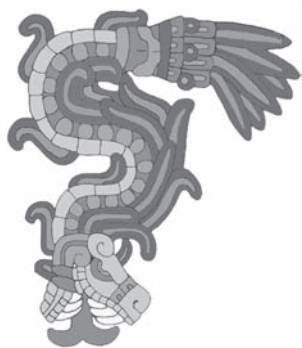


López Austin, Alfredo, and Leonardo López Luján
2012 The Posthumous History of the Tizoc Stone. In *Fanning the Sacred Flame: Mesoamerican Studies in Honor of H. B. Nicholson*, edited by Matthew A. Bost, Brian B. Dillon, and David Carrasco, pp. 439-460. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.



THE POSTHUMOUS HISTORY OF THE TIZOC STONE

Alfredo López Austin and Leonardo López Luján

Ancient stone monuments, preserved thanks to the tenacity of material almost immune to the passing of time, are testimonies to the thoughts and actions of vanished generations. They offer the illusion of clearly transmitted messages through the hardness of form, the perfection of contour, and the harmony of composition. Because we can see them, we also believe we can hear through them the distant voices of their creators. But we forget, at least momentarily, that the ancient message is not automatically crystallized within its stone medium and that the carved forms are simply triggers waiting to fire the imaginations of the varied beholders. Meanings are created and recreated differently depending upon their viewers' chronological and cultural position. Thus the objective appearance of any sculpture will continue to be subjectively transformed into idealizations: anthropomorphic figures will be turned into priests or warriors or philosophers or dancers, assumed functions will become astronomical or magical or recreational or commemorative, and volumetric quantity will become sacred flows, gods, demons, or simply mere collections of atoms. All such interpretations depend upon who is looking at the ancient monument and what his or her point of view is. This potential plurality of readings, even more mutable in the clash of cultures and the passing of centuries, is often the most important factor in the fate of individual monuments, for it will determine whether they survive.



18.1. The Tizoc Stone with its distinctive basin and channel. The lateral face has fifteen conquest scenes. Photo by José Ignacio González Manterola.

Such is the case of the Mexica monument that today bears the name Tizoc Stone, whose carving was ordered by this controversial sovereign of Tenochtitlan between AD 1481 and 1486. Its changing fate, like the fates of other, similar sculptures, has been marked by highly diverse assessments and a very unusual physical movement through the streets, plazas, and museums of Mexico City. The sculpture, currently in the Mexica Hall of the National Museum of Anthropology (inv. 10–162), is a squat cylindrical mass of andesite outstanding for its great size and weight: 94 cm high, 265 cm in diameter, and weighing about 9.5 tons (figure 18.1). The top and lateral faces of the cylinder are beautifully worked within the canons of the style that has been called “Imperial Mexica.” The top surface bears the conventional representation of the sun. The lateral surface has a sequence of fifteen scenes or unbounded panel segments, each composed of a warrior subduing a deity who personifies a seigniorial domain identified with a toponymic glyph (see López Austin 2006; Matos Moctezuma 2009). The continuous design panel on the stone’s side is bounded by two horizontal bands, one above, the

other below, that respectively depict a nocturnal sky and a terrestrial reptile. In a disconcerting yet informative manner, a central concavity with a deep channel cuts through the carved reliefs, radially interrupting the solar disc on the upper surface and one of the conquest scenes on its side.

Today we know that the Tizoc Stone was an ideal instrument for the harsh exchanges between humans and gods. We have discussed its ritual function in the book *Monte Sagrado–Templo Mayor* (Sacred Mountain–Great Temple), identifying it as one of two large stone cylinders that formed a liturgical pair on the patio of the Temple of Yopico, a complex dedicated to the god Xipe Tótec and located on the southern end of the sacred precinct of Tenochtitlan (López Austin and López Luján 2009: 463–467). Both carved cylinders were destined for the *tlahuahuanaliztli*, or “striping,” a ritual more commonly known in English as the “gladiatorial sacrifice.” One of them, the *temalácatl*, was the small arena where the poorly armed captive fought the warrior sacrificers. The other, the *cuauhxicalli*, received the captive’s wounded body for the inevitable removal of the heart and the subsequent offering of blood to the sun and the earth. The stone in our study was a *cuauhxicalli*, since it lacks the central spike sources attribute to the *temalácatl*, an appropriate element for attaching the cord that tethered the captive.

