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THE O B V E R S E O F T H E

C O D E X O F C H O L U L A

by

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ABSTRACT

The obverse of the Codex of Cholula is a map of the Cholula region drafted between A.D. 1549 and A.D. 1586 and annotated with glosses in Nahuatl. The Codex illustrates the borders and subject communities of the Kingdom of Cholula; the center of Cholula with its Great Square, marketplace, and major streets; and the barrios of Cholula with their principal buildings. The implications of this codicil research for archeological investigations into the definition of the borders of ancient polities, settlement patterns and boundary maintenance within the Kingdom of Cholula, and community patterning within the ancient city of Cholula are examined.

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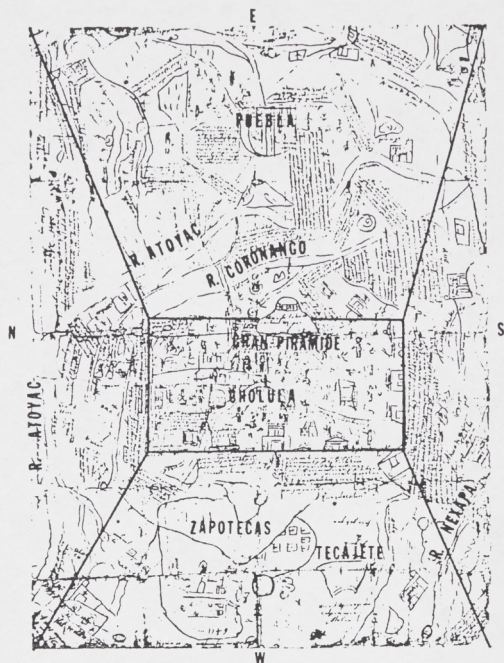


Fig. 1. The Indigenous Lay-Out of the Codex

The plan of the Cholula region is distinctly indigenous in its lay-out. The peoples of Mesoamerica did not view the four cardinal directions in a straight line as Europeans do. Instead, five areas were conceptualized: center, east, west, north, and south. The center was depicted as a rectangle—just as the City of Cholula is seen in the form of a rectangle at the center of the plan. The regions east, west, north, and south of the central rectangle were conceptualized as trapezoidal areas expanding out from each side of the central rectangle and delineated by diagonal lines extending from the corners of the central rectangle. Although many Mesoamerican maps place the western region at the top, in the case of the Codex of Cholula the eastern region was apparently meant to be at the top of the plan (Fig. 1). To better understand the geographical context of the plan, the area covered by the plan has been outlined on a modern map of the Valley of Puebla (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. The Valley of Puebla



Fig. 3. Codex of Cholula—Copy 2
(After Glass 1964: Fig. 60)

THE OBERSE OF THE CODEX OF CHOLULA / Lind

TABLE 1. TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF THE CHOLULA REGION

FEATURES*	GLOSS IN COPY 2 OF CODEX	GLOSS NO.**
MOUNTAINS		
Acatepec	Acatepec	III-C6
Acuexcomac	Acucomon tepetl	IV-C4
Chipilo	Nepalualtopel	III-C8
Chiquimuite	-	-
Catepec	Quatepe	I-C4
Comalo	-	-
Conde	Tepopolo	II-A8
Cuautlancingo	Tcauhyocan	III-A17
Guadalupe	Yztzocan	IV-A14
Loreto	-	-
Luna	-	-
Malinche	Matlalcueye	I-A9
Manzanilla	-	-
Nixconxe	Tepanchi tepec	IV-C16
Ocotlan	Teyocan	IV-A11
San Juan	Catepec	II-B6
Tezcatl	Teraxic	V-C5
Tepoxuchitl	Tepch xochio	I-B10
[Tetepetzin]*	Tetepetzin	III-B17
Tlacuauquico	Tlacoa quita	V-B4
Uruaga	-	-
Xaltepec	-	-
Xilutzonan	-	-
Zapotecas	Tzapoteca	V-B5
Zeresotia	-	-
RIVERS		
Almoloya	-	-
Alseseca East	Chiyeacan?	I-B2
Alseseca West	-	-
Amatlanapan	Metlapanapan	III-A12
Atoyac	Atoyac	III-A7
Atlanepantla	-	-
Cienaga	-	-
Coronango	-	-
Huiliuapa	-	-
La Venta	-	-
Leona	-	-
[Michapan]*	Michapan	II-B8
Nexapa	Nexac	V-C3
Pinahuac	Pinahuicac	V-A6
Prieto	-	-
San Francisco	-	-
Tlapalac	-	-
Xopanac	-	-
Zahuapan	-	-
BARRANCAS		
Atenco	-	-
Atlachahuatl	Atlachahli	II-A4
Atzinco	-	-
Corona	-	-
Honda	Atlahtli?	II-A5
Mixactlatl	Tepoxchatla?	I-B2
Tecoaoatla	ocao tlaza can	I-A8
Tlapacoya	-	-
SPRINGS		
Acopilco	-	-
Actipac	Yaticpac	III-C11
Amulucan	Amaliucan	I-B3
[Aguic]*	Aguinexac	II-A3
[Maquixtlan]*	Maquixtlan	III-B13
[Telpochatl]*	Telpochatl	IV-C15
[Tezcocoac]*	Tezca coac	III-B18

