

John Pohl
2004

Dear Stuart and Scott,

Here are some "scrap" folders on significant ceremonial centers for Postclassic confederacies of southern Mexico.

Unfortunately we know even less about these places as the temples were dismantled to build the churches and palaces of the encomenderos and caciques but at least the floor plans are still out there and we have Mitla and Yagul for proportions. ^{TEPOSQUILA,}

If you are so inclined I think the most important would be the temple, palace, and plaza precincts for Tilantongo, Zaachila, and Tehuacan. The first two were the highest ranked royal families for the Mixtec and Zapotec confederacies. They were not the grandest palaces but the most prestigious and oldest. Mitla of course goes without saying. A view of the Temple of the Columns would be neat because it would illustrate how close you've come in your interpretations of what has been lost by comparison to a gentling style reconstruction of a known example. Mitla is especially known for the scapular frames on the cornices, a device that goes back to Monte Alban and is distinctively Zapotec with the outward batter. Mixtec codices depict cornice and roof treatments that are surmounted by elaborate merlons and seem more typically central Mexican even Teo. in origin.

Tehuacan was the springboard for the Eastern Nahuatl operating out of Cholula into Tabasco and the Soconusco and ultimately trade with Central America. MacNeish believed like Seler that Codex Borgia portrayed precincts in and around the Tehuacan Valley. Subsequent finds in Tlaxcala indicate that the style of art and architecture as well as iconography extended into Tlaxcala and Cholula as well. Nevertheless, the distinctive "eared" temples are typical of southern Puebla architecture. It goes without saying that a big blow out Borgia style temple with all the ornamentation would be cool to see, especially with a big "xantile" shrine in the plaza in the foreground. Xantile's are found almost exclusively in the Tehuacan Valley sites. The head you have would be a good one. Here are some others.

You might want to consider an illustration that highlights a typical Oaxacan settlement pattern to contrast with your aerial view of Tlaxcala, an urban center formed by the conjunction of four separate estates. I suggest that the Jaltepec aerial might serve this well. The mountain behind the town was described as the 'refuge' used when the Aztecs attacked. Its an excellent

oblique of the palace complex, very typical. There would be smaller palaces on the adjacent lomas with settlements of farmers occupying the lowest slopes.

This could be accomplished with a view of Tilantongo as well but I'd like to make sure that you tried at least one composition that highlighted the Temple of Heaven and the palace there. A view from the patio of the palace to the east - north east would allow you to see the temple of heaven in the distance copnstructed on the remains of the big platform in the background. The Postclassic temple appears to have been constructed at the summit of an earlier and larger Classic period platform that was subsequently allowed to erode so that appeared to be the natural top of the hill.

If you want to tackle any others let me know. I threw in some stuff for Coixtlahuaca and Tututepec.

Best, JOHN

SELER PUBLISHED PLANS FOR
GUINOLA - THE ZAPOTEC
COMPLEX AT TEHUTEPEC -

I'll be heading out next Sunday the 20th and will send you my new contact information.

AT PRINCETON
I'LL BE STARTING MY BOOK ON MITLA
NEXT FALL -

YOU GUYS - THIS IS

A POSTCLASSIC WORLD

NO ONE HAS SEEN BEFORE

+ IS JUST BEGGING TO

BE BROUGHT TO LIFE,

I THINK ITS THE SYSTEM THAT
INTEGRATES THE S.E. + S.W. U.S.

+ ULTIMATELY IS SUPPLANTED BY THE
AZTEC EMPIRE.



TEPOSOLULUA -
MIXTECA ALTA

PALACE OF THE CACICA -
VERY LATE POSTCLASSIC BUT MORE LIKELY
EARLY COLONIAL

MIXTEC PALACE



I THINK POSTCLASSIC
PEOPLE STUCCOED +
PAINTED THE ORNAMENTATION -

THIS LOOKS MORE LIKE COLONIAL
STONE WORK TO ME.