These impressive, paired cylinders also served as true memorials glorifying the feats of each sovereign, since they recorded on their sides inherited conquests as well as the sovereigns’ own triumphs. This explains the Mexica obsession with constantly replacing the *cuauhxicalli*, the *temalácatl*, or both, thereby confirming the gradual expansion of the empire.

STONES DESTROYED, STONES BURIED

With the Spanish Conquest, the enormous ritual stage that formed the heart of Tenochtitlan was dismantled building by building and stone by stone. The great sculptures were profaned, desecrated, dispersed, and abandoned, each to its own destiny in the new course of history. The immediate fate of the cylindrical stones from the patio of Yopico differed, as described in the *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas*, a document written between 1543 and 1544:

En el año 136 [AD 1458] hizo Moteçuma el Viejo una rodela de piedra, la cual sacó R[odrigo] Gómez, que estava enterrada a la puerta de su casa, la qual tiene un agujero enmedio y es muy grande . . . Y en aquel agujero ponían los que tomavan en la guerra atados, que no podían mandar sino los braços, y dábanle una rodela y una espada de palo; y venían tres hombres: uno vestido como tigre, otro como león, otro como águila, y peleavan con él hiriéndole: luego tomavan un navajón y le sacavan el corazón. Y así sacaron los navajones con la piedra debaxo de aquella rueda redonda y muy grande; y después los señores que fueron de México hicieron otras dos piedras, y las pusieron cada señor la

suya una sobre otra, y la una habían sacado y está hoy día debajo de la pila de bautizar, y la otra se quemó y quebró cuanto estuvieron los españoles. (*Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas* 2002: 72)

In the year 136 [AD 1458] Motecuhzoma the Elder made a stone round shield that Rodrigo Gómez removed, which was buried at the gate of his residence, which has a hole in the middle and is very large . . . And in that hole they used to attach those whom they took in battle, who could not move but his arms, and he was given a round shield and a club for a sword, and three men came, one dressed as a tiger, another as a lion, another as an eagle, and fought with him and wounded him, then they took out a large knife and removed his heart. And thus they took the knives with the stone under that very large and round wheel; and then the old lords of Mexico made two other stones, and each lord placed them one over the other, and the Spaniards removed one and today it is under the baptismal font, and the other was burned and broken when they came. (Authors' translation.)

Concerning the first case mentioned in this passage, the *Actas de Cabildo* (Mier y Terán Rocha 2005), the papers of Archbishop Juan de Zumárraga (García Icazbalceta 1947), and Francisco Guerrero's map of Mexico City (now in the Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla) make it clear that, between 1525 and 1526, the conquistador Rodrigo Gómez Dávila built his primary residence on the corner of Calle Real (Moneda Street today) and Calle del Agua (Seminario Street today) (figure 18.4) and that five years later the modest episcopal houses were built in an adjacent area to the east. Much later and after being constituted archiepiscopal, these houses expanded toward the west, occupying part of the old Gómez Dávila estate.

This causes us to speculate with good reason that the large "round shield with a hole in the middle" is none other than the famous Archbishop's Stone (figure 18.2), exhumed in 1988 and now displayed in the National Museum of Anthropology (inv. 10–393459). The archaeologists who discovered this temalácatl say they found it barely 30 cm away from a Colonial wall and under a layer of earth predominantly filled with fragments of Colonial Period ceramics (Pedro Francisco Sánchez Nava and Judith Padilla, personal communication, 2009). This and the fact that the Archbishop's Stone was not aligned to the Pyramid of Tezcatlipoca, whose stairway is situated a few meters to the east (see Matos Moctezuma 1997), confirms that it was moved from its original position or at least was noticed during the Colonial Period (figure 18.3[B]).

The other "round shield" that was not destroyed according to the *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas* (2002) would have been buried after the fall of Tenochtitlan but rediscovered shortly afterward at a date we calculate between 1526 and 1532, when the first cathedral was built. There it would have remained under the baptistery chapel, at least until 1626, the year this small building with an east-west axis was demolished. Was the stone still buried underground?