*Features in brackets [...] glossed in Codex but not labelled on modern topographic maps of region.

**Gloss number in Simons (1962; 1968ab).

THE OBERSE OF THE CODEX OF CHOLULA / Lind

TABLE 2. TOWNS IN THE CHOLULA REGION

TOWNS	GLOSS IN COPY 2 OF CODEX	GLOSS NO.**
Acatepec, San Francisco	Acatepec	III-C6
Acozautla, Santa Ana	Acosatlan	IV-C3
Acuexcomac, Santa Maria	Acuicomon tepetl	IV-C4
Ahuatempa, San Pablo	Ahuatenco	IV-C5
Almeratla, San Lorenzo	San Loren so	II-A7
Amalucan, San Juan	Amalih can	I-B3
*Amatlan, San Juan	San Juoan amatl	II-A2
*Analco, Santo Angel	Analco	I-B4
Analco, San Miguel	Acolco	V-A5
Atoyatenco, San Jose	Atoyatenco	IV-A7
Atzonpa, San Gregorio	Azon pan	IV-C6
?Buenavista, San Juan?	Tezpetzlin	III-B17
Caalotepec, San Antonio	Callocan quahila	II-C4
Calera, San Geronimo	Teneztetla	II-A9
Chalchahuapan, San Bernardino	Chalchi apan	IV-C7
+Chapulco, San Jose	-	-
Chautenco, La Trinidad	Oua hui ten co	III-A16
CHOLULA	Tlolan Chololan	III-B4
Coapa, San Francisco	Tlacoa quita	V-B4
Coatepec, San Bartolo	Quahete	I-C4
Coronango, Santa Maria	Colo nanco	III-A9
Cuacualoya, Santiago	Coaqualocan	III-A8
Cuanala, San Mateo	Quanal la	V-A7
?Cuautlancingo, San Juan?	Tecauhucan	III-A17
?Huayotlipan, San Felipe?	Yxtlahuacate quixquitlan	II-B9
Malacatepec, Santa Maria	Malacatepec	II-C5
Mihuacan, San Antonio	Mihuacan	III-A13
Monoxpan, Santiago	Xoloman atenco	III-B24
?Nextetelco, San Lucas?	Xaxco	V-A9
Ocotlan, San Francisco	Ocotlan	III-A14
Ocoyuran, Santa Clara	Ocoyuran	III-C9
Ometotitla, San Gabriel	Ometotitla	IV-A9
Papaxtla, San Miguel	Papach tla	V-C4
PUEBLA	Cuetlax coape	I-B5
*San Baltazar	Sa Barteal	II-A2
San Pablo del Monte	Achichipicayan	I-A7
?Santa Isabel Cholula?	Salechco	III-C14
Tecuanipan, San Geronimo	Tlequa nipan	V-C6
?Tehuilooyocan, San Luis?	Quetzalocotlan	IV-C12
?Temoxtitla, San Bernabe?	Nepalualtopel	III-C8
Tenancingo, San Miguel	Tenanco	I-A8
Tepeco, San Salvador	Tepocolo	II-A8
Tlaltenango, San Pedro	Tlal tenanco	V-A8
Tlampa, San Martin	Tlamapan	V-C7
Tlaxtla, San Juan?	Tlaltepec atenco	IV-A12
Tulcingo, San Juan	Toltzinco	II-A10
*Xilotzingo, San Juan	-	-
Xochimehuacan, San Pablo	Xochimehacan	II-A11
Xonacatepec, Santa Maria	Xonacatepec	II-B11
Xotla, San Miguel	S Miguel Xotla	IV-A10
Zacapechpan, San Gregorio	Zacapechpan	IV-C8
Zacatepec, Santa Maria	Zaca tepec	V-B2
Zoquiapan, San Martin	Coquitla	III-A11

*Town mentioned in Codex but not glossed at its geographic location.

