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



47 Goddess of Coatepec Harinas

MATLATZINCA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Coatepec Harinas, Valley of Toluca

Region: Central Highlands

Wood and shell, 39.5 x 15 x 10 cm

Inventory: 10-74751

On reaching the Altiplano, Cortés and his troops noticed that the Mexica and neighboring cultures kept effigies of their gods not only in the homes and temples of every village, town and city that the Spaniards visited, but also that they were placed at the crossroads of different routes to Tenochtitlan, atop hills and mountains, inside caves and rocky shelters, beside large trees, on cliffs and crags, near springs, and in other sacred geographical sites that were frequented by the devout seeking contact with the supernatural. According to the nineteenth-century professor, doctor and naturalist Nicolás León, this delicate image of a female deity was discovered alongside a similar sculpture in a cave near the Matlatzinca community of Coatepec Harinas, south of the volcano called El Nevado de Toluca.

Like most effigies of this type, it was designed to be viewed frontally, its symmetry presenting the indigenous ideal of solemnity. Her face expresses no exaggerated emotions, and her body—erect and with her feet placed solidly on the ground—presents a serene posture. Her bodily proportions have been compacted vertically, emphasizing the size and features of her head, hands and feet. The artist portrayed a young woman with her hair braided across her forehead. Her torso is nude, with her hands cupped before her bosom as if in offering, and she wears a long skirt that covers her from waist to ankles.

This image was carved from a dense, reddish wood that may be cedar. For different reasons, few wooden objects have survived from pre-Hispanic times to our day: cellulose and lignin are extremely sensitive to exposure to light, oxygen and certain compounds present in archaeological sites.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Basalt with red, ocher and black pigments, 94 x 120 x 225 cm

Inventory: 10-220914

Given the jaguar's nocturnal and aquatic habits, the Mexica drew a connection between it and the night, the underworld, the earth and fertility; also war and sacrifice, given its ferocity; and magic and sorcery given its furtiveness and keen night vision. It was the latter—its night vision—that led the Mexica to view the jaguar as the greatest ally of shamans and, by extension, the patron of governors. In his manifestation as a jaguar, the supreme god Tezcatlipoca is easily confused with Tepeyollotl, the divine expression of the forces of the earth and the moon.

This sculpture originally sat at the foot of a temple's staircase. It was found in December 1901 beneath the Marquis of Apartado's grand neoclassical residence a block north of the Mexico City Cathedral when Porfirio Díaz initiated work to shore up its foundations. Many years later, in 1985, the sculpture of a royal eagle was discovered just a few meters away. It likely formed a liturgical pair with the jaguar, given that this bird of prey was associated with the day, the sky and the sun.

The artist depicted the feline crouched and poised for attack: its ears are pricked up, eyes wide open, its mouth baring sharp teeth. It has powerful limbs and its claws are extended. The fringe of fur around its mouth is not one of the jaguar's traits, so it may be an allusion to Tepeyollotl's beard. There is a cavity in its back measuring sixty-four centimeters in diameter and twenty-four centimeters deep, which served as a *cuauhxicalli* or recipient for sacrificial offerings. The walls of the cavity bear a sculpted band of eagle feathers and another one of jade beads and currents of water, while the bottom displays images of Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli offering blood from their ears. The animal's skin was originally painted ocher with black spots, while the claws and the recipient were painted red.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



49 Obsidian Monkey

ACOLHUA CULTURE

Late Postclassic? (1200-1520 AD), Texcoco?, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Obsidian, 14 x 15 x 16.5 cm

Inventory: 10-998

Given its agility, hyperactivity, constant swinging through tree branches and spiral prehensile tail, the Mexicas associated the spider monkey with air currents, whirlwinds and the powers of Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl, the god of wind and fertility.