↑
PALACE OF
THE CACICA AT
TEPOSCOLULA

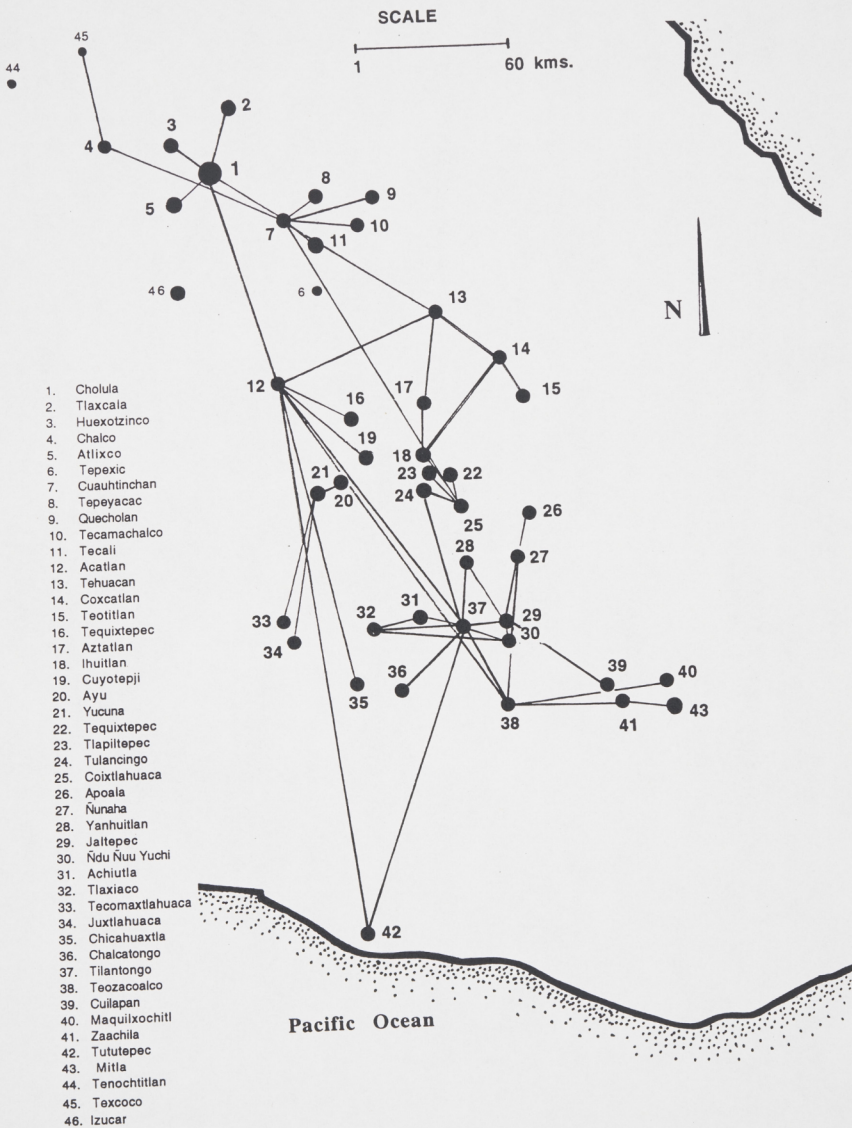
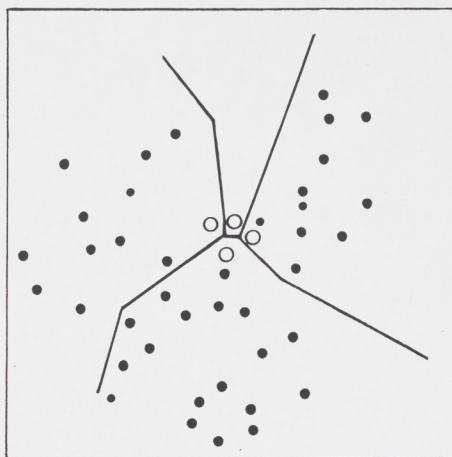
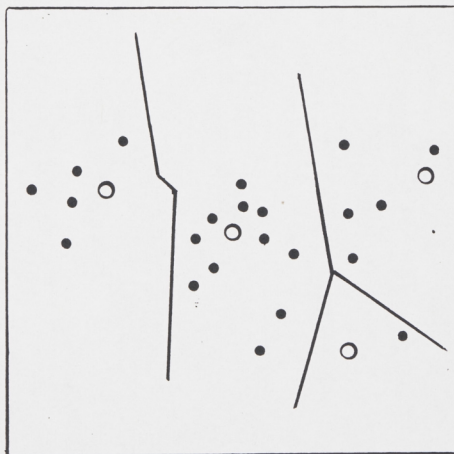


Fig. 3



MORE
CENTRALIZED
EASTERN
NAHUA
PATTERN
a PUEBLA
VALLEY -
TLAXCALA -
TEHUACAN



MORE
TYPICAL MIXED
OAXACA -
POCKET
VALLEYS
ETC. IMHOIT
LARGE URBAN
CENTERS
b

0 10kms. - CHECK MEASUREMENTS

Fig. 1