+Town indicated by illustration of building in Codex but with no accompanying gloss naming town.

?Town tentatively identified as corresponding to gloss in Codex.

**Gloss number in Simons (1962; 1968ab).

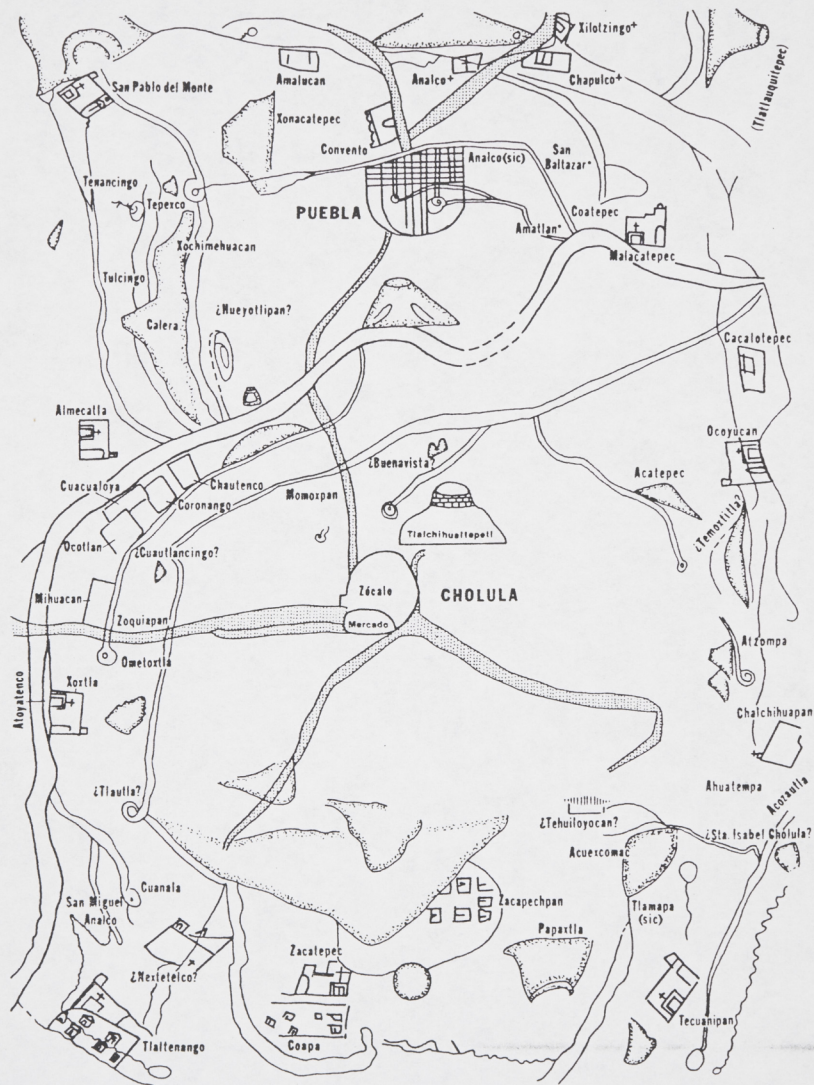


Fig. 6. Towns in Copy 2 of the Codex of Cholula

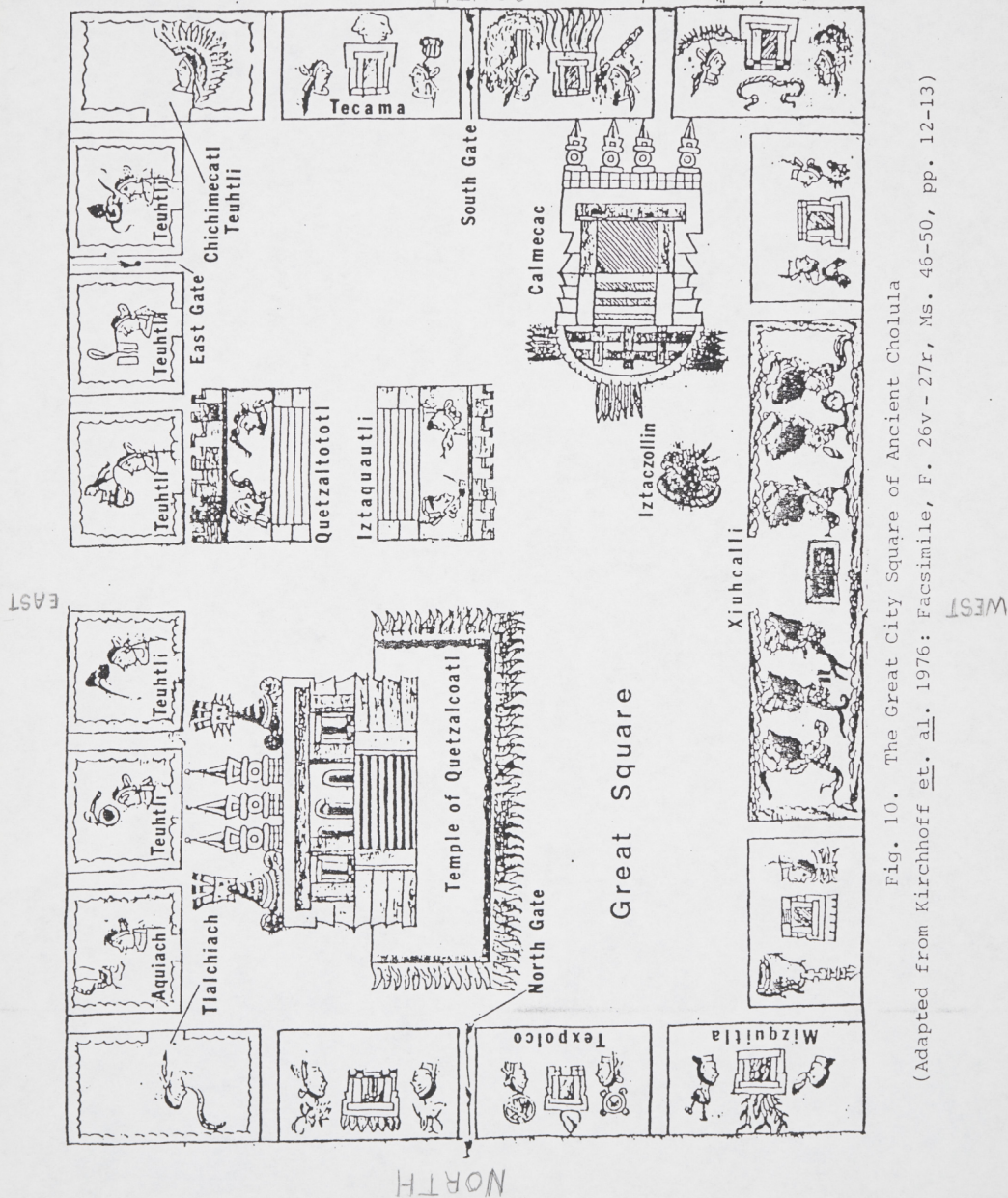


Fig. 10. The Great City Square of Ancient Cholula

THE OBERSE OF THE CODEX OF CHOLULA / Lind

TABLE 3. THE BARRIOS OF CHOLULA

SIXTEENTH CENTURY BARRIOS*	BARRIOS GLOSSED IN CODEX	PRESENT-DAY BARRIO CHURCHES
TIANGUISNAHUAC, SAN MIGUEL**		
Tecpan	?Tecpan quivac / Tenanqui auac?	San Dieguito
Escoloco	Quezoco	San Miguel Tiangisnahuac
Cemotuntlica	-	-
Ostuma	Ustoma	?Santo Sepulcro?
Tlacpac	Tollan Tlacpac	?Niño Perdido?
Tiangisnahuac	Tianquic nahac	San Miguelito
Tollan Pochtlan	Tollan	-