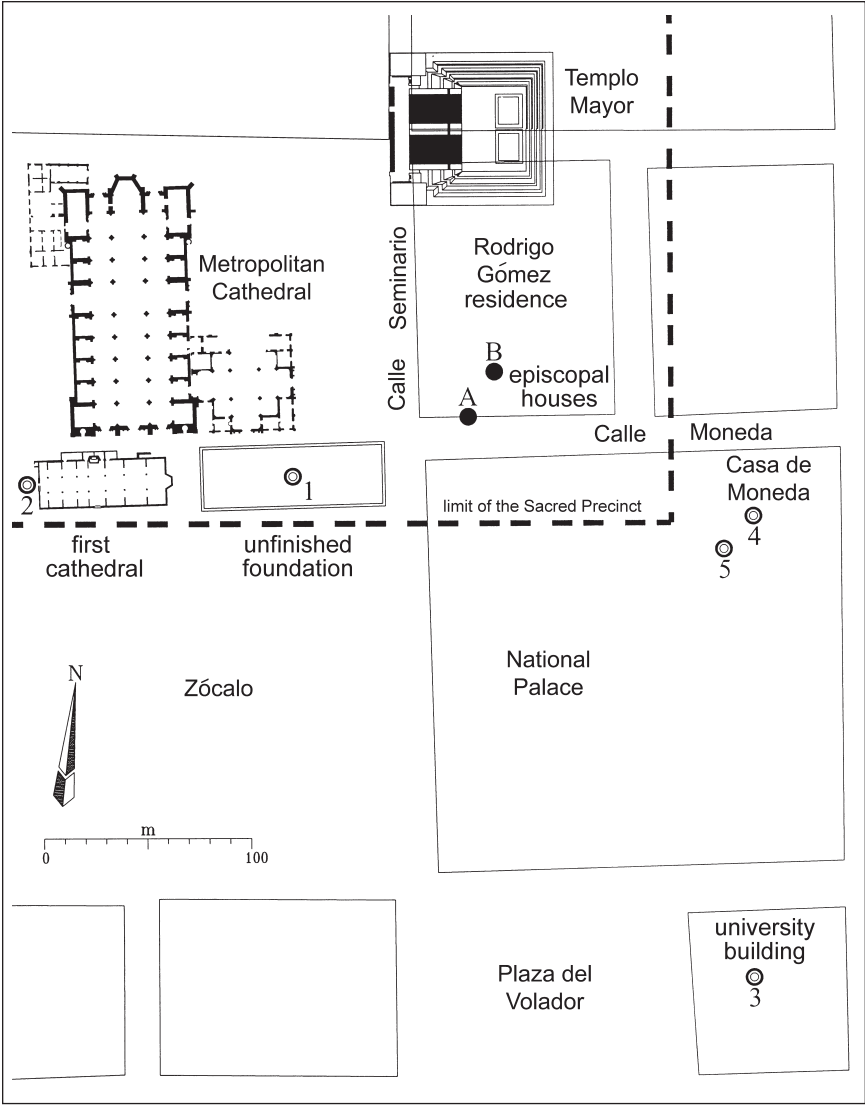


18.2. The Archbishop's Stone lacks a channel. Eleven conquest scenes are arrayed along its side. Photo by José Ignacio González Manterola.

THE TIZOC STONE IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

Significantly, the Tizoc Stone comes from this same area. In “El libro de los ritos” (The Book of Rites) in the *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España* (History of the Indians of New Spain), Fray Diego Durán (1984: 1: 100) mentions that this sculpture

era una que agora tornaron a desenterrar en el sitio donde se edifica la Iglesia Mayor de México, la cual tienen agora a la puerta del Perdón. A esta llamaban “batea” los antiguos, a causa de que tiene una pileta en medio y una canal por donde se escurría la sangre de los que en ella sacrificaban, los cuales fueron más que cabellos tengo en la cabeza. La cual deseo ver quitada de allí, y aun también de ver desbaratada la Iglesia Mayor y la nueva: es porque se quiten aquellas culebras de piedra que están por basas de los pilares, las cuales eran cerca del patio de Huitzilopochtli y donde sé yo que han ido a llorar algunos viejos y viejas la destrucción de su templo, viendo allí las reliquias, y plega a la divina bondad que no hayan ido allí algunos a adorar aquellas piedras y no a Dios. (Durán 1971: 181–182)



18.3. Schematic map of the successive relocations of the Tizoc Stone (1–5) and the Archbishop’s Stone (A–B), by Tenoch Medina.