In 1964, this thin-walled recipient occupied a place of honor in the Mexica Gallery, sitting at the intersection of a cruciform arrangement that included the *ocelocuauhxicalli* at the entrance, the Sun Stone at the back of the room, the Fire Serpent on the right, and Coatlicue on the left. This placement was a clear acknowledgement of the perfect technical execution of this representation of a spider monkey.

The monkey is using its tail to hold a container formed by its bulky body. In a manner unusual for Mexica art, its arms, legs and head project outward from this volume. Its head features the characteristic tuft of hair, deep eye sockets and a mouth that appears to be blowing, or perhaps generating inclement winds.

According to Eugène Boban—antiquarian to Emperor Maximilian, dealer in archaeological objects and knowledgeable in the intricacies of manufacturing forgeries—the monkey was discovered by a fieldworker at an hacienda outside Texcoco. The worker traded it to a patient of Dr. Rafael Lucio, celebrated for his research into leprosy, in exchange for a lamb. In 1869, the doctor acquired the monkey in exchange for a diamond ring, and later donated it to the National Museum. The interesting thing is that two years after making this story public in 1885 and selling numerous obsidian pieces (some of them forgeries), Boban confessed that “ancient Mexicans never made figures or idols out of obsidian,” and that “all obsidian objects bearing a body, arms and legs may be considered forgeries.” Based on these statements, further analysis of the monkey is warranted in order to verify its authenticity.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



MEXICA CULTURE

Late Postclassic (1200-1520 AD), Tenochtitlan?, Basin of Mexico

Region: Central Highlands

Diorite, 16 x 36 x 17 cm

Inventory: 10-392922

Significantly, Mexica art paid considerably less attention to the plant kingdom than it did to the animal kingdom. There are relatively few instances of freestanding sculptures of plants that have survived to this day, the most important among these being basalt and andesite representations of cacti such as the organ-pipe cactus and the barrel cactus. Some excellent carvings of gourds have also survived, like this one that was sculpted out of a hard, green-hued metamorphic stone. It features the mature fruit with its pentagonal flower at one end and its prolongation at the other. The artist captured the plant's morphology with a keen sense of the essential and a skillfully simplified naturalism.

The context that gave rise to this sculpture and other similar ones is unknown, so there is no way to determine its original function with any certainty. But there is some speculation that it may have once decorated a temple devoted to the deities of vegetation, or that it formed part of an offering to a fertility god.

Thanks to a beautiful drawing done by the German artist Maximilian Franck in 1829, we know that the sculpture was then in the possession of José Mariano Sánchez y Mora, the count of Peñasco, who had amassed in Mexico City an extraordinarily rich collection of natural history, archaeological objects, pictographs, coins, paintings and instruments of the physical sciences. By 1892, the sculpture formed part of the National Museum collection. Legend has it that to put museum visitors' powers of observation to the test, a director decided to exhibit the sculpture alongside a real gourd purchased at a local market. To his surprise, everyone wondered why a botanical display had been mounted in a museum that was supposed to have a very different intent.

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN
TR. MICHELLE SUDERMAN



Bibliography

- **History of Archaeology**

López Luján, Leonardo, "Arqueología de la arqueología: de la época prehispánica al siglo XVIII" in *Arqueología mexicana*, no. 52, INAH-Raíces, Mexico City, 2001.

—, "El capitán Guillermo Dupaix y su album arqueológico de 1794" in *Arqueología Mexicana*, no. 109, INAH-Raíces, Mexico City, 2011.

—, *La recuperación mexicana del pasado teotihuacano*, INAH, Mexico City, 1989.

Rico Mansard, Luisa Fernanda, *Exhibir para educar. Objetos, colecciones y museos de la ciudad de México (1790-1910)*, Ediciones Pomares, Barcelona-Mexico City, 2004.

- **Introduction to Anthropology and Early Peoples Galleries**

Formicola, Vincenzo, A. Pontrandolfi & J. Svoboda, "The Upper Paleolithic Triple Burial of Dolni Vestonice: Pathology and Funerary Behavior" in *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, no. 115, 2001.