Panchimalco	-	-
Calmecac	-	-
MIZQUITLA, SANTIAGO**		
Mizquitla	Mizquitla tecpan	Santiago Mizquitla
Tzocuilac	(Zocuilac)@	Santa Maria Tzocuilac
Izquentla	Yequen tia	El Carmelito
Coamilco	-	Cristo Vivo Coamilco
Xinasco	?Yztzocan?	?Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe?
Cuitlizco	Cuitlizcotecpan	Jesus-Tlatempa
Cuimanco	-	-
Qualmehuaca	?Tzaqualpan)?@	-
TEXPOLCO, SAN JUAN CALVARIO**		
Tecpan [Texpolco?]	(Tecoatz tecpan)@	San Juan Calvario Texpolco
Papalutla	Papalutla tecpan	?Santa Cruz Jerusalem?
-	Papa lotla	-
Cuac	Coac tecpan	?Ecce Homo?
Tzaqualco	Tzaquate	-
Quauhtzenco	-	-
Xahueztlan	?Xitla? #1	?Capilla de Dolores?
Xiutenco	?Xitla? #2	?San Pedrito?
XIXITLA, SANTA MARIA**		
Quautla	Quauhtlan tecpan	Santa Maria Axixitla
Ocotlan	Ocotlantecpan	?Santisima Trinidad?
Tlaxcoaque	-	-
Ticomán [Chiconteccalpa]	-	-