was the one that has been unearthed for the second time at the site where the Cathedral of Mexico City is being constructed. This stone now stands at the western doorway of the church. The ancients call this the “basin,” because it had a concavity in the center and a channel through which ran the blood of the victims, which were more numerous than the hairs on my head. I would like to see this stone removed from the doorway of the church. And once

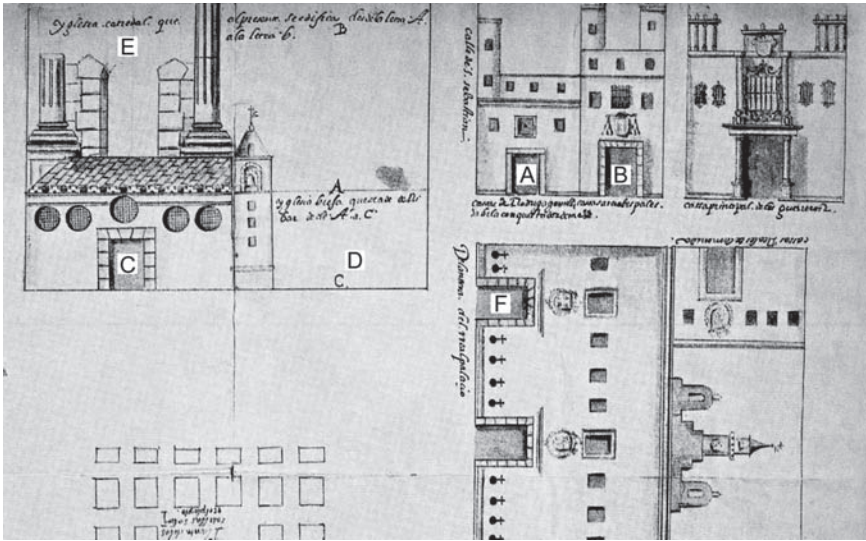
the old cathedral is torn down and the new one is erected, we should also remove the stone serpents which serve as the bases of the columns. These used to stand near the courtyard of Huitzilopochtli. I happen to know of old men and women who have gone there to weep over these relics because of the destruction of their temple. I trust that in His goodness our God has not permitted those Indians to go there and adore the stones and not God. (Authors' translation)

If we take into account the fact that the Dominican friar began this book around 1565 and had finished it by 1570, the area of the discovery would be located just east of the old cathedral, where an enormous pit was dug between 1562 and 1565 to construct the foundations of a new cathedral with seven naves that was intended to be as large as the one in Seville (figure 18.3, no. 1). This project was canceled, however, because of its high cost and the presence of a very shallow water table at the chosen site (Toussaint 1972). As it is well-known, a less ambitious project must have been initiated in 1570–1571, north of the old cathedral, which resulted in the current Metropolitan Cathedral.

What is important for our study is that for nearly six decades the Tizoc Stone remained exposed to the gaze of people passing in front of the so-called *Puerta del Perdón* (Portal of Forgiveness) of the first cathedral, that is, in front of the principal (west) entrance of the building, whose ruins lay beneath the southwest corner of the current cathedral complex (figure 18.3, no. 2). There it was seen by several privileged witnesses. For example, one of the indigenous artists of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún (1979, 9: fol. 7r) left an image of it depicted in the *Florentine Codex* between 1575 and 1577, without its sculpted reliefs but with its distinctive basin and channel (figure 18.5). It was located in the same place by Durán in his 1581 *Historia* (1984: 2: 395) and by the historian Hernando de Alvarado Tezozómoc in his 1598 *Crónica mexicana* (2001: 146, 404), the former calling it “*pedra del sol*” (sun stone) and the latter “*pedra del sacrificio*” (sacrificial stone).