García Bárcena, Joaquín, "Tecnología lítica" in *Arqueología Mexicana*, vol. IX, no. 52, 2001.

Owen, Roger C., "The Americas: The Case Against an Ice-Age Human Population" in *The Origins of Modern Humans, a World Survey of the Fossil Evidence*, Fred H. Smith & Frank Spencer (eds.), Alan R. Liss Inc., New York, 1984.

Tattersall, Ian, *The Fossil Trail*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995.

Acosta Ochoa, Guillermo, "Las ocupaciones precerámicas de la Cuenca de México. Del poblamiento a las primeras sociedades agrícolas" in *Arqueoweb: Revista sobre Arqueología en Internet*, http://www.ucm.es/info/arqueoweb/numero8_2/acosta-ochao.html

- **Preclassic Culture of the Central Highlands Gallery**

Barba de Piña Chan, Beatriz, "Tlapacoya. Un sitio preclásico de transición" in *Acta Antropológica*, época 2, I-1, Sociedad de Alumnos de la Escuela Nacional de Antropología-INAH, Mexico City, 1956.

Niederberger, Christine, *Zohapilco*, Colección Científica, no. 30, Arqueología, INAH, Mexico City, 1976.

Ochoa Castillo, Patricia, "Preclásico" in *Museo Nacional de Antropología. México*, Conaculta-INAH/Lunwerg Editores, Barcelona, 2004.

Porter Muriel, Noé, *Tlatilco and the Pre-Classic Cultures of the New World*, Viking Fund, Publications in Anthropology, no. 19, Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, New York, 1953.

Vaillant, Susana B. & George C. Vaillant, *Excavaciones en Gualupita*, INAH, Mexico City, 2009.

• **Teotihuacan Gallery**

- McClung de Tapia, Emily, "Aspectos ecológicos del desarrollo y la decadencia de Teotihuacan" in *Anales de Antropología*, no. 15, UNAM, Mexico City, 1978.
- Matos Moctezuma, Eduardo, *Teotihuacan, the City of Gods*, Rizzoli, New York, 1990.
- Millon, René, *Urbanization at Teotihuacan*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1973.
- Sanders, William, *The Cultural Ecology of the Teotihuacan Valley*, Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania, 1965.
- Sugiyama, Saburo & Rubén Cabrera, "Hallazgos recientes en la Pirámide de la Luna" in *Arqueología Mexicana, Teotihuacan, ciudad de misterios*, vol. XI, no. 64, INAH-Raíces, Mexico City, 2003.

• **The Toltecs and Their Time Gallery**

- Acosta, Jorge R., "Interpretación de algunos de los datos obtenidos en Tula relativos a la época tolteca" in *Revista Mexicana de Estudios Antropológicos*, vol. 14 (part 2), Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología, Mexico City, 1956–1957.
- Foncerrada de Molina, Martha, *Cacaxtla: La iconografía de los olmeca-xicalanca*, IIE-UNAM, Mexico City, 1993.
- Hernández, Gilda, *Vasijas para ceremonia: iconografía de la cerámica tipo Códice del estilo mixteca-Puebla*, CNWS Publications, Leiden, 2005.
- Hirth, Kenneth, *Ancient Urbanism at Xochicalco*, 2 vols., University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, 2000.
- Jiménez García, Elizabeth, *Iconografía de Tula. El caso de la escultura*, Colección Científica no. 364, INAH, Mexico City, 1998.

Jiménez Moreno, Wigberto, "Síntesis de la historia pretolteca de Mesoamérica" in *Esplendor del México antiguo*, Carmen Cook de Leonard (ed.), vol. 2, Mexico City, 1959.

López Luján, Leonardo, Robert H. Cobean & Alba Guadalupe Mastache F., *Xochicalco y Tula*, Jaca Books-Conaculta, Mexico City, 1995.