Acahuicho	Acahuicho tepan	-
Tochpan	?Teno chan?	-
TECAMA, SAN PABLO**		
Mexico	-	San Pedro Mexicaltzingo
Ochpanco	-	-
Tecaman	Tecaman tecpan	San Pablo Tecama
Caotlan	-	-
COLOMOCHCO, SAN ANDRES**		
Yohualtian quico tepan	Yohualtian quico tepan	San Andres Parroquia
Colomochco	Collomachco tecpan	San Pedro Colomochco
Cuaco	-	Santa Maria Cuaco
Matlalcingo	Tematla quahuatl	La Santisima Trinidad Matlalcingo
Xicotenco	(Coquiliaco)@	Santiago Xicotenco
Xalotle	-	-
Aquihuac	[Aquihuac]+	San Juan Aquihuac

*After Carrasco (1971: 35-44).

**Districts of Cholula in the 16th century.

+Building illustrated, but not glossed, in Codex.

@Glosses in original obverse after Simons (1970).

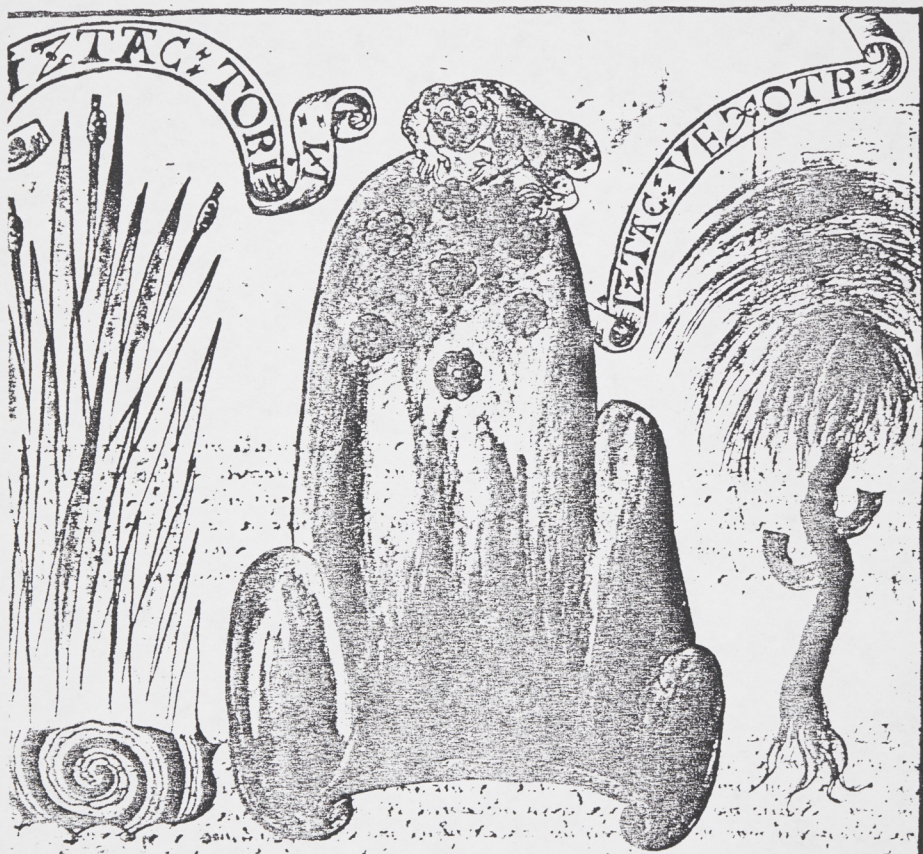


Fig. 12. The Place Glyph for Cholula

(After Kirchhoff *et. al.* 1976: Facsimile, F. 14 r, Ms. 54-58, p. 40)