More interesting still is the description by the young Francesco Carletti, who resided in Mexico City between June 1595 and March 1596. Carletti (2002: 69), a Florentine slave merchant, reported the Tizoc Stone's shape, location, and suspected functions in his *Razonamientos de mi viaje alrededor del mundo* (My Voyage around the World):

(Colegio [los jesuitas], el cual era una fábrica muy suntuosa y bella, tal como es también hermosísima aquella en donde vive el virrey, situada en una de las plazas, en donde está también la catedral, que en mis tiempos no estaba terminada de construir. Todavía se ve en ella una mesa de una piedra grande y gruesa trabajada en forma redonda, con varias figuras en medio relieve esculpidas dentro, con un canalillo en medio de ella, por el cual dicen que corría la sangre de aquellos hombres que se sacrificaban sobre ella en la época de su gentilidad mexicana, en honor de sus ídolos, cuyas reliquias se ven todavía por



18.4. Plan of central Mexico City in the sixteenth century. On the Calle Real (upper right) are (A) the residence of Rodrigo Gómez Dávila and (B) episcopal houses; on the Plaza de Armas (upper left) are (C) the first cathedral, (D) unfinished foundations, (E) the new cathedral; (lower right) (F) is the royal palace. By Francisco Guerrero, in the Archivo General de Indias, Seville.

la ciudad fijadas por ellos en la pared, en las esquinas de las casas hechas por los españoles, puestas allí como triunfo de sus fundaciones). (Carletti 1964: 59)

[The Jesuit] College, a very sumptuous and beautiful fabric, as is that inhabited by the viceroy, which is located on one of the plazas in which there is also the cathedral, which had not been completed in my time. There one still sees a tablet formed from a huge, thick stone worked in a round shape on which are carved various figures in half-relief, and with a small gutter in the middle through which ran the blood of men who here were sacrificed in the times of the Mexican nobles, in honor of their idols, of which one sees the remains still throughout the city, walled up in the exterior walls of the buildings erected by the Spaniards, placed there to express the triumph of their foundation. (Authors' translation)

Visionary indeed is the testimony written between 1598 and 1600 by the chronicler Cristóbal del Castillo, who, when referring to the places conquered by the Mexica, says “están escritos en el malacate de piedra circular, la piedra de rayamiento, que está junto a la Iglesia Mayor de México” (they are written on the circular stone cylinder, the stripping stone, which is next to the cathedral of Mexico City) (Castillo 1991: 136–137). In this enlightened manner he correctly interpreted its reliefs:



18.5. The Tizoc Stone as shown by one of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's indigenous artists. Florentine Codex, Book 9, fol. 7r.

(Aquel que está primero de pie, que tiene [al otro] por el cabello, es la imagen de los mecitin, y el otro hombre que está arriba, inclinado, ése es el poblador de los lugares que fueron conquistados, que es hecho cautivo. Allá está grabado sobre la piedra el nombre de cada población; en cada punto está esculpido, por todas partes, alrededor del lomo de la piedra discoidal. Y ya nadie sabe los que [eran] los nombres de nuestros lugares, pues en verdad han muerto todos los ancianos que sabían las historias de la escritura de la piedra.) (Castillo 1991: 136–137.)

The one at the bottom, who has the other by the hair, is the image of the Mexica [*mecitin*], and the other man who is above, inclined, is the settler of the places that were conquered, who is made a captive. Carved on the stone is the name of each settlement; and each point is sculpted, all over, around the back of the circular stone. And now nobody knows the names of our places, since all the elders who knew the stories of the writing on the stone truly have died. (Authors' translation)

THE TIZOC STONE IN THE LATE COLONIAL PERIOD

We do not know if the Tizoc Stone was intentionally buried in the seventeenth century or whether, as Francisco Sedano (1880: 292–294) stated, it was buried accidentally as a result of the great flood of 1629 and the subsequent earth filling done by the city's inhabitants until 1634 to raise the ground level above flood stage. The only certainty is that the stone reappeared on December 17, 1791, facedown, at least 42 cm below the surface. According to the astronomer and antiquarian Antonio de León y Gama (1832: segunda parte: 46):

(Se iba abriendo la zanja para la atarjea que vá al primer arquillo inmediato al portal que llaman de los mercaderes, y pasa por la cerca del cementerio de la iglesia Catedral, en el sitio mismo donde estaba antiguamente una cruz, de madera pintada de verde sobre su peana de mampostería, que es donde formaba esquina la antigua cerca del cementerio y hace frente á las tiendas de cerería del Empedradillo.)