Mastache, Alba Guadalupe, Robert H. Cobean & Dan Healan, *Ancient Tollan. Tula and the Toltec Heartland*, The University Press of Colorado, Colorado, 2002.

Serra Puche, Mari Carmen, *Xochitécatl*, Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 1998.

Solís, Felipe, Gabriela Uruñuela, Patricia Plunket, Martín Cruz & D. Rodríguez, *Chohula: La Gran Pirámide*, Conaculta-INAH-Editorial Azabache, Mexico City, 2006.

• **Mexica Gallery**

- López Austin, Alfredo & Leonardo López Luján, "La historia póstuma de la Piedra de Tizoc" in *Arqueología Mexicana, Coyoixauhqui. La diosa de la Luna*, vol. XVII, no. 102, INAH-Raíces, Mexico City, 2010.
- López Luján, Leonardo, "El adiós y triste incesante peregrinar de la Piedra del Sol" in *Arqueología Mexicana, La religión mexicana*, vol. XVI, no. 91, INAH-Raíces, Mexico City, 2008.
- Matos Moctezuma, Eduardo & Leonardo López Luján, *Monumental Mexica Sculpture*, Fundación Conmemoraciones, Mexico City, 2009.
- Nicholson, H.B. & Eloise Quiñones, *Art of Aztec Mexico: Treasures of Tenochtitlan*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1983.
- Walsh, Jane M., "La vasija de obsidiana de Texcoco" in *Arqueología Mexicana, Lenguas y escrituras de Mesoamérica*, vol. XII, no. 70, INAH-Raíces, Mexico City, 2004.

100 SELECTED WORKS
NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF ANTHROPOLOGY



Instituto Nacional
de Antropología
e Historia

 **CONACULTA**

ARTES
DE MÉXICO

Consuelo Sáizar
National Council for Culture and the Arts
President

National Institute of Anthropology and History

Alfonso de María y Campos
Director-General

Miguel Ángel Echegaray
Technical Secretary

Eugenio Reza Sosa
Administrative Secretary

Benito Taibo Mahojo
National Communications Coordinator

National Museum of Anthropology

Diana Magaloni Kerpel
Director

Martha Carmona
Assistant Director of Archaeology

ISBN: 978-607-461-086-4

® © 2011, Artes de México y del Mundo, S.A. de C.V.
Córdoba 69
Col. Roma, Del. Cuauhtémoc
06700, México, D.F.

® © 2011, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia
Córdoba 45
Col. Roma, Del. Cuauhtémoc
06700, México, D.F.

Images: **Digitization Project of the Archaeological Collections of the National Museum of Anthropology,**
Conaculta-INAH-Canon /Photographer: Luis Martín Martínez García

INAH. The reproduction, use and/or distribution of images belonging to the cultural heritage of Mexico and contained in this catalogue are restricted and regulated by the Federal Law on Archaeological, Artistic and Historical Monuments and Sites, and the Federal Copyright Law. Prior permission for their reproduction must be obtained from the INAH and the holder of heritage rights.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the publishers, pursuant to the Federal Copyright Law and applicable international agreements. Copyright infringement may result in civil liability and criminal prosecution.

General Coordinator: Mónica del Villar

Editor: Margarita de Orellana

Editorial Coordinator: Gabriela Olmos

English-Language Editor: Richard Moszka

Translators: Michelle Suderman, Padraic Smithies, Quentin Pope, Clara Marín

Design: Germán Montalvo

Research Assistants: Marco Cervera, Roberto Velasco Alonso

Layout & Editorial Design Assistant: César Susano

Design Assistant: Francisco Orozco

Map and Timeline: Magdalena Juárez Vivas

Drawing on p. 217: Javier Urcid

Photography: Digitization Project of the Archaeological Collections of the National Museum of Anthropology, Conaculta-INAH-Canon, except:

National Library of Anthropology and History: pp. 16, 17, 20

Martirene Alcántara, pp. 125, 132–133, 251, 253

Marco Antonio Pacheco / Arqueología Mexicana / Raíces, pp. 26, 29, 30–31, 36, 39, 42

Rocío Ruiz, roll-outs of Codex-Style tumbler and Jiquilpan bottle, pp. 267, 296–297

Michel Zabé, pp. 97, 155

Acknowledgments:

Martha Carmona, Arturo Cortés, Miguel Ángel Echegaray, Vanessa Fonseca, Martín García Urtiaga, Mercedes de la Garza, Julieta Gil Elorduy, Alejandra Guerrero, Salvador Guilliem, Miguel León-Portilla, Sonia Lombardo, Leonardo López Luján, Luis Martín Martínez García, Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, Alejandra Morales, Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, Benito Taibo, Enrique Vela, Gracia Zanuttini

The Archaeology Department researchers, the Exhibition Design Department members, the Archaeological Collection Transportation personnel, the Conservation Laboratory & the Cultural Goods Protection Department of the National Museum of Anthropology

Measurements in this catalogue are listed in the following order: height x width x depth

Except when noted, pieces are from the cultural area of Mesoamerica

Cover: Coatlicue, Mexica Gallery

Table of Contents

Presentation

ALFONSO DE MARÍA Y CAMPOS 11

Introduction

DIANA MAGALONI KERPEL 13

Archaeological Collections in Mesoamerica and New Spain

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN 15

The National Museum and Archaeology

LUISA FERNANDA RICO MANSARD 23

The Collections' Formation: 1955-2011

DIANA MAGALONI KERPEL 33

Ancient Mesoamerican Words on the Walls

MIGUEL LEÓN-PORTILLA 41

Colonial Maya Books on the Walls

MERCEDES DE LA GARZA 45

Mesoamerican Territory and Timeline 52

● INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY AND EARLY PEOPLES GALLERIES 53

The Origins of Man

JOSÉ ANTONIO POMPA 55 - 78

● **PRECLASSIC CULTURE OF THE CENTRAL
HIGHLANDS GALLERY** 81

Foundations of Ancient Mexico

ROBERTO GARCÍA MOLL 83 - 104

● **TEOTIHUACAN GALLERY** 107

“The Place Where Gods Are Made”

EDUARDO MATOS MOCTEZUMA 109 - 133

● **THE TOLTECS AND THEIR TIME GALLERY** 135

Wise Men of Ancient Mexico

ROBERT H. COBEAN & ELIZABETH JIMÉNEZ GARCÍA 137 - 141

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN & MARCO ANTONIO SANTOS ■ 142 - 144

MARI CARMEN SERRA PUCHE ■ 146

ELIZABETH JIMÉNEZ GARCÍA ■ 148 - 156

GABRIELA URUÑUELA ■ 158 - 160

● **MEXICA GALLERY** 163

Late Postclassic Cultures of the Central Highlands

LEONARDO LÓPEZ LUJÁN 165 - 188

● **CULTURES OF OAXACA GALLERY** 191

The Great Cultures of Oaxaca

NELLY ROBLES 193 - 206

JAVIER URCID ■ 208 - 216

● **GULF COAST CULTURES GALLERY** 219

The Olmecs and Other Peoples of the Gulf

SARA LADRÓN DE GUEVARA 221 - 223, 232 - 242

ANN CYPHERS □ 224 - 230

● **MAYA GALLERY** 245

Maya Civilization

MERCEDES DE LA GARZA 247 - 260

NIKOLAI GRUBE □ 262 - 268

● **WESTERN CULTURES GALLERY** 271

Artists and Warriors

ARTURO OLIVEROS 273 - 284

EDUARDO WILLIAMS □ 286 - 294

MARIE-ARETI HERS □ 296

● **NORTHERN CULTURES GALLERY** 299

Settlers of a Shifting Frontier

MARIE-ARETI HERS 301 - 324

About the Authors 326

Bibliography 331