The trench was still being dug for the water conduit that runs to the first small arch next to what they call the merchant's portal and passes right by the foundation of the Cathedral church, in the same spot where long ago there used to be a wooden cross painted green on a piled-stone pedestal, which formed the corner of the old foundation wall and faces the candle shops of the Empedradillo [Monte de Piedad Street today]. (Authors' translation)

In addition to commissioning a drawing by the engraver Francisco Agüera, León y Gama (*ibid.*) himself studied the relief at that time. He concluded (*ibid.*) that it was neither a *temalácatl* nor a *cuauhxicalli* but rather a solar monument registering Tenochtitlan's two zenithal passages, celebrated "con un divertido baile que representan los treinta danzantes, que de dos en dos están tan finamente grabados en la circunferencia cilíndrica" (with an amusing dance performed by thirty dancers who were so finely engraved in pairs on the cylindrical circumference).

The Flemish captain of dragoons, Guillermo Dupaix, also had occasion to examine and draw the stone. Dupaix came to the idea that it should not be called the *Piedra del Sacrificio* (Sacrificial Stone) or the *Piedra de la Danza* (Dance Stone), as his contemporaries proposed, but rather the *Piedra Triunfal* (Triumphal Stone):

Pues este trozo cilíndrico muy precioso á la historia de ésta Nacion, dedicado á la posteridad, nos manifiesta palpablemente las Victorias que consiguió sobre 15 Provincias (o Reynos).

For this cylindrical piece, quite precious to the history of this Nation, dedicated to posterity, palpably shows us the Victories achieved over fifteen Provinces (or Kingdoms). (Dupaix n.d.: fol. 1)

The top face, however, was disconcerting to him, and he ventured the opinion that its significance may have been astronomical.

A few days after the discovery, the regent magistrate (*corregidor regente*) of Mexico City asked the dean of the cathedral to find an appropriate place to exhibit the monolith, as had been done with the Calendar Stone, placed by that time at the bottom of the new tower (see López Luján 2008). In spite of the spaciousness of the atrium, his response was negative, alleging that “no había paraje ni destino para poderla aplicar” (he had no spot or destination he could give it). Surprisingly, the regent magistrate communicated to the viceroy that he thought the same with respect to the city; therefore, it would be sufficient to have it “medir, dibujar y describir si fuere posible para su futuro conocimiento” (measured, drawn, and described if possible for future knowledge) (AHGDF: n.d. fol. 4r–5r). So the Tizoc Stone was buried again, but this time with the solar disc facing upward at ground level, which resulted in the profound wear visible today on the top face. According to halberdier José Gómez (1986: 82), this occurred on September 3, 1793, “en el lugar que se ha de poner la santa cruz que estaba en el cementerio de la catedral” (on the spot where the holy cross that used to be on the cathedral foundation had been placed).

Sometime between 1803 and 1804, Dupaix gave his drawing of the Tizoc Stone’s sequence of conquests to Alexander von Humboldt (1995: pl. 21), who was passing through the Colonial Mexican capital. The Prussian savant published a segment (figure 18.7) in his *Vues des Cordillères, et monuments des peuples indigènes de l’Amérique* (Views of the Cordilleras and Monuments of the Indigenous Peoples of America) (1810). There he says that the stone served as a *temalácatl*, for by then he was inclined toward the iconographic interpretation of the captain of dragoons and erroneously suggested that the Mexica warriors wore a sort of left shoe “terminado por una especie de pico que aparece destinado a la defensa” (ending in a kind of point that appears destined to defense) (Humboldt 1995: 136). Moreover, Humboldt (*ibid.*) claimed to have “confrontado la exactitud” (compared the accuracy) of Dupaix’s drawing, thus implying that he had the rubble removed from the lateral face of the sculpture.

THE TIZOC STONE IN INDEPENDENT MEXICO

In 1823, following the War of Independence, the British showman William Bullock traveled to Mexico with his son (see Costeloe 2008). One of his goals was to produce the sketches for eventual paintings by John and Robert Burford for their View of Mexico City exhibition at the Leicester Square Panorama in London (Romero de Terreros 1959). Drawings and exhibitions composed of scenes from cities throughout the world were made using a procedure that was extremely ingenious for the period. The artist was located at a single point and reproduced from there everything in the surrounding landscape. The final images, of large dimensions, were exhibited on the smooth wall of a rotunda, producing a 360-degree view for spectators who, situated in the center with the painting at a sufficient distance,



18.6. *The Tizoc Stone (visible through grille) in the northeast corner of the patio of the Mexico City University in 1842. Detail of an oil painting by Pedro Gualdi.*

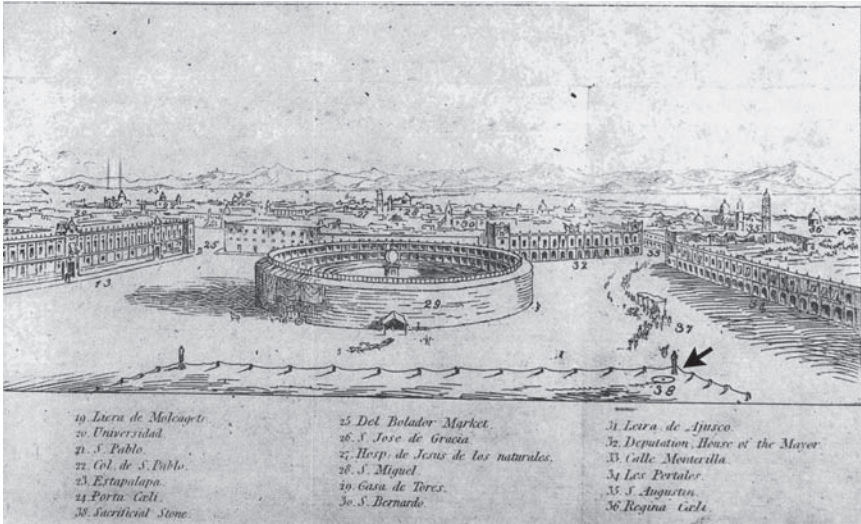


18.7. Two panels from the Tizoc Stone in an engraving published by Alexander von Humboldt (1810), based on a drawing by Guillermo Dupaix.

had the illusion of encountering the remote country from which the panoramic drawing had come. Bullock established his vantage point in the upper part of the cathedral and sketched in the round. In one of his sketches, which includes the southwest corner of the cathedral foundation at the bottom toward the right, we can see how the top face of the Tizoc Stone has surfaced (figure 18.8).

Another one of Bullock's plans was to produce replicas destined for the Ancient Mexico exhibition in the Egyptian Hall (figure 18.9), a building on his property in Piccadilly (Bullock 1824a: 151, 335, 375–376). For this, he solicited the clerics at the cathedral to let him excavate around the contours of the sculpture, which they not only approved but for which they also assumed the cost. With great difficulty because of the elevated water table, he finally managed to free the monument. With the authorization of Lucas Alamán, minister of foreign and domestic relations, Bullock immediately took plaster molds and reproduced the reliefs (figure 18.10)—in “somewhat embellished” form, in the opinion of George Francis Lyon (1828: 2: 120). The following year Bullock (1824a: 335) recalled: “I have seen the Indians themselves, as they pass, throw stones at it; and I once saw a boy jump upon it, clench his fist, stamp with his foot, and use other gesticulations of the greatest abhorrence.”

The location of the Tizoc Stone changed on November 10, 1824, when it was transferred to the no longer extant University building located in front of the Plaza del Volador (figure 18.3, no. 3). The following year the Mexican National



18.8. Sketch of the Mexico City Zócalo in 1823 by William Bullock for John and Robert Burford's *Panorama*. The Tizoc Stone (black arrow) is number 38. Romero de Terreros 1959.

Museum opened its doors there, an institution created by order of President Guadalupe Victoria. The travel logs of the American Edward T. Taylor (1959 [1825–1828]: 58) and the Englishmen Mark Beaufoy (1828: 198–199), as well as those of George Lyon (1828: 2: 120), agree that the sculpture was located on the corner of the extensive central patio behind a group of panels, sharing the enclosure with the massive Coatlicue sculpture (López Luján 2009: 148–150). This is confirmed in the renowned oil painting of the University patio created by the Italian artist Pedro Gualdi around 1842 (figure 18.6).

With the worked faces of the stone completely exposed, the activities of both illustration and interpretation gradually increased. For example, Carlos Nebel (1963) produced detailed lithographs (figure 18.11) that he published with an explanation in his *Viaje pintoresco y arqueológico sobre la parte más interesante de la República Mexicana* (Picturesque and Archaeological Journey over the Most Interesting Part of the Mexican Republic). We also recall the lithograph of Casimiro Castro (1855–1856), in which he brought together under the title “Antigüedades mexicanas” (Mexican Antiquities) the most spectacular pieces in the National Museum. This image (figure 18.13), in which the Tizoc Stone is strangely depicted at upper right, was included in *México y sus alrededores* (Mexico City and Its Surrounding Area). In this same lithographic album, José Fernando Ramírez (1855–1856) attributed to the monolith the character of a monument dedicated to the sun and commemorative of the victories of Tizoc.

Brantz Mayer (1844: 84), secretary of the US delegation to Mexico from 1841 to 1842, tells us that the stone was exhibited at that time with a rare addi-



18.9. Detail of the frontispiece of the catalog for William Bullock's 1823 *Ancient Mexico* exhibition. Frontispiece, Bullock 1824b.

tion: "a stone cross now erected in the middle to sanctify it." Madame Calderón de la Barca (1843: 51), in a fine display of imagination, evokes its ritual use, specifying down to the color of the officiants' attire: "We afterwards saw the Stone of Sacrifices, now in the courtyard of the university, with a hollow in the middle, in which the victim was laid while six priests, dressed in red, their heads adorned with plumes of green feathers . . . held him down while the chief priest cut open his breast, threw his heart at the feet of the idol."

Despite the fact that, in 1866, Emperor Maximilian ordered that the entire museum be moved to the old Casa de Moneda, located on the northeast corner of the palace, the transfer of the Tizoc Stone did not occur until 1873. At that time it occupied the center of the patio (figure 18.3, no. 4), among great palm



18.10. Wax miniature of the Tizoc Stone, brought to London by William Bullock. Courtesy, British Museum.



18.11. Rollout of the Tizoc Stone conquest scenes on its side panel. Lithograph by Carlos Nebel, 1963.



18.12. *Detail of Ideal Reconstruction of a Ceremony by Jean Frédéric Waldeck, ca. 1832. A gladiatorial sacrifice takes place on a temalácatl, and in the background a cuauhxicalli is visible. Oil painting, “Reconstrucción ideal de una ceremonia prehispánica,” in Museo Soumaya, Mexico City.*



18.13. *Mexican Antiquities of the National Museum. Lithograph by Casimiro Castro, 1856. The Tizoc Stone is visible at upper right.*



18.14. The Tizoc Stone at the center of the patio in the National Museum. Photo engraving published by Désiré Charnay, 1885.

trees and very close to the Coatlicue. Thus it appears there in many photographs and in an engraving (figure 18.14) published by Désiré Charnay (1885: 41) in *Les anciennes villes du Nouveau Monde* (The Ancient Cities of the New World). From that period also date the interpretations of Manuel Orozco y Berra (1881), who saw in the Tizoc Stone a *cuauhxicalli* that posthumously celebrated the deeds of the said *tlatoani*, and of Jesús Sánchez (1886), who understood it as a votive monument with images of dancers who bore their captives for sacrificing to the fire in a feast held every four years.

In 1883 the Gallery of Monoliths was created in the back of the building, so the collection's most valuable works were no longer exposed to the inclement weather (López Luján 2009: 167–170). Notices mention that the bulk of the transfer took place between September of that year and August 1886. The Tizoc Stone went to the west end of the gallery, next to the Coyolxauhqui head (figure 18.3, no. 5). The maneuver was completed with the arrival of the Calendar Stone, which enabled President Porfirio Díaz to hold the inauguration of the gallery on September 16, 1887.

CONCLUSION

Since the story is so well-known, we will not elaborate on the transfer of the Tizoc Stone to its present location in the Mexica Hall at the National Museum of



18.15. *Replicas of the Tizoc Stone reliefs sold by Désiré Charnay to the Peabody Museum, Harvard University. The Musée du quai Branly, Paris, has the same four replicas. Photo by Barbara W. Fash, 2004.*

Anthropology in Chapultepec Park (Bosque de Chapultepec). This magnificent construction was inaugurated by President Adolfo López Mateos on September 17, 1964. Since that time it has been possible to view this cuauhxicalli from a new perspective, not only as a paradigmatic reflection of Mexican national history but also as a universally appreciated masterpiece of art. Finally, we note the irony hiding in plain sight: despite the “posthumous” nature of this muted monument, the Tizoc Stone remains very much alive, calling out to each successive generation, inspiring it to study the stone anew, and reopening the door to the distant Mexica Empire.

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